The musical body:
how gender and class are reproduced among young
people playing classical music in England

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I declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own.

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Abstract

Scholars of western classical music have predominantly studied it as a text and positioned it a site of 'absolute value' through which musicians and listeners 'transcend [...] the bodily' (Johnson 2002). This thesis uses ethnography in order to critique this approach, exploring the experience of young people who participate in classical music ensembles in the south of England. It interrogates the relationship between classical music and the middle classes, asking what classed and gendered dispositions are being (re)produced through this musical practice. The thesis argues that rehearsal processes shape the embodied dispositions of young musicians to cultivate a mode of restraint and gendered control, which is congruent with a particular classed identity. This occurs within a powerful affective group setting, which interpellates participants as subjects of value through the intimate, embodied, non-linguistic call of this music.

This argument is built through four key claims. First, the boundary-drawing which legitimises the protected status of classical music draws on the classed, gendered history of its institutions in the Victorian period. This camouflages the ways in which musical standards of 'excellence' are formed socially, in and between certain bodies. Second, this musical practice simultaneously disciplines but also effaces the body. A major theoretical contribution of this thesis is to argue that the dispositions this produces are audible in the aesthetic of the music. Third, an ethic of correction is central to classical music education. Those in less privileged positions capitalise on this as a route towards classed self-improvement, gaining access to a musical world where they find an expressive voice, a strong sense of identity, and a supportive and intimate social scene. Fourth, mediated through sound, the sensuous body acts back against its disciplining to share powerful affective states with others, creating a powerful allegiance to bourgeois social norms and values.

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Introduction: Relocating classical music in culture: 'the music of the universe'?

After a week spent rehearsing intensively with the New Symphony Orchestra, the day of the concert finally arrives. We have moved from the rehearsal venue to the 500-seater concert hall; the empty seats contain a nervous promise of the performance to come. The cello soloist arrives to rehearse with us in the afternoon, and we spend a tedious two hours going over details in the Dvorak Cello Concerto to make sure we can follow her — an unwieldy process of making sure an orchestra of 60 people matches every nuance of her playing. We stop and start, stop and start, playing the same sections over and over again, until the conductor is satisfied that we've got it right.

For the concert, I am sitting at the back of the cello section, the hall half full of family and friends. The girls are in all black, with elegant dresses and high heels, and the boys are in dinner jackets. The concerto is the second piece in the first half. When we get to the middle movement, somehow time seems to slow down. The air is thick with concentration. The solo cello line laments its sorrow against an accompaniment of sustained notes from the orchestra. We follow the cellist's line as it sighs down the scale, pushing ahead urgently and passionately, and then resolving back to the minor key, resigned. To my surprise, I find I'm nervous of playing, frightened of making a sound. We know this piece well by now, and I know what I'm doing, but every time the cellos have to start playing I find myself hesitating, not wanting to come in confidently even though I know that I'm right. My body freezes with fear and my playing becomes precarious, fearful, tentative; each phrase stretches out in an eternity of hyper-alertness. My bow scrapes across the string, making a pale, undernourished sound. Adam, the conductor, had joked during the rehearsal that the stereotype of a string player is that they're never the first to do anything. I've suddenly become that stereotype. I've lost all my nerve for coming in confidently, the fear of getting it wrong and being the only person to make a mistake overcoming my usual confidence. The rest of the concerto

creeps by in a welter of fear.

Finally we make it to the end. I can breathe. It feels as though the audience has been holding their breath as well, sharing in the fragile silences between phrases, willing us to get it right. I suddenly realise that my fear of making a mistake was also a fear of letting down this collectivity and spoiling the perfect sonic edifice we were forming together: a passing monument in sound to our past and our future, as represented by the young people on stage and endorsed by the audience through their attention. They applaud enthusiastically, and as I stand on stage receiving the applause, it feels for a few disorienting seconds as though they are applauding themselves for having produced these wonderful young musicians. I have a strong sense of being present at a social ritual, one which celebrates the values and ideals of this particular social group, where the performers and audience form a feedback loop of mutual praise and congratulation.

Talking to the other musicians after the concert, I discover that, similar to the audience's precarious, silent listening, the entire orchestra had been gripped with fear. The leader of the cello section had even been pretending to play the pizzicato (plucked) entries because, like me, he was too scared to make a sound. It was uncanny to discover that my fear had been shared throughout the group, becoming audible in sound. Had my body communicated its fear to others without my knowledge? Or had I instead picked up on the fear of the group, and reproduced it in my playing? This unconsciously shared experience highlighted this social ritual as a powerfully embodied, collective, experience, despite our being separated into individual seats, not touching each other, or even looking at each other. Our shared silence and separateness somehow created a powerful communal experience.

This experience, from my ethnography with youth classical music groups in the south of England, gives a sense of the powerful affective states that circulate in classical music ensembles, amidst the social ritual of a classical music concert. I could have chosen to open this thesis with a description of one of the exhilarating moments where all the players in the orchestra were on the edge of our seats; or an experience of ethereal beauty from the disembodied voices of the youth choir in my study; or simply an account of the pleasure of playing a beautiful melody. However, following David Hesmondhalgh's manifesto for a more ambivalent music sociology (Hesmondhalgh 2013), I have chosen to highlight this example where an affect of fear was transmitted throughout the group, so powerfully as to feel like it would silence us, and yet at the same time creating something communal. This scene shows how classical musicians rehearse to perfection, feeling enormous pressure not to make mistakes; to get it right. It illustrates a particular combination of being separate and individual, and yet still sharing powerful forms of togetherness. It also demonstrates how the ethic of correction of classical music, coming from conductors, teachers, fellow musicians and from within oneself, can work against musical expressivity. Most germane for this thesis, however, is how this scene shows us, from the inside, a middle class social ritual where individuality becomes collectivity, where the audience and musicians together hang on to the precarious, wonderful, terrifying silence and sound, our shared attention forming a channel of communication despite our bodies' carefully positioning as separate, never touching, following historical standards of correctness.

These are some of the themes of this thesis: communicating affect through sound; correction; music standards, or getting it right; the dialectic of individuality and collectivity; and the disciplining of the body. However, rather than simply examining these aspects of classical music practice in micro-social contexts, I am using them to fuel a more ambitious, socio-structural investigation into how classical music practice among the young people in my research reproduces classed and gendered dispositions. I draw on the history of classical music education institutions in the UK, bringing together literatures

from sociology of education, new musicology, cultural studies, music sociology, and body and affect studies, to try to understand this musical practice as a cultural phenomenon. I will draw together these themes and literatures to demonstrate how classical music, in reproducing itself, also reproduces classed and gendered subjectivities.

In order to do this, I have undertaken an ethnography of the youth classical music scene in a county in the south-east of England which I will call Whitchestershire. Drawing on research with four ensembles — a youth choir, two youth orchestras, and a youth opera group — this thesis explores the relationship between classical music and class, as read through the pathways and experiences of the young people in these groups. The musicians and singers in these ensembles are in their teens and early twenties, and are mostly English, white, and middle class. They are drawn from a variety of schools and universities, attending these music ensembles as an extra-curricular activity. They have been participating in classical music usually for many years; some of them are at music conservatoires and plan to become professional musicians while others want to pursue different career paths. Drawing on my own past life as a pianist and cellist from a middle-class background living and working in the classical music world, I played music with these groups, observing their rehearsals, going to the pub with them, and interviewing them, to explore the relationship between classical music and these middle-class youth who play it and love it.

Why youth? Classical music could be theorised as the original post-war youth movement, as the first youth orchestras in the UK were set up in the 1940s. Rather than subverting or challenging normative values, youth orchestras and choirs tend more towards reproducing them, and have therefore escaped the scholarly attention that has been paid to working class subcultures. This thesis therefore contributes to an emerging sociology of the middle classes in the UK by exploring the socialities of a particular group of middle-class young people. Furthermore, a focus on youth is particularly generative for studying classical

music's culture because studying young people in this context entails examining education settings. This means that tacit knowledge is put into words, making more explicit the assumptions and ideologies of this world. In addition, classical music education is currently the site of contestations over tradition and value. Recent policy reforms in music education have privileged the values of classical music education over other genres of music (Spruce 2013; Henley 2011). In addition, the growth in classical music education programmes directed at children in 'deprived' areas demonstrates a resurgence in defending the value of this practice.

However, despite these developments, classical music, or 'western art music', has usually been studied as a text rather than a contemporary cultural practice.[1] As Bennett et al note in their major study of class and cultural consumption in the UK, '[t]hose who study popular music generally use qualitative and ethnographic approaches often strongly informed by cultural studies, whilst those who study classical music are more likely to use quantitative data, focused historical studies and more 'orthodox' social theory. We badly need to bridge this divide if we are to understand the relationships between musical tastes more comprehensively' (Bennett 2008, 77). Similarly, Paul Atkinson (2004, 158) notes that sociologists have eschewed classical music in favour of studying more popular genres, a trend he ascribes to 'inverse snobbery'. While my focus in this thesis is on practice rather than taste, my approach is also generative for illuminating questions of class, culture and consumption which Bennett et al have addressed. Furthermore, through examining musical practice, I can look at how dispositions associated with a particular social position become inscribed into the aesthetic properties of the music. Against earlier approaches in the sociology of music (Becker 1982), this thesis doesn't only explore the social relations around the music, but asks how these socialities can be heard in the music itself.

This thesis aims, therefore, to relocate classical music within one of the cultures

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1 I will use 'classical music' rather than the usage which academic music departments prefer, 'western art music', as the former is the vernacular term among my participants.

that produces it today, against still-prevalent discourses of its autonomy from the social. In particular, the main thread of the thesis will be to examine how this musical practice is produced in and between bodies, in order to investigate how it works as a mechanism for storing value in particular bodies, and thus reproducing inequality. In foregrounding the body, an interesting tension is created with prevailing ideas of classical music being transcendent or sublime (Johnson 2002; Scruton 2007); indeed, musicologist Julian Johnson articulates a common discourse when he argues classical music allows us to 'transcend […] the bodily' (p.112). This thesis therefore brings the body back into a culture where many of the ideals of practice – wearing black, being 'faithful' to a written text, and emphasising the organic unity of the musical work – downplay the body's role in creating sound and prioritise a cerebral approach to the music.

Studying the body and bodily practices requires getting beyond discourse, and beyond the standard qualitative method of the in-depth interview. Putting my own body to work in my research sites was therefore an integral part of my methodology, and something that I could not have done without being an 'insider' in the classical music world through my years of training and working as a pianist and cellist. I carried out an ethnography over eighteen months with the four groups in my study, playing the cello in the two youth orchestras, and helping out as rehearsal pianist for the Young Opera Company. With Cantando Youth Choir I observed rehearsals, which enabled a different but also very rich seam of data. In order to understand my participants' pathways and experience of being in these groups, I conducted interviews with 37 young people and nine adults involved in these groups, as well as carrying out three focus groups with young people. These two methods form the bulk of my data; however, I have supplemented them with secondary data such as reports and statistics, as well as original archival research to contextualise my sites in the broader UK classical music education scene and its history.

This introduction lays out the theoretical approach for the thesis in order to identify key themes which will be explored empirically. In it, I argue that

classical music can be seen as a site for the (re)production of bourgeois subjectivity. Firstly, I lay out the ideas this thesis is arguing *against,* which are currently being deployed in debates around music education reforms in the UK – namely, that classical music is a universal culture, autonomous from social context, and therefore can be recognised as 'great' music. Second, I examine affinities or congruences between historical and contemporary ideas of class and classical music culture. Most notably, I examine the ways in which the middle classes have used and still use classical music to construct symbolic, cultural and economic boundaries to safeguard their privilege. However, following Born (1991), DeNora (2000), and the insights of the subcultures literature, I discuss the dangers of assuming an homology between a particular social group and its music. I describe how this thesis negotiates this potential problem, by drawing on Terry Eagleton's 'ideology of the aesthetic' (1990). Finally, I lay out my approach for this thesis, which is to theorise classical music primarily as a practice in and between bodies, against discourses that it 'transcends' the bodily (Johnson 2002). Drawing on Lisa Blackman's (2012) work on affect and the body, I argue for an approach which posits the intentional porousness of bodies, leading them to be open to affecting others and being affected. As the opening scene demonstrated, this is an approach which is particularly apposite in studying music, as we can *hear* affect in sound. This theoretical overview leads me to identify four themes which will run throughout this thesis, which I describe before mapping out the trajectory of the thesis.

Classical music education: from high art to civilising mission

'Music education has become a contested field because it is the site of a central debate about cultural values and authority' (Johnson 2002, 74)

This quote comes from musicologist Julian Johnson's book, 'Why we need classical music', which formed one of a flurry of books a few years ago defending this art form, including 'Why classical music still matters' and 'Classical Music, Why Bother?' (Kramer 2009; Fineberg 2006). Why should an art form that still has, as I will suggest in this section, hegemonic status, need such a robust

defence?[2] Johnson also asserted that 'music as art' (i.e. classical music) 'at its best, is thus redemptive: it gives back to us a sense of our absolute value that a relativist society denies', while 'project[ing] a utopian content' (Johnson, 2002, 9, 112). These ideas draw on a legacy according to which classical music has a quasi-spiritual status in Western culture (Hanslick 1971; Scruton 2007). 'Absolute music', i.e. music without text, programme or function, is seen to express 'the absolute' (Dahlhaus 1991, 3). This is best illustrated in the words of one of my participants in a previous research project on classical music audiences. She described why she thought everyone should get to hear Bach: 'it is quite possible that in the middle of a difficult urban situation with gangs or whatever... they would hear something that had a calming effect, an inspirational effect. It's kind of in the music without it needing the words... [it's] the music of the universe maybe, the building blocks?' (Bull 2009, 15). Another audience member in the same study described classical music as 'sounding mathematics', giving perfect expression to Dahlhaus' (1991, 7) description of instrumental music as 'pure structure' which 'represents itself'. Similarly, philosopher Roger Scruton, in a book that was recommended to me by one of my adult participants, argues it is wrong to think of tonality as 'one idiom among many, of no universal significance'; rather, it is 'the perfect expression' of our achievements, 'a symbol of Western civilization itself' (Scruton 2007, 90–91). The idea that classical music has a particular logic which can be recognised and valued cross-culturally, throughout time and space, is seen as indisputable, both for Scruton and many of the audience members in my earlier study. This is what Julian Johnson calls 'absolute values', then, as opposed to the 'relativist' values

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2 When I crunched the numbers for Arts Council portfolio funding in 2012 in the region in which my ethnography took place, I found that one pound in every five goes to organisations which are dedicated to classical music. The actual proportion of funding which goes to classical music is therefore higher, as some organisations supported classical music as well as other art forms, and so are not included in this one pound in five. Also relevant here is The Place Report (Stark et al. 2014) which found Arts Council funding to be disproportionately allocated to London. Furthermore, this level of funding is disproportionate to the size of audiences. The audience for opera in England is 1.6 million people; for jazz 2.5 million and for classical music 3.3 million. Total Arts Council funding for opera in England in 2012-13 was about £50m, for classical music £18.3m and for jazz £1.35m. (Hodgkins 2013). This trend is set to continue, with 24.8% of total Arts Council portfolio funding for music 2015-2018 allocated to orchestral music, and 57.9% to opera and music theatre (Monk 2014). This hegemony, however, is more than economic, as will become clear over the course of this thesis.

which do not accept the authority of 'music-as-art'.

This section sketches the terrain of this 'contested field', describing current developments in the 'civilising mission' of classical music (Beckles Willson 2013), and arguing that they share a legacy with the older, Kantian, ideas outlined above. Over the last ten years or so, there has been a shift in legitimising discourses from classical music as being universally 'great' across all cultures and times, towards a rhetoric of the 'social benefits' of classical music (which is itself far from new, as we shall see in chapter two). This latter discourse argues that classical music education teaches valuable social skills such as cooperation, pride, discipline, and aspiration; this rhetoric is used, for example, by programmes that use classical music as a social programme for 'deprived' communities. Most famously, it is used in relation to the El Sistema programme (Baker 2015), a music education programme which began in Venezuela in the 1970s, claiming to rescue slum children from a life of drugs and crime by teaching them classical music. The snug fit of these two discourses can be seen from the programme of one of the groups in my study, the Young Opera Company, which described how the young people in the opera would 'get to know great works as living, breathing creations', and through this, they will also learn 'originality, creativity, commitment and discipline'. The 'social learning' discourse complements the 'great art' discourse by demonstrating how producing 'great art' also teaches valuable life skills to young people.

This neat tying up of high art with opportunities for young people to learn desirable qualities makes these kinds of youth programmes come across as good for everyone. This is typical of debates on music education, where identical rhetoric can camouflage starkly different agendas and values. For example, Rob Adediran, chief executive of music education charity London Music Masters (LMM), a programme which teaches classical music in primary schools in low-income areas, argues that 'all children have innate music talent, we believe, and [we need to] give them time and expertise to explore their innate musicality' (London Music Masters 2014). Similarly, Matt Griffiths, chief executive of Arts

Council-funded charity Youth Music, argues for 'a musically inclusive England where all young people are able to access and make progress in music-making, despite any barriers' (Griffiths 2014). These positions sound similar. However, this rhetoric disguises opposing ideas of 'cultural citizenship' (Turner 2001). The two poles can be mapped out following the "cultural democracy" versus 'democratization of culture' ideal types (Evrard 1997). The latter position posits that "great culture" should be made available to everyone, framing the question around access rather than value. The government's recent Henley Report for music education (Henley 2011), which laid the foundations for the 2011 National Plan for Music Education (Department for Education 2011), is closer to this axis, as Spruce (2013) notes, with its requirement for pupils to learn the notation and practices of Western classical music. The cultural democracy stance, against this, posits that whatever culture people are producing should be valued, rather than expecting them to engage with the 'greats'. This position is taken by Youth Music, an Arts Council-funded charity which focuses primarily on musical practices for excluded youth.

Cultural democratisation thus draws on ideas of the universalism of great art and music, taking the position that these forms of culture should be accessible to everyone. This idea therefore tends towards a 'cultural deficit' model wherein some social groups are seen to lack culture, and need it to be brought to them. This can be clearly seen from the ethos of the funder of one of the orchestra courses I played on during my fieldwork, a charity called Orchestras Live, who receive Arts Council funding. According to their annual report, they seek to bring 'world-class orchestral music' to 'culturally deprived' areas of the country, overcoming 'financial and attitudinal barriers' to young people attending orchestral concerts (Orchestras Live 2012, 18). These 'attitudinal barriers' deserve further scrutiny. Bennett et al.'s (2008) study on culture and class in the UK sheds light on this. This study combined quantitative and qualitative methods to ask whether cultural consumption, across a variety of types of culture, was associated with class position. They concluded that it was, finding 'beyond question, the existence of systematic patterns of cultural taste and

practice' (p. 251). Notably for this study, they found that 23% of their sample strongly disliked classical music (p. 79). Could this 23% overlap with those in 'deprived areas' who have 'attitudinal barriers' to attending orchestral concerts? And could this be a class divide? Bennett et al. found that it was exclusively middle- or upper-class people who said they liked and listened to classical music; they concluded from analysing the qualitative data in their study that classical music is the only genre of music that still carries cultural capital (p. 93). This suggests that the 'cultural deficit' model propounded by Orchestras Live is one in which those in middle- or upper-class positions bring 'proper' music to those in working-class positions. Indeed, Linda, one of the adults in my research who worked as a primary school teacher in a working class area of Whitchester, described the cathedral school choir coming to her school to sing to her choir as 'music for the poor people'.

This 'cultural deficit' model of music education often draws on discourses of the 'social benefits' of classical music in order to make its case. While this thesis will explore these 'social benefits', I will also suggest that they are not always neutral qualities, but may be those which are valued by some social groups over others. Orchestras Live, mentioned above, does not elaborate on what these might be, but simply states that 'orchestral music is […] an effective tool in addressing wider social and economic agendas', without indicating the mechanisms by which this might occur (Orchestras Live, 2012). Another example is the worldwide network of El Sistema offshoots, of which there are projects in London, Norwich, Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Stirling, at the most recent count. Mainly state-funded, In Harmony Sistema England (IHSE) and its Scottish cousin, Big Noise, are more explicit about their 'social action programme'. Geoff Baker's (2015) ethnography of El Sistema Venezuela, the original programme in this network, describes middle-class children (*not* 'deprived' children, as suggested in their PR) being yelled at by untrained and poorly paid teachers in a pedagogic model that would seem dated to the Victorians. Furthermore, as he notes, there is something that doesn't add up about using an inherently exclusive organisation, the symphony orchestra, for a

social *inclusion* programme (Baker 2015). Similarly, Mark Rimmer's (2014) ongoing research into IHSE has found that children who do well in learning classical music in this programme also tend to be those who do well at, and enjoy, school. (This Bourdieusian 'fit' between the dispositions required for classical music and for mainstream schooling foreshadows the next section of this chapter on class.) Despite this evidence that classical music may not necessarily be an appropriate tool for social exclusion programmes, the idea of bringing classical music to deprived children has caught the worldwide imagination, and cultural entrepreneurs in the UK have been as enthusiastic about this as everywhere else.

As this movement is one of the policy areas which this thesis will be relevant to, I will examine their legitimising discourses in more detail. The rationale that 'Big Noise', the first Scottish branch of El Sistema, offer on their website, merits critique in light of the above discussion:

> 'Big Noise is an orchestra programme that aims to use music making to foster confidence, teamwork, pride and aspiration in the children taking part – and across the wider community. […] The social benefits of Sistema come from the structure, challenges and cooperative nature of a symphony orchestra. […] We believe that there is a unique, inherent inclusiveness in the symphony orchestra. […] Orchestral music is beautiful, and we think beauty is important. In addition the orchestra gives us a structure to foster life skills, cooperation and confidence. An orchestra is a natural learning place for self-discipline and communal discipline, as well as encouraging performance and celebration of what can be achieved by working hard together.' (Sistema Scotland 2014)

There is, I am suggesting, a particular value-system at play in this manifesto, of which I will briefly highlight four points. First, the rhetoric of aspiration, hard work and self-discipline echoes neoliberal ideals of social mobility, which individualises failure by attributing it to a lack of these attributes, bypassing social structural issues such as high unemployment. Second, this manifesto

highlights the 'structure' and 'cooperative nature' of the symphony orchestra, as well as its 'communal discipline'. In chapter six, Emily's and Francesca's experiences of being humiliated by conductors suggest that this 'co-operation' and 'communal discipline' is achieved at a cost. Third, the 'inherent inclusiveness' of the symphony orchestra is asserted – against Baker's findings, in Venezuela, that El Sistema was highly competitive and exclusionary, and only the most committed children managed to stay the course (Baker 2015). Finally, the manifesto argues that 'beauty is important'. But whose beauty? This assertion harks back to the Kantian ideal of universalism and 'absolute value' described at the beginning of this section, as part of the underlying ideology of classical music. Furthermore, as Bourdieu (1984) demonstrated, beauty is *not* absolute, but perceived differently according to social position.

This discussion demonstrates that these kinds of 'civilizing missions' which classical music is being employed towards (see Beckles Willson, 2013, for another example), assume a particular value system which both ignores the particular culture of classical music; but also attributes to it values such as cooperation and communality which it may in fact work against. These ideas are echoed by an event which was set up to discuss 'Class, race and classical music' by London Music Masters (LMM) in which they raised the issue of inclusion and diversity in classical music education as well as within the profession (London Music Masters 2014). Speakers at this event put the lack of diversity down to inadequate access to music education for young people from black and minority ethnic, or working class communities, and lack of role models from these groups working in classical music, underpinned by an individualistic ethos that people can transcend structures if they work hard enough. African American violinist Tai Murray spoke of how "music gives young people something to hold onto in their lives besides violence or perhaps laziness" (London Music Masters 2014), echoing the idea which underpins the Sistema model, that classical music can be used to rescue poor children from a life of drugs and crime (Baker 2015), as well as drawing on an "underclass" rhetoric which has become particularly prominent in recent years (Tyler 2013). Chief executive of LMM Rob Adediran

who spoke of how he himself had come from a working class family to become a classical musician exhorted young people to 'be ambitious'. Both speakers emphasised 'excellence' as the goal, echoing the policy rhetoric from practically every organisation which trains classical musicians, from the National Youth Choir of Great Britain to the recent Henley Report into music education (Henley, 2011).[3]

What is being defended here? Why does this musical practice elicit such passion and commitment? And what is the significance of the fact that this is a music which is consumed and practised by the middle- and upper-classes but is being used as a 'social action programme' for the working-classes? At the LMM event, African-American writer Candace Allen asserted that 'all music is without nationality. It is simply sound', exhorting us to 'inhabit it without concern for its origin'. Nor would my participants see classical music as having any particular raced or classed associations. Inequality within classical music is seen as being an access issue; if this music is universal, then it must be simply that people have not had a chance to learn to love it yet. This thesis sheds light on these current debates in music education in several ways. It explores how the 'social benefits' of classical music are experienced differently by young people in different classed and gendered positions. It demonstrates some of the ways in which the powerful musical identity of the young people in this study is formed. It explains how this musical practice is reproduced, across generations, within what I am calling the 'institutional ecology' of classical music education. And it describes how the social benefits and social learning of classical music have an affinity with a value-system which emerged in the nineteenth century with the rise of the middle classes.

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3 This 'excellence' rhetoric has been criticised by Lonie and Sandbrook (2011) for assuming a 'pyramid' model of music education where everyone is aiming for the same point. Instead, they suggest a 're-examination of traditional concepts of progression routes that reflects alternative concepts of excellence, achievement and success' (Lonie and Sandbrook 2011, 69). By contrast, London Music Masters' rhetoric carries the assumption that everyone is aiming to be a performer. The point is, whenever the word 'excellence' is evoked in classical music, there is a whole system of assumptions at play, of which the pyramid model is one; and the idea of musical 'standard' which chapter three will explore, is another.

Middle-class boundary drawing in education

Having examined the debates in music education and cultural policy into which this thesis will intervene, I will now zoom out and situate these questions within the theoretical influences of this study; first, I will explore the themes of this thesis in relation to sociological debates on class and culture; second, I will discuss ways in which this study will draw on theories of the relationship between a particular social group and its music; and finally, I describe my approach to examining classical music as an affective practice occurring in and between bodies.

It should be clear from the previous section that debates in classical music education have not foregrounded questions of class. However, in sociology, class has received renewed attention over the last decade or so (Skeggs 1997, 2003; Reay et al. 2011; Sayer 2005), after it was condemned to 'zombie' status in the 1990s (Beck 1992). Current sociological understandings of class follow Pierre Bourdieu's theorisation in assuming that class is not purely an economic category, but that people's cultural consumption and practices form part of their class position and identity (Bourdieu 1984). This approach draws on a model of different forms of 'capital' — economic, social, cultural, embodied, symbolic — which can be passed on through generations, in order to safeguard privilege (Bourdieu 1986). This is also a relational understanding of class rather than a hierarchical one; people formulate their identities against others' identities, and the wealth of some is gained through exploiting the labour of others (Skeggs 2010). Furthermore, class inflects other social identity categories. This means we need to understand, in particular, gender identities through the lens of class (and race); the expectations and possibilities involved in being female or male are different according to one's class position.

Sociology has tended to prioritise research into the working-classes. However, particularly in sociology of education, recent work has examined middle-class strategies and identities, in order to understand how educational privilege is created and maintained (Ball 2002; Power et al. 2003; Reay et al. 2011). While

the middle classes are far from homogeneous (a point which will be discussed further in chapter one), they share 'a strong commitment to education as key to middle-class cultural reproduction', argue Reay et al. (p.19). This draws on what they call a 'bourgeois self' which encompasses a 'particular set of values, commitments and moral stances' which has remained relatively constant over time (Reay et al. 2011, 6). These values include 'a sense of responsibility, underpinned by individualism, combined with agentic citizenship and a propensity for choice', as well as ambition, a sense of entitlement, educational excellence, confidence, competitiveness, hard work, deferred gratification, and an ability to erect boundaries, both geographically and symbolically (p.12). The school choice agenda introduced in the 1990s has therefore been argued to benefit the middle classes who have the skills and networks to make this system work for them (Reay et al. 2011; Ball 2002).

This value-system is reflected in studies of class and parenting (Lareau 2011; Vincent et al. 2013; Vincent and Ball 2007; Irwin and Elley 2011; Walkerdine et al. 2001). Indeed, an unmentioned antecedent of middle-class parenting practices is the Suzuki method of music education, which emerged as a citizenship education programme in post-war Japan but was soon exported to the US (Yoshihara 2008). The Suzuki method could be seen as the prototype for the mode of parenting which Annette Lareau (2011) describes as 'concerted cultivation'. Associated with the middle classes, concerted cultivation sees the child as a project to be invested in for the future, as opposed to the 'natural growth' model, which Lareau argues is more associated with the working classes, wherein the child is seen as already whole in themselves, not requiring extra investment. For the middle classes, this investment is brought about through extra-curricular activities, which require large amounts of parental time, labour and money. As Yoshihara (2008) describes, the Suzuki model similarly relies on a model of the family where the mother has time to invest in learning music alongside the child. This history suggests that extra-curricular music education, which, as Lonie (2013, 3) argues, is under-researched compared to music in school, could have particular insights to offer the research agenda around

parenting and class.

What is important about this literature for this thesis is that it lays out a classed model of personhood; as Skeggs (2003) argues, 'theories of the self assert an assumed and often unrecognized class position' (p. 152). I would extend this to include theories of *musical* self-hood, such as the assumption of classical music education that in order to become 'musical' it is necessary to draw on technology, expertise, and specialist tuition, on a one-to-one basis. The self that is inscribed in classical music education is constructed initially as an *individual* and is only then able to become relational, in that learning an instrument on a one-to-one basis is the starting point of classical music education, subsequently supplemented by participation in ensembles. The recent defence of one-to-one lessons as opposed to group lessons (Pidd 2013) while framed around child protection and the question of whether it is possible to become technically proficient in group lessons, can be seen to be dancing around this particular ontology of personhood. Grade exams, of course, assume that one's musical 'voice' has to be mastered individually; but even one of the more conservative music education institutions, the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) has recently introduced 'Music Medals', designed for pupils learning instruments through group tuition (Wright 2013, 238). Both parents and teachers have been resistant to this model; Wright suggests that there is a low take-up of these exams because parents see the traditional model of grade exams as a 'better investment' (p. 240). I am arguing, therefore, that the accumulative, resourced, entitled, middle-class self (Skeggs, 2003) is both *assumed* in classical music education, and also *actively formed* through its norms. Crucially, this accumulation of resources 'must be about a projection into the future of a self/space/body with value. We only make investments in order to accrue value when we can conceive of a future in which that value can have a use' (p.146). This future-orientation therefore constitutes an affinity between classical music practice and a middle-class identity.

All this accumulation and investment needs to be safeguarded once it has been

acquired. This is where the middle classes' proficiency at building and maintaining boundaries around their own culture and practices comes into play. Chapter two will examine how classical music was fenced off by the bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century. Here, I will briefly trace the theoretical antecedents of this idea. The boundary drawing which Reay et al. (2011), Ball (2002) and Power et al. (2003) describe in school choice is only one example of this practice. Jackson and Benson (2014) and Butler (1995) describe other examples of a long-held tradition in which the middle classes have carried out spatial boundary-drawing, such as through suburbanisation. However, in education, in order to understand the boundaries and exclusions around what knowledge may be acquired, by whom, and how, we must turn to Basil Bernstein (1977). What is particularly helpful about Bernstein's work is his linkage between the classification and framing of educational knowledge – the *what* and the *how* – and the way certain social groups are advantaged in educational settings. One of his ideal types of knowledge codes, the 'collection' code, fits very well with classical music education. This 'code' is exemplified by 'strong classification': clear boundaries between types of knowledge; hierarchical control; and discouragement from 'seeking for a different order of things'. This tends to create 'a strong sense of membership in a particular class and to a specific identity' where 'the key concept… is discipline' (p. 90, 98). Bernstein describes the potential effects of these practices: 'for those who go beyond the novitiate stage, the collection code may provide order, identity and commitment. For those who do not pass beyond this stage, it can sometimes be wounding and seen as meaningless' (p.100). It is therefore structured in such a way as to alienate some learners; for example by positioning the knowledge and interest they already have as worthless in this educational setting, because it is outside the boundaries of what counts as knowledge. For example, proficiency in music technology will not be helpful in gaining access to the youth classical music scene which this thesis describes. By contrast, the sense of 'order, identity and commitment' which Bernstein describes is clearly evident in this scene, in the strong identity which many of my participants acquired through their involvement in classical music.

As Moore (2013) notes, unlike Bourdieu and theorists of reproduction, Bernstein emphasises the significance of the *content* of pedagogy as well as its structural effects. The effects of this 'strong classification' on different social groups in educational settings is important for this thesis in that, similarly to Bernstein, I will also be focusing on *what* is being transmitted, and how, in classical music education. However, unlike Bernstein, I will focus less on speech and language, and more on non-linguistic embodied musical practice. Despite this, there are important overlaps. Power et al. (2003, 35) note that, as Bernstein (1977, 124) predicted, the 'old middle-class families' in their study of the middle classes and school choice tended to choose schools on the basis of the values of discipline and high achievement. This is the 'traditional' education model which has strong classification and framing, in common with classical music education. We can therefore tentatively map an affinity between the 'old middle class' (or what I will call, drawing on Reay et al. (2011), the 'established middle-class', as discussed in chapter one), and classical music education, in terms of the content of pedagogy and the classification of legitimate knowledge.

What are the broader effects of this strong classification and framing of knowledge? Bernstein was writing prior to Bourdieu's (1984) seminal work on culture and distinction, but he anticipates Bourdieu in theorising 'the implications of classifications for a hierarchical ordering of knowledge' (Atkinson 1985, 135). From Bourdieu, as outlined above, we add the concept of cultural capital, as well as the habitus, the semi-conscious expression of one's social position. Finally, one further theorist is needed to complete this set of ideas: Michelle Lamont (1992). She builds on Bourdieu's work by not only examining the role of legitimate cultural knowledge in reproducing classed boundaries through exclusion, but also moral and socio-economic hierarchies of exclusion. Lamont's study of cultural capital among US and French businessmen found that classed 'boundary work' was used to draw 'symbolic boundaries' which worked as an exclusionary practice of informal hierarchialization in the workplace. Symbolic boundaries were used to classify others and give informal advantage to some, a form of cultural capital which

lead to 'the exclusion of low status individuals, to discrimination, overselection or to their self-elimination' (p. 178). Boundary work is shown here to lead to exclusionary practices, through the existence of common understandings on the nature of cultural, moral and socio-economic hierarchies.

A stark example of how strong classification of educational knowledge can lead to the reproduction of classed hierarchies of self-elimination and exclusion can be seen through examining different pathways for music education at tertiary level. A recent study of 2007-11 UCAS data of music and music technology degrees in the UK (excluding conservatoires) demonstrates that there is a clear class divide between those studying music at university and those studying music technology; the former are predominantly middle class while the latter tend to be working class boys (Devine, Born, and Taylor 2013). From the limited data available, it appears this trend extends to music conservatoires; a Freedom of Information request I made shows that in 2006-7 there were no students on free school meals at age fifteen who had gone to any of the music conservatoires by age nineteen, and in the years 2007-10 there were less than ten per year throughout the UK (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2013). Supporting this finding, data from the five top conservatoires in the UK in 2012-13 shows that only 3.9% of students came from 'low participation neighbourhoods' (the lowest quintile of the UK, by area, for participation in tertiary education), against 9.8% across all tertiary music degree courses (Scharff, Kokot, and Blamey 2014). This is also a genre divide between different types of musical knowledge. Music degrees tend to have a relatively large component of classical music and require the ability to read standard staff notation (as can be seen from the A level requirements for entry onto these degree courses (AQA 2014)); music technology degrees do not tend require knowledge of classical music and its notation, but instead are more reliant on alternative forms of notation and musical knowledge, such as music technology software. We see here boundary work on the basis of differently valued forms of musical knowledge; classical music's strong classification as legitimate knowledge appears to be working as an exclusionary device which leads to very

low numbers of working class students on conservatoire degrees.

One explanation for this phenomenon could be that classical music education is a site where middle-class boundary-drawing has been particularly successful in safeguarding privilege. According to outreach and education programmes that have sprung up over the last twenty years such as London Music Masters, hard work and talent are what matters; this suggests that any class divide in music education is simply a matter of funding and access. Against this, I would suggest that these social divides along the lines of musical genre indicate that classical music is indeed a site of contestation over class where privilege is safeguarded, although exclusivity is not total. In chapter two, I will highlight similar rhetorical moves in the late nineteenth century to those being made today, in which the few non-white or working-class inhabitants of the classical music world are taken as evidence for its meritocratic status.[4] Similarly, the as-yet unwritten history of youth orchestras is the history of a middle-class youth movement. The first British youth orchestras were established from 1944 onwards, and there has been a steady stream of new groups set up every decade since then. Thus we can see youth classical music as one of the first post-war youth movements; the Reading Youth Orchestra toured Germany in 1949 (Reading Youth Orchestra 2014), beginning a tradition of cultural ambassadorship which still continues. The bourgeois values described by Hall (1968) which the hippies were reacting against in the 1960s, were therefore already institutionalised in the middle-class youth movement that is classical music – a youth movement which has quietly crept through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first without much change or much commentary. One key point of investigation for this thesis, therefore, is to examine the

4 I do not have space here to discuss in detail the opening out of music education in the 1960s and 1970s, as described by Cleave and Dust (1989). However, my argument would be as follows: The general trend of high rates of social mobility in many institutions during these decades was mirrored in music education, which recruited many people from less privileged backgrounds into the music profession. Their acceptance into this 'world' was on the understanding that they would take on its values and culture over their own. This means that classical music practices retained their hegemonic status and gained credibility as being open to 'talent', a rhetoric which it still uses as a legitimising discourse. This golden age was short-lived, and structures of authority and tradition did not change.

institutionalisation of boundary-drawing practices in classical music – on what basis boundaries are drawn, and how they are upheld – and to ask whether this has any congruence with middle-class boundary-drawing practices in education more generally.

The above discussion serves to set up one premise of this thesis: that there is a link between classical music and the middle classes, in that young people who play or study classical music are highly likely to be middle class; or at least, not working class. Classical music practice draws on classed modes of parenting, indeed the Suzuki method may even have been a prototype for them in the second half of the twentieth century. Is there, then, a symbiosis between classical music education and middle-class values and subjectivities? Or is this link simply another strategy of middle-class boundary-drawing to safeguard educational privilege?

Studying music as culture: unpicking the legacy of the Birmingham School

Another key question for this thesis is therefore to explore precisely the nature of the link between classical music and the middle-classes in the UK. Are there aspects of this musical practice and culture, or even of the aesthetic of the music itself, which can be linked to a classed disposition? The nature of the link between a particular social group and its music has been extensively discussed in sociology, mostly in relation to popular music and working-class subcultures. Central to this history is the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) (Hebdige 1981; Hall and Jefferson 1993; Willis 1978). Paul Willis (1978) looked at the subcultures of 'biker boys' and 'hippies' and their associated musics. He describes a homology between the heavy, on-the-beat rock music that the bikers consumed, and their embodied physicalities, symbolised by their motorbikes representing physicality, solidity and strength; 'man's domination of the machine' (Willis 1978, 61). The aesthetic qualities of the music are part of what gives the bikers an embodied affinity with it. However, this approach, examining music as somehow reflecting the culture which creates or consumes

it, has been heavily criticised, for example by musicologist Richard Middleton who argues that 'the connection between rock'n'roll and the bikers is much looser than Willis seems to believe' (Middleton 1990, 159–62). Similarly, both Tia DeNora (2003) and Georgina Born (1991) argue that music should be understood as mediation rather than as an object. DeNora's (2000) interpretation of Adorno's work on music disrupts the idea of a musical 'object' played or listened to by a subject; instead, the music 'itself' is constituted by the social relations of those involved in producing and consuming it. Along the same lines, Born (1991) draws on Deleuze's concept of the assemblage, arguing that 'music has no essence but a plural and distributed socio-material being'. Against studying classical music as a text, this theorisation offers an alternative way forward. We therefore need to study music's many mediations: 'sonic and social, corporeal and technological, visual and discursive, temporal and ontological' (p. 268). This approach suggests a focus on practices and discourses surrounding the music; the dress, venues, uses of technologies, reviews, post-concert chat, and divisions of labour, to name just a few possibilities, are all part of the music's 'assemblage'.

This theorisation sets the scene for a move away from the 'homology' model of socio-musical relations towards a more contingent connection. David Hesmondhalgh argues for Stuart Hall's idea of 'articulation' (2000, 47) as 'a metaphor which holds onto notions of determination while recognising complexity' (p. 48). However, as Born (2012, 269) further notes, musical relations may not simply reflect wider social relations, but might 'refract' them into different formations. Social relations in music may even be a reversal of everyday social relations, as described by Marina Roseman in her ethnography of musical practices of the Temiar (Roseman 1991), a society in which the gender relations in everyday life are reversed in musical practice, where women have the powerful, expressive role that they lack outside of this sphere.

What is particularly useful about this theorisation is that it does not simply describe the different ways social relations are mediated in musical practice, but

allows us to theorise how these practices might inflect the music 'itself'. In order to do this, I will draw on work from Susan McClary (2001; 2002) on the subjectivities of tonality. As McClary argues, there is indeed a bourgeois aesthetic; that classical music is 'shape[d] in terms of bourgeois ideology' with 'its goal orientation, obsessive control of greater and greater spans of time, its willful striving, delayed gratification and defiance of norms' (1989, 58). Recall Skeggs' resourced, entitled, accumulative middle-class self, as well as Reay et al's boundary-drawing, individualistic, competitive, and yet hard-working and responsible 'bourgeois self'. These social and musical readings of bourgeois culture have never been examined empirically in dialogue with one another. However, the similarities are great, and if the musical practices which support these aesthetic structures do indeed exhibit these same characteristics, then the homology would be supported. Furthermore, as Rod Paton points out (2011, 171), the more difficult instruments such as violin have been favoured in classical music education over 'instant access' instruments such as drums, penny whistles and ukeleles. The more difficult the instrument, the more investment (of time, money, and effort) is required to become proficient at it, therefore the higher the degree of distinction it can accrue. And as noted above, classical music education in the form of the Suzuki method is an unacknowledged prototype for middle-class 'concerted cultivation'. These clues point towards this homology being upheld. But as Hesmondhalgh (2000) reminds us, this may be a more complex or contingent connection. Following this framing, then, I will ask in this thesis what demands the aesthetic of classical music makes on the musicians who are putting it into practice; whether McClary's reading of 'bourgeois ideology' in the development of tonality translates into particular classed practices; and whether the classed values which Skeggs (2003), Reay et al. (2011), and others identify are brought into the practice of classical music.

Evading homologies: the ideology of the aesthetic

In order to set up a theoretical framework for this thesis which will allow me to deal with this knotty problem of the precise 'articulation' between classical music and the middle classes, I will draw on Terry Eagleton's (1990) 'ideology of

the aesthetic', a theory which will underpin my approach throughout the thesis, as well as Lydia Goehr's (1992) related idea of the 'work-concept'. Goehr (1992) describes how in the late eighteenth century an ideology emerged in which a piece of music was thought to exist as a unified whole, separately from whoever wrote it, commissioned it, and performed it, and the function for which it was performed. This is what she calls the 'work-concept', which since around 1800 has structured our ideas of music-as-art, and the power relations between composer, performer, and audience, whereby the performer must be 'true' to the intentions of the composer (Goehr 1992, 232). A belief in the superiority of the composer's creative vision was formative for the music-making in my research sites, for example, in the Young Opera Company's production of The Magic Flute, director Sophia was adamant that the young people 'have to learn the reality of Magic Flute first. And then they can go and twist it and change it.'

The developments in the musical aesthetic which Goehr is discussing are situated in a broader political and artistic context by Eagleton's (1990) work. Eagleton's thesis homes in on the shifts occurring in the late eighteenth century and asks how the 'aesthetic' came to function as ideology, suggesting it was crucial in gaining people's consent to the new political order of class society. Previously, feudal social relations meant that power worked directly on subjects; norms of behaviour were tied to social roles (p. 81). Within an emerging democratic class society, there was a shift in the 'very concept of power' from coercion to hegemony (which Eagleton aligns with Gramsci's notion of hegemony, p. 107), so that 'political power must implant itself in subjectivity itself' (p. 115); within this changing society people's consent to the new social order could then be ensured.

While Enlightenment ideas of rationality would convince people they should follow social norms, this was not enough; the bodily, sensory realm must also be 'colonised'. Without this, the 'atomizing individualism and competitiveness' of bourgeois civil society 'threatens to destroy the ideological solidarity necessary for its political reproduction' (p.80). Capitalist bourgeois values did not produce

social solidarity. The aesthetic is therefore a project of working out how the senses can support and reinforce the new class society along with its ideology of Enlightenment rationality. How does it do this? Through providing the experience of community which bourgeois society lacks. The 'aesthetic' becomes, for the bourgeoisie, an imagined realm of freedom which colonises both the body and the rational mind into allegiance to class society.

This thesis will explore, and problematise, Eagleton's claim that the aesthetic works through pleasure, on the body (1990, 28). According to Eagleton, the new bourgeois subject internalises structures of power as structures of feeling (p. 78). But these structures of feeling are experienced by the subject as 'something I just happen to feel' (Eagleton 1988, 333). They are not experienced as a political power acting on oneself, but one feels as though they are coming from the depths of one's own soul in responding to the beauty of the universal aesthetic: the point where 'subjective and universal coalesce'. I have already mentioned how classical music's supposed universality is one of its legitimising discourses. Another is the experience of 'depth', along with the presumption that this viewpoint or response is freely chosen. This response, combined with the intense socialities and heavy investment of time and energy required for classical music education, contributed to a powerful sense of identity as a musician for most of my participants. This was further fuelled by the experience of 'intimate Gemeinschaft' or community, which is unavailable to the bourgeoisie elsewhere in this new, alienating social order (Eagleton 1990, 76).

Eagleton's work needs to be read critically in light of the ways in which the body has been re-theorised in social theory over the last 25 years. I will outline these changes in the following section; but for now it is important to note that the dualisms that Eagleton sets up of body versus mind, pleasure versus control, and individual versus community appear to be reifying the very ideas which he is trying to critique. Eagleton is showing how ways of thinking about the aesthetic prop up class society, but he retains some of the ways of thinking that he describes in eighteenth century theories of the aesthetic in his own analysis. For

example, he draws heavily on Baumgarten's *Aesthetica* from 1750 which, as he describes, sees aesthetics as the 'sister' of logic; the 'feminine analogue of reason at the lower level of sensational life' (p. 16). While his broader argument here is critical, in arguing that ways of thinking about the aesthetic were formative for establishing a new middle-class universal subject, his analysis at times risks reifying the categories he is attempting to critique, such as the idea of 'bodily experience' (p. 3) as somehow separate to the rational mind. It is possible, however, to use Eagleton's broader argument on the role of the aesthetic in legitimising class society and middle-class subjectivity, without accepting the assumption of a mind-body dualism which he appears to take from aesthetic theories. For the purposes of this thesis, using his work therefore requires a vigilant critical position in being alert to reifying these dualisms.

What is generative in Eagleton's work for this thesis, however, is his dialectical approach in which the aesthetic is seen as upholding the hegemony of the new class society, but *also* providing a space where its antithesis can be experienced – where all of the individualism, competitiveness, isolation, and loneliness of being an independent autonomous subject can be negated and lost in the *communitas* (Turner 1969) of communal sensory experience. This experience of 'intimate Gemeinschaft' or community upholds the existing society by providing a safety valve where dreams of freedom, safety, ineffability and transcendence can exist untrammelled, and gives people a sensory, embodied experience which affirms that society has produced 'full, harmonious perfection' and 'totality', as Matthew Arnold, midwife to the rhetoric of high culture, puts it (2009 [1870], 13). However, as well as upholding class society, this experience also threatens it, precisely by providing an alternative, emancipatory vision of *communitas*. Or, as Julian Johnson's defence of classical music which I drew on at the start of this chapter describes, it 'projects a utopian content' (Johnson 2002, 9). As chapter eight describes, the 'unnameable' emotion of depth and the suspension of time that are experienced occasionally in live performance carry the sense of 'freedom' which Eagleton theorises.

In order to draw these ideas together, I will use the phrase 'community-in-sound'. This describes both the sensory/sonic experience of being in sound, but also Eagleton's and Turner's ideas of community as existing as a liminal or oppositional space to everyday socialities. Using this dialectic as a working model for this thesis allows me to theorise classical music *both* as having some kind of homology with bourgeois values, while *also* providing a space where their opposite can be experienced – the space of a particular imaginary or fantasy which encompasses the dialectical opposite of these values. For Eagleton, this is community and freedom. This thesis therefore locates classical music and the aesthetic values it upholds as fundamental to the political structure of class society. It can be seen, therefore, that on a theoretical level a powerful argument can be made for the affinity or co-constitution of bourgeois values and identity with classical music. I have described how a middle-class ideal of a future-oriented, accumulative, individualised self is both assumed and produced in classical music education; and how classed boundary-drawing in education is also clearly visible in classical music education. Furthermore, according to Susan McClary's reading of tonality, the text itself also carries these values. For Eagleton, this is no coincidence, but is in fact part of the supporting structure of the class society of modernity. But is this what is going on with the musical practice itself? The final section of this introduction will argue for a new approach to studying classical music which starts from the body.

Classical music as bodily practice

Eagleton ends his tour de force on the aesthetic by arguing that we need to 'think everything through again in terms of the body' (Eagleton 1988, 337). This is my starting point in this thesis. Classical music is, after all, a practice in and between bodies, despite discourses that it 'transcend[s]' the bodily (Johnson 2002, 112). The final section of this introduction therefore lays out the ways I will think of bodies and how they interact in this thesis, drawing primarily on ideas from Pierre Bourdieu and Lisa Blackman. Indeed, 'practice' is a key term in Bourdieu's writing; he uses this to lay out his opposition to inanimate theoretical models of human behaviour which imply a rational actor who already

knows the outcome of his/her actions. By focusing on practice, Bourdieu is instead theorising uncertainty, in that actors' strategies over time will have uncertain outcomes; as he describes it, 'practice is constructed in time. Time... gives it... its direction and meaning' (Bourdieu 1990, 98). This theorisation is particularly useful for examining musical practices because of the possibility of the accumulation of skills over time, and particularly because these skills are embodied and therefore can be stored in the body, as Barlow et al. note (1995). In classical music practices there is a strong future-orientation of skills accumulation, which foregrounds the potential for strategic nature of this practice. As chapters three and four will explore, my participants imagined their futures differently in ways that drew on their different positions in social structures of class and gender, and can be seen in the ways they spoke about doing their music practice. The latter use of the word 'practice' also has the same strategic, uncertain, future-orientation as Bourdieu's usage.

Practice assumes an actor who knows what to do within her field; for Bourdieu this 'feel for the game' (1991) is conceptualised as the 'habitus', the semi-conscious sense of what is possible or not possible for someone in a particular social position. Habitus is criticised for being over-deterministic, leaving insufficient space for transformation (Shilling 2004); I share these concerns and therefore will be using the concept more in the sense of a disposition (Bourdieu 1977, 214) rather than a strictly 'structuring structure' (Bourdieu 1977, 72). In addition, as Reay (2004, 438) points out, a frequent problem with its use is that the 'habitus becomes an explanation for the data rather than a way of working with it'. To guard against this, I will resist using the habitus as a reified structure to explain my participants' decisions and practices. However, as we will see, despite their reports of difficult 'inner conversations' with themselves, as Reay (2004, 437) describes, drawing on Sayer (2005), about their trajectories and life decisions, the habitus was still a powerful structuring mechanism for them. I therefore use the concept of the habitus in conjunction with the idea of 'practice', as did Bourdieu.

This approach reveals a useful epistemological congruence between meanings of musical and social practice. Three meanings of practice are relevant here (OED 2006): firstly, a nearly obselete usage, 'to devise means to bring about (a result); [...] to plan, scheme, intend'. This shows a link with the strategic, future-oriented identity discussed above. Secondly, an ethical stance: 'to live or act according to a principle or the set of principles one advocates'. As chapter four will explore, ideas of correction or 'getting it right' in classical music practice can have an ethical and affective association. A final meaning of 'practice' is 'to observe (a religious duty), to perform (a rite)'. This link with religion is an important part of understanding the body in classical music practice, in particular the historical link with the emergence of evangelical religion as a formative influence on the development of middle-class values. As Davidoff (2002, 77) describes, this also had an ethic of rightness attached to it: 'religious belief gave confidence as to how to behave, how to know what was right or wrong'.[5] Similarly, Shilling and Mellor (1997) link this into changing ideas of the body following the Reformation. The medieval experience of the sacred was a somatic one, but with the emergence of Protestantism the body came to be experienced as sinful and needing discipline; people no longer knew how to make sense of their fleshly bodies. Especially important is the body's relation to the transcendent. The Reformation removed the sacred from everyday life and located it *outside* the body in a sublime realm (p.3). Texts became an important mediating device for sensory experience; emotionality 'was constrained and mediated by a thoroughgoing cognitive control manifest as theological conservatism and a strong commitment to the authority of the Bible' (p.99).

This idea of locating the sacred outside the body in a sublime or transcendent

5 The dialogue between classical music as an emerging practice in the 19th century, and parallel forms of emergent bourgeois selfhood, lead towards the idea that classical music could be most helpfully theorised, historically, as a Protestant sect. Davidoff (2002) describes how bourgeois ideology was heavily influenced by the Evangelical movement emerging in the late 18th century. Churchgoing was a predominantly middle-class pursuit, a key component of respectability (p. 76). While different sects drew on different fractions of the middle class, and held different doctrines, classical music practice also draws on the concerns and ideologies that were contested between these religious movements: pleasure, self-control, bodily decorum, and social hierarchies (pp. 92, 96).

realm is crucial to my theorisation of the body in classical music practice. It can also be linked to representations of whiteness. As Richard Dyer (1997) writes, whiteness draws on elements from Christianity, imperialism, and the construction of race. I will briefly draw out the first two of these links; firstly, the link with Christianity. As Dyer (1997, 15) argues, 'what has made Christianity compelling and fascinating is precisely the mystery that it posits, that somehow there is in the body something that is not of the body which may be variously termed spirit, mind, soul or God'. This 'mystery' of the body as both present and absent is echoed in the way I will theorise classical music as a cultural technology which both disciplines but also effaces or transcends the body. One of the very few other contemporary cultural analyses of classical music practice, from Yoshihara (2007, 190) hints at this idea, describing how 'composers and compositions are grounded territorially, historically, and culturally', but the performers are 'largely disembodied'. Musicologist Julian Johnson (2002, 112) also discusses classical music in similar terms, arguing that 'we insist on being more than physical objects; we insist on our identity as something intangible and irreducible to physicality, even while our being is rooted in it'. Similarly, the importance of correction (Weeks 1996) in classical music practice further corroborates this link; Shilling and Mellor (1997, 122) describe the 'Protestant linking of the fleshy sensuality of human embodiment with sin'. The systematic disciplining of the body in classical music — the kind of systematic practising that violinist Jenny describes, in chapter four — constitutes a mode of taming the flesh, to overcome its 'status as an impediment to the word of God', or, indeed, the authoritative text of the composer (Mellor and Shilling 1997, 122).

Dyer (1997, 15) further posits a link between whiteness and imperialism or enterprise: 'The white spirit organises white flesh and in turn non-white flesh and other material matters: it has enterprise.' This mode of organising, or control, can be read onto the dynamic of accumulation, investment and future-orientation which I am describing as necessary to classical music practice; you have to be able to imagine a future self towards which your present self is

investing time and effort. This could be argued to extend to the aesthetics of the music as well; a crucial part of this musical culture is the sense of control over past and future which is necessary to understand large-scale musical works. (By contrast, Indian classical music, as Alaghband-Zadeh (2013) describes, creates large-scale musical structures through improvised moments in time which are negotiated between performer and audience.) Dyer reads this 'paradox of whiteness' onto the historical construction of race as a category, arguing that 'what makes whites different... is their potential to transcend their raced bodies', 'a need to always be everything and nothing, literally overwhelmingly present and yet apparently absent' (p. 15).

As will become clear throughout this thesis, there are powerful congruences between ideas of whiteness and Christian ideas of the body, and the way the body is experienced in classical music practice: text is supreme; the body must be disciplined, the sacred or transcendent is located *outside* the body, and the fleshly body does not make sense and must be effaced. And yet, as I described in the opening scene to this chapter, this disciplined body is still able to communicate, despite the sense that the self is bounded and autonomous. It is for this reason that it is necessary to move beyond Bourdieusian theorisations of habitus and practice, which focus on the individual body rather than theorising a communicating body. This suggests a mode of communication between bodies which has come to be theorised in the social and biological sciences as 'affect'. As Gregg and Seigworth define it, 'affect is found in those intensities that pass body to body'; it 'is the name we give to those forces [...] *other than* conscious knowing' (Gregg and Seigworth 2010, 1). In classical music practice, powerful intensities are cultivated; they are inscribed into the texts of this music which musicians must bring into sound through bodily movement. In the classical music ensembles in my study, my participants and I are drawing on years of individual practice and investment into embodied habits which accumulate to form musical skill. These habits naturalise and create the bounded autonomous subject which, ironically, should not be susceptible to these processes of affective communication. But we are also allowing ourselves to let go of an

individual, isolated self, and to experience the *communitas* of being open to being affected by these intensities that we call emotion. Most importantly for theorising affect, we can then *hear* these affects in sound, externalised through our movements, our breath, our communication with the bodies around us. The opening scene to this chapter described an affect of fear inhabiting my body, which I was convinced had come from within me, and yet it was shared by other members of the orchestra, and was audible in the skeletal, emaciated sound I was producing on my cello.

Drawing on Lisa Blackman (2012, xv), I am therefore theorising bodies as permeable and porous between self and other, and as processual rather than stable (p. 1), an approach which is common to affect theories more generally (Brennan 2004). Blackman's intervention is to insist on the immateriality of the body; it cannot be solely reduced to its materiality but also has the capacity of psychic or psychological attunement. Blackman returns to writing from the turn of the last century by William James and Gabriel Tarde to explore ideas of 'threshold conditions' where bodily and psychic openness were seen as more possible, before the norm of 'affective self-containment' of a bounded autonomous subject became the norm. These ideas of 'threshold conditions' were apparent in writing about the crowd, amidst fears of 'uncivilised' mobs and urban unrest. Underpinning these ideas of openness or psychic autonomy were distinctions between the primitive and the civilized, the inferior and the superior, the lower and the higher, and the instinctual and the acquired', and the role of inhibition or will in exerting control as part of being a 'normal subject' (pp. 36-7). The assumption was that the 'uncivilised' were more open to suggestion. Among those seen as 'civilised' — the white, middle-class male — affective inhibition was cultivated.

These ideas are particularly relevant to this thesis because they were influential during the time I will describe as being formative for music education, the late Victorian period. I am going to suggest that these ideas were institutionalised

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into classical music and its education practices, leaving a legacy which we reproduce today. In particular, the emphasis on bodily restraint and control can be seen as an historically classed practice, which today works as a way of habituating young middle-class bodies into appropriate classed and gendered dispositions. This musical practice therefore helps to create the experience and ideal of the autonomous, bounded individual which has become the norm. Rather than the middle-classes somehow naturally being more 'inhibited' and restrained, Blackman's work helps us to see that this norm must be actively created and reproduced, against the capacity of bodies to communicate. As the opening scene in this chapter showed, the musicians were communicating an affect of fear despite being choreographed into stillness and individuality. This idea of affective contagion was prevalent in writers in the late Victorian period such as Gustav Le Bon, as Blackman describes (2012). However, their ideas were also suffused with ideology of the time around the inferiority of the working classes, women, and non-white people. I therefore draw on Le Bon's ideas not as theory, but as historical data or artefact. This allows me to draw out similarities between received ideas of the time, as expressed in his work, and the social practices of classical music then and now.

One of the questions this thesis addresses, therefore, is to what extent this ideology is still present in the social relations of classical music, given that they remain similar today to the late nineteenth century? How is the communicating body habituated into restraint and bounded individualism, given the powerful affects that are being cultivated in these large groups? If music can be seen as an expression of an imagined society (Born 2012), can the orchestra therefore be read as a bourgeois fantasy of male control?

The 'community-in-sound' which I described above is formed through this affective communication between bodies. This affect of openness, which coincides in classical music with bodies choreographed into stillness and hierarchy, is, I will argue, a disposition of trust, openness or *porousness* among the young musicians in my study. Their trust in each other and in their teachers

and conductors manifested itself in a disposition of porousness, which in turn increased their openness to being affected. In this instance, the psychological and physiological are co-constitutive. I will use the word 'porousness' throughout the thesis to refer to this capacity or disposition, for example, in chapter six I describe how the embodied authority of the conductor appears to work directly on the trusting bodies of the musicians, as he 'plays' them through his gestures, gaze, and breath. This porousness, then, can allow both an increased connection with other musicians, but also a vulnerability.

Key themes and chapter outline

By way of summarising this theoretical introduction, I will outline four theoretical premises which will guide the thesis. Firstly, boundary-drawing is a key practice of the middle classes (Bernstein 1977; Reay et al. 2011), particularly around education, to protect their privileged position. What kinds of boundary-drawing are occurring in my sites? And how do these interact with the bourgeois value-system of individualism, competition and hierarchy; or by contrast, with cooperation and community? Furthermore, taste boundary-drawing over classical music is linked to class position; how is this manifested in my sites? And how does musical standard work as a boundary-drawing practice, if indeed it does? The second theoretical premise relates to how the body is shaped in this musical practice. As Bourdieu suggests, embodied dispositions are one of the ways in which class is carried (Bourdieu 2004). How does the rhetoric of 'transcend[ing] the bodily' (Johnson 2002) affect what goes on in rehearsals? How do embodied classed dispositions interact with classical music practice — do they overlap, or clash? Does the body ever 'act back' (McNeill 1995, 32) on the discipline that is imposed on it?

Thirdly, what is the meaning of 'getting it right' in classical music practice? As Atkinson (2006), Martin (2006), and Paton (2011) have suggested, this is a key part of this tradition, as opposed to other genres where an 'inappropriate' or wrong note can be turned into an expressive gesture (Walser 1997). How is 'getting it right' accomplished in rehearsals; what are the means and methods of

correction, and how is this experienced by young people in these groups? And finally, if, as Eagleton suggests (1990), the senses are 'colonised' through the aesthetic into complicity with the political order of class society, how is this brought about? How is the body tamed and stilled into this complicity? And how does the emotional and affective terrain of the music being played, as well as the social relations of these groups, work towards this complicity? Or is the sensory and affective the realm of resistance to the authority of this tradition — or where else is there space for transgression?

Part one of the thesis, comprising chapters two, three, and four, examines how boundary-drawing in classical music has been carried out in the nineteenth century, as well as today, and demonstrates how this is inscribed on the bodies and subjectivities of the young musicians in my study, focusing particularly on the lower-middle-class participants. Part two (chapters five and six) zooms in to examine the rehearsal in close detail, showing how powerful affects are cultivated and controlled, in and between bodies. Part three (chapters seven and eight) is themed around bodies and sound, describing how this bodily experience of sound *nearly* allows space for refusal, transgression, or change, but the power of tradition and pleasure closes this down. However, before embarking on the substantive material of the thesis, I will first spend the next chapter introducing my sites as well as discussing the process of carrying out the research.

Chapter one: Writing the body, reading against the grain, and other problems with turning life into words

For Althusser (as with Eagleton) nothing is outside of ideology. 'The ideas of a human subject exist in his [sic] actions', and therefore he must

> 'inscribe his own ideas as a free subject in the actions of his material practice [...] these practices are governed by the rituals in which these practices are inscribed, within the material existence of an ideological apparatus, be it only a small part of that apparatus: a small mass in a small church, a funeral, a minor match at a sports club, a school day, a political party meeting, etc' (Althusser 1971, 34–35).

Althusser's focus on everyday social ritual points towards how the everyday is inscribed with these commonsense understandings. Any of my sites, for example a youth choir rehearsal in a school hall in a village outside a provincial town, could be added to Althusser's list of everyday social rituals. However, the daily, weekly or monthly regularity, as well as the predictable format of the youth music rehearsals I observed in my ethnography, served to obscure the ideas inscribed in them. The process of fieldwork during this ethnography was one of learning to see beyond the familiarity of the practices, to unveil the ideas governing them, which required the sustained presence of my body and mind over time in these sites. This veil of familiarity was difficult for me to see through, due to my insider status in this musical culture, and the taken-for-granted formulae of rehearsal and performance structure and etiquette. Indeed, this chapter is the story of this process of estrangement, of forcing myself to examine this 'material practice' in close detail.

This quotidian normality of my research sites, and the intense familiarity that they had for me (despite occurring half a world away from my own music education) belies the enormously powerful identity that was inculcated through

these absolutely ordinary practices. It was disconcerting for me to learn to analyse these practices as having particular resonances, continuities, or discontinuities with wider histories, structures and norms. In particular, the ideology of classical music 'transcending [...] the bodily' (Johnson 2002) and prioritising the rational and cognitive was so heavily inscribed into aspects of this practice that I would find my analysis doing the same, as I will describe. This chapter explores this process, as well as introducing my research sites in more detail, and explaining how I did my research. I will begin with a brief account of how my autobiography led me to this thesis; before turning to my research sites. In describing how I gained access to the sites I will also provide an introduction to each of the groups in my study, building up a picture of the youth classical music scene in Whitchestershire more generally. I will go on to discuss my dual role as insider/outsider; insider to this musical culture, but outsider to this particular scene. I will then discuss the process of fieldwork and analysis, including how I have read class into my research sites; how to bring the body into a practice that effaces and denies the body; the always multi-layered encounter that is the ethnographic interview. I will finish with a brief discussion of the ethical and epistemological issues I encountered in this research.

Autobiographical reflections: why sociology has neglected classical music

One of the seeds of this thesis was a frustration with my training and skills as a classical musician. This was both musical and social, if indeed the musical and the social can be separated. As a musician, my classical training stifled my ability to participate in the more informal, creative kinds of music-making that I would have liked to join in with. Socially, I felt that some of the values I had learned through my classical music education were at odds with my own value system, particularly around the hierarchy, authority and individualism that I felt were inscribed in this tradition. Long before I read any ethnomusicology I sensed that musical practice could be a space for exploring different ways of being social, and I felt cut off from these, even while classical music afforded me

many fulfilling, exciting and magical experiences. This thesis is, in some senses, an exploration of my own formation as a young musician, since I had shared very similar experiences to many of my participants. However, I went back to university at age 26 to do an undergraduate degree in sociology, as a route out of my musical career. I mostly stopped playing classical music, and had no intention of doing research in this area. In fact, I spent many years trying to escape writing this thesis. My master's thesis on political music in the Climate Camp movement in the UK (Bull 2010) felt like so much more radical a topic that I felt proud and excited to tell people about. No wonder that classical music has been neglected by sociologists; it is entirely uncool in comparison with Sarah Thornton's clubbers (1995) or the young people in the black music scene in Birmingham in the 1980s (Jones 1988). Indeed, I spent the first month or two after officially starting my PhD trying to squirm out of writing about classical music, before eventually coming to it with a sense of reluctant inevitability.

The deep ambivalence I felt about choosing classical music as a PhD topic may shed light on its neglect as a topic for sociological research (Atkinson 2006; Bennett 2008). I suspect that others, like me, who share this musical identity may feel uncomfortable at casting a critical sociological eye on such a formative part of our very selves. And yet to really understand what is at stake for classical musicians, we need to be musicians ourselves to study this culture. To participate in high level music making we need to have started learning as children and put in the thousands of hours of practice that our participants have. As a result, the relatively few existing accounts of classical music's culture come from outside of sociology (Kingsbury 1988; Nettl 1995; Yoshihara 2008; O'Toole 1994). This is a pity, since, as this ethnography will show, classical music practice is an enormously rich site for analysing class, gender, and modernity, among other sociological themes. However, music sociology has has focused on the historical rather than contemporary sociology of classical music (DeNora 1995), or contemporary classical music (Born 1995) rather than mainstream classical music practices. Both DeNora and Born have had a hostile or at best mixed reaction from musicology as a discipline. This is in a large part

about the disciplinary divide; musicology has relied on text-based and historical analyses of classical music (DeNora 1995), prioritising until recently a 'great men' approach (Taylor 2007), and thus neglecting contemporary practice.

My use of ethnography to examine classical music practice is, in part, a retort to this predominance of textual analyses. In order to bring the body and the social into dialogue with musicology's reading of texts, there need to be bodies in the research process itself — mine, at the very least. However, before turning to a discussion of how I brought my body into the ethnography, I will first introduce the four youth music groups that were my research sites. This will allow the reader to start to imagine themselves into the scenes, as well as positioning myself, as situated participant observer, within them.

The unfamiliarity of the familiar

I chose not to use my existing musical contacts in the UK to gain access to research sites; instead, I contacted the administrators of the Whitchestershire County Youth Orchestra (WCYO) and Cantando youth choir after finding them in an online search. Both groups were very welcoming, and I went for an initial day's observation with each in January 2012. The Whitchestershire County Youth Orchestra was holding a two-day course rehearsing two pieces, and playing them through to parents at the end of the day as an informal concert. In the school hall in Whitchester where they rehearsed, there were about 60 teenagers setting up as I arrived. It was a cold, grey, day in January and the rehearsal looked like hard work, the musicians being given detailed instructions from the conductor, taking apart the music and putting it together. Their bodies were slumped, heads down, with little movement – only what was needed to play. The sound of the percussion instruments — timpani, bass drum, sometimes cymbals — resonated through my body. There was an air of concentration in the room that had a particular quality: intent, focused, but somehow inward, with each person concentrating on their own part. Despite this, there were moments when the group felt like a group, when someone made

a mistake and everyone laughed in a good-natured way. There was a slightly geeky, introverted tone to the group, and a pleasant informality between adults (conductors and tutors) and the young people. In the late afternoon, the parents filed in for the concert, and the orchestra managed to play through both pieces without stopping, a struggle given the difficulty of the repertoire. I helped put away some of the chairs and then left, not really knowing what I had seen that I could write about, and finding it all uncannily familiar from my own teenage years.

This air of familiar unfamiliarity also accompanied me on my first visit to Cantando Youth Choir. Unlike the WCYO, which had been around for decades, they were a relatively new group, having been formed out of the ashes of the county youth choir (a process described in chapter three). They rehearsed in another school hall in a village just outside of Whitchester, and as I arrived by bicycle there were several SUVs lined up to drop off the singers. I went inside and introduced myself to the administrator, Linda, who I'd been emailing, as well as the conductor, accompanist, and vocal coach. As we chatted, most of the teenagers were taking group photos of each other — they were having a 'onesie day' where many of them had come to rehearsal wearing onesies. Once the rehearsal began, however, this energy shifted and the forty-odd singers became intently focused on the instructions from their conductor and their musical scores. Similarly to the WCYO, bodies were still, there was no chatting or playing with mobile phones or fidgeting. Instead, their concentration was palpable and seemed to be embodied in the vivid intensity of the sound the choir produced.

I decided to go ahead with research with these two groups, and carried out a pilot stage of fieldwork in April 2012, which included two interviews and two focus groups as well as further observations with Cantando youth choir. However, as I started to get more involved in the fieldwork, two further groups appeared serendipitously. I heard about the New Symphony Orchestra (NSO) during this pilot stage of fieldwork, when I interviewed one of the organisers of the group, Helen, after meeting her through Cantando youth choir. She

mentioned that they were still short of cellists for their forthcoming course and I offered myself up to play. Despite being somewhat older than the (informal) age limit of 25, she welcomed me along, without so much as an audition or a CV; presumably I had successfully demonstrated my musical ability and credentials by this time in conversation and interview. They rehearsed for a week-long course once or twice a year, and were organised by two of the participants, Andy and Helen, both 21 at the start of my research. They were friends who had met through Cantando, and had set up the NSO because they thought the musical standard of the WCYO was too low (a dispute that is discussed in chapter three). The orchestra had been running for a couple of years, and operated on a shoestring budget. It was free for the players (unlike WCYO and Cantando, which both cost around £300 a year to join), and the organisers made ends meet by calling in favours from people they knew. There were no auditions; instead they would ask friends and friends of friends who would match the standard of the group.

I played for two courses with the NSO, in August 2012 and August 2013. However, many of the young people I met in NSO then turned up in my other research sites throughout my fieldwork; indeed, some of them had at some point been in all four of the groups in my study, and those who were of a similar age tended to know each other. This meant I could have chosen to frame my site as a 'scene' rather than simply a collection of groups (Straw, 1991). It was not, however, comparable to 'scenes' in other studies of youth culture, most notably the subcultures and post-subcultures literature. This was mainly because, with the exception of the New Symphony Orchestra, it was organised by adults on behalf of the young people, rather than by the young people themselves, making it closer to a formal youth movement such as the Scouts rather than the looser, more informal collectives of young people described by subcultural researchers.

The fourth and final group in my research was the Young Opera Company (YOC). I got involved with them through a similar snowballing process to joining the NSO. I had offered my services as a piano accompanist for lessons, auditions

and exams to all my interviewees, both to avoid becoming the 'parasite' researcher who only takes without giving anything back to participants, but also to gain access to further sites for participant observation. Only a couple of people took me up on this, including Andy who asked me to come and play for a rehearsal of the Young Opera Company, which he was singing in. Once Jeanette, the vocal coach with this group (as well as with Cantando), realised I was a trained pianist and heard me play, I was warmly welcomed. I played on and off for their Sunday afternoon rehearsals over the next three or four months, and returned to play for their subsequent production after my official fieldwork had ended.

This group, similarly to the NSO, was also relatively new, having been founded by its director, Sophia, a couple of years earlier. She had teamed up with Jeanette, as well as Anne and Gregory, two local high school music teachers (Gregory was retired) who helped run the group. They chose the repertoire for the group, ran the auditions and allocated the parts, and directed rehearsals. Sophia was the powerhouse behind this group, having trained as an opera director. She now had an unrelated day job, but she was evidently keen to use her skills and give opportunities to the immensely talented young people she saw around her (including her daughter who was participating in the production). It was a point of principle for her, as with the NSO organisers, that it should be free to participate for the young people, and she raised sponsorship money as well as obtaining a small grant from the county council music service. Participants ranged from age eleven or twelve to their early 20s. The small orchestra to accompany the singers, which was pulled together shortly before the performance, was also drawn from young people, many of whom also played in the WCYO or the NSO. The Young Opera Company was an anomaly among my research sites in the way it rehearsed, being a dramatic rather than simply a musical performance. For that reason, I have only included ethnographic work from their rehearsals in chapters two and seven, the latter of which focuses explicitly on the experiences of young women in this group. However, the trust I gained with the young people in the group through my participation in it proved

helpful in carrying out interviews with them, and spending some more informal time with the participants.

In retrospect, there are some problems with studying both vocal and orchestral groups together, under the broad label 'classical music'. The culture, history, and practices of Cantando was somewhat different to the orchestral groups, and the YOC was different again. Despite this, they all shared common assumptions around classical music practice such as fidelity to the score and the intentions of the composer; reverence towards the 'great' composers; and musical standards of 'excellence'. Furthermore, the overlap of participants across all four groups justifies their inclusion, showing some continuity of those involved as well as of shared assumptions. In addition, the participants had had similar musical training across all four groups; all of the singers also played an instrument to a high standard. A relatively high level of musical ability was needed for entry into any of the groups (this was usually assessed either by audition or by grade exam standard), skills that could not have been learnt within the state school music curriculum. Young people's social background in the form of their extra-curricular musical education was therefore an important factor in allowing their entry into these groups. All of my participants had started instrumental lessons before the age of ten; eleven of them had started at age four or five; fifteen started at age six or seven, and a further ten started at age eight or nine (there was one participant for whom it was unclear). Many of them had therefore been having one-to-one music lessons for at least ten years before joining these groups. Despite this predominance of private music tuition from an early age, it was indeed possible for young people without any family input other than the cost of lessons (which could be substantial) to join these groups. However, such young people were the exception rather than the norm. For most, a lot of parental labour went into producing 'musical' children, such as driving children to lessons, rehearsals, performances and exams, making sure they did their practice at home, providing equipment, attending performances, and liaising with teachers.

Since these groups were all extra-curricular, not affiliated to any particular school or university, but instead drawing on young people from across the city, county or even (for the New Symphony Orchestra) from further afield, they generally met for intensive short courses of a weekend or week, usually leading up to a concert. The exception was the Young Opera Company who held regular rehearsals in the months leading up to their performances. This meant that my ethnography, similarly, had a fragmented nature; I might have a week where I was doing intensive ethnography from 9.30am to 10pm (rehearsing all day then socialising with the group in the evening), and then many weeks in which nothing happened other than maybe interviews I had scheduled. In addition, it is important to note that I only saw my participants in youth music sites, and for the most part not in the other important sites in their lives such as home or school. However, in total I was involved in the groups in my research, on and off, for eighteen months.

Provincialising the middle classes

Why Whitchestershire? I had looked into youth classical music groups in London and considered carrying out my ethnography there. I eventually decided to base my research in Whitchestershire rather than in London for several reasons: first, there was a particularly thriving youth classical music scene in the city of Whitchester and an interesting contrast between city and county in terms of levels of wealth and opportunities; secondly, it was convenient for me to access while carrying out the ethnography; and finally, it offered an interesting alternative picture of the provincial middle class, in contrast to recent work that has focused on London (Vincent et al. 2012; Butler and Robson 2003; Jackson and Benson 2014; Reay et al. 2011). The pseudonyms of the town and county were chosen to reflect the Roman history of the area; 'chester' and 'cheshire' being common suffixes in England, drawing on the Roman word for camp, 'castra'. 'Whit' means 'a very small part or amount' or an 'iota', so together they could mean 'a small part of England'. I also liked the way the name sounds quintessentially English, allowing the reader to imagine the elite provincial

town, along the lines of Bath, Chester, or York, in which this thesis is set.

In order to get a sense of my participants' class position, I asked about their parents' jobs and education, their own schooling and expectations for university and career, and their perception of their class position. Following Bourdieu, I conceptualise class as being formed through composite capitals (social, economic, cultural, symbolic), but I add to his theorisation an understanding that class is inflected through spatialisation. This means that the middle classes that Vincent and Ball (2007) and Benson and Jackson (2014) studied in London cannot be conflated with the middle classes from the elite provincial town of Whitchester, which in turn are distinct from those in the county of Whitchestershire. There are, as noted in the introduction, commonalities across the middle classes (Reay et al. 2011). However, the predominantly professional parents of my participants meant that the class fraction among my participants was mainly that of the two groups that Reay et al. (2011) call 'established middle-class' and second generation middle class: those whose parents have been to university. What I have identified as 'lower-middle class' can be conflated with Reay et al.'s first-generation middle class, those from 'aspiring working-class' backgrounds, whose parents were first in their family history to be in a professional occupation. Among my participants, this includes young people who are the first in their family to go to university, but whose parents might have professional training (such as accountancy), own their own homes and whose siblings are also going to university (see Appendix One for full details). It is also relevant to mention that 31 out of 37, or 84%, of my participants lived at the time of interview with both parents in a nuclear family, a high proportion compared to two-thirds in the UK in 2012 (Press Association 2012). Both the lower-middle-class and middle-class groups in my study, however, lacked the 'metropolitan habitus' that Butler and Robson (2003) identify as typical of London's middle classes, who value the social mixing available in the city. When I brought up the question of diversity in the Young Opera Company, director Sophia blithely gestured towards the one Chinese British participant in the group, saying 'he's about the total of our diversity'. The

cultural practice of making classical music was what was valued in these groups, although the relative homogeneity of the social scene was valued by my participants who talked about being in a space with 'like-minded people', away from the 'chavvy' spaces that some of them went to school.

Most didn't go to 'chavvy' schools, however; a disproportionate number (sixteen, or 43%, compared to 7% in England as a whole) had attended independent school.[6] Only a handful didn't go to a top-performing school or college for sixth form. Tertiary destinations were similarly ambitious. While the occasional person talked about maybe joining the army as a musician (the military being an important training ground for music in the county, with army bands used as a recruiting ground for young people), all of my other participants were at, or planning to attend, university or music conservatoires. Ten out of my 37 interviewees were at Oxbridge and three more were hoping to go there. There were also several people at Durham, Manchester and King's College London, universities that can be seen as Oxbridge substitutes.

What does all this mean in terms of understanding class? Barlow et al. (1995) complain that research on the middle classes describes the fragmentation of this group but stops short of explaining how they are working as political actors to safeguard their privileged position. Similarly, Reay et al. (2011) suggest that the middle classes are no longer committed to the common good and use their privilege to instigate exclusionary practices against losing their position. I am suggesting that exploring middle-class institutionalisation of culture, in the form of classical music education, can highlight ways in which the middle classes use their political power. Exploring this question in an elite provincial town rather

6 This trend of disproportionate numbers of young classical musicians in Whitchestershire attending independent schools was borne out in data I collected on schooling from the two orchestras in my study. In the New Symphony Orchestra, in the 2012 group 27 musicians (55%) were at or had been to state schools, nineteen (39%) had been to independent schools, and three had been to both. In the county youth orchestra (in 2013), which had a more inclusive recruitment strategy as well as putting on free transport for those living further afield, a higher number (46 players, 78%) went to state schools, eleven (19%) to independent schools, and two were home schooled. Data from 2012-13 shows that the proportion of those studying at the five top UK conservatoires who graduated from independent and international schools was 24.4% (Scharff, Kokot, and Blamey 2014), which suggests that my sample is not atypical.

than in an urban setting gives a picture of a middle class who are less threatened, more homogeneous, and therefore more confident in their position, than researchers have described among the urban middle classes. This question will be further explored in chapters two and three, which examine boundary-drawing practices.

Insider or outsider?

Having introduced my research sites, I will now turn to the process of carrying out the research, beginning with my own status as researcher. My classical music training and experience allowed me to appear to be an insider to this culture, but I was an outsider to these groups and also to the world of the English middle-class youth who I found myself studying. For, although I had started my research thinking I was examining the culture of classical music as it is practised today, I came to realise that I was also studying the culture of the social group who were playing it. My error had been to assume that I could separate the two — precisely the critique that I was trying to make of much of musicological research, which reifies classical music itself as existing outside of culture, for example, by studying the formal structure of the score according to logical principles (Schenker 1994) or by studying musical practice as existing in a vacuum, lacking awareness of its embeddedness in the cultures that produce it (Bayley 2011). By contrast, I saw classical music culture as both being reproduced and produced by the culture it was being practised in. However, its powerful tradition meant that despite having learnt my craft in other parts of the world, I could still immediately fit in to the way it was practised in the youth music groups in my study.

My insider status was an indispensable part of my ethnography. It was most helpful in allowing me to become just another player or tutor, making my presence as ethnographer much less visible than when I was observing without playing. I played with all of the groups except Cantando Youth Choir, which was an auditioned choir that I was not eligible to join. I played the cello in the New

Symphony Orchestra and in the county youth orchestra, and in the latter I quickly made myself indispensable by playing the viola part on the cello when they didn't have any violas. I took a position parallel to a tutor in this group, as the participants were aged thirteen to eighteen; one day when the cello tutor was stuck in traffic, the administrator asked me to lead the cello sectional until the tutor arrived. For the Young Opera Company, as noted above, I was the rehearsal pianist. This role allowed me to be a fly on the wall in rehearsals while still being an accepted part of the group.

My insider status was not without its disadvantages. I was bringing to this ethnography a critical perspective that was generally not shared by my participants; namely, by asking how this musical practice might contribute to reproducing gendered and classed identities. However, not only were many of the norms and practices of this musical culture second nature to me, so that I didn't see them, but also I share the white, middle-class identity of most of my participants, albeit in a post-colonial variant. This was a recurring theme in the field notes I wrote following rehearsals (or during rehearsals, for Cantando youth choir; as I wasn't taking part, I openly took notes during the rehearsal, in this way managing to get a lot of detailed observational data). This 'fish-in-water' (Bourdieu 1992, 127) feeling occurred because I was trying to investigate the possible affinity between this musical practice and what might be called a bourgeois culture, from a position of being thoroughly bourgeois myself. Following Coffey (2002, 314), therefore, this research involved autobiographical work of my own in order to try and see what was invisible to me in these practices. Little by little, I started to see what was particular and specific about my research sites, rather than just seeing them as 'normal' — the process of 'distancing' that Labaree describes (2002). This process is still occurring; an uncomfortable unravelling that fails to stop when the thesis does.

The elusive body

What was most useful about my participation in these groups was being able to

write about my own experience of the non-linguistic, embodied aspects of this practice. Musicians-as-ethnographers are an important part of the discipline of ethnomusicology, but this tends to involve the researcher learning a new musical instrument and culture (Alaghband-Zadeh 2013). By contrast, I was using a skill I already possessed to a highly proficient level. This means that when describing, for example, the sensation of 'muscular bonding' (McNeill 1995) when playing in a string section, I bring to it a different history than my participants would. In particular, what they found difficult, I found easy, because I'd already worked professionally as a musician. This meant that the element of struggle, difficulty, and challenge that my participants described was mostly missing from my experience, as was the excitement of novelty. It is important, therefore, to see my reflections as coming from my position as a situated observer, and not as carrying the assumption that they represent my participants' experiences. However, I have included descriptions of my experience of playing in these groups in order to illustrate processes that I was subjected to in similar ways to my participants, for example, I was also susceptible to the embodied power of the conductor (chapter six), or the pleasure of playing a beautiful melody with my section (chapter five).

My body thus became part of my empirical data, and I described in my field notes the sensations of adrenalin, excitement, satisfaction, boredom, frustration, awe, or pleasure, just as I noted down other happenings. In order to describe these physical and mental experiences in close detail, I drew on my Buddhist meditation practice, from which I had learnt techniques that focus on detailed awareness of sensory experience. As Buddhist teacher Kamilashila describes it, in meditation we are learning to go into the 'fine detail' of our experience; quite simply, learning to be more aware (Kamalashila 2012). This practice made my shifting physical and emotional states more easily legible to me, and gave me greater clarity in recalling and analysing them. One example of using this technique of writing is the opening of the introduction to this thesis — in the concert where I realised I was so nervous of making a mistake that I was hardly playing at all. This nuanced awareness of my mental and physical states, as

honed through meditation, facilitated my ability to carry out fine-grained analysis of these states and write about them in detail. Such reflections on my embodied experience, shared affects, and how they could sometimes be heard in sound, became an important part of my ethnographic approach.

Similarly, in the process of writing, my meditation practice was an important daily reminder that I had a body. Writing within an academic tradition where people are colloquially thought of as a 'brain on a stick' (Cham 2009), and writing about a musical tradition where the body must be clothed in black in order to ensure its absence, it was all too easy to slip into a disembodied argument such as describing the content of the rehearsal form, in chapter five. My research sites were ones where I was obliged to relinquish control of my body to larger structures, such as timetables and instructions set by others. As I describe in chapter five, sometimes during rehearsals many of us, myself included, would 'zone out' in a disembodied state of inattention, as we ceded control to the conductor. But even once I started writing, the body still kept trying to escape and squirm away, leaving me describing musical sound without bodies producing it, or social and musical structures that could be theorised tidily. The cognitive explanations — which were the 'common sense' (Hall et al. 1978) explanations within this musical scene — were the ones that pushed their way to the foreground of my analysis, and I had to keep reminding myself to relocate the body into the picture. The bodies in these groups even made themselves tidy, in orderly rows, stopping and starting on command, and like the young musicians Scharff (2016) describes, keeping silent about any injuries or bodily failures that might interrupt this. In writing, therefore, I had to keep yanking my body and other bodies back into the text by using my field notes to take me back into particular 'primal scenes' (Back 2013) of my research, reliving them in my body in order to describe them in my writing.

Revealing encounters

As well as my focus on embodied experience, another important part of my

methodology was the semi-structured ethnographic interview. I carried out interviews with 37 young people and nine adults across my four sites, as well as three focus groups that acted as pilot research when accessing new sites. Appendix One gives an overview of the interviews. With three of my interviewees (Jeanette, Andy, and Ellie), I carried out more than one interview. This allowed me to develop conversations over time, and have more challenging, in-depth exchanges. In addition, as also detailed in Appendix One, a few of my interviews were carried out with two participants together, which proved to be helpful in allowing conversations between them to develop. Some of these interviews were squeezed during the lunchtime of a day's rehearsal, or at the pub afterwards. With others, I made an appointment to meet them at a café in town at another time; the latter method allowed more time, some interviews lasting up to two and a half hours. The interview material proved to be very rich. I would suggest this was partly due to my ongoing presence in these groups. The richness of this data can also be attributed to the high levels of trust that these young people appeared to have in the adults running the youth music groups, which I theorise as a bodily openness or porousness (as discussed in the introduction); this trust was then often extended to me as being in a similar position to these other adults. Finally, for the majority of my participants, giving a coherent narrative account of their lives appeared to be a reflexive position that was very comfortable (with a few notable exceptions).

I had intended to try and develop relationships with four or five 'key informants' who I would follow into other musical sites in their lives, and who I would carry out a series of interviews with. This only really worked for one participant, Ellie. I observed one of her lessons and subsequently accompanied her on the piano for a lunchtime concert, which involved rehearsing together at her house and visiting the secondary school she used to attend. While I also did three very long interviews with another participant, Andy, I didn't manage to develop these kinds of relationships with other participants in the groups, mainly due to the fragmented nature of the ethnography, which mirrored the pattern of rehearsals in these youth music groups. However, I also paid for two singing lessons with

the vocal coach for Cantando and the Young Opera Company, Jeanette, to experience for myself the embodied transformation that my participants were undergoing.

I transcribed most of the interviews and focus groups in full; a couple I transcribed in note form where the material seemed less interesting. I began my analysis using qualitative data analysis software but subsequently I abandoned this, instead using Excel to make a simple database of key categories for comparison and analysis (including schools attended; age started lessons; parents' occupations; career aspirations). I found that re-readings of relevant interviews or field notes and keyword searches within Scrivener (my writing software, onto which I uploaded all my empirical materials) sufficed to carry out my analysis. This proved to be generative in that as my arguments developed in the course of the writing, moments in the data that I had passed over at first reading became highly salient. In chapter eight, for example, when I asked singers Hannah and Katherine what they thought they had in common with other people in Cantando, apart from the music, they said that it was only really the music they had in common. At the point of my first trawl through the data, this appeared to be an instance of me barking up the wrong tree. However, in the course of the writing and revisiting the data, the exchange about how the music evoked this commonality proved powerfully illustrative of their musical identity.

Interview data has been heavily criticised for its constructed nature (Silverman 2013); positions vary as to whether there a 'truth outside of the telling' or if the accounts gathered in interviews need to be analysed simply as 'moral tales that are interesting regardless of whether they are lies or simply wrong' (Back 2007, 164). I am arguing that the accounts I was given in interviews appeared (to me as ethnographer) to hold truth for my participants at the time of interview, and therefore as long as they are not taken as the whole, unmediated truth, they are a useful component of a broader seam of data gathered in the rest of the ethnography. Interview accounts were certainly partial and incomplete, but any

account of a life and lived experience must be. In order to retain awareness of their constructed status, I analysed them as constructed narratives, following Steedman (2000) and Skeggs (2002) who suggest that the mode of telling is revealing as well as the substance of what is told. This drew my attention, for example, to the ways that some of my less privileged participants narrated their experience as one of overcoming obstacles; Miriam, as discussed in chapter four, was aware of gender and class inequality but narrated her musical biography as one in which these obstacles had not affected her. By contrast, those from more privileged positions didn't narrate themselves in relation to obstacles, but instead described themselves as 'lucky', or presented straightforward accounts of their experience as being 'normal'. Against Silverman's injunction to use the interview only as a last resort and to rely instead on more 'found' social data (Silverman 2013), I suggest that by taking into account not only what was said, but how it was said, and to whom (positioning myself, as a young(ish), female, middle class, fellow classical musician, in the encounter), interview data can be an important ingredient in an ethnography.

Another way in which the mode of telling was revealing in both interviews and ethnographic encounters was my participants' use of irony, a common mode of interaction used by some of the young people in my research. A typical example was Robbie, with whom I was discussing arts funding. After going through various reasons why classical music and opera should receive state funding, he ended in a jokey tone of voice, saying, 'I want more people to like the music I like'. We both laughed, and took it as a joke. However, this phrase echoed in my mind as I transcribed the interviews and read over my field notes, and I started to realise that underneath the tone of voice, there was a truth for Robbie in this statement. Its simplicity was revealing and shed light on other participants' statements about how wonderful they found classical music and how they wanted to share that with others. He had made a joke out of what was his truth.

There were other, more disturbing examples, such as Andy's insistence that the racist jokes that he and his friends would tell, despite the presence of a British

Asian friend, were all ironic. Similarly the Alpha Males, which some of the older boys in the National Youth Orchestra had set up, complete with hoodies labelling them as 'Alpha One' and 'Alpha Two' etc, as discussed in chapter three, was 'only a joke'. These examples of gendered and racialised strategies of domination being disguised as a joke suggest that irony, for my participants, is a way of asserting unacceptable opinions or identities. This was a helpful, if uncomfortable, realization for me, in that it pointed me towards what my participants felt it was unacceptable to express; opinions or ideas that they appeared to hold but be unwilling to state openly; as Haraway notes, in relation to a very different example, irony is 'about the tension of holding incompatible things together' (Haraway 2013, 190). The Alpha Males knew it was unacceptable to suggest that they, being tall, male and the more senior members of the orchestra, were therefore 'alpha', and yet there was enough truth in this for them to get hoodies made, and form a gang.

Negotiating a critical position: reflections on ethics

In this ethnography, rather than 'studying down', as has often been the case in sociology, I was studying those with similar social positions to myself. I initially thought that this meant I wouldn't encounter ethical issues around power. However, studying 'up' and 'across' has revealed its own ethical dilemmas. The first problem, not specific to those studying 'up' or 'across', was trying to explain the concept of ethnography to people who had never heard of it. I would ask permission from whoever was running the rehearsal to be given time to introduce myself and my project briefly at the start. This meant that anybody who wasn't there at the beginning of the day missed my introduction and didn't necessarily know I was a researcher unless I managed to spot them and introduce myself. Particularly with the older participants who I would go to the pub with, I was unsure (as Loveday (2011) also describes), whether they understood that I might write about our conversations. I tried to be explicit about this where I thought something was relevant, saying for example, 'can I quote you on that?' but there were inevitably times when I didn't realise until

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later that the conversation was important. In addition, I found it impossible to keep my personal political commitments out of sight in these kinds of social situations, particularly as I was in the middle of co-ordinating a feminist espionage project the week that I started fieldwork with the New Symphony Orchestra, and the two projects encountered each other uncomfortably at the pub one evening. However, being relatively open about my politics led to interesting conversations, and I felt more comfortable, enjoying being gently mocked for being a feminist.

Throughout my ethnography I continued to find it difficult to explain what my research was about, not least because the focus shifted and crystallised during the research process. I was nervous about raising the issue of class in a clearly well-heeled setting, as it seemed to me that it would come across as questioning the legitimacy of their privilege. I need not have worried, as responses ranged from the dismissive ('if there was more funding for music in schools then class wouldn't be an issue in classical music') to the curious ('what are you finding so far?') to the incredulous ('oh god, who even talks in that way any more?'). More problematic was trying to explain that I wasn't there to do advocacy research as is often the case in research into the arts, as Belfiore and Bennett (2008) note; but instead, that I had a critical agenda. It is interesting, of course, that no-one in my research sites really saw class as being the critical research agenda that I thought it was. The enormous openness of almost everybody I approached demonstrated their confidence in the transparent benefits of what they were doing, as well as their assumption that I shared this confidence.

This dilemma became most pronounced in relation to the other ethical issue I encountered, related to the material discussed in chapter six on how the authority of the conductor was constructed and experienced in rehearsals. While I had for a long time been uncomfortable with the authoritarian power dynamics involved in working with conductors, I wasn't sure if or how I was going to write about it. In the course of my conversations and interviews, it became clear that there were powerful affective interactions going on between conductor and

group, particularly in Cantando youth choir; and furthermore, that these were typical of a broader culture, that of the British cathedral choral tradition, which was in the news at the time due to the conviction of National Youth Choir conductor Michael Brewer on sexual abuse charges (in fact, several of my participants had sung under him in this choir). I have emerged with a critical perspective on this tradition. The ethics of this critique are questionable, as I have not fed back this critique to the conductor of this group, other than in our interview, where I tried, unsuccessfully, to engage him in discussion of one of the sexualised jokes he had made in rehearsal.

It could be argued that the most responsible ethical position would be to feed back my critiques to this conductor, given that I was going to be writing and speaking publicly about this material. I have decided not to. Firstly, he is simply reproducing the British cathedral choral tradition that he himself was educated in, and is trying in his own ways to be critical of it. However, according to the standards of this culture, he is doing an excellent job and many of the participants in Cantando were thrilled to be able to work with him. I see my role as describing this tradition generally, rather than the practices of an individual practitioner. Furthermore, as chapter six describes, these authoritarian practices were experienced by my participants in other groups as well as Cantando. I have discussed my critiques with one trusted informant among the adults in these sites, but my general ethical position is instead to describe the practices of this culture, and then to find ways to communicate it to those involved in it. For example, in 2015 I will be using the material in this chapter as the basis for discussions with classical music students at the Leeds College of Music, in this way feeding back my analysis to those involved in similar ensembles.

As a result of the critique developed in this chapter, I have worked carefully to anonymise both the region and the groups and individuals involved; I had hoped to be able to name the county and situate the study in the geography and history of the area, but I have decided not to do this in order to preserve anonymity. All names have been changed in this thesis; and where possible I have tried to

reproduce the class, age, or ethnic associations of particular names.

Reading against the grain

'Truth for anyone is a very complex thing. For a writer, what you leave out says as much as those things you include. What lies beyond the margin of the text? The photographer frames the shot; writers frame their world.'

Jeannette Winterson (2012, 8)

A final ethical issue in this thesis relates to my critical perspective, in reading these sites against the grain (Back, 2007). By this, I mean that my participants might not necessarily recognise the way I have described these practices, as I have been looking for things that are usually hidden or dismissed - the body, power, and the unspoken norms of practice. My approach draws on feminist epistemology, in particular standpoint epistemology (Harding 1996), an approach that argues that knowledge is always socially situated. In order to achieve 'strong objectivity' (Harding 1996, 244) rather than the inadequate objectivity of conventional science, the 'subject/agent of knowledge' (p. 243) (in this case, myself) has to be visible and embodied, located in a particular historical moment. Similarly to the 'objects' of knowledge, the subject is also 'multiple, heterogeneous, and contradictory' (p. 243). This is a relief, in that it allows space for ambivalence to be laid bare and explored in all its contradictions.

This does not mean that the knowledge produced is therefore reduced to relativism (p. 243). Instead, it is perspectival (Strathern 1991, 31), seen 'from and through the body [the researcher] inhabits' (p. 36). As Donna Haraway describes, 'perversely, objectivity turns out to be about particular and specific embodiment [...] The moral is simple: only partial perspective promises objective vision' (Haraway 1996, 254). This allows the common sense position of my participants, the 'point of view from which the world is evaluated and on whose behalf claims are made', to be revealed and interrogated (Strathern, 1991,

31). For example, my interpretation in chapter five, which reads the rehearsal process as one of habituating the bourgeois characteristic of restraint alongside and through rehearsing the music itself, might well be dismissed by my participants, in that it sidelines what they think is important, and foregrounds something incidental. However, in trying to make sense of what we are actually doing in rehearsals, I have started by analysing what bodies are doing, which has led me to this possibly counter-intuitive analysis.

This approach also follows the perspective from Hesmondhalgh (2013) that there has been something of an overemphasis in music research on the 'power of music' that risks ignoring ways in which music can fail to lead to flourishing. There are certainly very many positive, life-enhancing aspects to this practice that I could have chosen to focus on, and some of these will emerge throughout the thesis. However, these are all qualities that strengthen the identity and socialities of those already involved in this music; it ignores the fact that this musical practice reinforces particular dispositions that have resonance with historical processes of classed and gendered exclusion. Similarly to grammar schools, classical music is a wonderful experience for some of those who have the opportunity to participate in it, but is less good for others and for those who do not. To focus on ways in which this musical practice works for those lucky golden children who have made it into the hallowed circle, rather than examining how its continuities and resonances with a broader classed and gendered culture work to legitimate continuing inequalities, runs the risk of colluding with the exclusions through which class operates.

This is an ethical issue in this research because it means that my participants might disagree with the ways in which I have interpreted some of what they have said; and I have not yet fed back my findings to them in any systematic way. I can expect, therefore, that many people who have a strong identification with and love for this music will reject my ideas, finding that I am trying to explain sociologically something that should be left to the realm of the transcendent and the sublime, outside of the logic of practice of the everyday world (just as

Eagleton (1990) describes). I make no apology for doing this. As I hope will become clear over the course of this thesis, the means that produce these ideas and feelings of transcendence are at the same time working to reproduce classed and gendered hierarchies and norms. To turn away from this critique is to collude with their reproduction.

Having laid out the epistemological, methodological and ethical foundations for this thesis, I will now turn to the substantive material. Chapter two sets up the landscape or 'ecology' for the classical music 'world' that my participants enter into. Critically examining the historical formation of this 'ecology', it argues that bourgeois values such as restraint were institutionalised into classical music practices in the late nineteenth century, and that these institutions shape the tradition of practice that my participants encountered.

Part one: Musical and social boundary-drawing

Chapter two. Boundary-drawing around the proper: from the Victorians to the present

Eighteen-year-old Owen's biography tells the story of a journey between two worlds. He comes from a lower-middle-class town about fifteen miles outside Whitchester where he went to primary and secondary school. His parents are not university educated but met while training as accountants and now work for public and educational institutions. When I asked him what he thought his class position was, he gave an astute description of the differences between people in his home town, and the people he'd met through music and through coming to Whitchester for sixth form: 'we're not a particularly middle class family I don't think. Certainly coming here to Whitchester sixth form college has opened my eyes to proper middle-class people.' By contrast, where he grew up, 'we're all very much in the same kind of boat, working class, lower middle-class kind of kids... There's no real, um, I suppose you'd say proper middle-class people, certainly not in the football team anyway'.

He had been very into football as a child, but despite being from a family that he described as 'not musical at all', he started learning the tenor horn at primary school. At age thirteen joined the local RAF band and was given a French horn to learn on the job rather than having lessons — a pedagogic model common to brass bands that is unheard of in classical music. He started going to a Saturday morning music school run by the local authority music services and joined an orchestra there. Through a friend he heard about the Junior Guildhall, a prestigious Saturday scheme run by one of the London music colleges, and auditioned when he was fifteen. When I met him, he had recently been accepted into the National Youth Orchestra, and described himself as 'irritatingly passionate' about classical music. He was excited about his plans to do a music degree at a redbrick university, followed by a postgraduate course at a conservatoire, which he hoped would lead to an orchestral career.

Owen was thus able to draw on the considerable opportunities and resources

available through what I will call the 'institutional ecology' of classical music — the framework of organisations that make up the classical music world. This had allowed him to be able to join the most elite youth orchestra in the country, and unusually for classical musicians, without any particular parental input. What is especially interesting is how he contrasts his first extracurricular interest, football, with his subsequent musical involvement:

> 'I mean football's obviously fantastic, I'm still a big Ipswich supporter, but I don't think it would've opened any doors to me, it would've just been a hobby, I would've ended up doing some other job, maybe that I hated, so I think the fact that I can, you know I've picked up this hobby and I can actually continue it as a career, I can actually build my life around it, I think [is] better'.

In this way, Owen narrates his movement from his lower-middle-class town where he played football, where he was headed for a job that he might have hated, to the 'proper middle class' world of youth classical music, as one that has 'opened doors' to a career around which he can build his life.

This chapter takes Owen's story as a starting point to explore the layers of institutions that constitute this exciting world of possibilities for him. This chapter performs two tasks in order to set up the rest of the thesis. Firstly, it defines the parameters of my research sites by setting up the historical formations of these sites and practices, and showing how they shape the contemporary 'ecology' that my participants experience today. Secondly, it lays out the history of classed values and practices associated with classical music. It shows how boundary-drawing around the 'proper' was institutionalised into classical music practice in the late nineteenth century, and can still be identified today. This thread will recur throughout the thesis, as I demonstrate how nineteenth-century bourgeois values such as restraint, disciplined labour and 'time-thrift' are inscribed into classical music practice.

This chapter takes one of these values, female sexual restraint, to demonstrate

how ideas of classed boundary-drawing around classical music were institutionalised into classical music education institutions in the late nineteenth century. I start by describing how these Victorian institutions have shaped the musical landscape or 'ecology' that, as Owen describes above, provides an exciting world of opportunities for those lucky enough to find their way into it. I then describe how this 'ecology' was institutionalised in the late nineteenth century. I provide an alternative reading to the current historiography of this period (Ehrlich 1985; Wright 2003) by focusing on the predominance of women in music education institutions, describing how gendered disciplining around bodily containment and propriety have been institutionalised into classical music practices. This gendered disciplining formed part of the boundary-drawing around class which is still an important part of classical music practice today. I examine how this boundary-drawing around the 'proper' was reproduced by my participants through ideas of what counted as 'serious' or 'proper' music. This sets the scene for chapter three, which explores a different form of boundary-drawing, through musical standards.

Mapping the institutional ecology of youth classical music

The 'institutional ecology' of youth classical music which offered Owen such a breathtaking array of opportunities makes visible the link between the present and the late Victorian period when this 'ecology' was established. Inclusion in this world afforded Owen and other young people the sense of being valued, by being presented with so many possibilities. In order to map out the youth classical music ecology I have taken all the institutions, organisations and ensembles which my participants mentioned and mapped them out into an institutional ecology of youth classical music. Why is this an 'ecology'? The word is apposite because it describes an institutional landscape where differences in musical ability are turned into a form which can be capitalised on by some. This 'ecology' has the advantage of appearing natural and eternal, as does any successful invention of tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992), in this case thanks to its grand architecture; its repertoire from the eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries; and its clear ideas of right and wrong. However, it is a built environment which legitimises a particular value system. In this way, nineteenth century distinctions around class and morality, such as ideas of authority, restraint, and the Protestant tradition of the importance of the text, take on the appearance of being natural, inevitable and right. As Owen's story demonstrates, these structures do indeed allow those outside the white middle class to join, so long as they are willing to fit in with existing traditions of practice.

This 'ecology' as it exists today consists of five categories, into which fit all of the ensembles and organisations that were mentioned by my participants. I have labelled these the 'behemoths' or music conservatoires; the 'standardisers', or grade exam boards; the local authority music services; the 'informal economy'; and the 'talent scouts'. The music conservatoires that most of my participants were attending, had attended, or wanted to attend, were almost all set up in the late nineteenth century[7]. I have nicknamed the conservatoires the 'behemoths' because of their Victorian origins; they call to mind the captains of industry of that period in their architecture (heavy, stone, imposing), their worldwide reputations, and their Victorian resistance to change (Perkins 2011). As Ehrlich (1985) notes, these conservatoires proliferated in the late nineteenth century with 33 in the UK and Ireland by 1900; only a handful have survived. The conservatoires now all run Saturday schools for secondary school students, generally called the 'Junior department', where students get the intensive training of a conservatory while still at school. Several of my participants were currently attending or had attended these 'junior departments' and some of them were currently at the senior departments, i.e. tertiary level. The entry level required for the Royal College of Music Junior department is a 'distinction' mark

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7 Key institutions were Trinity College London (established 1877), the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (1880), the Royal College of Music (1882), the London College of Music (1887), Glasgow Athaeneum School of Music (now the Royal Scottish Conservatoire, 1890), and the ABRSM (1890). Exceptions to this trend were the Royal Academy of Music (established 1822), and the Royal Welsh and Leeds Colleges of Music which were founded in the mid-twentieth century, their prestige accordingly lower than the older conservatoires.

at grade five by age eleven, although for violin and piano the required standard is higher (RCM 2014). This would probably require an applicant to have had individual instrumental lessons for at least three years.

The other reason for calling the conservatoires the 'behemoths' of this institutional ecology is the huge influence they have on all of the other institutions and practices I will be describing. Music teachers and conductors who are in positions of authority in other institutions tend to have studied at one of them, and therefore the practices that are taught at these conservatoires shape musicians for generations to come. However, as Perkins notes (2011, 10) they are under-researched and hugely powerful, able to authorise what counts as musical standards of excellence, and have therefore been resistant to scrutiny and to change.

The other group of Victorian institutions that were heavily formative of my participants' musical lives are the music examination boards. I have nicknamed them 'the standardisers'. The two that survive today are the Associated Board of the Royal Colleges of Music (ABRSM) and Trinity College London (TCL). In all of my interviews, participants mentioned the grade exams in passing, as part of the taken-for-granted landscape of musical practice, for example as above referring to being of 'grade five standard' as a measure of musical ability. For each of the three major exam boards in the UK, grades range from one to eight, with advanced certificates available subsequently. Among both the 'behemoths' and the 'standardisers' (which are also wealthy institutions; the ABRSM uses its wealth to subsidise the Royal Colleges of Music (Wright, 2013)) it is notable how many of these institutions were established between 1872 and 1893. They have been crucial in training musicians and shaping classical music culture not only in the UK but around the world (Kok 2014), using their 'musical authority' to construct and export musical norms and ideologies (Wright 2013).

Building on these Victorian foundations, we now move to the twentieth century layer of this ecology, starting with the local authority music services. These are

the organisations who deliver instrumental teaching in schools, the dogsbody work of actually providing beginner music lessons to children, as well as running county music ensembles. Established at various points between the 1930s and 1970s (Cleave and Dust 1989; Hallam and Creech 2010), local music services are the poor cousins of classical music education, having endured, as Brighouse (2002) notes, cuts upon cuts from the 1960s onwards (apart from an injection of funding from New Labour in 1999-2001 (Hallam and Prince 2000)). The most recent round of restructuring (which includes £15 million funding cuts) is being implemented following the National Plan for Music Education (NPME) (Department for Education 2011). This required music services to re-brand themselves as 'hubs' which function as commissioning bodies, rather than delivering services directly (a model familiar from NHS reforms). In addition, as Spruce notes (2013) the NPME prioritises skills and knowledge associated with Western classical music, such as reading staff notation and recognising 'great' works, over creativity or skills associated with other musical genres. The Whitchestershire county music service was an important part of the youth music ecology locally; fourteen of my 37 interviewees (excluding the adults) had started learning instruments with the county music service. Two participants started learning from a family member and the other 21 started immediately on private lessons outside of school. However, by the age of eleven or twelve almost all of my participants had moved away from the lessons provided in schools to start having private lessons outside of school. The local authority music service was therefore widely used, but also slightly looked down on, as I will explore in chapter three.

The fourth group is what I have called the 'informal economy'. This is a grab-bag category that encompasses all of the amateur, youth, private, and charity ensembles or teaching studios or locally-run groups or classes. The sheer number and diversity of these groups cannot be underestimated. I amassed a bewildering array of local amateur orchestras, choirs, musical theatre groups, chamber music courses, orchestra courses, and more, some of which had been running for decades, others which came into existence for a few years only to

fade out when funding or energy to run them ran out. Finally, overlapping with the informal economy are the 'talent scouts': institutions or schemes that identify 'exceptional' youth 'talent', and are usually Arts Council-funded or have some government funding through a different route (eg Youth Music, a government-funded charity). This includes the National Youth Orchestra, Choir, and Brass Band. Given that public funding for professional orchestras now requires them to have an education programme, these schemes also form part of the legitimising mechanisms for existing classical music institutions. The 'talent scouts' also include three major specialist music secondary schools, which one of my participants had attended, which hot-house talented young musicians who are identified at an early age. Similarly, many independent schools offer music scholarships; seven of my participants had obtained these. This was the most direct route towards the classed self-improvement classical music education offered.

As well as these five categories of purely musical organisations there are other non-musical institutions that have music education as part of their formal or informal remit, most notably churches, schools, and the military. Church choirs were often a route into singing in a more 'serious' choir such as Cantando Youth Choir. Finally, as noted in Owen's story, above, the army and RAF were active in music education; several wind and brass players in the groups in my study were taught by army or RAF musicians and had participated in military bands. No wonder Owen felt amazed to have stumbled upon this musical smorgasbord of opportunities; and once he had become a proficient orchestral player he was in demand from various groups who needed players to make up their full cohort of numbers. Owen described the exciting experiences of playing in the Barbican concert hall one week, then getting paid to play in the pit for another school's music theatre production the next week, then attending a residential course with the National Youth Orchestra the following week. For Owen, who didn't see this as normal and inevitable in the way that some of the established middle-class young people seemed to, the sense of being in demand and being chosen to be in elite ensembles created or confirmed a sense of being valued and valuable. Had

he not started playing classical music in a serious way, he thought his life 'would have been far less fulfilling'. There is therefore a two-way process of these young people being valued by institutions that are seen as valuable.

How do these institutions come to be seen as places that confer value and are repositories of value? In chapter eight I will return to the question of how young people recognise themselves as being worthy subjects of this value. In this chapter I am exploring the latter question — how value in the form of legitimate or 'proper' musical knowledge is institutionalised and stored in the institutions and practices in this musical culture. Owen was clear that classical music counted as legitimate knowledge, and he based this on its intellectual content. 'Stuff like ethnomusicology or that sort of thing has never interested me. Never. […] Gamelan [an Indonesian musical instrument] and that kind of thing, it's never really interested me musically. I think because it's based in tradition rather than intellectual reaction'. In particular, he found Romantic music to have both the 'depth' as well as the intellectual component that made it worthy of building his life around it. This discourse of 'serious' music — complex, worthy of detailed analysis and in-depth study — was, as I will explore later in this chapter, common to many of my participants. The link I want to draw out here is between ideas of 'serious' music, legitimate musical knowledge that can be studied for its intellectual content, and ideas of the 'proper' that were formative for the institutionalisation of classical music education in the nineteenth century, to which I will now turn.

Institutionalising bourgeois values

I have identified the late Victorian period as one that was crucial for the formation of this musical ecology, which has given Owen all of these opportunities. I am going to argue that, then as now, boundary-drawing around what counts as classical music — 'serious' or 'proper' music — occurred alongside boundary-drawing around class. In this section I examine how discourses of music and class inflected each other in this formative late Victorian

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period; next, how these ideas were institutionalised in gendered ways; and finally, explain how these ideas can be read onto notions of 'musical standard' that formed part of the boundary-drawing around the 'proper'. As Skeggs and Moran (2003, 62) note, the 'proper' can also be linked with 'propriety' and 'property' etymologically, as the three Latin roots of this word are firstly, proper or good; second, clean or hygienic (propriety); and finally ownership, or property. Common to all three meanings is the ways in which '[t]alk of propriety, use and exclusion is also talk of limits: of borders and boundaries', implying also a theme of invasion — 'moving from order and safety to disorder and insecurity' (p.66). It is this boundary-drawing work that I am interested in here. What work is the category of the 'proper' doing in relation to the music that is described as 'proper'; and why is this used interchangeably with 'serious' music? I will suggest that the usage of both of these words — serious, proper — is significant when seen in historical context. This requires an exploration of the historical links between classical music and the middle classes.

While I am mainly focusing on the late nineteenth century when the major music education institutions were established, in order to understand the relationship between classical music and the middle classes we need to go back earlier in the nineteenth century. From 1830 onwards, Europe's major cities had seen a process of the institutionalisation of music-as-art. This included a shift in consumption practices towards 'sacralisation' whereby classical music would be consumed in reverent silence (Weber 2004; Johnson 1996; Sennett 1992). This was a classed process, as William Weber describes (2004); in 1830s and 40s London, Paris, and Vienna, the aristocracy and upper middle class had 'consolidated' to form 'taste publics' around classical and popular music, a process that secured the bourgeoisie's place as sentinels of high culture. There was a proliferation of amateur music-making in the from of brass bands and choral societies in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, thanks in a large part to the Sol-fa method of music notation, as a result of which the elites turned away from choral music and towards symphonic music (McGuire 2009, 34). By the late Victorian period that is crucial for the institutionalisation of music

education there was therefore already in place a classed infrastructure for music consumption. In the case of both playing and listening to 'serious' music, or music-as-art (including orchestral instruments but *not* including brass bands or choral singing) the overall picture is of middle-class institution-building (Pieper 2008; Gunn 1997; Talbot 2002; Ehrlich 1985; Milestone 2007; McVeigh 2004). Pieper's description of the Birmingham Triennale festival as well as Milestone's account of the building of Stalybridge Town Hall serve as representative examples of the middle classes — professionals, civil servants and business people — building edifices in which they could see and be seen amidst the increasing social confusion of the city (Gunn 1997). This is not to say that working-class people did not sometimes attend these venues, but rather that the institution building was carried out by the middle-class. When the working-classes were recruited into this project it was often in order to inculcate them into practices of 'rational recreation' (Bailey 1986).

Divides around musical literacy are another way of demonstrating this boundary-drawing around class. As McGuire (2009) describes, the working classes were less likely to be able to read conventional staff music notation, instead singing even complex pieces such as Handel's *Messiah* using alternative notation systems that were prevalent at the time, such as the Tonic Sol-fa system commonly used for choral societies and brass bands (McGuire 2009). This means, as Johnson-Hill (2014) describes, that the division between those who could read staff notation and those who could not, was a class divide. (This is still the case today; as analysis from Born et al. (2013) of UCAS data found, but 'alternative' notation systems are no longer Tonic Sol-fa, but instead, guitar tabs or music technology programmes for phones or tablets). These notation systems formed part of a moral mission towards 'rational recreation', a movement stemming from the Victorian concern with temperance and associated ideologies of classed morality. By providing the working classes with leisure activities that kept them out of the pub, they would be safeguarded against the idleness that was the major signifier of 'degeneracy'. As Anne McClintock describes, 'degeneracy' was 'defined as departures from the normal human type'

(McClintock 1995, 46). This included the working classes, the colonised, prostitutes, slaves, and other groups who were in fact essential to the functioning of the middle class, which 'thus defined itself as different from the aristocracy and the working classes who spent, sexually and economically, without moderation and who preferred not to work' (p. 100).

With the rapid expansion of the lower middle classes in the final decades of the nineteenth century, boundary-drawing between classes intensified (Gay 1998, 7). A bourgeois value-system had emerged that included self-restraint; domesticity; disciplined labour; accumulation and forward progress; 'time-thrift'; and all of these values performed with seriousness or earnestness. Most importantly for this chapter, a gendered understanding of sexuality that centred on female respectability was an important part of middle-class morality. This drew on the 'cult of domesticity' that followed the rise of the bourgeois family, which involved the separation of the household and workplace (Davidoff 2002, 181) and the invention of the role of housewife, which first appeared in the census in 1851 (Gay 1998). The centrality of women and the domestic sphere to the emerging middle-class identity draws attention to the private sphere as the necessary 'other' to the rational, masculine public sphere. Domesticity, as McClintock argues, 'was crucial in helping to fashion the identity of the middle class', the domestic household serving as both the model for nation and Empire, as well as unifying a large class of people 'around the presiding domestic values of monogamy, thrift, order, accumulation, classification, quantification and regulation' (1995, 167-8). Women's successful performance of the role of refined, virtuous mother, daughter, and wife became the linchpin of this new bourgeois identity.

Thrift and 'time-thrift' (Thompson 1967, 78) were corollaries to the ethic of restraint. Time-thrift is the process of treating time as currency, which is intrinsic to the Puritan work-ethic (Weber 2001). This gradually overcame pre-industrial practices such as 'Saint Monday' (taking Monday off, probably to get drunk) as time-pieces became available to more and more people throughout the

eighteenth and nineteenth century (Thompson 1967; Davidoff 2002; Gay 1998, 13). This highlights the importance of capitalist accumulation and forward progress to this emerging ethic, a cultural shift that can be traced in the rise in book-keeping. The habit of keeping accounts filtered into everything from children's illnesses to letters received (Davidoff 2002, 380–383), reflecting the impulse for systematization and order. Accumulation as a habitual disposition even found its way into English prose; the increased use of gerunds created a "grammar of growth" where forward movement became compulsory for literary characters as well as their readers (Moretti 2014, 56). A further key discourse, serving this accumulative spirit, was around the "gospel of work" (Gay 1998); disciplined or "rational labor" versus idleness was a crucial axis around which the emerging middle class asserted its identity in the mid- to late-nineteenth century (McClintock 1995, 119). Presiding over this value-system was an overarching affect of *earnestness* or seriousness, often used in conjunction with usefulness, as Franco Moretti describes (2014, 131). This value system was read onto musical practices, a discussion to which I will now turn.

'The College would be a place of work, and not of recreation and amusement'. Music and morality

Within these discourses, music had a contested moral status. Some of these contestations were put forward in an enormously popular book by one Reverend Haweis, entitled 'Music and Morals'. First published in 1871 and reprinted many times until 1936, this book argued for 'the music of the great composers (i.e. the Austro-German canon) as truly exemplary, morally as well as musically' that 'represented an uplifting and worthwhile pursuit' (in Wright 2013, 32). (Clearly this logic didn't work for Haweis himself, who had an illegitimate daughter by one of his parishioners). Haweis was writing against a strong, classed discourse of music-as-entertainment — music that had the potential to be thoroughly unrespectable. This was also a gendered discourse, as the debates around licensing and censoring music hall venues and acts demonstrate, particularly in the 1850s-70s before music hall began its journey towards respectability (Bailey 1986; Bratton 1986). As Dagmar Hoher notes, repeated questions about the

status of the single women who attended London's music hall venues in parliamentary and licensing reports suggest that they must be prostitutes. This demonstrates the link between music hall and the perception of sexual degeneracy (Hoher 1986).

Music was also harnessed to serve the 'cult of domesticity', as described by contemporary commentator John Hullah, a close friend of Dickens' and inspector of music in teachers colleges, in 1878:

> 'the more general diffusion of musical skills [would mean that] order, cleanliness, mutual forbearance would take — must take — the place of slovenliness, filth and mutual recrimination; and for some hours in the week the working man might exchange for the hell of the gin-shop for that image and foretaste, if such be possible, of heaven — a well-ordered, cheerful home' (Cox 1993, 33).

Absent from this description is the working man's wife, who was responsible for rescuing her husband and children from slovenliness and filth into order and cleanliness by having a genteel sing-along. Music was therefore seen as having powers of redemption for the 'degenerate' classes. This meant that music education was a deeply contested site, rehearsing debates around who should, could, or needed to learn music. In true Victorian social reformer style, music education was frequently used by middle-class social reformers as a tool to rescue the working classes from their moral turpor (Cox 1993; McGuire 2009). This can be most clearly seen in the debates around the musical training of elementary school teachers, as Lynch (2010) as well as Cox (1993) note; many of the trainees would have been pupil-teachers, who were often pauper children (Dent 1977). An inspection at Cheltenham teachers training college found that the singing practices there were having a 'refining' influence on the students involved, and the inspector, our friend John Hullah, described how music cultivated 'patience, temperance, power of attention, presence of mind, self-denial, obedience and punctuality' (Cox, 1993, 16). However, at another teacher training college, trainees were not allowed to have piano lessons because the

college authorities thought 'it did not become persons of their station in life' (Lynch 2010, 176).

Music, in common with other modes of social interaction, was therefore often experienced in the company of others from similar class positions, and the discourses associated with it reflected the classed discourses circulating at the time. As well as its dangerous association with the body, music also threatened the bourgeois values of thrift and economy by being seen as 'wasteful' or unproductive (Leppert 1995, 26–7). For this reason, the founder of the Royal College of Music, George Grove, was obliged to emphasise music's 'usefulness' in a fundraising speech to donors in the 1880s, adding that "the College would be a place of work, and not of recreation and amusement [......]. Students would have to go there with the intention of [......] treating music as a serious matter of life" (Wright 2003); we have seen above that "serious" and "useful" can be seen as keywords of the nineteenth century bourgeoisie, both lending themselves towards the regularity and rationality of everyday life. The contrast with music hall, in which "pleasure is represented as an abundance" could not be more stark (Bailey 1986, xviii). Through discourses of hard work and their associated moral connotations of respectability, classical music therefore managed to escape charges of sensuality and emotional excess and so was able to be salvaged by the middle classes as acceptable, even for young women. The strict disciplining of audiences (Levine 1990; Johnson 1996; Weber 2004) and, as I will suggest, the disciplining of bodies in music education institutions, was also important in ensuring that music contributed towards moral purity.

A 'systematic' finishing school: disciplining while denying the female body

George Grove, who was so insistent that the students at the Royal College of Music would treat music *seriously* and work hard, is credited with bringing the 'systematic' training institutionalised in European conservatoires (predominantly Leipzig and Paris) to the UK (Wright 2003). Who was subjected to this 'systematic' training? It was overwhelmingly girls and young women, and

as Ehrlich (1985) suggests, they were predominantly middle class. This leads me to one of the key arguments of this chapter. I am going to demonstrate how female respectability and propriety — the proper — was integral to the successful disciplining of the body, as performed through classical music. In this way, the story of musical boundary-drawing in the nineteenth century, the legacies of which are institutionalised in the ecology described above, is closely intertwined with exclusions around sexuality and class.

Amateur music-making in the mid- to late-nineteenth century was being boosted by the increase in the cheap availability of printed music and pianos (Ehrlich 1985; Gay 1998). However, the respectability of music teaching as a profession was somewhat dubious, and there was a lack of teachers to instruct all of the would-be musicians from middle-class homes. Wright (2013) and Ehrlich (1985) suggest that the exam boards and conservatoires were established in order to meet this need. For the exam boards, however, the potential for a highly profitable commercial venture was clearly a key part of the impetus. And so it proved. Both the ABRSM and Trinity College expanded rapidly in Britain as well as in the colonies; and for both, the overwhelming majority of examinees were girls. By 1913 Trinity College exam board was dealing with about 28,000 students a year, and the ABRSM around 25,000, 90% of whom were women (Ehrlich 1985, 118-9). For the conservatoires, a pattern of roughly three times as many women as men prevailed.[8] (Men were more likely to follow informal training routes into the music profession, in which they were dominant.) Most of these women went on to become teachers (Ehrlich 1985, 119). While the RCM had 50 scholarships per year available for those unable to afford the fees (Wright, 2003, 241), the majority of students appear to be middle-class women (Ehrlich 1985). A musical education was an excellent provision for a daughter who might need to earn her own living, and as Ehrlich notes, the number of women categorising themselves as 'musicians and

8 The National Training School for Music, during its short-lived existence, had roughly three times more female than male students (Wright, 2005, 247). The Royal Academy of Music in 1884 had more than three times as many women as men (with thanks to Kathy Adamson from the RAM for assisting me with this archive enquiry).

teachers' in the census rose from 900 in 1841 to 19,100 in 1891 (p. 235). An early prototype of this type of student was Charles Dickens' sister Fanny, who attended the Royal Academy of Music in the 1820s. The Dickens family were two generations away from being servants, but John Dickens, the father, had managed to get work as a clerk. Despite this, they teetered on the edge of solvency and respectability — a precarious boundary that is constantly present in Dickens' writing. Dickens himself was put to work at age twelve while his family struggled to find the 50 guineas a year fees for his sister's Academy fees (Tomalin 2012); an injustice that he strongly resented. Musical training was therefore both a marker and also a ladder into the respectable middle class for those on its edges.

The existing historical literature on conservatoires deals with the preponderance of women attending conservatoires and taking grade exams by dismissing these institutions as 'little more than finishing schools' for young women (Herbert 2014). Rather than seeing the 'finishing schools' model of conservatoires as a failed version of the 'systematic' professional training that the RCM was set up to provide, I would argue that there was a pattern of *gendered* training occurring within music education in this period. These institutions, I suggest, were serving a demand for training respectable femininity. For the lower-middle classes, in particular, respectability was a major concern because of their closer proximity to the working classes. The discourses around classical music as morally 'exemplary' and 'uplifting' (Wright 2013, 32), as described above, were very convenient for the enormous emerging market in grade exams and conservatoire music education. Indeed, this musical practice lent itself extraordinarily well to the role of moral uplift through its requirement of sustained, detailed, daily disciplining of the body; the instruments and the music played on them are both difficult to master and require a high skill level that draws on thousands of hours of repetitive, disciplined work in order to be able to render them even passably well. The aesthetic of classical music is thus dependent on years, even decades, of weekly lessons and daily practice.

Given that it is mainly women who were going through these institutions, and notwithstanding how radical and important it was for women to have the possibility of economic independence through this route at a time when most professions were closed to women, I want to suggest that this 'systematic training' was in fact a component of classed boundary-drawing around the respectability of women's bodies. This required not only the strict disciplining of the body, but also effacing the body's sexuality in order to construct music as a respectable occupation for women. This training thus involved a *denial* of the body at the same time as it was being disciplined. This pattern of discipline and hidden sexuality is exposed by Ruth Solie in her reading of the diaries and correspondence of teenage girls in this period. She describes the 'piano-playing contract between women and Victorian society': the piano as punishment or discipline from the patriarchal authority of the bourgeois family; the piano as 'friend, confidant and companion'; and finally as 'repository for emerging sexuality' (Solie 2004, 12, 100–113). This disciplining needed to be particularly strict given the still contested status of music in relation to bourgeois morality, and the sensuous possibilities of the practice, as revealed in Leppert's (1995) reading of the many nineteenth century paintings of music lessons, always showing a male teacher instructing a refined, attractive young lady.

Examining refinement: bodily discipline and the music exam boards

As we will see throughout the thesis, this disciplining while denying the body continues to be important in shaping modes of practising, performing and listening in classical music. In order to give a sense of the mode of bodily disciplining and its continuity since the late nineteenth century, I have obtained copies of the ABRSM piano exam syllabi from 1890 to 2011, which show that the structure of the exam and therefore, arguably, the mode of bodily discipline, is very similar.[9] Examining first the syllabus for the 'senior grade' piano exam from 1890, the structure of the exam comprises scales, sight-reading and pieces dictated by the exam board, with a separate written paper on music theory. The close instruction for bodily comportment that is given in the 1890 syllabus is

9 With thanks to Sara Trepte from the ABRSM for sending me copies of these syllabi.

notable: 'N.B. the use of the third finger on the black keys is not compulsory'. This instruction demonstrates the level of disciplining of the body, down to fingering being dictated. The syllabus also sternly reminds the examinee that '[c]andidates are informed that a large proportion of the marks required to pass will be awarded for excellence in Technical Exercises' (i.e. scales). This shows the importance that was placed on accuracy in bodily demeanour.

Little has changed between 1890 and today. When we compare this syllabus to today's grade eight piano syllabus (and also to the 1958 syllabus, which it resembles closely), the structure of the exam is almost the same. The focus of the marking scheme appears to have shifted from prioritising 'Technical Exercises' towards providing a 'musically satisfactory result'; however examiners are still assessing 'accuracy of notes and rhythm'. The repertoire is broader in the 2011 syllabus than in 1890, but both syllabi specify Bach preludes and fugues, Beethoven sonatas, and works by Chopin and Schumann. The wording of the instruction above regarding fingering for scales has changed to 'any practical and systematic fingering which produces a good result will be accepted', suggesting that this is still a point of contention, and that the Board is responding to queries; young women both in 1890 and now have presumably been having the same conversations with their teachers and the same correspondence with the exam board about the appropriate, 'systematic' fingering to use in scales, expecting this to be dictated by the 'musical authority' of the exam board (Wright 2013). The point is that exam candidates must work out their fingering in a *systematic* way, as this is music that requires accuracy and consistency. This conveniently falls in line with the bourgeois value system of rationalisation, regulation and order (McClintock 1995, 167; Moretti 2014; Davidoff 2002), but most importantly, with ideals of respectable femininity around decorum and refinement of the body. As popular Victorian author John Claudius Loudon explained, 'women's virtuosity lay in her containment, like the plant in the pot' (Davidoff 2002, 191). The juxtaposition of 'virtuosity', a word associated with musical practice, and 'containment' suggests that this bodily disposition was a performance that could be learned by young women who

desired to demonstrate their respectability. This 'virtuosity' could then be put to its proper purpose, which was, in the words of another contemporary commentator, one Reverend Binney, to serve 'the mighty engine of masculine life' (p.118).

The preponderance of women in conservatoires today as well as in the late 1900s, when neither then nor now are women in positions of dominance in the classical music industry, suggests a reading of classical music as a gendered form of discipline. I have described how institution-building in music education in the late Victorian period helped create a respectable profession for young women by training them to be music teachers. This training disciplined women's bodies into respectability and propriety in a model that was exported to many parts of the Commonwealth. Notably, in Wright's account of the rapid expansion of the ABRSM he describes how the Board was losing money in Australia, but this was not seen as a problem because musical standards were seen as more important than profit (Wright 2013). This suggests that as well as the importance of the music exams as a profitable market, there was also, as Roe-Min Kok (2014) argues, an ideal of musical standard at stake that was about exporting the discipline of Empire. Musical standard can therefore be seen to be linked to the *successful* disciplining of the body. For women, then, respectability and propriety were at play in ideals of musical standard. Mastery of one's instrument denoted the capacity for restraint, rational labour and time-thrift; these bourgeois values became audible in the successful performance of classical music, and could then be examined and certified, and if necessary commodified in the form of piano lessons. In this way, proficiency in classical music was institutionalised as a boundary marker between respectable, middle-class women, and their 'degenerate' working-class others who lacked this 'containment' and refinement.

Boundary-drawing around the proper in the present

I have suggested that boundary-drawing around class in the late Victorian

period, as written onto the female body through its refinement and restraint, could be *performed* through proficiency in classical music. Music conservatoires and exam boards in the late nineteenth century proliferated to serve this demand for female respectability within an independent career. Classical music thus became a way of performing classed ideals of morality in the Victorian era. This worked to draw a boundary between the 'respectable' and 'degenerate' classes, and in addition was a means of imposing bourgeois morality on those who were feared to lack it, i.e. the working class. These ideals were intrinsic to the establishment of the major music education institutions which, as described in the institutional ecology, were highly formative in shaping ideas and practices around music for my participants.

What, today, is the legacy of these institutions and the discourses amidst which they were established? Is this boundary-drawing still meaningful to my participants as classed boundary-drawing, or is it simply a relic of the Victorian boundary-drawing that has been institutionalised into these practices, and that may have accumulated different meanings and associations since the late nineteenth century? In order to explore this question, I will now turn to accounts from my participants around taste boundary-drawing in order to demonstrate the ways in which the 'proper' is constituted as a category today. This is distinct from — but linked with — boundary-drawing around ability or musical standard, which I will discuss in the next chapter. Both modes of distinction draw on discourses of the proper, or 'propriety', but these are most clearly seen in contestations around taste, and as I will demonstrate, are central to the protected status of this musical practice, as well as working to camouflage the cultural capital that is accumulated through this practice.

This discourse of 'proper' music came up fairly often, again sometimes with an ironic tone of voice. As noted above, Owen saw Romantic music as offering an intellectual content that he perceived 'world' musics such as Indonesian gamelan to lack. This is part of an approach that frames classical music as legitimate knowledge, worthy of in-depth study, and positions less 'intellectual'

and more 'traditional' musics as 'other'. Similarly, Hannah, a singer, recounted how her school friends had asked her, 'what on earth's a music degree, do you just listen to songs?'

> Hannah: And I'm like, no no, a MUSIC degree, like proper music, so like…
> [laughs]
> AB: What do you mean, proper?
> Hannah: Hardcore music, Bach chorales and all of that [partly joking].

For Hannah, then, there is an ironic knowingness about seeing classical music as 'proper music'; she is aware that it is maybe snobbish or sets her apart, but she is also proud of being able to participate in 'hardcore music'. Contestations around what constitutes 'serious' or 'proper' music denoted the boundary between music-as-art and other musics, and were actively policed by some of my participants. Music by choral composer John Rutter was the clearest dividing line, echoing the social boundary-drawing around the populism of the Tonic Sol-fa movement in nineteenth century choral singing. Exemplifying the reversal of the field of restricted production (Bourdieu 1993), Rutter's choral music was extremely commercially successful. However, when Cantando were singing a well-known Rutter piece, I heard complaints from several members about the quality of the music. Francesca said that although she didn't like Rutter, her objection was not just about taste, but about how badly written it was for the sopranos, because they had to sing high in their range for long periods. (I feel the same about Beethoven's Ode to Joy, but the point holds for Rutter as well.) Others sheepishly admitted to me that they knew they weren't supposed to like Rutter but actually they really enjoyed it; this admission usually came after I had shamelessly declared that I liked it. Rutter's music was the disputed border-land between what counted as music-as-art and what didn't.

More clearly beyond the pale was Andrew Lloyd-Webber, similarly exemplifying Bourdieu's general rather than restricted field of production. However, adults in positions of musical authority could consecrate music from outside the

restricted field of production as acceptable. Conductor Olly, who had thoroughly charmed the county youth orchestra, chose a programme of film music for them to play, including music from Spiderman and Pirates of the Caribbean. In his habitual didactic mode, he explained to us during rehearsals how John Williams and other film composers had drawn on classical composers' techniques, thus dignifying this music with a lineage that drew on the 'greats'. Nevertheless, he made it clear to the group that film music was in a different category to the classical canon, referring to it a couple of times as 'McDonalds' music, because it had 'no nutrition value'. It was therefore acceptable to play film music as long as it was underpinned by a healthy diet of weighty, 'proper' orchestral repertoire; we had played Vaughan Williams and Shostakovich on the previous course. Significant here is the link with nineteenth-century discourses of physically and morally healthy bodies in the moral panics around the 'penny dreadfuls', popular magazines for boys in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century (Bristow 1991). By contrast, serious music is healthy and nutritious, important for growing bodies.

Breaking these taste boundaries of repertoire incurred scathing responses from some of the young people; vocal tutor Jeanette commented to me, 'don't you find they're terrible musical *snobs?'*. Cantando was singing a movement from the 'Joyful Messiah', a version of Handel's Messiah arranged by Quincy Jones into a soul-inspired version; Andy was scathing about this piece, griping to me that 'the assumption is that because it's a youth choir we want to do jazzy young choir numbers with jazz hands, you know what I mean? Cheesy. [...] Everyone hates it'. By contrast, Britten's Chichester Psalms, which they were also singing, was, he thought, an appropriate choice; although a twentieth-century composition (i.e. recent), it is a staple of the 'serious' choral repertoire so fits within the category of art music. Both Andy and his friend Helen spoke of their experience in Cantando as being their first exposure to 'proper [choral] repertoire', by which they meant canonic choral pieces with at least four vocal parts. Andy and Helen's reference to 'proper repertoire' echoes other participants' talk of 'serious music', suggesting a common understanding in this

world of what this means. This delineation of repertoire as 'proper' versus 'cheesy', 'jazzy', or 'McDonald's music' is important boundary-maintenance work, which, as I will suggest below, works to safeguard the value and legitimacy of classical music.

Is this simply an example of cultural capital working as it should? (Bourdieu 1986) As noted in the introduction, Bennett et al.'s study of cultural consumption in the UK found that classical music was the only genre of music that could be seen to carry any cultural capital. What I have added here is to show *how* this mode of cultural capital has been institutionalised and stored (Barlow et al. 1995) over a long period of time, retaining its prestige over time through the kind of boundary-maintenance work that I have described. This work of reinscribing value has to be continually performed; even Tristram's mission to make sure Cantando sang a broad range of repertoire was underpinned by bringing the methods of classical music practice — of detailed, meticulous ordering — to bear on non-classical repertoire (Green 1990), as well as inscribing the hierarchy of value onto the repertoire (as described in chapter four). I suggest, therefore, that there is a recursive process occurring where the boundary-drawing helps reproduce the social divisions around which it has been built up; as Benson and Jackson (2014), Reay et al. (2011) as well as Lawler (2005) suggest, boundary-drawing is still practised in myriad ways today by the middle classes.

Safeguarding classical music's privileged status

I began this chapter with describing Owen's journey from football into classical music. He told me how music gave him many more opportunities than playing football ever would have. Does classical music really have a special status that allows it to accumulate disproportionate rewards? While boundary-drawing around classical music in the nineteenth century was around class and respectability, today boundary-drawing is also necessary to safeguard its privileged funding status compared to other genres. As mentioned in the

introduction, more than one pound in every five of Arts Council portfolio funding in the region went to classical music. Maybe this bias should not be surprising when the head of the Arts Council, Sir Peter Bazalgette, recently spoke of the 'civilising influence of the arts', harking back to a colonialist discourse that would be more fitting in the Victorian era discussed above than today (Bazalgette 2014).

Classical music requires the exclusionary practices described above in order to demonstrate how it is different from other genres. This works to justify its special status and disproportionate investment. Boundary maintenance is therefore integral to the protected status of this musical practice. This constitutes a particularly stark example of Bernstein's theorisation of the classification of educational knowledge (Bernstein 1977). As we will see, these exclusionary practices also contribute to the formation of the powerful identity that goes with this knowledge code. As a result, it is unsurprising that the young people among my participants were vocal in their defence of classical music. They drew heavily on cultural preservation discourses in this defence, arguing that this music should be funded so that it will not die out, rather than because it was more valuable than other genres. Mainly, they simply told me how much they loved it, even to the point of Sara's assertion that 'opera has saved my life' (see chapter seven), a position that it is difficult to argue with. However, where a defence of classical music's value *was* forthcoming it was based on a Darwinian version of universalism: the idea that classical music is universally great and would be recognised as such across cultures and time. This was sometimes confused with the idea that classical music is the Ur-music from which all other musics derived.

By contrast, the adults in my study were much more likely to draw on legitimising discourses of the social benefits for young people of learning classical music, such as responsibility and punctuality, alongside discourses of 'great' music and tradition. These resembled the qualities propounded by John Hullah in the 1870s as being a result of participation in this music: 'patience,

temperance, power of attention, presence of mind, self-denial, obedience and punctuality' (Cox, 1993, 16). The adults in my research usually used slightly different wording, but other than temperance, the substance was very similar. In a sense what is most important here is that the boundaries are being drawn at all, being reconstructed in slightly different ways by different people and groups, and actively policed. Boundary-drawing around the 'proper' therefore serves a new and distinct function in the late twentieth- and early twenty-first centuries: to protect classical music's special status as 'legitimate' culture and its concomitant extra investment, which require these boundaries to be maintained in order to demonstrate its difference from other genres that do not have these privileges. If its value was shown to be historically contingent and tied to a particular group in society, then its special status could be less easily defended. This extra investment in turn protects the cultural and symbolic capital of the middle class.

Conclusion: performing respectability

In this chapter I have shown how different readings of the 'proper' have been used in drawing boundaries around classical music in order to safeguard its protected status. I began with Owen's story of how the 'institutional ecology' of youth classical music gave him a dazzling array of opportunities – and ones that he saw as being connected to the 'proper middle-class' world of Whitchester rather than the small lower-middle-class town where he grew up. Inclusion in this world gave him a sense of being important and valued, through being in demand as a musician by various prestigious schemes, groups, and institutions. This 'ecology' draws our attention to the period 1872-1893 when the richest and most authoritative institutions in classical music education were established. I described a system of bourgeois values from this period, built around the cornerstones of the 'cult of domesticity': female respectability and sexual restraint. I argued that the predominance of middle-class women in music education institutions suggests a pattern of gendered disciplining through music education. I identified bodily discipline, as performed through accuracy,

consistency, and careful ordering of the female body, as a mode of performing respectability and propriety. Finally, I examined boundary-drawing around the 'proper' in the present, as read through contestations over taste and repertoire. I suggested that 'serious' or 'proper' music as a category serves to protect the privileged status of classical music in funding, as well as its value as legitimate musical knowledge.

This chapter contributes towards two of the key themes of this thesis; firstly, middle-class boundary-drawing, and secondly, how the body is simultaneously disciplined, but also effaced. In order to perform respectability, the body must be disciplined and carefully controlled in each movement; but in order to be respectable, the female body, with its associations with sexuality especially when playing music, has to be effaced. I have suggested that this particular mode of embodiment, which I will explore further in chapters four, five, and six, is intertwined with classical music's history of gendered discipline in British music education institutions.

It remains to be seen how this mode of gendered embodiment and restraint is experienced by my participants today. Similarly, other bourgeois ideals, of disciplined labour, 'time-thrift', future-oriented accumulation, systematicity, and order, will be revisited throughout the thesis. Of course, the parallel histories of the growth and establishment of the bourgeoisie and of the music itself and its practices and institutions, means that it would be strange if this music were not in some guise an expression of bourgeois hopes, ideals and norms. But as Born (2012) reminds us, music may not directly reflect the social world that produces it but instead may 'refract' or reverse its logic; so we must remain open to the possibility that classical music can indeed be a site of critique or subversion of these values.

The next two chapters make up the rest of part one of this thesis. Chapter three continues with the theme of bodies and boundary-drawing. Rather than examining boundary-drawing through musical taste, as this chapter has done, it

explores ideas of musical standard, asking how this is formed in and between bodies, and what kinds of inclusions and exclusions this legitimises. It also asks how musical standard functions for my participants as a form of capital, describing how they draw on their class and gender identities to imagine different futures for themselves based on these positions. The chapter opens, however, with the second vignette in a triptych of accounts from working- and lower middle-class young men in my study. I have focused on accounts from these young men because they found this world the most alien, and therefore their stories were often the most revealing of its paradoxes. Having begun the current chapter with Owen's story, I will now introduce Andy, another musician from the New Symphony Orchestra. Similarly to Owen, Andy was amazed that through playing music he found himself in 'another world' to the one in which he had grown up.

**Chapter three: 'Everyone here is going to have bright futures'.
Capitalising on musical standard**

Similarly to Owen, Andy grew up in a small town some distance outside
Whitchester. He comes from a working class family; his mother is a school nurse
and his father a builder. He went to secondary school and sixth form locally,
'just a normal state school, not particularly good.' When I met him, he was in
the final year of a music degree at a redbrick university; when I mistakenly
referred to him studying at Oxford, he was pleased that he could 'pass' for being
an Oxford student. He started playing the flute at primary school with lessons
through the county music service, later changing to oboe, getting into classical
music through a friend at school. He describes how there was 'no music' in the
home growing up — only pop music on the radio — and he felt his parents don't
really 'get' the classical music world that has come to be his life:

> 'They didn't understand the music world, they didn't get the idea of
> standard almost. [...] They didn't listen to classical music and if they did
> want to, they wouldn't have understood the world [...], just the actual
> standard that actual musicians... it's insane, the amount of hours, and just,
> nothing goes wrong. It's a different world, I mean, you don't get that. [...] I
> always tease my friends and say my children will practise until their fingers
> bleed. Part of it is a joke, but part of it is — I do want them to play
> instruments, if I have children, and — I will make them practise'.

Andy has even worked out what instruments his children will play - bassoon,
viola, and horn, 'in that order'; the reason being that if they play rare
instruments, then they'll have more chance of getting on in the classical music
world. He's only partly joking when he says they will practise till their fingers
bleed. But why, at age 21, does he have this intense preoccupation with his
imaginary future children's entry into the classical music world? What is at stake
for him in this struggle, that he is adamant he will *make* them practise? In this
chapter I follow on from the theme of boundary-drawing in the previous chapter

to explore exclusions on the basis of musical standard or ability. The key question this chapter asks is what is musical standard and what does it do as capital. I describe how musical standard is formed in and between bodies. I call this the 'sociability' of musical standards, by which I mean that musical ability or standard is always formed socially, even while it is judged individually. We can see through Andy's and Owen's experiences what is at stake in ideas of musical standard: the possibility of inclusion into this valued world full of opportunities.

The chapter begins with an account from Megan, a singer, talking about how her teacher shaped her to become not only the musician she is, but the person she has become. This lays out the bodily interaction and investment that goes into forming musical ability, within the close bond of the teacher-student relationship. Next I turn to looking at how musical standard is produced and recognised in and between bodies, uncovering a tension between the recognition that musical standard is mutable according to who you play or sing with, yet exists alongside a firm belief in hierarchies of ability. These hierarchies of ability reinforce social hierarchies and exacerbate the high levels of competitiveness and critique that are found in youth classical music. Having laid out the building blocks of musical standard, I ask how it is capitalised on by my participants, describing how musical standard was behind an exodus from the local authority music service by two of the groups in this study, framing this in terms of the 'agentic citizenship' or choice agenda of the middle class, as described by Reay et al. (2011, 13). The chapter closes by mapping out the varying trajectories of my participants. I identify three groups, based on participants' background and aspirations, which demonstrate the different ways in which they draw on this investment in musical ability to shape their futures.

'She crafted me'. The intimate moulding of the teacher-student relationship

I met Megan when she was singing one of the lead parts with the Young Opera

Company. She had never been in an opera before, and she was finding the experience somewhat terrifying, so I was doing what I could from my position as rehearsal pianist to support her — playing her melody along with her and giving her encouragement. She was in her final year of A levels at a top state sixth form college; her mother was a headteacher and her father an 'artisan baker'. She was somewhat atypical among my participants, in that she wanted to go on to do contemporary music rather than classical, and was more at home as a singer-songwriter and folk musician than a classical musician. She had only been singing classically since she was fifteen, when she started singing lessons (paid for by her parents) with Jeanette at her state secondary school. This relationship with Jeanette had been transformative for her. While she described how the singing lessons had made her sing in a less 'free' way, making her more self-critical, they also had an enormous impact on her, both personally and musically:

> M: I wouldn't be the person I was without my singing lessons […] you go on such a personal journey with [your teacher] […], they craft YOU. It feels like she crafted me around my voice in my singing lessons […] I think I totally trusted her, trusted her judgment, trusted how she was teaching me. And she really got me, so…

> AB: As a person?

> M: Yeah, as a person and through my voice at the same time. […] And I don't think - I can't regret those lessons because I can't think of how I would be if I hadn't had them.

This discussion touches on not only the deep trust which Megan felt for her teacher and the way in which she felt this age (fifteen to eighteen) was a formative period for her, but most importantly for this discussion, the way in which her singing voice, and through her voice her *self*, has been a co-production between her and her teacher. Through crafting her voice, her teacher was crafting her. The emerging materiality of the voice became part of the

scaffolding around which her sense of self developed.

This process meant that singing lessons, for Megan, were a 'vulnerable' space:

> M: Sometimes I go in and it's not linked to anything you've been doing, but I just burst into tears, so I try and sing and I just cry. It's like a space, an hour in the week where it's just you and you and yourself and you can't do anything else. [...] you can't hide anything, cos when I'm learning to sing it's quite a sensitive time

> AB: Personally?

> M: yeah, it's like an hour that is... sacred in a way, like, I don't know, it's for yourself, and... it's vulnerable.

> AB: If there's something going on for you emotionally, you can't hide it?

> M: yeah because it's there in whether you've practised, it's there in how you sound, it's there in the emotion of the music, sometimes I'm singing a piece and I'd had like the worst week, it was like an awful week, and I was just singing the piece and my voice just cracked and I just cried, and Jeanette was just there to pick me up again.

Megan, therefore, saw her sense of self as constructed through the materiality of the voice. The formation of self and voice was an intimate, vulnerable process requiring great trust in her teacher. Many of my participants, in all of the groups within my study, had long-standing and very close relationships with their instrumental or vocal teachers, some of them having been learning with their teachers for ten years or more. When I interviewed Sara, for example, she was excited at having just become godmother to her former teacher's first child. This teacher had taught her for free when she could no longer afford lessons, and they were still very close even though the teacher had moved away. Similarly, Francesca, also eighteen, still had the same singing teacher she had had since she started lessons at age nine. She described how 'she knows me SO well [...]

it's in the context of my voice but she knows what makes me tick and what she needs to say to get what she wants'. For sisters Rosie and Beth the relationship with their teacher was a family one, as he had taught both their elder sisters as well as teaching them for years. And when I accompanied violinist, Ellie, on the piano for a lunchtime concert, her ex-violin teacher came to hear her play, and we all went out for afternoon tea afterwards. These relationships go far beyond the half-hour-a-week transmission of knowledge to become intimate, trusting spaces of personal development. Rather than simply musical 'knowledge' or skills being passed on, the very expressive capacities of the student — their musical voice — is moulded through the teacher's guidance and support.

Similarly, when I observed one of Ellie's violin lessons, I could see how her musical 'self' was shaped through this embodied, semi-verbal relationship of trust and openness. I'd met Ellie in the NSO. She'd been to a top private school in Whitchester, as had her brother, Jack, also in the orchestra. Her father had his own business as an IT contractor, and her mother, who had emigrated from China, was a housewife and also helped out with her family's business. Ellie was in the final year of a music degree at a redbrick university. She was having lessons with a teacher at a music conservatoire, Roger, and she had told me several times how amazing he was.

I observe one of Ellie's lessons not long before a performance exam for her degree course; she is stressed and nervous and this is audible in her playing. Roger, a calm, genial man in his 60s, was listening along as she plays through her pieces, starting with the Brahms G major violin sonata — a wonderfully expansive, graceful piece of music which I know very well from having played it on the piano. The rehearsal room at one of the London conservatoires where the lesson takes place is complete with a seven-foot grand piano, a harpsichord, and tasteful pictures on the pristine white walls. The pianist, Tom, places the first two chords which start the piece — just simple G major chords, the piece beginning as though we have all the time in the world. His hand and arm gestures are elegant and flowing, his whole body embodying the character of the

piece. After the first two chords the violin comes in. It's a gentle, lilting melody, but Ellie doesn't seem at ease in it; she is looking intently at the music and she's not in the flow of the piece, and her sound is muted, inward. After a few bars, though, she starts to play out, to play more expressively. As he listens, Roger gestures along with the music, half conducting, half dancing, almost. His body can't keep still for more than a few seconds at a time. It's the kind of piece that encourages flowing, expansive, open gestures. His motion seems to be led by his hands, flowing outwards in circles, but his whole body is involved, his legs lifting onto his toes as he sits, his torso moving in circles to follow his hands — he is living through each moment of the music as much as if he were playing it. Occasionally he picks up the violin on the table next to him and plays along with Ellie for a phrase or two, bolstering her line, the sudden vibrancy of his sound adding a burst of energy and expression to her playing. After her initial nervousness, Ellie's body starts to move expressively, too. She is cushioned between the relaxed support of the pianist as he provides warm, lilting G major lines, and the body of her teacher moving with her body, creating her phrasing with his gestures. I find myself moving along with the music as well, unable to listen in stillness.

Later in the lesson, they are all clustered around the piano discussing some point in the music; Tom, the accompanist, leans forward, smiling, listening to their conversation, and Ellie and Roger stand over the music, gesturing towards something in the score — their three heads together. It seems like a scene of musical intimacy from a nineteenth century painting. This is only slightly marred by my knowledge that Roger and Tom are being paid, and Ellie (via the university) is paying them. Roger hasn't actually said that much during the lesson, more often hinting at points of correction of tuning or phrasing which he has obviously told her in earlier lessons. At this stage of preparation, close to the performance, all the details should already be in place, so his teaching is embodied rather than verbal — communicating the phrasing and expression of the music through his movements and his occasional interjections on the violin, which lift and carry Ellie's playing along with him.

This is how the musical 'self' is formed; through hours, years, of this embodied communication. This is what Megan means when she says that Jeanette 'crafted me'. Her expressive voice was formed, as I am watching Ellie's being formed, through taking on the gestures, the phrasing, the encouragement, and the physicality of her teacher, as part of herself. This kind of investment is what my participants are talking about when they tell me about the great trust they have for their teachers. Some, like Nilanka, talked about having 'bad luck' with teachers in having to change lots of times because his teachers kept moving away – a highly disruptive occurrence. For a small minority of my participants, who I will discuss in the next chapter, this relationship was a negative and destructive one. These accounts show how my bland phrase, the 'sociability of musical standards' fails to capture the type of interactions that occur in lessons. These vignettes show how this kind of encouragement and support from adults is integral to learning this musical practice, and how it cannot be separated from a broader sense of identity; as Megan described, her sense of self wasn't a pre-existing entity which was simply expressed through the voice, but rather the materiality of the voice was moulded by her teacher, within a relationship of deep trust and intimacy.

Breathing socially: how musical standard is recognised in and between bodies

The above description of Ellie's lesson shows how her nervousness and constrained expressivity were gradually dissolved by her teacher's presence. Far from being a passive listener, he was actively shaping her playing. This idea was corroborated by the common understanding among my participants that you play better when you play or sing with people who are better than you. Several people told me they preferred to play or sing in ensembles where most people were better than them, so that they would play better and learn more. Conversely, being in a group where you're the best player and others aren't as good as you was viewed negatively. There is thus an enabling factor to playing or singing with musicians of a higher standard, in that it means you play better than you would on your own.

However, alongside this idea, everyone also believed in 'objective' measures of musical standard such as grade exams. The understanding of musical ability in the grade exam model is one of improvement comparable to climbing a ladder, getting better according to how hard you work at it. These two ideas — of standard as objective, and of standard as mutable according to who you're playing with — are not entirely incompatible, in that technical ability certainly improves with hard work. But it was also agreed that working hard in the wrong way could in fact damage your technique, so the investment of a good teacher was indispensable. I will spend the next two sections exploring this tension between musical standard as variable according to the standard of people you were playing or singing with; and as quantifiable, individualised and hierarchalised. First, I will look at how standard or ability is recognised and enhanced between musical bodies. The following section describes how this is converted into musical and social hierarchies, which were enormously important in shaping young people's identities.

I had numerous accounts from my participants of the details of breathing, energy, listening, and similar micro-sociological processes of how musical and expressive ability was enhanced and affectively transmitted between people, both between players, between player and conductor, player and teacher, and within the group as a whole. Above, I have explored this relationship between teacher and pupil; now I will turn to how this occurs between players, and how these micro-sociological communications can be turned into appraisals or labels of musical standard, often read through 'confidence'.

Ellie, who we met above, told me 'I have spent my whole life playing in an orchestra', and one of the pleasures of this was the 'inspiration' that came from a conductor: 'I want someone on the podium who inspires me to play better […] I want someone to make me play so amazingly that... […] you put all of your work in to it'. If the conductor was failing to do this, inspiration could come from the person sitting next to her:

> Ellie: If my desk partner is good then I will play much better, if he inspires

me to play better.

AB: How does that communication happen, if someone's really good, how can you tell?

Ellie: You can hear it, it's weird, you just feel it when you're sitting next to them.

AB: What are you getting?

Ellie: It's like a weird kind of connection, you might look at each other and smile because you realise that you've just done something exactly the same, exactly the same feeling. For example, we were doing Brahms One last night, my desk partner was this guy called Tim, really really good violinist, really incredible, and the reason he is such a good leader is because he is inspiring to listen to and to watch, like everything he does is like 'this is what I'm going to do, follow me' – well, not 'follow me', 'take it if you want, this is how I want to play it'. He always does it in a way that's not commanding, 'you must do this', it's always an invitation. For me sitting next to him, he's one of the best desk partners I would ever sit next to, because I feel like he will give as much as I give him, it's equal.

The kind of leadership she is describing has resonances with the way the conductors in this study described their leadership (as explored in chapter six). The welcoming, inviting gesture was one that Ellie could not but follow, and which she felt made her play better. This kind of non-linguistic communication also occurred among the choral singers, who would be picking up embodied signals which were simultaneously used as information for fitting into the group, as well as to be able to position others as 'talented' - similarly to how Ellie labels Tim as 'incredible'. I have called one example 'breathing socially', where Holly described how she listens to the person standing next to her in the choir, and from this she can tell how good a singer they are:

'If they're quite confident in what they're singing, they're confident enough to do the movements of when to breathe, they know exactly when they're going to breathe, um, when they're going to come in, 'cause they move with it, and it's those little things that you can tell.

Singer Jonty also describes listening to those breathing around him:

And another basic thing is staggered breathing, it's something that you get used to the more you sing. I feel like now I have absolutely zero compunction about 'oh I need a breath, I'll just take a breath, we're in the middle of this syllable' — you're in the middle of the choir, no-one's going to notice, I'm sure when I started I'm sure I was like 'no I'll sing from the last place I was told I'm allowed to breathe, until this place.

In these extracts, Jonty and Holly both describe a subtly complex process of listening/breathing — wondering when you're allowed to breathe, who will notice when you're breathing, whether you will actually move with the breath or pretend to hide it in case you're in the wrong place. Once Jonty is confident enough to simply breathe when he needs to, this process becomes simpler. But there is a whole level of communication going on at the level of the breath and the body which, as Holly describes, can contribute to labelling someone as a confident or less confident singer. Musical ability is therefore perceived in what DeNora (1995) calls an 'interpretive act' drawing on very subtle signals of breath, movement, or lack of movement. Similarly, Ellie described her desk partner Tim as a 'really really good violinist, really incredible', and how 'everything he does is like 'this is what I'm going to do, follow me''. His role as leader (the first violinist of the orchestra) means he is required to perform this confidence, and Ellie is entirely convinced by his performance, and his confidence. I will return to this idea of recognition of someone's musical ability through their confidence at the end of this chapter, reading it onto participants' differing social trajectories.

'In orchestras, it's set out by hierarchy, it's made on a hierarchy'. Musical and social hierarchies

In orchestras, however, ability was clearly visible, demarcated by seating position. While in the two orchestras examined in my study, this was a relatively relaxed negotiation, for those of my participants in the National Youth Orchestra (NYO) it had become an important marker of hierarchies of ability. This hierarchy of standard, despite its inconsistencies, was immensely important to the identities of many of the young people, particularly the orchestral musicians. The orchestra is laid out in a hierarchical arrangement which players are slotted into. As well as hierarchies within groups, there were also hierarchies between groups, where the strong disinclination, almost fear, from some of the advanced orchestral players of playing in groups of a lower standard, was palpable. Owen commented scathingly about the Whitchestershire County Youth Orchestra after they lowered the standard required for entry, that 'they let anyone in now'. Why was he afraid of playing in a group where most people weren't as good as him?

This fear of loss of standard, and defense of the hierarchy of musical standard over everything else, was captured in debates around changes to the NYO. A new chief executive had been appointed who wanted to abolish hierarchy in the string sections. Cellist Fred was incensed by this:

> [The new manager] always said that there should not be a hierarchy in NYO, but there's always going to be a hierarchy [...] In orchestras, that's the thing, [it]'s set out by hierarchy, it's made on a hierarchy.[...] When you come into NYO, it's the process of moving up, like, how do you measure progression in an orchestra? Each year, you go from [desk] nine, to seven, to whatever, to, move up from desk nine, that's the natural progression. Say, oh it's my second year, I'm fifth desk, next year I really want to be like desk three, desk two, that's my aim. You come back next year, desk seven, no explanation. Is that the way to motivate...?

As with most members of the NYO who I spoke to, Fred and his friend Jack (Ellie's brother) were both intensely loyal to the NYO and therefore utterly

furious at the changes (including changes to repertoire, personnel, and social arrangements) which the new manager had brought in. Fred and Jack, however, had a lot to lose. They were part of a 'joke group' (as they described it) called the 'Alpha Males', which was formed of seven of the young men in the orchestra who had had hoodies made for themselves saying 'Alpha One', 'Alpha Two', etc. The new manager told them they couldn't do this, and they were incensed, telling me that 'I think the whole orchestra knew it was a joke, we took it as a complete joke'. I highlighted this use of irony or 'joking' in chapter one, suggesting that it was masking a truth that was unacceptable to articulate openly. What is being (not very well) masked here is the way social hierarchy is normalised and made acceptable by the hierarchy of musical standards. Similarly, Ellie (who had also been in the NYO) also described:

> 'Like with everything, the NYO had a hierarchy, social groups in the orchestra, and that's how it works, you have your leader, you have your principles [section leaders] and they are the top people, and they're decided by the violin professors and they know what they're doing'.

Ellie asserted 'it's not even possible' to make the orchestra non-hierarchical. From both Ellie's and Fred's accounts emerges the trust in the judgement of the adults who make these decisions; the 'violin professors… know what they're doing' asserts Ellie. This kind of trust in authority was integral to the functioning of this social world – respect for elders and tradition was a sine qua non, and musical authority trumped other kinds of authority. (The implications and experience of this will be explored further in chapter six.)

It is also telling that Ellie links the 'social groups in the orchestra' to this hierarchy; what is at stake is who one's friends and sexual partners are as well as one's own identity. People tended to be friends with other musicians who were of a similar standard to them. Most of my participants also said their closest, most intense friendships were with the friends they'd met through music, and for a few, all their friends were musicians. In addition, out of the nine people who mentioned romantic relationships to me, only one was in a relationship

with a non-musician. Consequently, there is a sense in which young musicians come to know themselves — their identity and status within the group — through this hierarchy. This is also closely connected to their decisions whether or not to pursue music as a career. For those who weren't going to pursue music (about half my interviewees), it was often because they felt they weren't good enough. In this respect there was a degree of self-reflexivity about this awareness of musical standard; they couldn't escape being aware of their own position in a visually demarcated hierarchy in which they were constantly being judged by others.

'Being with such like-minded people'. Structures of affinity in social space

The fear of playing in a group of a lower standard is therefore not 'just' about music but about the loss of status which has been so hard-earned; about how you perceive yourself and how others perceive you; and about who you are likely to socialise with or have sex with. The powerful identity formation that is occurring here can thus be seen to be linked with the social trajectories identified earlier: the probability of having a high standard of musical ability is to a large part dependent on one's trajectory in social space because of having started music at a young age. As Bourdieu (1987) describes, this affinity means that people with similar trajectories come together and reinforce their resemblance, in a recursive process.

These close friendships were linked to finding a congenial social space outside school. This was particularly valued by two of my participants who told me they had been bullied at school, and found in youth music a scene where they felt that they fitted in. For another, Lisa, youth music was a place where she felt at home, away from her 'chavvy' secondary school; there was a clear understanding that youth classical music spaces did not overlap with 'chavvy' spaces. Hannah was a little clearer when she expressed how she loved being in Cantando because of 'being with such like-minded people'. She went on to describe what she meant:

> 'we're all young, most people have been through [the top sixth form

college], and it's all kind of Whitchester people, you've always got some link from some other ensemble, so it's nice to all come together and just being with everyone who's sort of...'

Everyone who's sort of what? She runs out of words just at the point of articulating this commonality. This discursive gap is, I would suggest, significant, in that it points towards something that is not usually or readily articulated— the shared social space which is recognised but doesn't usually need to be described. This shared social space is constituted by what Bourdieu calls a 'structure of probabilities of drawing individuals together or apart, a structure of affinity and aversion between them' (Bourdieu 1987, 6–7). The 'similar conditions' of the young musicians in these groups have led them to seek out others who resemble them and reproduce this 'structure of affinity' – which they recognise even if they can't always describe it. That this 'fitting in' was not just about musical skills was made explicit by Tristram, the conductor, who described the benefits of the 'self-selection' processes in Cantando:

> 'And obviously it is word of mouth [for recruiting new members] at the moment but in a way that is a little bit better than having all comers because the people who are in the choir know the sort of calibre of person that should be, so it is quite self-selecting. It's quite limiting, because you don't have a wide pool of people to choose from but it does mean that the people who come forward are usually, more often than not, just going to fit straight in'.

The word 'calibre' is interesting. Does Tristram means musical calibre or social worth more broadly? As this chapter has been arguing, musical standard or 'calibre' is inextricable from social value and relationships. His use of the word calibre also contains an assertion that worth can be measured. Harking back to the previous chapter and the identification of nineteenth-century bourgeois values which have found their way into this musical tradition, Davidoff (2002) describes an obsession with measuring and ranking developed among the

emerging middle class. This is part of the value system behind the hierarchies which Fred, Ellie, and Jack were so vehemently defending.

Competitiveness and criticism

I have described how social and musical hierarchies within groups were extremely important to many of my participants. However, as we saw in the first section with Ellie's and Megan's lessons, musical calibre was accumulated through intensive shaping by musical adults, over a period of years. This process required an openness, a willingness to be shaped by others, which, as described in the introduction, I am theorising as a mode of bodily porousness, trust, or earnestness.

Megan's description of being 'crafted' by Jeanette also required Megan to open herself up to critique. This included both self-critique, as well as criticism or direction from others, a process which she found extremely difficult. She saw self-criticism as going 'hand in hand with a desire to do well', while also finding that 'it's cut-throat for yourself'. This self-criticism was something she thought had probably increased since she started learning classical singing at age fifteen, when she was going through a 'confidence crisis', 'and now it's part of it, part of learning'. The process of taking instructions from the director in putting on an opera exacerbated this for Megan:

> 'Someone's criticising you — they're not, they're directing you, they're saying, 'you should be over here' or 'you should be standing still', but I've immediately turned it to 'should', [...] I can't help it. So even if [the director]'s saying you know, 'turn round here', I hear that as 'you haven't turned round, you're doing it wrong', and it's just, that's just the way I am'.

Megan individualises this experience of self-critique, in that she thinks it's 'just the way I am'. She was surprised or possibly disbelieving when I told her that the self-criticism she was dealing with was in fact quite common among other young people I'd spoken to; in the groups in my study, judgments of oneself and others were being made frequently. Isabelle, another singer, had found her level of

internal self-critique had increased exponentially as soon as she started a music performance degree course:

> 'there were just so many people who were literally doing the same songs as me, right next to me, straight after me, or had performed the same recital straight after me, and I was like, I'm not going to be […] better than them'.

Being double cast in the opera production, singing the same role as Emily, exacerbated this effect on Isabelle:

> 'I think, oh god [I'm] not going to be better than that. It just makes me not want to do it, so that's what makes me practise over and over again. […] It's really really bad, I don't know what it is, no matter if someone's younger or older than me, I'll still be like, I want to be better!'

It wasn't so much that the practices of classical music introduced a level of self-critique which was previously absent; rather, they reinforced and exacerbated existing patterns of self-critique and competitiveness. Patterns of hard work and repetitive practice could easily turn into obsessive perfectionism, fear and anxiety. As I will discuss in chapters five and six, however, the stopping and starting, correcting and critiquing, instructing and directing, which occur in rehearsals and lessons are an integral part of the tradition of classical music practice. However, another young woman in the group, Elizabeth, who said she was 'quite critical of myself', also described herself as 'quite a confident person, in life, I don't tend to put myself down that much'; she saw her habit of self-critique as a positive, necessary quality. However, for Elizabeth, judgement was externalised onto others 'all the time'. Indeed, making judgements of self and others' performances was a skill being learnt and practised in these groups.

The potential for this critical judgement was exacerbated in the Young Opera Company production by many of the roles being double cast, with two singers learning exactly the same part. Most of the young people assured me they didn't feel in competition with whoever they were double cast with, but they also

described how this lack of competitiveness was a contrast to other sites of youth classical music. Francesca described how youth music is:

> 'quite competitive in terms of, everyone's developing and growing and so you judge yourself by the people around you, and the whole question of who gets solos and that kind of thing can become very, very fraught [...] I think a good deal of the critique [...] is genuinely intended and presented as a way of being better, [...but] from my own experience it's very easy to internalise it as 'I'm not good'.

Similarly, Ellie told me some of her friends had needed to take a year out of music college because the environment was so competitive. This competitiveness can therefore be seen to be an externalisation of the self-critical judgements that this musical practice required in order to get to a high standard. Notably, even though Jeanette described her pedagogy as 'affirmation, affirmation, affirmation', showing a keen awareness of the critical nature of this practice, this still made few inroads on Megan's 'constant' self-critique in rehearsals: she described how she just 'wouldn't hear' the positive comments but would only remember the critical ones.

I have described how musical standard or ability is both constructed and recognised in and between bodies, in ways which attribute it to being a quality of some bodies rather than others. Ways of moving and shaping a musical phrase were formed through an intimate, non-linguistic mode of communication between teachers and students. This was also present between musicians in groups, who would pick up micro-cues around the way in which someone breathes or moves to spur them on to play better, as well as to make judgements about how good others were. These judgements informed both social and musical hierarchies of status, which were vigorously defended by my participants. They also reinforced the 'structures of affinity' that meant youth classical music was made up of 'like-minded people'. These judgements could also turn into competitiveness and self-critique which became negative for some of my participants. Most interestingly, there was something of a contradiction

around the idea of musical standard. It could both be measured objectively on an individual level, and people could be placed in a hierarchy of ability, but at the same time, it was mutable according to who you were playing or singing with.

I will spend the rest of this chapter exploring what musical standard does and how it forms an expression of classed habitus, as well as working as a form of cultural capital. Firstly I will examine how musical standard was used to justify two of the groups in my study leaving the local authority music services to be run privately in order to illustrate how collective mobilisation of musical standard was orchestrated, and secondly, I will analyse of the different ways in which my participants capitalised on their musical ability.

Musical standards and the flight from public services

Soon after starting my fieldwork I found myself hearing from several people the story of Cantando youth choir's defection from the county music service. 'It was basically a parental coup', Jeanette, one of the tutors involved with Cantando, told me:

> 'There was a fall-out, I think, between Tristram [the conductor] and the music service, and Tristram said he was going to quit, and the music service said, [...] fine we'll find someone else to take the youth choir, and I think the word got out [...] so the parents turned to Tristram and me [...] saying, would we take over the choir and run it privately?'

The choir had been started some years previously by music teacher and conductor Gregory. When Jeanette came on board, before the coup, she found the young people in the group had 'an enormous sense of snobbery. Oh my god! They were all, you know, 'we are very good at what you do and you're not coming in this choir unless you're as good as us [...] people who think they're wonderful sight-readers and have the right to be in the choir'. When Jeanette and Tristram

took over from Gregory, the 'training choir' of less experienced singers had just been combined with the youth choir. As Jeanette described, 'there'd been a lot of hostility about that, because the people who felt that they were really good were really sick about being combined'. Tristram's abilities as a conductor soon made the choir even better than it had been before, despite the apparently lower calibre of the members. Hence it was a serious matter when the choir seemed about to lose him, as the standard of the group would drop.

The second defection from the county, that of the New Symphony Orchestra (NSO), was slightly more discreet. Helen and Andy, who ran the NSO, had in fact met and become friends while singing together in Cantando. Lamenting the low standard of the Whitchestershire County Youth Orchestra (WCYO), they decided to form a better orchestra for young people locally. Helen described how it had come about:

> 'We were all having a drink after a concert, and we were saying, [...] the County Youth Orchestra is shocking, you know the standard is dropping every single year, they're way too ambitious, it's so expensive [...] So we were having this age-old conversation of, isn't it a shame, there are so many great players in Whitchester, and they're all our friends and wouldn't it be so much fun if we just got together and played some music. [...] We met up a month later, and sat down and came up with a name for the orchestra, came up with lists of players...'

And in this way the NSO was formed. Players were recruited through friends and friends of friends, with an older demographic than the WCYO, longer courses and more ambitious repertoire. Helen's low opinion of the WCYO was shared by other members of the NSO; Jonty described how 'it's become a feedback loop, because they're not thought to be that good [...] the county ensembles don't attract good people.'

There are several layers to these narratives. On one level, it is simply a story of

people wanting to play in the best group, with the highest standard. This was the 'common sense' position of my participants, one which needed no explanation or justification. On another level, however, these are stories of the flight from public services by those who feel entitled to a higher quality of youth music-making than they're getting, and who have the resources, contacts and skills to make these groups happen without public support.[10] Digging even deeper, these narratives reveal some of the assumptions behind classical music practice which are so taken-for-granted they may not even be seen or discussed by those involved; or where they are revealed, they are fiercely defended. One is encapsulated in the attitude that, as Jeanette described it, 'you're not coming in this choir unless you're as good as us' — the idea that it is important to sing or play with people at the same standard as yourself, rather than having mixed ability groups.[11] Jeanette challenged this attitude by letting in people with a lower standard of sight-reading, even though 'the people who felt that they were really good were really sick about being combined' with the less able singers. It's notable here that it is the adult tutors — Jeanette and Tristram — who are trying to make the entrance requirements less strict, while the young people and their parents in both Cantando and the NSO are the fierce defenders of the status quo and tighter standards of entrance: defending the legitimacy of the system which has rewarded them.

10 As well as being about musical standard, there had been complaints about the inefficient administration of the county music service (which, to be fair, ran an enormous number of projects with a very small team). This raises the question of who should do the administration for these groups; it was usually women, sometimes paid, sometimes not, a question to which I will return in the conclusion.

11 Research from sociology of education within schools shows that mixed ability classes rather than setting or streaming are better for students as they encourage 'pupil responsibilization' as Diane Reay describes; 'teachers don't teach to the whole class but pupils can go along at their own pace more' and learn from others as well as the teacher (1998, 551). Furthermore, as Reay and Ball note (1997) setting is seen as one of the reasons why middle class parents go to comprehensives rather than leave the state system. However, as will become clear in part two, the pedagogy of large ensembles works almost entirely on a model of teaching to the whole class and there is very little opportunity for 'pupil responsibilization' as the learning model of these groups works on a top-down, uni-directional model from conductor to musicians, a model which is consistent across amateur, professional and educational environments of classical music ensembles (one-to-one lessons, however, have the potential to be more pupil-directed). The main objective is usually a good quality performance and learning objectives for the young people tend to remain undefined.

As well as avoiding mixed ability groups, another assumption that underlies these two narratives is the overall aim of raising the musical standards or 'excellence' of the group as a whole. This was an aim shared by young people and adults in these groups. Working towards the highest musical standards was an unquestioned, unquestionable good, trumping any other considerations around access, affordability, or diversity. Even when Jeanette and Tristram opened up Cantando to a more mixed ability group, this was a step towards building a bigger choir with a better sound; the quality of the performance would in the end be stronger, and those who weren't as good at sight-reading would just have to work harder to keep up. Similarly, the formation of the NSO in order to have a better quality orchestra was so obvious as to not need justification. The 'access' programme of cultural policy in recent decades (O'Brien 2013, 41) could not compete with this ideology of musical excellence. While the county music service put on free buses to bring in players from remote corners of the county to the WCYO, these kinds of access strategies were not undertaken by the NSO or Cantando (the latter group, however, did put a lot of energy into access routes through primary schools' choirs, but this programme was relatively new and therefore the results were yet to be seen).

This 'pyramid' model of musical excellence, where (as WCYO conductor, Olly, put it to me) 'to get a good violinist, 10,000 violinists have to start' is the norm in classical music education. The recent National Plan for Music Education (2011) follows this model; all children get a brief opportunity to learn an instrument in school through large group teaching, and those who are discovered to have musical ability or talent are supposed to be given the opportunity to continue. This means the question of who is allowed to define what musical talent or excellence consists of becomes important. As we have seen seen, learning to make judgment is an integral aspect of this musical practice: being judged, learning to judge others, and learning to inhabit the mode of authority which pronounces these judgments.

We can therefore add 'excellence' to the discussion of 'standards' or 'ability'. The

defections from the county by the NSO and Cantando shows how the slow process of embodied shaping of musical ability described at the beginning of this chapter becomes magnified when people with similar trajectories in social space meet and discover their 'affinity'. This maps rather too neatly onto broader classed practices. Remember in the introduction, Reay et al's (2011, 12) description of the 'bourgeois self', whose values include 'agentic citizenship and a propensity for choice', as well as entitlement, educational excellence, confidence, competitiveness, hard work, and an ability to erect boundaries. Classical music practice not only reproduces these qualities but camouflages them by making the goal of musical ability and excellence seem inevitable and indisputable. In this way, re-configuring these groups outside the public sector could be read as a microcosm of classed practices more broadly, performing on a smaller canvas the contestations of the school choice agenda (Reay et al. 2011; Ball 2002; Power et al. 2003). School choice has been a site where discourses and disputes over class and entitlement have been made most explicit, and similarly to these disputes, classical music education's negotiations of privilege can be read as a fable of how that which seems inevitable and right to my participants in forming Cantando and the NSO, can reproduce the hierarchies and boundaries which keep this musical practice firmly within the families of the privileged.

Uncertain capital

The young people in these groups have been shaped and moulded, invested in, criticised, praised, and ranked. What next? What do they aspire to do with all of this musical ability they have accumulated over their ten or fifteen years of investment in practice? How can this shed light on how classical music might work as cultural capital? As Bennett et al. (2008) note, classical music is the only form of music they could identify as carrying cultural capital, but they were unclear as to how it works. The amount of effort, time, and money that parents and young people have put into it similarly suggests they expect some return on their hard work, as does the huge investment by independent schools in

resources for classical music. In what form is return on this capital expected? In the form of musical pleasure throughout their adult life? Or more material rewards, such as profitable social networks, high status marital partners, or well paid jobs? These questions will recur throughout the thesis, but in order to establish them, I will now describe how I have categorised my participants into three groups according to their social background in combination with their aspirations. I have called these three groups the 'bright futures'; the 'masters of the musical universe'; and the 'wide-eyed and hard-working'.

The 'bright futures' group acquire their name from a comment Bethan made, when I interviewed her during a lunchbreak in NSO rehearsals, the summer before she was starting a degree at Oxbridge. I asked her what she had in common with the other members of the New Symphony Orchestra:

> 'Well I guess everyone here is very disciplined, you know, they're all clearly working very hard and going to have bright futures [laughs]. And I think — I've been practicing the violin every day since I was six — not that I practise every day [laughs] but it's a good way to get into that kind of mindset where you just keep going and what you do pays off'.

I was struck by her earnest confidence in the 'bright futures' that were in store for her and her fellow musicians. She didn't mean a bright future as a musician — at least not for herself, as she had never had any inclination to become a professional musician. She went on to describe how the mindset of 'what you do pays off' helps with school work as well, showing a congruence between what was required to succeed in classical music and within the education system. This 'fit' between the dispositions required for school and those required for classical music has also been noted by Mark Rimmer (2014) in his evaluation of the In Harmony El Sistema (IHSE) music education programme; he found that children who did well in IHSE were also those likely to do well in school. Discipline and hard work, which Bethan pinpoints as two of the characteristics that make up this group, require this faith in the future rewards of present efforts. Indeed, disciplined work with a view to future proficiency, pleasure,

praise, or other rewards is a value that permeates this musical practice. Such a value requires a mode of selfhood whereby projecting one's sense of self into an imagined future, and investing in that future, is possible and habitual. As Bev Skeggs notes, drawing on Bourdieu, (2004, 146), this is a middle class disposition. She describes how 'investment must be about a projection into the future of a self/space/body with value'. If this future is precarious or uncertain, then investing in it doesn't make much sense. A congruence between middle-class modes of selfhood and classical music practice becomes clear, in the form of this relationship between time, work, and future value.

This group encompassed mainly those who came from the established middle class, and who had, similarly to Bethan, decided not to pursue music as a career. They saw themselves as 'normal' and indeed they were normal according to the circles they moved in; their parents were lawyers, accountants, academics, vicars, teachers, research scientists, architects, or ran their own companies. Some of them had seriously considered following a career in music, but had made what Fred described as the 'difficult decision' not to pursue music; for him, this had clearly involved some soul-searching, but he had eventually decided to study business at a Russell group university; habitus won out, despite his account that he had really seriously considered becoming a musician. When I interviewed him, in the summer between his first and second years of university, he was in the process of setting up a business with a friend at a redbrick university who he had met in the National Youth Orchestra. His musical contacts had 'set me up hugely', he told me, with 'people I've met along the way that have gone on to do other things that I have as a contact that are going to be useful'. His friend Jack, who was studying history at a top university and wants to go into politics, agreed that 'the social side [of music] will always be important'.

For Alice, it was also a difficult decision not to study music at university. For her, the discipline that Bethan describes, of practising every day and learning that long-term investment will pay off, was the explicit rationale her mother (a

dentist) gave for her to learn music. Indeed, it had already paid off for her in that she had obtained a music scholarship to a private school, which, she told me, had meant she had got better A levels than she would have done if she had stayed in the state system, and as a result she had got into a better university. For Alice, then, the investment in learning classical music had already paid off. The rewards were already piling in for many of these young people; no wonder it was a difficult decision not to go on and study music. And yet none of the 'bright futures' group seemed to regret this decision. Fred said he'd find playing in an orchestra 'boring' if he had to do it for too long; others said they weren't prepared to put in the amount of work they knew would be necessary. Learning classical music, for this group, appeared to work as an expression of their habitus more than as an investment in cultural capital; the rewards were there, but they were similar to the types of rewards that would be accrued by this group anyway. Learning music had not made a transformative difference to their lives in the way it had for Owen, Andy and Jonathan.

The second group I have categorised as 'masters of the musical universe'. This is a much smaller group, exclusively male, also of those from relatively privileged backgrounds. By contrast with the 'bright futures' group, they have decided to become professional musicians, but only because they have been promised a high status within the classical music world. Toby, at age sixteen, had already been singled out as a future 'master of the musical universe' by being selected to start a music degree at the junior conservatoire programme he attended, while still at school. With his sights set on a classical music career, he was on the way towards a high status in the music world — maybe as a composer, which was his main interest. Indeed, when I interviewed Toby he told me he was in the process of copying out the score to Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony in order to get a sense of the structure of the piece (a practice maybe akin to copying out War and Peace to familiarise oneself thoroughly with it).

This group also included the two young conductors of the NSO, Adam and Will, both in their early to mid twenties, and both already occupying positions of

authority with ease. Adam had studied music at Oxbridge and described how:

> 'when I got towards the end of university [...] I looked back at the
> competitions I'd won, and positions I was being given over other people,
> and I thought, this is something that's worth putting all my energy into
> pursuing professionally. I'm aware that by the time I reach 30, I could not
> have made it [...] and then if it doesn't work, I can convert to law and sell
> my soul, you know. [...] There are lots of things that I could earn some
> money doing.'

This group were exclusively male, and like Adam, felt relatively secure that if
they do not 'make it', they have plenty of options for alternative trajectories.

The third and final group comprise those from lower-middle-class backgrounds
or less privileged middle-class families, as well as some of the young women
from established middle class backgrounds — the sisters of the more privileged
brothers. I have called this group the 'wide-eyed and hard working'. They
comprise those who want to make a career out of music, aiming to either
become orchestral players or opera singers. It should be noted they do not
expect, or want, to occupy positions of power within the industry. Not only have
they internalised the identity of being a classical musician — which the 'bright
futures' group had also done, to an extent — but they have also invested their
whole lives in it. This is an exciting prospect for them; it includes Owen, who we
met in the previous chapter, as well as Andy, with whose story I began this
chapter. Ellie, who we met earlier, told me her career plans involved continual
learning and improving, hence my label 'hard-working':

> 'I'd love to be in an orchestra, to be at the back of an orchestra and be told
> what to do. Because I feel a lot of the time I'm always at the front and I
> already know what to do - I want to learn [...] I don't want to be a leader, I
> don't have any aspirations in that - earning money or being the soloist or
> whatever, just having the sense that I'm learning constantly.'

All her friends, her flatmates, and her boyfriend were musicians, and for her it was a whole world: 'I never feel like I'm missing out on the rest of life because... I've got music. [...] We're in our own little world, I have no awareness of what's happening outside this world.' It made perfect sense for her to become a musician, given that her entire identity and sense of self was invested in it. She knew she needed to do a postgraduate course and although her parents would be able to help her with the fees, she didn't want them to and was trying to get private sponsorship, although she was finding it depressing to have to 'convince people' that 'I'm worth investing in'. Her faith that she is worth investing in is a contrast with Miriam's outlook. Miriam's mother is also from an immigrant family, like Ellie's, but Miriam is from a lower-middle-class family from a remote part of Whitchestershire. She told me she couldn't afford to do postgraduate study, so she would take any job she could get and use all her spare time to keep practising in the hope of subsequently being able to get an orchestral job.

Furthermore, with the exception of Megan, who I began this chapter with, all the participants I have included in this category were adamant they wanted to be classical musicians, even if they played other genres as well.[12] Bass player Charlie was already gigging as a jazz musician, but he had started training in classical music because he could see it was possible to have a more secure, steady career as a classical musician than as a jazz player, thanks to all the institutions and investment in classical music. Many of this group named experiences of youth music, such as being in the National Youth Orchestra, or a Young Opera Company production, as being decisive moments in deciding to pursue music as a career.

It is important to emphasise the ways in which some of my participants saw

12 However, I caught up with percussionist Lisa a year later as she was finishing music college, and she told me she had decided to try and make a career as a pop rather than a classical musician.

through and subverted these categories. One example was Jenny, whose mother was adamant she would be a professional musician, and had worked hard to get Jenny into a specialist music secondary school. Jenny had left the school at 16, having found it stressful and difficult, and had decided not to go to music college. This decision had led to conflict with her mother. However, just at the end of my fieldwork, Jenny was overjoyed to find out that she had made the grade to take up a place at Oxbridge to study music. Her mother had been trying to shoehorn her into the 'wide-eyed and hard-working' group but Jenny maybe knew on some level that the 'bright futures' would give her more options.

What I have been trying to demonstrate through these three 'ideal types' is the way in which my participants' structural positions, in particular gender and class (although ethnicity played a role as well) played out in their choice of trajectory. Those in the 'bright futures' group would often seriously consider going on to be a professional musician, but somehow they almost always decided against it, and I would hear on the grapevine that so-and-so had won a place on a prestigious management training scheme, for example. Gender was crucial here, however, as many of the young women who came from relatively privileged families might go on to do music — but their brothers would not; Ellie's brother Jack was in the 'bright futures' group, while she was in the 'wide-eyed and hardworking' group. This difference needs to be read in light of the previous chapter's description of music conservatoires in the UK as institutions of gendered discipline. It suggests the historical reading that was given as to why there were more women than men at music conservatoires may still be relevant today; classical music is still a much more appropriate pathway for middle-class women than men in that it performs female respectability. This also foregrounds the working and lower-middle class young men, Andy and Owen, as well as Jonathan who we will meet in the next chapter, as inhabiting an uncomfortable space where they fit in neither on class nor gender grounds. I will discuss this further in the conclusion, as well as revisiting this three-way grouping of the young musicians' trajectories, in relation to the wider structural implications of this trend.

Conclusion: how standard trumps all

This chapter has argued that musical standard or ability is always formed socially, in and between bodies. Furthermore, it rewards the kinds of bodies who have a trusting disposition that is amenable and open to this kind of moulding and shaping from their teachers. This trust is a mode of embodied porousness that requires bodies to be willing to be shaped; to let go of previous dispositions and become what is required of them. Despite this, inclusions and exclusions, hierarchies, and competition are all premised on musical ability being the property of the individual. Musical standard is therefore in a sense expressing the position or trajectory through social space and the affinity with (or the affinity one would like to have) with others in this world. What is important to emphasise is that standard trumps all other concerns in this musical world. This is demonstrated by the formation of the New Symphony Orchestra predominantly as a reaction against the low standard of the county youth orchestra. There were also other concerns, such as expense, but standard was the main issue motivating its founders.

This intimate shaping and mutual recognition between bodies that I described in the first half of the chapter therefore becomes a powerful form of capital that shapes how others read your musical ability. Confidence is therefore part of the affective resource that makes up musical ability. This is part of what Ellie recognised in her desk partner Tim's 'incredible' playing, and what Holly can hear in other singers' breathing. This confidence can also be mapped onto the three ideal types of future trajectories I have identified. Jonty, who breathed with confidence wherever he needed to, was — of course — in the 'bright futures' group, in his final year of a degree at Oxbridge. Isabelle, who had become so self-critical when she went to music college was in the 'wide-eyed and hardworking' group. The gendered and classed positions of my participants were also expressed through their differing levels of confidence in making authoritative judgements. The 'masters of the musical universe' were extremely authoritative; when speaking to Toby I would forget he was only sixteen, and

defer to him as though he were an expert. The 'bright futures' group held many authoritative voices, but similarly to the 'wide-eyed and hardworking' group, this was gendered; a few of the young women in each group were very tentative in putting forward their opinions, while most of the young men were not.

This chapter contributes to all of the key themes of this thesis, but particularly towards understanding how classical music contributes to classed boundary-drawing. The musical standards produced through the shaping of the musical body are used to reinforce musical boundaries between the 'proper' or 'serious' and 'improper', as well as creating social boundaries which include or exclude on the basis of musical ability; social boundaries which happen to include those who are 'like-minded' and have shared a similar trajectory through social space. These differences in ability are legitimised through the institutional 'ecology' of youth music described in the previous chapter.

The ways in which I have described the body as disciplined, hierarchalised, and ordered, contributes to the second key theme, of disciplining while effacing the body. I have shown how this musical practice is built through embodied practice and relies on this communication between bodies. In chapter five I will explore this further, describing how the body is also effaced or transcended. Thirdly, the section on self-critique foreshadows the next chapter, which will introduce a theme of correction. I will argue that correction is experienced in different ways by those in less privileged positions. And yet, as we have seen, the 'wide-eyed and hardworking' group are those who have decided to invest their whole future into classical music, despite the fact they will not be in positions of power within the industry. Finally, in relation to the fourth key theme, of bodies communicating with each other, I have shown how my participants agree they play better when they play with others. A notable example of this was Ellie's description of playing with her desk partner, Tim, and how following his 'invitation', they would both 'give' as much as each other, and this would lift the musical experience through their connection. This sense of rightness, communicated between bodies without words, is part of what

forms my participants' powerful allegiance to playing classical music. But as we
will see in the next chapter, for those like Andy and Jonathan who were unsure
of their footing in this world, this porousness, trust, and faith was tempered with
a sense of precarious belonging .

Chapter four. 'Getting it right' as an affect of self-improvement

Jonathan's trombone had cost £5000. He'd bought it when he started music college at age eighteen, having previously played one he borrowed from the county music service. In order to pay for the trombone, he told me how he had used the money his grandmother had been saving up for him since he was four — £2,200 — and applied for grants for smaller amounts, as well as getting a tax exemption. He still owed money on it, three years later, and to this end he was working in retail during the summer holidays while he was playing with the New Symphony Orchestra.

Sporting a hipster haircut, Jonathan stood out as stylishly dressed in contrast with the other young men in the orchestra, who tended to wear public-school label Jack Wills, their shirt collars turned up at the back. He described his background as working-to-middle class; his father held down two jobs, working as a firefighter as well as doing quality assurance at a factory, and his mother was an accountant; neither had been to university. Despite all these jobs, his family had struggled with debt over the years. He had also struggled with depression, he admitted, which affected his motivation at times, but having a rigorous daily practice regime helped:

> J: I had a few downers this year. This year's been the most I've been focused and motivated, but as I said, no one likes to practise but if you can get yourself into a routine it's hard to get out of it. But likewise if you're out of that routine it's hard to get back into it, and that's where I am at the moment [...]. I think on the whole I work hard and I know that a lot of my laziness does come through and I need to work on it, so.

> AB: It's like you can always work harder.

> J: Yeah. Every performance I do I'm not happy with. I think every solo performance I've done is not good at all.

The result of this self-critique and sense of his own 'laziness' was that he would

spend eight hours a day in a practice room with his trombone. Jonathan's instrument, like those belonging to many of my participants, had a history and an identity of its own, as well as being a part of his own identity. This close identification was particularly evident in a dream that he told me about. It was more of a nightmare really. He'd dreamt that his trombone had become all crumpled, as though it was made of paper. He described the texture of the metal in his dream as it became all creased and scrunched up. I was struck by the resemblance with a recurring nightmare that I have had for years, in which my cello is in a life-threatening situation such as a burning building, a bomb scare, or a car accident, and I have to rescue it. For both of us, our instruments have become a psychic symbol for our sense of self. Jonathan's dream of a crumpled trombone seemed to be mirroring his sense of never being good enough, no matter how hard he works.

Like Andy, who we met at the start of chapter three, Jonathan's account was one of precarious belonging – of never being quite sure of his place in this 'world'. If hard work could get him there, then he would do it. Practice, improvement, and making mistakes were common themes among this group — the wide-eyed and hardworking — and particularly among those who came from working- and lower-middle-class positions. Later in this chapter, I will focus on the accounts of four people in this position, including Jonathan, of how they felt they needed correction in order to improve, even if it came in the form of bullying from their teachers. First, however, I will set up the idea of 'getting it right', and conversely the fear of making mistakes, which is a learned disposition as well as a shared affect. I will first of all riff around the idea of 'getting it right' drawing on different uses of the phrase by Simon Frith and Bev Skeggs, before introducing its moral connotations of gendered respectability. I will then discuss rightness/correction/wrongness in relation to the labour that goes into producing a musical performance, arguing that rightness is a way of making this labour audible — while at the same time trying to conceal it under a performance that sounds easy and effortless. Finally, I will ask what wrongness signifies; as well as what *correcting* mistakes signifies. I will argue that

correction, the substance of rehearsals, is occurring on a symbolic as well as a musical level: in classical music, you can *hear* rightness, and this is in part what makes this such a powerful affective practice.

'The satisfaction of doing something right'. The ethics of aesthetics

Andy, who we met at the beginning of the previous chapter, had been in all four of the groups in my study. He was the only person I met in my fieldwork who could definitively be described as working class. His perspective on the classical music world was particularly astute, because of his semi-outsider position, and he often described very clearly things that other people didn't even notice. One example of this was his take on the ethical or moral connotations of the experience of playing classical music. When I asked him what he enjoyed about playing in an orchestra, he replied:

> 'I don't know, I suppose the satisfaction of doing something right, to be honest. I know that sounds like a really silly thing to say, but when you're playing in a wind section and you have an entry and it's really in tune and you all come in at exactly the same time, the unity of that is just so powerful, like such a good feeling, to make something communally.'

Andy identifies here the 'satisfaction of doing something right'; he doesn't say 'playing something right' but 'doing something right' suggesting an ethical sense of rightness associated with accuracy of notes, tuning and ensemble. This ethical sense of rightness has a 'communal' dimension for him of getting it right *together* that has a powerful unity. In this example, the musicians and any listener can even hear this rightness as represented in the musicians all playing an entry exactly in time and in tune with each other, similarly to how I could hear the fear in my own playing in the opening scene to this thesis. This is powerful on an affective level; it can be felt at the same time as heard, in the breath, in choirs. Conductor and chorus master Gregory even described to me how people in choirs breathe at the same time and their pulses synchronise to the same pace. (In fact, 'entrainment', or synchronisation of bodies that hold rhythms, doesn't occur on the level of the pulse but instead on a neurological

level (Clayton et al. 2013)). Tristram, the conductor of Cantando, told the choir that if they were breathing right they would then get a difficult rhythm right, saying 'I want the audience to be moved by seeing you all breathing together'; he recognised the power of the affective visual and aural dynamic for those watching. This multi-sensory unity therefore has a powerful affect, or as Andy describes it, 'such a good feeling'.

Does this affect also suggest that everything that occurs in this space, in this group, and in this musical culture, must also carry this sense of 'doing something right', in a kind of affective contagion? Along these lines, I am going to suggest there is indeed a link between the ethic and aesthetic of 'rightness'. Simon Frith explores this in relation to theorizing aesthetic value in popular music, noting 'it is in deciding — playing and hearing what sounds right [...] — that we both express ourselves, our own sense of rightness, and suborn ourselves, lose ourselves, in an act of participation' (Frith 1996, 110). Elsewhere, Frith draws on work from John Miller Chernoff, who suggests that 'among African musicians an aesthetic judgment (this sounds good) is necessarily also an ethical judgment (this is good) [...] the quality of rhythmic relationships describes a quality of social life' (1996b, 275). This sense of rightness or 'making music... as a way of living ideas' (1996a,111) can be read onto the discussion in chapter three about affinities between musicians as a social group and standards of music-making, in particular the suggestion from several of my participants that friendship groups and even sexual and romantic relationships tend to be formed between musicians of similar standards. Social status becomes externalised and knowable in ideas of musical standard, in a 'fit' between oneself and one's friends. Making music becomes a way of living ideas in terms of hierarchies of perceived musical/social calibre of worth.

This idea corroborates Skeggs' argument (1997, 90) that 'rightness' is also a classed disposition. Her working-class female participants could 'never have the certainty that they are doing it right which is one of the main signifiers of middle-class dispositions'; this 'lack of certainty means they cannot make use of

social space in the same way' as those who don't have to worry because they know they'll probably get it right (1997, 10). One thing that is at stake in getting it right socially, therefore, is access to middle-class spaces. And yet, for Andy, getting it right *musically* is his ticket to the middle-class spaces of classical music, in which he learns to fit in *socially*. As I described in chapter two, classical music was a way for some of the lower-middle-class young people in my study to consolidate their class position, whether through getting music scholarships to private schools, or going to courses and making friends with 'proper middle class people' (as Owen described them), or getting into Oxbridge or other high status universities.

What is crucial in this musical practice is that rightness can be heard and known; you can be sure when you've got it right, unlike Skeggs' working-class women who live with uncertainty. In classical music, you can hear rightness; or rather, you ought to be able to hear it, and if you can't, you are demonstrating your ignorance by playing it wrong. You need to show you can make judgments of right and wrong, in tune and out of tune, together or not quite together. Both in getting it right, and in making judgments of whether you or someone else has got it right, the hard work of learning to make these judgments is being performed.

Constructing rightness, part one: gendered respectability

In one of my interviews with Andy, I asked him to elaborate on the ways he thought his classical music friends were more similar to him than his school friends, when, to my surprise, he put forward the idea of classical music as indexing a middle-class morality:

> Andy: I think music is... often linked to, like, not even intelligence level, but kind of a moral level of what is right and what is wrong, do you know what I mean?

> AB: I'm not sure...

Andy: Like I mean chav culture has a different set of morals as, like, white middle class, and I think - you know I very much consider myself - even though my parents are very working class, all my university friends would say, oh you're completely middle class, I'm like, I'm not, my dad's a builder my mum's a nurse [...] so in a way it's a middle class morality, what would be the substance of that, like is this about kind of...?

The association of getting it right musically, and what he called a 'moral understanding of what is correct behaviour and what is OK' was powerful for him. It was also racialised; this sense of right and wrong that he felt was inextricably linked to classical music was also part of what he called his 'white middle class morality'. Andy was unable to clearly answer the question he himself posed, of 'what would be the substance' of this morality. At first he described it as a gendered, sexual morality linked to women's promiscuous sexuality, but when I challenged this he admitted that many of his classical music friends were just as promiscuous as the 'chav culture' he was trying to set them against.

However, this reading of sexual morality onto middle class morals, as expressed through classical music culture, is an important piece of this puzzle. Chapter two set up the historical argument as to how female sexuality was a marker of classed respectability in the Victorian period. 'Chavvy' culture, including its gendered associations of shameful female sexuality as exemplified by the moniker 'slut' or promiscuous female, was commonly understood among my participants not to have any overlap with classical music culture. This was only referred to occasionally, for example in the pub one evening Helen was telling her friends that her (Eton-educated) boyfriend had been teasing her about having 'chavvy' vowels. She told this story with the kind of irony I describe in the introduction, as a funny story, but she was able to tell it as there was absolutely no way that anyone could read anything chavvy onto her, and indeed all her friends reassured her that her vowels were in no way 'chavvy'. A more obvious example of policing female sexuality into respectability came on a night

out with some of the same group of people. I was swapping stories of a sexual nature with Andy when another boy leaned across the table and said to me in a loud voice, 'Are you a slut?' I was taken aback, and brushed off the comment in an offhand way. But the violence of the accusation stayed with me, and I went home shortly afterwards, feeling uncomfortable.

This incident could be seen to be part of the 'lad culture' that is blossoming among university students (Phipps and Young 2014). However, when it is coupled with the boundary-drawing practices of classical music, Andy's reading of classical music as associated with white middle-class morality, and the modes of 'respectable' dress and embodied restraint (as I will describe in chapter five) that were demonstrated among these groups, it forms a picture of classical music as an expression of classed respectability. The problem with trying to identify respectability is that it only becomes visible when it is transgressed. There were very few transgressions in my fieldwork, and where they occurred they were subtle. For example, during a concert with the NSO, the girls were required to wear all black, with long skirts or trousers; but, the organisers told us for the 2012 concert, 'since it's so hot you don't need to wear stockings'. We all wore respectable, modest, but elegant clothing, except one young woman who stood out for having very high wedge heels and bright peroxide blonde hair. My friend who was in the audience noticed her; she stood out, drawing attention to how soberly dressed the rest of us were. Indeed, for that concert I had wondered why I had put on earrings and done my hair up, against my usual slightly feral mode of self-presentation. I realised later that I was doing this to fit in with the respectable image that all the other young women were performing.

Constructing rightness, part two: the morality of hard work

Similarly to female sexual respectability, as I described in chapter two, another link with nineteenth century bourgeois morality was the ideology of 'rational labor' versus idleness (McClintock 1995, 119). This was a crucial axis around which the emerging middle class asserted its identity in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Andy went on to inadvertently describe how he warded of

the stigma of idleness:

> Andy: I find it really hard to do nothing, I get really stressed out like why aren't I doing anything? I could be working, I could be...

> AB: And is that different to your parents?

> Andy: Um... No, actually. My mum never stops. Our house is immaculate. She comes in from work, she cleans the house, she walks the dog, she cooks the dinner... [...] And my dad doesn't like not doing anything, so he'll come in and watch TV in the evenings but in the weekends he'll do the garden, he'll build a new extension, he'll just... he's always on the go.

His family, from his account, shares an ethic of being busy not idle. Following McClintock (1995), Davidoff (2002), Moretti (2014), and others, this is about differentiating oneself from the unrespectable working class. This is all the more necessary for Andy because he is closer in social and geographical space to groups who might be deemed to be 'chavvy'; the closer you are to 'degenerate' groups, the more careful you need to be to distinguish yourself from them. There was a different relationship to the hard work required in classical music of those who are part of the established middle class, and those in lower-middle class positions, the former having less need to perform their morality and worth through labour.

This daily practice — the substance of the labour — elicited strongly contrasting discourses from my participants. These different orientations to practice echo the multiple meanings of the word that I outlined in the introduction, which include a strategic orientation to the future; an ethical stance; and a religious duty. Some of my participants would take the view, along with Jonathan, that 'I don't think ANYONE wants to practise [...] doing the nitty gritty, having to do the really boring stuff and forcing yourself to do it.' Others, such as Jenny, an eighteen-year-old string player, told me they loved the hard work; if there were echoes of religious duty for her, it was a duty that was undertaken with pleasure. Jenny came from a 'poor but middle class' family, in which her mother had very

strongly encouraged her into playing music, and following her mother's research into musical opportunities, Jenny had attended a specialist music secondary school on a scholarship. As a child, she describes how:

> 'I really enjoyed practising and my mum really encouraged me, [...] and I really wanted to try and improve [...] until I went to [the specialist music school] I played because I loved it, and I practised for four hours, [...] two hours in the morning, two hours in the afternoon'.

This was at age ten. 'But', Jenny went on to describe,

> '[I was] practising as in running through pieces, playing how I wanted to play it, not looking... not taking it apart at all, and so I did improve I think quite a lot but not nearly as much as if I'd done better practice. And then when I got to [the specialist music school] I did get told, you must do this, these are the.. you need to work on shifts etc, all those little things to do with technique, and my technique improved a lot. And how to practise, like taking a bar and adding two then adding two, etc [...] you'd never get it really really good unless you really do the detailed practice'.

This passage gives a glimpse of the labour that goes into becoming proficient on an instrument. Rather than 'playing how I wanted to play it' Jenny had to learn to 'take it apart' and 'do the detailed practice'. She doesn't finish the phrase in the first sentence: 'playing how I wanted to play it, not looking...'. Not looking for errors? For things to clean up? Practising properly means looking for what is wrong and correcting it, then repeating it over and over again to make sure that it will be correct every time you play it. This is part of the bodily discipline of classical music that is required in order to be able to realise in sound the word of the composer.

This repetitive scrubbing away at what is wrong uncovers the implicit analogy with dirt in the way that musicians sometimes talk about mistakes. The metaphor of 'cleaning up' mistakes is common parlance; for example Ellie's teacher mentioned, in the lesson I described in the previous chapter, that she

just needs to 'clean up' the tuning a bit in one section. In 'sectionals' in orchestra rehearsals we used a similar 'cleaning up' process to the one Jenny describes in her personal practice: correcting and then repeating over and over again. 'Sectionals' are when each section of the orchestra goes off together to practise their parts as a group, so all the cellists would practise together. During one of these sessions with the New Symphony Orchestra, the leader of the cello section led us through a difficult section, putting the metronome on and first playing it very slowly, then moving the metronome up one notch faster each time we played it. If someone made a mistake we would stay on the same speed or slow it down again until we got it right, then continue edging the speed upwards again. It was tedious, boring work, and entirely unmusical, but the passage did improve, and at the end of the session we could play it not perfectly but better. When classical musicians talk about hard work, this, then, is the kind of labour they are talking about: making it unmusical in order to be able to play the music.

This labour is both collective and individual. The culture of practice of classical musical, as exemplified in rehearsals, demonstrates this ideology of the morality of hard work in the norms of collective working of the group. On the individual level, examining differences between the ways participants in different class positions talked about hard work in their own personal practice, it was also possible to distinguish between those who felt they needed to work hard and those who felt this less acutely. As we would expect if this hard work is about differentiating oneself from the idle, 'degenerate' class, those who are closer in social space to being perceived as 'degenerate' have to work harder. For my participants, the level of hard work they disclosed depended partly on whether they wanted to go on to be a professional musician or not. As noted in the three groups I described in chapter three, the handful of lower-middle-class participants I spoke to all wanted to go on to be orchestral musicians or opera singers, and those who were from established middle-class families, especially the young men, either didn't want to be musicians (instead wanting to be diplomats, lawyers, academics, teachers, go into business or politics, among

other things) or wanted to study music but be conductors, academics or composers.

For those who wanted to be performers, which therefore didn't include any of the young men in the most privileged class positions, this ethic of hard work was more pronounced. However, the exchange below illustrates the nuances of this discourse of hard work. Thomas and Sam are friends who were at Oxford together doing music degrees, although neither of them want to become musicians; Thomas was planning to go into academia and Sam to become a lawyer like his father. Thomas was from a middle-class, state school background and had won a music scholarship to a very exclusive public school for sixth form, finding himself surprised to end up at Oxford. By contrast, Sam had gone to private schools since the age of seven, and had always been headed for Oxbridge. I asked them about practising.

> Sam: One thing I have never been particularly fond of is practising […] To be honest, if I practise an hour a day, I feel like that's been a good day for me.

> Thomas: Yeah, same for me. When I'm at home, I try to practise *at least an hour a day*. [… While at Oxford] I decided to do a diploma to kind of focus my practising […] So I just did it whilst – *just to make sure*, there's so many times at Oxford you think, I have an essay due tomorrow, and you spend the whole evening doing it, spending half an hour practising seems a waste of time, whereas if you're doing a diploma, or any kind of thing that's marked properly… [my italics]

Thomas agrees with Sam that an hour's practice a day is a good day, but he reverses Sam's formulation, to say 'at least an hour'. Even so, to give himself the incentive to *ensure* that he practises, Thomas decides to do a diploma (a post-grade eight qualification offered by the exam boards) 'just to make sure'. What is he trying to 'make sure' of? Why does he need to make sure that he practises? Why does he need to keep improving and working on his playing when he

doesn't need it for his career? He says he wants a diploma because it's 'marked properly'; an external validation of his standard. He feels he needs the credentialism offered by the grade exam boards in a way that Sam doesn't. The difference in class position between Thomas and Sam, I suggest, can start to make sense of this difference in attitudes to practise. For Thomas, it's important to keep improving — to keep proving his worthiness to be part of this social group of privately educated Oxbridge students. For Sam, this is a familiar culture in which he doesn't have anything to prove; there is no fear of losing his place. Practice as hard work is therefore doing performative, place-marking work for Thomas which it isn't for Sam.

The link between labour and 'rightness' is now becoming apparent. Getting it right musically is also *performing* the labour that has gone into accuracy. Accuracy and precision are also part of the bourgeois ethic that Moretti (2014) and others describe as emerging alongside the bourgeoisie in the first half of the nineteenth century. Andy described how 'accuracy in terms of notes is constant work, you're always working on getting the notes.' In playing and performing classical music, therefore, as well as performing your *knowledge* of what sounds right and wrong, what is also being performed is the *labour* that has gone into this practice. For some people, such as Thomas, demonstrating their proficiency and therefore their worth is more important than for others, such as Sam. In this way the ethic of getting it right/doing something right is linked to the aesthetic of classical music. 'Getting it right' is a way of performing the thousands of hours of disciplined labour that are required to learn an instrument, the accumulated investment that becomes audible in a few bars of solo. And this is not only the labour of the musician themselves, but also the labour of parents and teachers in endlessly correcting and encouraging, usually in one-to-one lessons or practice sessions, as well as the endless other work involved in a child's extra-curricular activity.

Affects of rightness and wrongness, part one: 'Doesn't it feel good!'

Returning to the collective practice of rehearsals, the main substance of the

labour that occurs in rehearsals is correction. As described in chapter five, the conductor stops and starts the musicians throughout the rehearsal, giving detailed instructions about dynamics, tuning, ensemble or phrasing. As well as correction from the conductor, there is also a constant process of *self*-correction going on; with most mistakes, the conductor will assume that we will correct them ourselves, or he won't have heard them because they were too small. As one's standard of playing improves, smaller and smaller details become perceptible as mistakes or as not-quite-right. When I got all the details of tuning, bowing and ensemble as well as all the notes right, I would get a self-congratulatory feeling of smugness. But this was only one level out of (at least) four levels of 'rightness'. Firstly, there were the mistakes that the whole orchestra would hear, such as in one NSO rehearsal where I came in on the conductor's upbeat rather than downbeat, playing an unintended solo in front of the whole orchestra, which meant we had to stop and start again. That's the most egregious level of mistake. The next level is where your whole section hears it, and the conductor might hear it, but chooses not to correct it as he assumes you have heard it and will do it correctly the next time. The next level is where only you and your desk partner notice something.   Finally, there are the mistakes that no-one else notices but yourself, which are myriad.   They might be the chord which you suspect probably isn't quite in tune but you can't hear; the quick adjustment to a bow going in the wrong direction; holding a note too long and starting the next phrase ever so slightly late, as well as all the intentional faking that particularly string players do deliberately in passages which are close to impossible to play accurately.

All of these levels of mistakes or not-quite-right-ness are audible in sound. As a musician, you become *knowable* through your playing: your standard, your calibre, your moral worth is made transparent through the sound you make – or fail to make, since silence or playing timidly is also a mistake. This goes some way to explaining the fear that gripped the orchestra in the opening section to this thesis; fear is the affective wallpaper of this musical practice. Bethan and Rebecca, two string players in the New Symphony Orchestra, described the fear

they felt when their section in the orchestra had a solo. Grade exams were often described as 'terrifying'. The worst judges are one's peers, despite the strong affinity with them described in chapter three. Andy described how:

> 'if I'm playing in front of Tommy [another player in NSO] I'll crap myself. It's to do with putting yourself out there and having someone say, *this is wrong, this is wrong, this is wrong*. I think that's what it's about for me. And I think you have to have the confidence to overcome their criticism' (my italics).

The sense of being judged is almost overwhelming. And yet, what this culture of fear makes possible is the practice of correction that forms the substance of rehearsals; the strength of the feeling of 'wrongness' that Andy describes *necessitates* these corrective practices. This is explored in close detail in one of the few academic interventions into youth orchestra rehearsals: Peter Weeks' (1996) conversational analysis of the language of correction in a youth orchestra rehearsal in the U.S. (notably, also showing the continuity of practice around the world). One of the most common modes of correction is what he calls 'contrast pairs' (p. 269). In this mode of correction, the conductor gives two examples of a particular musical passage, the first one 'embodying the failed performed version of a given musical passage, the other exemplifying the conductor's prescribed version'; he notes the first version 'was often sung in an exaggerated and faulted way, with a mocking tone, or done in a hasty offhand way, whereas [the preferred version] tended to be articulated more forcefully, clearly, and perhaps at greater length' (p.274). This was a mode of correction that was instantly recognisable to me both from my fieldwork and from my own musical education. It brought with it a powerful memory of the shame of being mocked in the 'faulty' version that would exaggerate the 'wrongness' in order to contrast it with the rightness of the correct version. This lays bare the shame of playing it wrong; the musician's failed attempt is not only amplified for the whole group to hear, but it is done so by the person in authority who overlays their own mockery at your failure on top of your already inadequate attempt.

There is thus a powerful affective dimension to getting it right or getting it wrong. Getting it right *feels* good, as the quote from Andy at the start of this chapter described; 'doing something right' together is 'such a good feeling'. After orchestra rehearsals, I wrote about this at various points in my field notes - the pride in getting it right, in counting the bars exactly and then coming in clearly and confidently, in tune and in time, with the next entry. Then the surprise and pleasure that it all comes together and sounds good. And when, say, taking time over a bar line, a sense of satisfaction in all watching the conductor and following him exactly, as though the orchestra is all breathing together. George, the cello tutor in the county youth orchestra referred to this in a sectional when we practised a difficult passage together. We worked on it until we got it exactly together, and he said, 'doesn't it feel good to get it right like that?' — and it did sound and feel good. We didn't need to be looking at each other, or to have any sense of what anyone else was thinking or doing or have any communication between us, except hearing that we were together.

Affects of rightness and wrongness, part two: tuning, shame and silencing

But when it was wrong, there was always the fear of humiliation that came with being corrected within the group. The affect of fear which I described in the opening scene to this thesis also comes not even from getting it wrong but the fear of getting it wrong — a paralysis, inability to make a sound. But possibly the most powerful affect of wrong-ness is shame. This was most often connected with tuning; Andy could have spoken for most of us when he said 'my tuning is the one thing that I stress about the most'. Sara Ahmed (2004, 103) describes how shame is about exposing something that should be kept hidden. However, with playing out of tune, it was about exposing something that is wrong and should be corrected. If you play out of tune it might be because your technique has failed you and you missed a shift, or – even worse – it might be that you *can't even hear* that it's out of tune. This is the most shameful, as I experienced when conductor Olly corrected my tuning in a rehearsal for the county youth orchestra. He just made a very small hand gesture towards me, in a very

respectful way, to suggest that my note was a bit under and I needed to come up a bit. I felt ashamed not to have heard that it was ever so slightly out of tune, and this tiny interaction stuck in my mind because of this. And yet, to an untrained ear, the difference in pitch would have been imperceptible.

In Ellie's lesson, which I described in the previous chapter, there is a moment where she has a high, long note, played very quietly. As she is playing it her teacher gestures towards her, his finger pointing up to indicate that the note needs to be pitched higher. Ellie doesn't see this gesture, as she is looking at her music, so when she stops at the end of the piece and he is giving his comments, one comment, very gently given, is to 'be careful' of that top B as it was 'under', it was 'almost a B flat'. It is less that I notice Ellie looking like she feels ashamed of having got it out of tune, than that I feel the shame with her and for her. Earlier in the lesson she had commented that she needed to 'sort out her intonation' [tuning] in a particular piece, maybe as a pre-emptive strike before her teacher made any comments. Indeed, he commented that she was very hard on herself about tuning, which I thought too; but maybe not *too* hard on herself, as I don't know if you can ever be too hard on yourself about tuning.

Nevertheless, I felt shame in the room, and from her teacher's particularly gentle manner at pointing it out I thought he did too. He had no choice but to point it out, he couldn't let it go; underneath his gentle, avuncular demeanour there became visible a sterner, stricter teacher who wouldn't baulk at mentioning things that his students will find it difficult to hear about their playing. Tuning was there as a spectre in the background throughout the lesson (and throughout everything every string player does). Ellie's fear and self-consciousness came through, often showing in her facial expressions when she would wince slightly if she suspected it was a smidgeon out of tune, sometimes even when it was fine, showing she wasn't absolutely *certain* it was fine. The notes come and go so quickly, and sometimes your ears might not be totally convinced that it was precisely in tune. How string players bring themselves to play anything at all starts to seem nothing short of miraculous.

In fact, a refusal to play or sing did come up in my fieldwork, and the circumstances are telling. This was a recurring narrative of fear of improvisation, or refusal to improvise. In classical music practice, musicians are always playing from a written score that has been composed by someone else. Take away the score, and they are unable to play. This inability to improvise was always something that gave me a deep sense of inadequacy as a classically-trained musician. The inability to make a sound without being given music to read is a corollary of the fear and shame of making mistakes that I have described above. In improvising, there is no clear right and wrong. The entire ethical and practical framework of making a sound is therefore removed, paralysing musicians and singers into silence. This was clearly apparent from interviews and discussions with my participants; they not only *couldn't* do it, they didn't even want to. Katherine is a typical example:

> K: I hate the whole concept, I just can't do improvisation. I just freeze and think, just kind of lose any musicality in me at all, and I'm just like, I can't do it. I don't know what.

> AB: I guess this is common for classical musicians, because we're used to using the score.

> K: Yeah, I'm very classical, I'm not... yeah.

> AB: So is it something you find scary, or that you'd like to do, or...?

> K: It's something that I admire in people that can do it but I don't really have any interest in doing it.

Conductor Gregory described how he'd tried to get his choir to improvise, 'I said, just have a go, all together' and was frustrated because they either wouldn't or couldn't. However, a few people were doing elite music education programmes which were progressive in including elements of improvisation. One example was Susanna's experience of jazz improvisation at the Junior Guildhall, one of the slightly less traditional of the Saturday junior conservatoire programmes.

Susanna described how she 'absolutely hated the thought of doing it, I was just terrified of it […] I just refused to do it, but they suddenly just made me do it and ever since I've just done it, and not really looked back at all'.

I was particularly struck by her outright refusal to improvise, until 'they made me do it'. However, now that she is starting music college, she is not going to do any more jazz or improvisation because she doesn't think it will be useful for her career, which she sees as being strictly within classical music; the jazz improvisation she sees as having been instrumentally useful only because it improved her classical playing. This refusal is therefore not in any sense a lack or a failure, but a positive strategy which Susanna, Katherine, and others employed, of eschewing something that has no value in this culture. They don't need to learn to improvise in order to do well as classical musicians, and in fact, the emphasis on getting it right and the potential shame involved in making a mistake makes refusal the obvious strategy here. The possibility of getting it wrong terrifies these young musicians into silence, showing the immense power of this ethical-aesthetic framework of practice.

'If it sounds easy you're doing it right'. Concealing labour

Underneath all of this fear of humiliation and shame, there is another discourse, one of *concealing* labour through a performance of ease. This directly contradicts the idea introduced above, that playing this music is a performance of the hard work that has gone into it. Not only is it necessary to get it right, and to know what it sounds like to get it right, but then it is necessary to perform 'ease', to look relaxed, and to 'look like you're having fun!' as the tutors and conductor on the county youth orchestra course kept instructing us. This is despite the magnitude of possibility of error. These discourses of striving and hard work versus ease were sometimes described in aesthetic terms. Laurence, a singer who had won a choral scholarship to Eton and then to Oxford, described the type of sound he liked in his or other people's voices as 'easy, if it sounds easy you're doing it right, […] I hate it being difficult'. This ease, for Laurence, is both on the level of the aesthetic and the technical (in terms of singing

technique) but there is also another level of *concealing* the labour that has gone into it. He went on to elaborate:

> *'I think my main goal is to make everything easy, then I view it as being the right way to do it.* I don't like it when it seems like an effort. I've done so much singing, obviously when it's extremely high it's still quite a challenge but it doesn't stress me at all to sing for long periods of time - if you're doing it the right way then it shouldn't be difficult, that's how I feel, and people might disagree, but... it's not ever straining or...' (my italics)

Laurence also uses the language of 'rightness' in describing 'the right way to do it'. For him, most of the hard work was put in when he was aged seven to thirteen, as a choral scholar, doing (he estimates) eighteen to 20 hours of music a week, living in as a boarder at the cathedral school, so maybe he really has forgotten what it was like when it *was* an effort. Nevertheless, the statement above is extraordinary when contextualised in the amount of labour that goes into creating the kind of musical performance he is describing; there is an irony to the idea of putting in a lot of work to feel effortless and easy and enjoyable.

While this quotation needs to be read within a discourse of the voice being natural and authentic, in that 'ease' is a pedagogic rhetoric that is emphasised in voice training, Laurence's comments also show a different orientation to hard work to some of my other participants. Unlike Jonathan, who emphasises the hard work that he needs to do, Laurence doesn't want this labour to be audible. The contradiction is around the visibility or invisibility of labour; it is necessary to prove your place in the middle class through performing labour, while at the same time concealing that labour through ease of performance. It is hard work but it has to sound easy. Similarly to the commodity fetish, labour is there in the value of the product/performance but it must be concealed. The idea of 'exceptionally talented young musicians' — a common phrase among the 'talent scout' organisations I described in chapter two — also helps to hide this labour. The intensive bodily investment and shaping that I described in chapter three is part of what is concealed, and the 'talent' becomes the property of the individual

rather than the outcome of the labour of teachers, parents, conductors and others in investing in this body.

However, this aesthetic of ease that Laurence, among others, preferred, needs to be contrasted with an account from Gregory. He was the chorus master for the Young Opera Company, a semi-retired music teacher who had grown up on a council estate and gone to grammar school then music college. He described his background as 'aspirational but cautious' – an early prototype for the 'wide-eyed and hardworking' group. He described to me how 'I like a bit of striving in my music', for example, the 'angst, with resolution' that could be found in Brahms. This was 'striving' in terms of the harmony, rather than in terms of the timbre of sound that Laurence is describing, above. This striving appeared to fit with the ethic of labour and hard work that was common to the 'wide-eyed and hard-working' group. Classical music made sense to them because they could work hard and perform their labour through their musical standard, performing their morality of hard work and, for the young women, their successful disciplining of the body into gendered respectability. The concealment of labour in the 'fetish' of the performance or product was more fraught for them than for those who didn't need to perform their morality, such as Laurence. His place in this world was secure and he had only to choose whether or not he wanted to take it up; he didn't need to perform or demonstrate his worthiness for it. By contrast, the striving of Jonathan, Andy, Thomas, and others, to be good enough, was something that needed to be heard and known.[13] This striving was also manifested in their desire to improve and be corrected, a discussion to which I will now turn.

'He really, really broke me — which I really needed'

Not only is rehearsing and performing hard work that has to look easy and look

13 In the Young Opera Company's production of The Magic Flute, 'striving' also made an appearance. In director Sophia's own translation, Papageno the forest-man, representing the people or the working classes, declares at one point, 'striving's not really my thing'. This storyline and translation positioned 'striving' as a classed practice, dividing people between the 'strivers' or aspirational people who would be allowed into the 'Temple of Wisdom', and those who were happy with their allotted place in society, who would live in the forest and have many children.

like fun, but in fact it has to *be* fun and enjoyable. Throughout my fieldwork and interviews, statements about enjoying the hard work recurred. Olly, the conductor of the county youth orchestra, introducing our concert to the assembled parents at the end of one course, emphasised to them how hard we'd worked and said that we ought to have gone home exhausted every day. Simon, a singer, liked being in Cantando because of 'actually spending time being really focused in rehearsals and doing hard work – feeling tired at the end of the rehearsal is nice.' Many people told me how hard they work in National Youth Orchestra courses, with Jenny's comments being typical: 'I really enjoyed it, it was fantastic, it was really hard, I found it really hard.' Megan commented on how much fun it had been being in the Young Opera Company production, before telling me how she had sometimes wanted to run out of the rehearsal room crying, but finishing her account by emphasising that 'it's been really fun'.

Not only do you have to enjoy it when it's hard work and exhausting, but four of my participants told me about being bullied by their instrumental teachers. What is striking about three of these accounts, from Miriam, Jonathan and Jenny, is that they all emphasised how good these bullying teachers were, and how the teachers were *right* to pressurise and humiliate them in these ways. Two were at music college and one, Jenny, was at a specialist music school, which she eventually left, partly as a result of this bullying. Miriam described how:

> My teacher at music college ripped me to shreds on a weekly basis, *but in a good way.* At the time I thought he was really mean and he was just bullying me, and actually you look back on it now, actually nothing he said to me was a lie, and he was just pushing me.

> AB: But did you feel like....

> Miriam: Yeah, and the time I think I was a lot more young-minded and I wasn't ready to take things on board, I took it all as a sort of personal attack, but it wasn't, it was a way of trying to get me to advance as quickly

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as possible, under pressure, and by the end of the year it was working. [my italics]

For Miriam, therefore, she was being 'ripped to shreds' 'in a good way'; this was justified because it meant she advanced quickly. This echoes the comment which I will explore in chapter six about Tristram, the conductor of Cantando, that 'sometimes I feel like I'm his dog — but in a good way', both young women apparently *enjoying* this humiliation.

Similarly, Jonathan describes his first year at music college:

> I had a really tough first year actually, I had a real bastard of a teacher […] but I've come to realise that he's an amazing player […] but he really, really broke me. But I persevered…

> AB: By being really critical?

> Jonathan: Really critical to the point of insulting critical, and *I do actually appreciate him breaking me down,* because the trouble is, when you start becoming a better and better player very often it's the case […] you start to get big headed […] and he really knocked me down which I really needed. I needed to have that humility brought to me, so I could realise this is where I am, and I have this potential to be a lot better than what I think I am, so whilst it did depress me, I persevered [my italics].

Both Jonathan and Miriam are grateful to their bullying teachers for pushing them really hard so they would improve as much as possible in the time they had at music college. Jonathan, however, is more critical than Miriam, in that he names his teacher as 'a real bastard'. He then frames his account in terms of his own perseverance in overcoming this barrier. This narrative of hard work and perseverance as overcoming obstacles was echoed in Miriam's interview, in which she described being a lower-middle-class woman as presenting obstacles both in terms of economic barriers as well as sexism, but positioned herself as having overcome these barriers.

Jenny's account was similar but she was younger when she experienced bullying from a teacher; she started at a specialist music school at age eleven and stayed till she was sixteen. While in some ways she loved her time there, she also found it very difficult:

> 'I think I was probably the worst violinist in my class and, um... I don't know. There was a lot of pressure from my teacher, which obviously he wanted me to progress. I think emoti... I mean, matu... my maturity level wasn't as good as it should have been so that I could develop more, as in practice-wise I didn't... I didn't take... I don't know... my practising wasn't very efficient and I didn't do enough to try and change it, I think. But now I hope I have, a lot, I'm much better at...[...] I got quite upset about... that he was quite angry with me at times, quite a lot of times. But I mean, *I'm not angry at him, I don't resent him for it, because I needed to improve,* but it didn't really work, his method of trying to make me practise [...] so I got quite quite upset and he wasn't very happy with my progress. It wasn't an incentive, it was sort of quite unfailing. and that's why I didn't really do well, until I left.' [my italics]

In the first part of this quotation, Jenny struggles to articulate what was going on. Her teacher would get angry at her but she is adamant that this is only because he wanted her to improve, and she tries to take responsibility for this herself but she can't quite get the words out for what she was doing wrong, suggesting, maybe, that she isn't quite convinced that this was her fault, but as it is clearly not an option to blame him, then it must be her own fault. Common to all three accounts is accepting, and even maybe being grateful for the bullying treatment that they have received. They all blame themselves for being too immature to be able to deal with these bullying teachers. Even Emily, who was bullied by her cello teacher till she stopped playing, took responsibility for her teacher's behaviour:

'I think I sort of assumed it was my fault, which looking back on it I don't think it was 100% my fault, probably I was slightly to blame [...] Maybe I just wasn't good at cello'.

Notably, all four of these accounts came from people who were in different ways unsure of themselves in terms of their class position. Emily went to a top private school and had an estranged upper class father but a working class mother, this class position meaning that, in her words, she always felt 'insufficient'. Jonathan and Miriam were both from lower middle class families; Jonathan said his family were maybe 'working to middle class' and Miriam's parents came from working class and immigrant backgrounds. Like Jonathan's family, they were unable to help pay for instruments or courses or extra activities, something that Miriam described as putting her at odds with her friends at music college. Finally, Jenny's family were middle class but poor, as she described it, and her mother's powerful insistence on Jenny becoming a classical musician had led to conflict between the two of them.

Why is their class position relevant to the way they talk about being bullied by teachers? And why are these young people so insistent that they need to improve and be corrected by their teachers? I am suggesting that the 'ethic of correction' that is central to classical music practice is experienced differently by those who are more marginal to this world. Their accounts reveal ambivalence in that they all described how they felt they needed and wanted correction, because they needed to improve. However, none of them labelled this behaviour from their teachers as bullying; they seemed to accept it as normal practice within this musical world. Jonathan does express resistance, naming his teacher as 'a real bastard' whose bullying he put up with as it allowed him to become a better player. The similarities across the four accounts suggest that this is not about individual teachers so much as an accepted culture of practice within elite classical music education.

An alternative reading is that those in more middle-class positions also experienced bullying but that it was only those in marginal class positions who spoke to me about it. The ambivalence in the accounts presented above suggests that these young people realised something was not right, even if, other than Jonathan, they couldn't name it. This reading is in keeping with a more general finding across all participants that those who were not normative in these spaces were more insightful in describing the social world of elite classical music, because it was not normal to them. Similarly, as described in chapter six, many people *didn't* mention Tristram's sexualised humour to me. Therefore, it seems possible that it was only those who were on the margins of this world who could see and name such problematic power dynamics, while those who were central to it took them for granted. This reading also makes clear why I have foregrounded accounts from the young people who were marginal to this space; they saw the dynamics of this world more clearly.

As discussed in the accounts of striving in the previous section, classical music offers fertile soil for this kind of labour. It is possible to keep working … extremely hard for years, even decades, and your improvement can (hopefully) be heard, and known, in sound. And yet, this never ends; you can always keep working and keep improving. Remember Jonathan's statement at the start of the chapter, that 'every performance I do I'm not happy with.' While this kind of self-criticism can be experienced in many kinds of social and aesthetic practices, classical music offers institutional support and validation for the kinds of labour that I have described in this chapter, with its clear boundaries around who is included and who is excluded; its modes of credentialism; and the constant need to keep performing your standard – even if you get it right once, in one exam/audition/performance, there is still the opportunity to make an egregiously shaming mistake in the next one.

Conclusion: classical music as a means towards classed self-improvement

This chapter has focused on affects of rightness and wrongness in classical music, linking these with a classed morality of hard work and gendered respectability. I have argued that being able to *hear* rightness brings the satisfaction of getting it right musically while also knowing that you've got it right socially. A different orientation to labour and the aesthetics of ethics in this musical practice can be found among my participants in different class positions. Sam and Laurence, who were both privately educated before attending Oxbridge, did not need to perform the labour of practising or showing they deserved their place in this world. By contrast, those from less privileged class positions such as Miriam, Jonathan, Andy, and Jenny had to work hard and perform their belonging. However, this was a labour they welcomed, on various levels, and they also sought and felt they had to accept this correction — even if it came in the form of bullying — which would lead to their improvement. The fit with Bourdieu's ideas of ease is almost too perfect; he quotes a seventeenth-century etiquette manual which describes the 'air of ease which comes with fortunate birth' (1984, 64). The rhetoric of 'ease' denotes on Laurence's part a distaste for the level of correction and labour that Miriam, Jonathan, Andy, and Jenny deemed necessary.

Classical music, for this group, was a means towards classed self-improvement. For Jenny, the impetus towards this came from her mother, who had done a lot of research and work behind the scenes to get Jenny into this position. For the others, it was their own efforts which found them their precarious place within this world. Revisiting the triptych of working to lower-middle class young men with whose accounts I have started chapters two, three and four offers a way of drawing out these themes. For Owen and Andy, in particular, classical music was an escape route, from the provincial or rural small towns where they went to school, to the urban. It was for all three of them their ticket into what Owen called the 'proper middle class'. Notably, Owen didn't talk about correction in the ways I have described in this chapter. This could be because he was still at

sixth form college, while Andy, Miriam, and Jonathan were already at music conservatoires, a much more demanding and intensive environment. Or maybe Owen had escaped the susceptibility that the others exhibited. However, the self-critique that I have described in, for example, Jonathan's account, was directed outwards by Owen, who would scathingly criticise anything he didn't find up to scratch.

As well as escaping from their lower-middle-class, rural home towns, classical music was a route towards class mobility in other ways as well. Andy, in particular, had successfully learnt the bodily dispositions, the ways of speaking authoritatively and dressing conservatively, and the moral and social codes that allowed him to fit in to the classical music world. Whether or not he succeeded in his chosen career as an orchestral musician, these dispositions would stay with him. He had also learned to imagine a different future from that of his parents. His 'plan B' was to work in music administration, and he had already proved his ability in this area to himself and others by running the New Symphony Orchestra for three years while at university. His imagined future, as well as his accent, taste, and dress, had become congruent with his friends in this world.

I have foregrounded Andy, Owen, and Jonathan's accounts in these three chapters because the experiences of the lower-middle-class young men in this world are particularly revealing. They do not have the assurance, ease, and authority that the established middle-class young men exhibited. They were also negotiating a musical scene which is dominated numerically by women, and which has historic and contemporary connotations with gendered respectability and femininity. It is therefore doubly difficult for them to negotiate an identity which works in this space. We have seen from their accounts how the classical music world is both an exciting site of possibilities, as well as a precarious space full of potential pitfalls. They are able to see, and describe, this world more clearly than other participants because it is more difficult for them to negotiate. However, they perceive the possible rewards as worthwhile. Jonathan therefore

keeps on shutting himself on his own in a practice room for eight hours a day, investing in his imagined future.

This chapter has set up the argument for the third key theme in my thesis: how the 'ethic of correction' of classical music is used by those in less privileged class positions as a route towards classed self-improvement. This theme of correction will be carried through into the next two chapters, which form part two of this thesis. However, this chapter has also described how affects of 'rightness' and 'wrongness' are experienced as, for example, a powerful sense of unity, or conversely, of shame. These affective experiences, and the intense friendships and connection that they facilitate, are crucial to understanding why people participate in this scene.

Conclusion to part one

Part one has described the historical and institutional setting for youth classical music practice (in chapter two), as well as exploring how bodies are moulded and hierarchically ordered (in chapter three) and how this is experienced affectively by the lower-middle-class young people (in chapter four). Together, these chapters have described a world that is taken for granted by those who feel at home in it. The young people accepted and often strongly defended the modes of practice of this world: hierarchy, competitiveness, critique, and hard work. However, the accounts of the working- and lower-middle class young men, along with others in the 'wide-eyed and hard-working' group, show a different orientation to these values than those in the established middle class. While the former are amazed to be in this group and will do anything it takes to be allowed to stay in it, the established middle class young people do not need to perform their labour and their worth in this way. The contrast in these accounts shows how classical music education, in these settings, was experienced differently by those in different class positions. It was not a neutral 'good' that can be prescribed *en masse* to young people regardless of social context. Instead, it is performative, bringing particular dispositions into play. These fit more closely with some social groups than others, thus creating differing levels

of comfort and discomfort among my participants.

My description of this world as an 'ecology' foregrounds the way it is naturalised, along with all of its exclusions between proper or serious and, for example, 'McDonald's music'. We have seen how the musical setting of these practices helps to camouflage the social processes that are occurring. The rhetoric of musical standards of excellence as the overriding goal works as a disavowal of the social, even though for many of the young people in these groups the social scene was the main reason they were involved in youth music. Indeed, when I brought this up at the pub one evening after a day of NSO rehearsals, conductor Adam averred that what they had in common was their shared sociability. This was, of course, a particular mode of sociability: slightly geeky, intelligent, and understated. It was a social scene I felt comfortable in, and this made it harder to see the shared norms and ideals that were at work, such as the importance of gendered respectability in this space, which only became visible to me very late on in my fieldwork, after the 'slut' incident described above.

A further aspect of this world that was disavowed or camouflaged was the investment from others — particularly adults — that went into forming musical ability or talent. The latter was seen as the attribute of the individual, thus accruing to those who possessed it myriad social and material advantages, such as scholarships to private schools, entry into a more middle class social scene, or valued social networks. In this sense, the youth classical music world can almost be seen to be a microcosm of the middle class world described in literatures on school choice (Reay et al. 2011; Ball 2002; Power et al. 2003). However, it constituted a less reflexive version of these debates; the possibility of entering this musical world was discussed without the awareness of its contribution to perpetuating inequality, which is described in debates around school choice. While the data is not comparable in that I didn't speak to parents, the sense of classical music being a special world which is worth the high price of entry was evident.

I will now turn to part two of the thesis, which focuses on the social relations of rehearsals, examining the embodied, affective communication that is occurring. Chapter five unpicks the taken-for-granted logic of the rehearsal structure, to interrogate the rationale behind the mode of correction I have described in this chapter. Chapter six explores how the gendered authority of the conductor is constructed and experienced in these sites. In both chapters, the powerful affective states which classical music engenders play a crucial role in legitimising the authoritarian social relations of rehearsals. Chapter five begins with an affect that has an important classed history — pleasure.

Part two: The rehearsal as cultural practice

Chapter five. Rehearsing restraint, or, how the body comes to be transcended

On one of the New Symphony Orchestra courses we played a lush Rachmaninov symphony, a piece that the whole idea of an orchestra could have been designed for. In the first movement there is a Romantic melody of Dr Zhivago-esque stomach-dropping gorgeousness. Every time this melody came around, I looked forward to it. The rest of the orchestra faded away as we — the cellos — lingered on a suspended note, then dropped down the octave to begin the tune, putting on our most chocolately-rich tone. Starting with a fairytale-like phrase of peaceful beauty, the tune became troubled, a hint of sadness entering into the harmony, as our line yearned higher and higher — then gracefully climbing down again to where we started, with a reassuring sense of coming back home. But then, the most glorious moment — the entire string section then joined the cellos to repeat the melody. From feeling like an inward nostalgic smile it became a magnificent vista of collective joy and energy. I would feel the whole string section breathing in together as the conductor, Will, gave one of his welcoming gestures to invite us all to join in. All forty of our bows snugly in synch, we gladly obeyed, and the roof seemed to lift off the rehearsal room to allow space for the melody to rise. This was one of the moments that made it all worthwhile, one of the few places where I would totally exist within the music for the duration of the tune, listening acutely to make sure I was exactly together with my section, closely watching the leader of the cellos and the conductor as well as my music, and within this hyper-alert state luxuriating in this glorious tune for the minute or less that it lasted for.

We were rehearsing this movement one sunny August afternoon, and as we approached the melody I started to anticipate the pleasure of playing it. But just as we were lingering over the first note, about to plunge into the main part of the melody, the conductor stopped us to give an instruction. I had to stop playing, even while every fibre of my being screamed to keep going. My frustration and

disbelief were visceral as I held my body poised as though to carry on playing, not wanting to give up the physical posture associated with pleasure. But the rest of my section had put their bows down and were awaiting his directions. Nobody seemed to feel the level of embodied frustration that I did at being stopped mid-flow. Maybe they were so used to it, whereas I hadn't played in an orchestra for ten years. It was clear that pleasure was definitely *not* what we were there for; playing a nice tune just because it feels nice was not on the agenda, as we had a time-limited period to prepare this repertoire.

In rehearsals, therefore, pleasure was fleeting, and frustration frequent. This process of stopping and starting required a high level of embodied restraint from participants, in that we would cultivate such intensely pleasurable moments as described above, but then be required to stop immediately on the conductor's request. Frustration would occasionally be evident when people would keep playing for a few notes after the conductor had stopped. In fact, this is a perennial problem with young orchestras, which I remembered well from my youth orchestra days, with the repeated refrain from conductors of '*please* will you stop when I ask you to?' exactly as Peter Weeks describes in observing rehearsals of a North American youth orchestra (Weeks 1996). I was impressed that both the NSO and the WCYO were usually far too disciplined to do this. Those in the NSO had spent five to ten years playing in orchestras, becoming habituated to this restraint. Their acceptance of this practice, despite its frustrations, was a necessary part of the structure of the rehearsal, and the social order required to get 60-odd people to put together a complex piece of music.

This chapter opens part two of this thesis, which explores what is happening in rehearsals in the youth choir and youth orchestras in my research (the Young Opera Group rehearsed in a different way, being a stage production, so they are not included in this part; chapter seven will look at their practices more closely). The youth music groups in my study spent a lot of time on rehearsals; Cantando would do only two concerts at the end of a year of intensive weekend rehearsals. The rehearsal is at the heart of the experience of being in these groups. Part two

therefore examines the rehearsal as a cultural practice. What is really going on here? The obvious answer is that we are preparing for a performance. But this doesn't entirely satisfy me. The sheer amount of time that is put into rehearsals suggests they are more significant than performances on some level. Nor are rehearsals necessarily enjoyable; they are characterised more by hard work than fun. People tell me they are 'exhausted' after a day's rehearsal, a few say that rehearsals are 'boring'. Conductors tell me they make jokes to keep the musicians on side. But sometimes rehearsals can be 'thrilling', when they go well, or they can be 'the most frustrating thing imaginable' when they go badly. I will contend throughout part two of this thesis that rehearsals are important sites for social and bodily learning about the culture of classical music, one of the key sites where this tradition is reproduced. For my participants, going to a rehearsal is as normal as going to school; most of them go to several a week and it is not uncommon to have two in a day, even after school. They thus become steeped in 'rehearsal etiquette' and the norms of behaviour required of them.

In the groups in this study, much of this learning was made explicit by conductors, for example, the requirements for punctuality and discipline. But even more was implicitly learned, becoming the tacit knowledge needed to function in this 'world'; for example, what counts as good quality music, or what the appropriate social relations are between conductor and musicians. This chapter explores the self-restraint required by players in order to bring together sixty people to play a long, complex piece of music, using this example to explore how the body is constructed in classical music practice. I will argue that in rehearsals, as well as preparing for the concert, we are learning the 'practical accomplishment' (Filmer 1999) or habit of experiencing emotions but acting out restraint rather than acting on the emotions we are feeling. As described in chapter two, restraint is a cornerstone of bourgeois identity, linked particularly to ideas of disciplining female sexuality. This chapter therefore contributes to the argument of the thesis by demonstrating how cultivating restraint is a key part of classical music practice, and describing how this is inscribed onto the body in rehearsals. It is significant that this is occurring within a predominantly

middle-class site, as this restraint or control is historically a valued trait of bourgeois identity, therefore it is important for young middle-class people to learn it. The body emerges as a site of contradiction between the ideal of disembodied, abstract rationalism, and the necessity of living in a body and using it to make sound.

This chapter takes two different approaches to the question laid out in the opening vignette: why must my pleasure be interrupted? The first section answers this question according to the common sense logic of classical music practitioners: my pleasure must be interrupted in order to 'fix' into place the details of the whole musical work. By this logic, pleasure must only be experienced at the right point in the structure, and the pleasure of one part (one player, or one point in time) must not be allowed to override the whole. However, this explanation is an entirely rational, disembodied one that does not account for the visceral frustration I felt on being interrupted. It also colludes in the effacing or transcendence of the body that I have described as a norm in this musical practice. I therefore go on to ask *how* this common sense logic is created — how the body is effaced or transcended in rehearsals — before returning to the question of why my pleasure must be interrupted. I answer this question differently the second time, arguing that in rehearsals we are learning and practising to restrain and transcend the body by constantly cultivating strong embodied emotions, and then not acting on them. However, this is a gendered form of control wherein we — the orchestra or choir — enact the part of the feminised crowd or mass, but instead of rioting, as was feared by the Victorians, the conductor's will stops the affect from spreading. Instead of pleasure as indulgence — as I wanted to experience in the introduction — pleasure inheres in *control* over the totality of the whole group and the whole musical work. This legitimises the abstract, rational ideal of this musical form and suggests the idea of the orchestra as a bourgeois fantasy of male control. My pleasure must be interrupted in order to reinforce the transcendence of the body.

Why my pleasure must be interrupted, take one

In a typical rehearsal, as violinist Ellie describes,

> 'I guess you play through the piece, so the conductor will pick out things
> that need to be fixed, so for example, balance, so he'll usually say, strings
> you're forte, wind you're mezzo forte. [...] and sometimes do a string bit or
> a woodwind bit or a brass bit, making sure the rhythm is the same and
> everyone's making the same sound. If we're echoing each other making
> sure we're doing it the right way.'

This description gives the basic structure of most rehearsals that is endorsed as
the standard format by Charles F. Barber (2003, 25) in his advice to young
conductors. This approach can therefore be summarised as: phase one: the piece
of music is played all the way through without (intentionally) stopping (although
it might 'fall apart' if some people lose their place in the music and have to stop).
Phase two: the conductor gives detailed criticism to the players about exactly
how to play particular parts, going over short passage of the music until the
players get it right, often rehearsing one section, for example, the cellos on their
own. This is where the bulk of rehearsal time is spent. Phase three (which might
be in the rehearsal but more likely is the performance): the piece is put back
together and played through, with all the corrections that the conductor has
given having been 'fixed'. The form is therefore whole-parts-whole (-parts-
whole-parts-whole ad infinitum depending on how many rehearsals you have).
Or unity-fragmentation. Or coherence-incoherence. Or organising time-
chopping up time.

This formula becomes particularly interesting when we contrast it with ideas of
coherence, unity and time in ideologies of classical music. There is an
overwhelming preoccupation in musicological writing on the organic unity of a
musical work (Goehr 1992, 242; Taylor 2007, 3). This is the concept of the
structure of a piece of music as forming a complex but logical, interconnected

whole, where all the fragments are subsumed to a larger unity and coherence; as Lydia Goehr (1992, 2) describes it, the concept of a musical 'work' requires the 'assumption of a structurally integrated whole'. This structure also forms a temporal linearity. As Kassabian (2013) notes, this leads to a certain mode of engagement with the piece of music, structural listening, an important part of classical music ideology. In structural listening, the listener is always aware of where they are in the structure of the whole piece, through being familiar with the common musical forms and being able to follow the harmonies and melodic development over the course of, say, a 50 minute piece of music. As Christopher Small (1996) suggests, these formal structures of classical music are a way of making sure that we never get 'lost in time'; we always know where we have come from and where we are going, and roughly what will happen in order to get there. Any surprises will come within the given structure. He wonders why we are afraid of getting lost in time, that we structure our musical experience this way.

The idea that all the details in the score add up to form part of this organic unity influences the structure of rehearsals and performance in the three phases described above of unity-fragmentation-unity. The details must be 'fixed' in place; as Ellie describes, 'sometimes what happens [in rehearsal] is, we'll do a section, go through the section fixing bits and bobs and then play through the section so that it leads into the next section and then play through the next section and he [the conductor] realises what's wrong, fixes that'. This word, 'fixing', is one that was often used, meaning to correct mistakes, suggesting a clear sense of right and wrong. However, in relation to the ideology of the organic unity of the musical work, fixing could also mean setting each detail, each note or phrase, in place within the larger whole. This makes sense of 'phase two' of rehearsals, when this process of 'fixing' forms the bulk of the rehearsal time. Why is this 'fixing' so important? On one level, so that the piece doesn't 'fall apart' in concert; as much as stopping in rehearsals is normal and right, stopping in the concert is abnormal and indicates something has gone wrong. But also this fixing is required so that all the details of the work, which have

been carefully placed there by the composer, can do the work of creating a larger edifice in sound and in time.

This is what is happening when the conductor stops us in rehearsals to give an instruction or correction to the musicians. This is, on the 'common sense' level of my participants, the reason why pleasure and other powerful affects must be interrupted; why it doesn't make sense to keep playing a pleasurable melody simply because it's pleasurable, but why everyone submits to the logic of restraining their pleasure in order to stop for a detail to be 'fixed' so that we can be sure to get it right. This also plays into ideas of efficiency, systematization, and instrumental rationality, which, as described in chapter two, are part of the legacy of classical music practice from the bourgeois values of the nineteenth century. 'Each problem is subdivided into discrete elements […] and solved by a methodological coordination of means and ends', as Frank Moretti (2014, 88) describes Weberian rationalization. Efficiency or 'time-thrift' and punctuality were also important bourgeois values that can be seen in rehearsals. One of the qualities of a good conductor was seen to be a good use of rehearsal time; we gave up control entirely to him as to how the rehearsal schedule would be organised. As Levine and Levine (1996) note, among professional orchestral players this process is experienced as infantilising, but it is accepted as the most efficient way of working towards a good quality performance. Precision, which as Moretti (2014, 82) notes, had an overlapping meaning with punctuality until the mid-nineteenth century, is also an integral part of the aesthetic of classical music, embodying what Moretti describes as a bourgeois 'mindset that considers details important' (p. 64). The 'fixing' is about being precise in relation to the score and the ensemble; Ellie described 'making sure the rhythm is the same and everyone's making the same sound'. This is about unity through precision, maybe ensuring that dotted rhythms are 'tight' and exactly together.

This explanation of why the rehearsal must be a 'stop-start' process (as Atkinson, 2006, also describes in his ethnography of Welsh National Opera) is more than adequate for my participants; and indeed, if the conductor lets a

mistake go past *without* correcting it, then there will be muttered grumblings in the pub after the rehearsal. The ideology of the organic whole also serves to ensure that pleasure — and other emotions — are fixed in time and place, within the existing structure of the musical work. 'Rightness' comes when pleasure came in the right place, within the organic unity of the work. (It is tempting to compare this to sexual pleasure within marriage, another instance where pleasure is only allowed to be experienced at certain points within a pre-given structure). Emotion can be enjoyed but it mustn't be allowed to overwhelm the whole structure. The part is not allowed to overtake the whole, either my part as a rank-and-file cellist, or one part of the music within the structure of emotion and time. I give up control over my affective responses knowing that they will be enhanced by being in the group, organised in time. The danger that is being guarded against in this mode of organising emotion and time, as Eagleton suggests (1990), is that emotion will override reason. Emotion becomes 'allowed', and indeed is central to the role of the aesthetic in 'colonising' the bodily or sensory realm into the political order, but the unity of form — the rationality or 'cognition' as Eagleton calls it — gives both the rationale for the 'fixing' of mistakes/fixing details into place, and also functions as the vehicle for the emotion, the pleasure of the sensory, 'collud[ing] with the senses and the bodily in order to subdue them' (1990, 128). This explanation for the stop-start process of rehearsals is therefore a cognitive, abstracted rationale, keeping the mind-body dualism intact, in line with the idea that classical music 'finds expression for our experience of exceeding the immediacy of the bodily' (Johnson 2002, 112). Unity of form and 'fixing' details into place within that form dictate the structure of rehearsals.

What happens if we bring the body back in?

But why would we? The reasons given above for why we rehearse the way we rehearse – and why my pleasure must be interrupted – are cognitive, not bodily. This is in line with the ideology of the 'work concept' as a unified whole (Goehr 1992) that dictates the structure of rehearsals. This chapter ought to end here, as I've explained what I sought to explain. The body has managed to wriggle and

squirm its way out of this explanation, which appears to be whole with the cognitive account given above. In order to drag the recalcitrant body into this picture, I will have to break with the linear, narrative form of argument I have pursued thus far; bear with me while I jump to a different starting point in order to smuggle the body back into my explanatory framework.

For cognitive, rational explanations to prevail and the body to be ignored and effaced, particular processes or modes of practice are required. One historical example is from McNeill who describes how from the sixteenth century onwards, pews were introduced in Protestant worship, which 'restrained spontaneous muscular responses', and by isolating one person from another with wooden barriers, 'introduced a new quiescence into public worship' (McNeill 1995, 79). This quiescence needed to be enforced through a particular architecture. In classical music practice, how is transcendence achieved? It is a practice that relies on the body in order to create sound, so in order to efface something that is indispensably present, there must be mechanisms for ensuring that it is as little present as possible; mechanisms that make it possible for it to be ignored and effaced and thus transcended. My detour, therefore, will take the form of an account of some of these mechanisms.

Interlude — how is the body effaced or abstracted?

The main way the body was effaced was through policing its movements and requiring it to be still. The most explicit account of policing bodily movement came from Alice. A group of us were sitting outside eating our lunch during rehearsals for the NSO. Alice told us about a rehearsal with the National Children's Orchestra. She was sitting on the outside of the first violins, tapping her foot to keep in time while playing a complicated rhythm. The conductor stopped the orchestra, and without saying anything marched down the line of first violins, and stamped on her foot. Still without saying a word, he walked back up to the podium to resume the rehearsal. During that afternoon's rehearsal I found myself tapping my toe inside my shoe to keep my place on the off-beats. I remembered Alice's story and stopped tapping.

This stillness was only required for European musics, and bodily movement was encouraged or even choreographed for non-European musics. In the NSO, we played a Latin American piece made popular by the Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra (who, as Baker (2015) describes, choreograph very carefully their apparently exuberant Latin American bodily movements). The conductor decided that we would follow that famous orchestra by adding some choreographed moves while we were playing. Andy, who we met at the start of chapter three, was adamantly against it, his reason being that it didn't work in conjunction with the more 'serious' music in the programme such as the Dvorak cello concerto. Maybe the proximity of the body worked to pollute its seriousness somehow. 'I said, I will not play if we do it. [...] we're a classical orchestra.' The conductor backed down and just put in one move at the end, where we crouched down as the music suddenly went quiet, and then gradually raised our bodies up as the music got louder. Even this was too much for Andy, who half-joked: 'I died inside. Even in the concert I died inside.'

There was a similar contestation over when and how to move one's body in Cantando. During the more 'serious' music such as Vaughan Williams, Purcell or Britten, the choir had stood still, holding their books, and letting the music emerge without putting any bodily expressivity in the way of the sound and words. For the performance, they wore all black, as is the norm for orchestral and choral musicians. In the concert, singing in the half-shadows in a gloomy Victorian church, it was almost as if they were trying to camouflage their bodies, so that the sound would appear to be coming from nowhere, enhancing its ethereal beauty. Any bodily movement or expressivity would have detracted from this aesthetic effect. Indeed, as Lisa McCormick notes in writing about classical music competitions, it was a constant knife-edge for the performers to figure out what they could wear, one competitor saying she was careful that what she wore didn't 'distract from the music' (McCormick, forthcoming, 195). The visual element was clearly part of the 'text' that was read by judges and audiences, but it had to 'appear natural', which was a particular challenge for

women (pp. 199, 201, 209) because of the strictures around female respectability as described in chapter four. This camouflaging of the body by wearing all black, or trying in whatever way to make it unobtrusive and unnoticed, is another mechanism for achieving transcendence.

However, the body no longer needed to be camouflaged in this way when Cantando started rehearsing a Duke Ellington medley. This piece was outside the boundaries of what would be called classical music, following the conductor, Tristram's, determination to avoid the usual narrow range of music that classical choirs performed. Tristram gave them instructions to move their bodies more, telling them they were holding themselves like they were still singing Purcell, suggesting a 'gentle swaying', and telling them 'you've got to loosen up'. They had stopped in between numbers in the medley for him to give some points, and there was an irony to being told 'you've got to loosen up' before being given very precise instructions about how to sing all the details in the music. When they started again, a few moved fairly comfortably but most looked quite self conscious and some people didn't move at all. There was an awkwardness in the group – I felt like they wanted to follow his instructions but moving out of 'singing Purcell' mode they didn't know how to switch to a different form of embodiment. One singer, Holly, joked later: 'you're like, come on guys, pretend you're some black people, and move! Oh! It's really funny watching, because they're singing so beautifully but they're standing here looking so serious.'

I remembered the last time I watched the choir rehearse this piece, earlier in the year. Tristram had made a joke about one young man in the basses who just couldn't keep still during this piece. He'd had an infectious movement to his body that I loved watching, as though his response to the music was irrepressible. This time, I looked out for him but his movement had diminished to just a little knee wiggle. He had conformed to the mode of bodily expressivity of the rest of the group. Tristram gave them some more instructions on how to move, suggesting clicking their fingers on the off-beat and telling one young woman to loosen her knees. He corrected their pronunciation on the word 'you'

telling them not to say 'yeu' — 'less Graham Norton, please'. They tried the whole number again, and he instructed them 'as soon as the music starts, I want to see you respond. I'm not talking about break-dancing, just something physical'. When I interviewed him later he grumbled that 'trying to get this choir to move even an inch is impossible'.

The clearest example of this movement/non-movement as a racialised dichotomy could be seen in some arrangements of African songs (arranged by conductor Mike Brewer who had recently been convicted of sex offences against one of his music students). The choir were choreographed with marching and clapping movements. At one point Tristram suggested that they march as though they were carrying a very heavy load. Some of them did so in an exaggerated fashion for a few steps, imaginary bundles slung over their backs, sinking with every step, in a seeming parody of what they might imagine an African 'other' to be. This music is not autonomous from the social, therefore not autonomous from the body; in a sense it requires bodily movement to maintain the distinction from the more 'serious' repertoire.

There was a clear divergence, therefore, in the way the body was positioned in European and in non-European musics. Expressive movement was not only allowed but required in the latter, while in European music the body had to be effaced – to be transcended. This example shows how ideas of whiteness are both drawn on and reproduced through this taken-for-granted practice. As Dyer (1997, 15) notes, 'what makes whites different … is their potential to transcend their raced bodies'. This also works as an example of the boundary-drawing around repertoire that I described in chapter two. 'Proper' or 'serious' music was demarcated by stillness, whereas 'cheesy' or 'fun' music was marked out by movement. This was also a racialised dichotomy, in that the body was only effaced in white musics. It is a corollary of the 'controlled, compact, concise' body identified by the pupils at the east London academy that Kulz (2013) studied. Indeed, the stillness of the body singing Purcell (for example) is one form of this control.

Controlled excitement: the body as a site of contradictions

As well as through being policed into stillness by the ways expressive movement was organised, another way the body was transcended was through being given contradictory instructions. It was told to exhibit 'controlled excitement'; told to move, but don't move; to 'relax but get all the details exactly right', with the effect that it was *confused* into stillness. I asked Holly, who was frustrated at her non-moving choir colleagues, what this non-movement was about. She answered:

> 'Probably concentration actually. [...] especially when you're singing without music, you're really aware of what everyone else is doing, when you've got to come in, and you kind of almost forget to move.'

Her assumption here seems to be that movement is something added in later, rather than an integral part of the 'musicking' itself (Small 1998). This is in line with the ideology of autonomous music that the musical work 'itself' exists separately to any one rendition of it (Goehr 1992); she is concentrating on get all the details of the music 'itself' correct, an endeavour that becomes a cerebral one in this account.

There is a contradiction between the concentration required to coordinate all the requirements of playing this music, and the sense that you are supposed to also be physically expressive. For, despite all of the disciplining into stillness as described above, the idea that the body *should* be expressive remained. For Andy, who so strongly objected to the choreography of the Latin American piece in the NSO, it was only because the movement was choreographed that he objected. 'I move a lot when I play', he told me. 'I just think people should look like they're enjoying it'. The latter sentiment was echoed by others, that it is important to perform enjoyment, so that the audience can see you enjoying yourself and then has permission to enjoy themselves. Similarly, Olly, the conductor of the WCYO complained to the orchestra during one rehearsal that 'with these rhythmic passages I see many of you playing like this' - he gave a comical demonstration of standing stiffly while blowing an instrument. Instead,

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he went on, 'I want to see that you are feeling the rhythm in your bodies, in some way'. I took this to be a pedagogic point; we weren't playing in time and he was trying all the tricks in the book to help us to get it right.

However, George, the cello tutor for the WCYO, made precisely the *opposite* argument for a similar off-beat rhythmic passage that we rehearsed in a cello sectional. He suggested that we should limit our movements to feel the off-beat, suggesting we should 'conserve our energy'. 'No-one would say that you shouldn't move, it's part of playing music', he argued, 'but you make a better sound if you don't move around so much'. These contradictory orders even became a joke between George and Olly during a string sectional rehearsal. 'Sit up straight — but relax', George quipped, smiling. Olly upped him one with 'be calm, but get it right'. George had to turn it into a parody at this point: 'do this, but also do that, but don't do that too much, and make sure you do this - and smile!'. It was a joke, but it was based in reality; often in sectionals George would say 'do this, and try and do this'. We'd try it and he'd stop us again and say, 'and try and do this' and we'd do it again and then he'd stop us and say 'but don't do that' and we'd try again, and again, and again. We needed to get every detail of articulation, phrasing and bowing correct, while being energetic, excited and passionate. This was no mean feat when the potential for mistakes was seemingly infinite. Alice joked that 'it's amazing how often I get the bowing wrong, given that there's only two options: up or down!'.

The musicians therefore tended to agree in principle that some movement was good, but they were somehow frozen into stillness by the concentration that Holly described as necessary to get all the details right. Indeed, this was made explicit by Olly when he called for 'a disciplined balance of control and excitement' in one rehearsal. We were playing a piece by Shostakovich, and he pointed out that the strings weren't using the full length of our bows. 'Violins', he said, making one of his typically dry jokes, 'I want you to go home and get out a tape measure, and measure how long your bow is, and look at how much of it you're actually using'. The music needed to sound more 'exciting', he said; this

technical tip would help to produce that effect. But we were never to lose control; 'controlled excitement' was what we needed, he told us. This juxtaposition of measurement — which, as with the precision that I described, above, is part of the nineteenth century bourgeois legacy of this music — and excitement, calls to mind Wouters' 'controlled de-control of the emotions' (in Featherstone 2007). Featherstone argues that this is an attribute of an emerging middle class self in the late twentieth century that distances itself from the 'grotesque other' amidst a 'sense of disgust at direct emotional and bodily expressivity' (p. 79). This 'controlled excitement' was achieved in classical music through technical means. Indeed, the better you were technically, the more exciting the music could become. The body was thus constructed as a site of contradictions, being instructed in a thousand details, while also being told to put energy and excitement into our playing. In theory, the technical instructions would enhance our capacity to play passionately or with excitement, so could be seen to be the more important aspect of the recipe. But the net effect, as Holly described, was of intense concentration in order to get all of these details right, which meant that this was a mode of excitement that was always led by the mind rather than the body.

Did the body ever appear, untranscendentally, in its leaky, fleshy, demanding glory? Lucy Green argues that performing classical music while being female is a sure way to make the body visible; when we hear a man playing the drums, we hear *the music* on the drums, but when we hear a woman playing the drums, we hear a *woman* playing the drums. The female gendered body makes the body visible where previously it wasn't (Green 1997). While, as I will argue below, the crowd or 'mass' of the orchestra or choir can also be read as gendered feminine, having a male figurehead in the form of the conductor controlled the affects of the female bodies in the group and the feminine associations of the group were thus neutralised. This means that the only time the body was made visible was through its failure: when bodies fainted, felt ill, got exhausted, felt uncomfortable, or got injured. During one day's rehearsal for Cantando, I counted four people drop out during the day from 'exhaustion' or 'not feeling

well'; I was sitting next to the administrator, Linda, as they came up to make their excuses to her, to be allowed to go home. Others spoke of how they would get to lunchtime in a day's Cantando rehearsal and already feel exhausted. Conductor Olly told us we *should* be exhausted after a day's rehearsal, because it was such hard work. This exhaustion appeared to have an affective dimension as a response to the pressure for rightness that created an affect of exhaustion and seemingly insurmountable difficulty. Conductor Olly saw this as a choice, arguing that:

> 'Well, you've got to be brave. And you've got to see it through and you've got to realise that it doesn't necessarily come easily but it's worth [it]. For some people it isn't, for some people, they simply can't do it, some people don't make that choice and can't do it'.

For Olly, then, what was required was mind over matter, will over recalcitrant flesh. However, even the cello tutor George's body made itself known through a shoulder injury he had had for some time, so that he was unable to play during some of the rehearsals. He was clearly very worried about it, as he worked as a freelance orchestral musician most of the time, so if he couldn't play, he wouldn't get paid. Indeed, Christina Scharff (2016) found in her study of early career female classical musicians that almost all of the musicians had had injuries of some kind through playing, and many had not told anyone due to fear of losing work. The body's failures are writ large in classical music practice, but the ideology of transcendence cannot take account of them so forces them to remain secret.

The practices described above — policing movement, wearing all black, and giving contradictory instructions — *almost* worked to efface and transcend the body. Because they worked most of the time, and beautiful performances would be produced, then it seems like they *do* work. My insistence on bringing the body back in seems pedantic, killjoy, disruptive, unnecessary, especially given the special status of classical music as expressing 'an aspiration to realize a being not confined to the bodily' (Johnson 2002, 112). But this aspiration is bought at

a cost, through the kinds of mechanisms such as I have described here. Since this musical practice can be so demanding of the body, it is quite a feat to pull off this ideal of transcendence; it requires all this work, and more, to keep it in place.

Why my pleasure must be interrupted, take two

This lengthy detour has attempted to bring the body back into my analysis of what is going on in rehearsals. My initial answer to the question of why my pleasure must be interrupted by the conductor took on the cognitive, abstracted reading that was my participants' common sense: we must be interrupted in order to 'fix' the details of the musical work into the structure of the whole. However, this disembodied explanation fails to account for the affective dimension of rehearsals: the frustration of being stopped, the disappointment of not getting pleasure, the failures of the body. I have demonstrated how this effacing is rehearsed in bodies, with the body emerging as a contradictory site that is exhorted to move, but not move; be controlled, but excited; concentrate, but relax. These contradictory instructions result in a 'does not compute' mode of stillness through confusion and information overload. However, as I will suggest, this stillness is not just an absence, but is productive of a particular set of social relations.

If the body is brought back into the frame, how then can I answer my opening question, of why my pleasure must be interrupted in rehearsals? In order to do this I have to re-describe my rehearsal sites as a scene where powerful affects are being cultivated - fear, excitement, pleasure, striving, and all of the other emotions of the Romantic repertoire that my participants loved, as well as the emotions related to the social relations of rehearsal, and the challenge of playing this difficult music. In this light, the mechanisms for keeping the body still can be reread as mechanisms for stopping the spread of these affects: for *containing* affect, ensuring that restraint is practised and these powerful emotional states are not acted on.[14] This reading suggests a comparison between the orchestra

14 While affects are contained within rehearsals, the well-known phenomenon of orchestral musicians having a lot of sex with each other on courses or tours suggests that these affects are

and choir, and the 'mass' or crowd' from the late nineteenth century. I am suggesting that the orchestra's social relations and modes of practice may carry the legacy of ideas about the crowd from this period, given that these ideas were circulating in the decades following the institutionalisation of the orchestra, and at the same time that music education was being institutionalised. In order to put forward a different model of what is going on in rehearsals than the cognitive one suggested by my participants, I will draw on these ideas; as well as ideas of the conductor or leader as the point where affects stop, exemplifying the idea of the orchestra as a fantasy of male control.

Amid fears of social disorder, late nineteenth century writers such as Gustav Le Bon (1960) and Gabriel Tarde (2011) formulated a psychology of crowds. Ideas of 'contagion' and the unconscious (Le Bon 1960, 30) were important to this psychology, suggesting that powerful emotions would spread and cause the crowd to form a 'collective mind' (p. 24) that would lead it to act as one being. As Lisa Blackman describes (2012), the crowd was given 'primitive' and female characteristics, with Le Bon suggesting that those who were likely to be swayed by the crowd were those who 'embodied the attributes which connected the human with the animal' (p. 36), the same grouping as McClintock's 'degenerate' types that I discussed in chapter two: the working classes, colonial subjects, women and children (1995). However, the 'inhibition' or 'will' of the leader rendered him able to stand up against these powerful affects, and stop them from spreading. Recall Olly's emphasis on courage: 'you've got to be brave', an assertion of the power of the will. A further link between crowds and conductors can be found in descriptions of 'mesmerism' in the method of early twentieth century conductor Arthur Nikisch (Holden, in Bowen, 2003, 16). This recalls the ideas of hypnosis, the unconscious, and the power of suggestion that underpinned the crowd psychology of Le Bon and Tarde (Blackman 2012). Conductor Will even referred to 'the masses' in my interview with him (in order to argue for the importance of great classical music performances being available to these 'masses'); he saw himself as separate from this group.

not *entirely* contained.

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In the decades leading up to these debates at the end of the century, the model of the 'mass' of the orchestra (and to a lesser extent, the choir) being controlled by the 'Napoleonic' ideal of the conductor was coalescing into the form in which we know it today (Bowen 2003, 103). The formative period for the development of the orchestra is the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, although choirs have a much longer religious genealogy. However, the cult of the conductor was on the rise in the mid-nineteenth century as orchestras grew bigger and became professionalised. Earlier in the century, it was the norm for the keyboard player or first violinist to lead (Bowen 2003, 97). The first conductor to face the orchestra rather than the audience, without an instrument, was Gaspare Spontini, who brought 'military discipline' to the Berlin Opera in the 1820s and 1830s. His performances were renowned for their 'precision and dynamic extremes'; an early precedent for Olly's 'controlled excitement' (p.103-4). (Featherstone's (2007) idea that 'controlled de-control of the emotions' marks a new middle class formation is called into question by this evidence of a longer lineage). In 1830s and 1840s London, as William Weber (2004) describes, it was usual to rotate the role of conductor between the members of an orchestra, but this old-fashioned method was overtaken by Mendelssohn's regime in the 1840s (Bowen, 2003, p.106). The conductor's role in labour relations was also becoming evident, as Mendelssohn increased pay and introduced pensions for his musicians; he was also known for improving musical standards by getting rid of the bad players, introducing the 'private rehearsal' rather than holding them publicly, and instigating the stop-start method of rehearsal with frequent interruptions and corrections (p.106). With the influence of Liszt and Wagner from the mid-century onwards, the maestro-conductor archetype was established (p.107). By the 1880s, with impresario and entrepreneur Henry Lee Higginson who founded the Boston Symphony Orchestra, musical control was paired with control of labour. Higginson's musicians would lose their contracts if they played with any other orchestras; and he would dismiss musicians immediately if they were not playing up to his standard (DiMaggio 1986, 54). We see in this a history of increasing control and precision in the music, coupled with stricter and more codified conditions of

employment for musicians. The increasing authority of the conductor mirrored that of the entrepreneur.

Le Bon's ideas reflect the ideology of their time: that the working classes, women, children, and racialised others were more susceptible to suggestion or emotion than the middle-class white man, whose self control allowed him to be the point at which affects stopped. I am suggesting that these ideas were codified into the social relations of the orchestra, and continue today to represent a bourgeois fantasy of male control over the masses. Indeed, the control exhibited by conductors makes them an object of fascination for business leaders today; management studies journals are the main place where discussion of the social relations of the orchestra take place[15]. Prominent conductors carry out workshops for business leaders; I had participated in them during my career as a musician, and indeed the conductor of the WCYO, Olly, had run such workshops.

How do these ideas of the crowd and the conductor's techniques for controlling it compare with rehearsals in my fieldwork sites? In rehearsals, most of us became the mass, willingly and easily. Particularly during orchestral rehearsals, which were more 'bitty' than choral rehearsals due to having so many more separate parts, we might have no clear sense of why we were repeating a particular passage, especially if we were struggling to play our own parts. The conductor would have the full score with all the parts in front of him, whereas we would only have our individual part, so we did not share his overview of the whole work. This was not everyone by any means. Some people would stay alert, following the process, but many people would zone out. Looking around me, in WCYO rehearsals, I would see lots of bodies slumping in their seats during the 'liminal' stop-start zone of rehearsal. In one rehearsal, for instance, I was sitting behind two boys in the second desk of the cellos, who spent much of the rehearsal leaning back in their chairs and staring blankly into space. One of the

15 See for example, Business Horizons (Vredenbergh and Yunxia He, 2003), Leadership Quarterly (Hunt et al. 2004), Business Strategy Review (Kerres 2012; 2013), or Journal of Management Enquiry (Strubler and Evangelista 2009), to name but a few.

violin tutors told off the violinists for 'zoning out' instead of counting their bars rest (i.e. bars when they weren't playing). As for myself, even though I was trying to concentrate on what was going on, my mind would revert to some seemingly primordial mode from years of orchestral rehearsals as a child and teenager, and I would suddenly snap out of a daze when given an instruction to play, not having realised that my mind had switched off. There is a dangerous edge to the zoning out; if you aren't ready to play when needed, you risk being humiliated in front of the group, but somehow (contrary to my usual way of being in groups) I couldn't help it. This is the mode of attentiveness that orchestral rehearsals seem to inculcate: suddenly jumping to attention when you're needed, and switching off when you're not. We would simply wait for the instruction from the conductor — 'cellos, basses and percussion from six bars before letter M' — play that section, then relax back into zoning out when the conductor moved on to someone else. In this way we would lose ourselves in time during rehearsals, or rather, we would only be saved from being lost in time by the strict punctuality of the timetable. We never ran overtime on the rehearsal schedule by more than a couple of minutes. This almost involuntary state of mind amounted to an evacuation of agency, where, as Le Bon describes occurring in the crowd, 'the activity of the brain becomes paralysed' (Le Bon 1960, 31; Blackman 2012, 32).

Within this slumping, zoning-out, giving-up-control state of mind and body, there would be periods of intense emotion such as fear or excitement. Fear was reported around having to play a solo that was difficult in front of the whole group. However, this fear was cultivated and enjoyed by some people, as part of the 'thrill' or excitement of the music. In a conversation in the pub after an NSO rehearsal, we were talking about a Stravinsky piece we'd been rehearsing. Rosie, a flautist, said that she purposefully hadn't practised the piece in advance, so as to get the excitement of playing it through for the first time and not knowing if she was going to get it right or not. Owen, sitting with us, agreed that this kind of tension/fear/excitement was something he also enjoyed. This seemed to be a particular kind of excited fear around not knowing if you're going to screw it up

or not, relying on your skill to see if you can get through it, especially when the music is going past really fast. I experienced a similar type of exhilaration, which seemed to be shared by the whole orchestra, when we rehearsed the Tschaikovsky violin concerto with the soloist for the first time. We got to the third movement and the violinist, with a cheeky grin, started playing much faster than I had expected; we had to scramble to keep up with him. We were playing off-beats, so the rhythmic impetus further increased the feeling of being on the edge of your seat. After a few bars we all settled into a tempo together and I could enjoy the thrill of being carried along so fast. The adrenalin was running through my body, my heart rate increased, my body having suddenly snapped into hyper-alertness in response to what had happened. We got to the end and gave him a huge round of applause, both for his fantastic playing and for giving us such an exciting ride.

These are just a few of the strong, embodied emotional and affective states that were cultivated in rehearsals. They gained much of their power from being in such a large group, of around 40 people in Cantando, and 50 to 60 in the orchestras. Being able to trust the conductor to stay in control of such powerful affects allowed us to enjoy them safely, without fear of the group losing control. In rehearsals, then, we are enacting a model of social order where the masses *don't* riot, and we are learning the habits necessary to make sure that doesn't happen. We, the group/mass, must relinquish control of our affective states, including pleasure, to the leader. In rehearsals, most of us followed the 'feminised' role of the mass in giving up control to the conductor of the process. We enjoyed and sometimes actively cultivated intense affective states, and ceded control over their stopping and starting to his 'will'.

However, not everyone gave up control to the same degree. Some of the young men in the group told me they would study the full score in advance and maybe bring a copy to rehearsals. This practice was also, in part, about level of experience; the more experienced and committed musicians were more likely to get to know the full score. However, several younger boys also mentioned this to

me, while none of the young women did; it was clearly a gendered mode of practice. It was a way of retaining control over the process, rather than entirely giving up one's will to the conductor. Through knowing the full score, they could follow what the conductor was doing when he was rehearsing a different section of the orchestra, and see how their own part fitted into the whole.

There was also a *pleasure* in this control. The pleasure was of a different kind to the indulgent pleasure I described in the opening of this chapter. This was pleasure in knowing the totality, and in seeing the perspective of parts-to-whole. The sensory, indulgent pleasure of playing a nice tune or making a big sound could also be enjoyed by those who were partaking of this more rational form of pleasure, but within the knowledge of the whole structure. Indeed, conductor Olly encouraged us to join him in taking this holistic perspective, saying, for example, 'even while you're in it you have to be able to at the same time stand back from it'; part of his pedagogic mode was to invite us to share in his viewpoint of the structure of the whole, teaching us that 'the music should be transparent' and we 'should be able to stand back from it, look down on it and see all the parts and how they fit together'. Similarly, Will told me he wanted to become a conductor partly because of 'a fascination with being able to make music like that, to be able to essentially play every instrument in the orchestra'.

These two modes of pleasure, pleasure-as-indulgence, and pleasure-as-control are therefore a gendered dichotomy, with different modes of engagement with the body. Pleasure-as-indulgence is all about embodied pleasure and cultivating powerful affective states, such as the fear, adrenalin or excitement described above. Pleasure-as-control is a mode of standing back from, or above, the process in order to see the whole, and how your part fits into the whole in time and in sound and space. However, the latter form of pleasure was more legitimised in rehearsals, even encouraged by Olly. The former type of pleasure had to be kept in its place, and not tip over too far into indulgence, a great danger with the melody I described at the start of the chapter. Rachmaninov's chocolate ice-cream melodies are almost disdained by classical musicians for

being too pleasurable.

Why, then, must my pleasure be interrupted? I have described how in rehearsals, we are learning – practising, habituating – how to transcend our bodies, by cultivating strong emotions and then learning to have them controlled by the conductor. My indulgent pleasure in a beautiful melody is admissable, but only if it doesn't overwhelm the structure, whether the structure of the musical work, or the social structure of the group. Reading this in light of one possible genesis of this mode of control, amidst fears of unrest in the late nineteenth century, it becomes clear that this is not politically neutral. A still body doesn't riot, so the stillness as produced by the cognitive mode of engagement with the music is productive of a particular kind of political body. We are performing a fantasy of social order, of a functionalist society where all the parts fit into the whole, or, to use a metaphor from conductor Olly, a well-run business; the orchestra is 'an extremely good model for a company and the CEO is the conductor'. However, in order to make this fantasy work, we either have to join the fantasy of control, or we have to relinquish control completely, 'zone out' and be absent, to cope with giving up our control to the conductor. This form of pleasure-as-control legitimises the abstract, rational ideal of this musical form, reinforcing the dominance of the cognitive over the embodied.

Conclusion: a bourgeois aesthetic?

Peter Bailey describes how in late nineteenth century music hall, a key site for working-class leisure, 'pleasure is represented as an abundance' (Bailey 1986, xviii). It should be clear by now that this forms a contrast to my research sites, where pleasure was certainly present, but also carefully controlled. While powerful emotions such as excitement or fear were actively cultivated by musicians in my research, they were always under strict control. This control was also cultivated through technical details such as precision. However, the conductor had ultimate control; his was the 'inhibition' (Blackman 2012, 36) that could stop even the most powerful affects from spreading. Musicians reacted to his control in one of two ways: either we would zone out and snap to

attention whenever required, or, particularly in the case of the young men, we would partake of the conductor's pleasure-in-control by getting to know the full score and using this knowledge of the whole to retain a degree of control over our own pleasure, and other emotions. This was a cognitive mode of pleasure that matched the ideology of the 'work concept' (Goehr 1992) as a unified whole where all the parts fitted together; pleasure had to take its place within the overall structure of emotion and time, so that emotion did not override reason (Eagleton 1990). This was one of the ways in which the body was effaced in rehearsals.

However, there were other mechanisms for ensuring the primacy of the rational and the transcendence of the body. Our expressive movements were minimised if we were playing European classical repertoire, so as to let the music emerge and be heard without the body distracting from it. In non-European musics, in a racialized dichotomy, the body was choreographed back into the frame, so as to reinforce the boundary-drawing between 'serious' repertoire and other musics. The body was also effaced by camouflaging it in all black, and by giving it so many detailed, often contradictory, instructions that it was confused into stillness. One of these contradictory instructions can be traced from the first famous autocratic conductor, Gaspare Spontini, whose performances required 'precision and dynamic extremes', with tempi also becoming more extreme (Bowen 2003, 103). This idea was still present today in Olly's instruction to play with 'controlled excitement'. The latter was something of a catchphrase for the disposition required by classical musicians; we had to both cultivate strong emotions, but always be able to restrain ourselves and to stop the moment we were asked to. These conditions created a mode of embodiment where the body had to be both present — in order to create sound — but also absent. The music itself in European repertoire had to appear to be disembodied, or located outside the body, as with the Protestant ideas of the sacred as described by Dyer (1997) and Shilling and Mellor (1997).

A key argument that this chapter contributes to the thesis is that the socialities I

have described here are not just about the social relations *around* the music, but they are intertwined with the aesthetic of the music, through its historical development. I am suggesting that 'controlled excitement' is a classed disposition, which was not only habitualised in the body by rehearsing restraint, as I have described, but was also formative of the aesthetic of the music. Detail and precision, both technical and musical, contributed to this aesthetic as well as fuelling the 'ethic of correction' that I described in chapter four. In this way, values and dispositions that characterised the nineteenth century bourgeoisie have been passed down as part of this musical practice. However, they are also clearly values that make sense to my participants today, as well as being inherited dispositions. Alongside and through learning how to play classical music, then, we are also learning structures of emotion (DeNora 1995) that become practised and habitualised. Embedded into the aesthetic of this music — both the complexity of the large-scale musical structures, as well as the requirement for precision and getting all the details right — are the particular values and practices of the emerging bourgeoisie of the mid- to late-nineteenth century. These include punctuality/precision; time-thrift; efficiency; but most importantly, disciplining both the individual and the social body into restraint and control; if music has the power to 'animate imagined communities' (Born 2012, 266), then the social relations of the orchestra can be read as a bourgeois fantasy of (male) control of the crowd or mass.

Is this practice of restraint as a mechanism to ensure social order a necessary practice for living in a complex society, as Norbert Elias (2000) suggests? Other writers, drawing on Elias, have examined how social and cultural practices such as dance or gymnastics reflect and produce social order, even amidst fears of unruly bodies who might emerge into public space and riot (Roubal 2003; Filmer 1999; Bahnisch 2000). The rehearsal can be seen as practising a form of public order required in modernity: piecing together a large, complex structure with a lot of bodies. However, rehearsals do not fit neatly into theorisations of public and private (such as the classification from Weintraub and Kumar (1997)), instead drawing on histories of both, as seen with Mendelssohn's

introduction of the 'private rehearsal' in the mid-nineteenth century (Bowen 2003, 106). The next chapter, examining the authority of the conductor, continues to explore this liminal space, showing how the embodied intimacy of the conductor is used to gain the consent of the musicians.

Chapter six. 'Sometimes I feel like I'm his dog': How conductors construct authority through intimacy

The scene: a school hall filled with 40 teenagers and a few adults. The teenagers - dressed in casual clothing but still looking smart - are standing in two rows in a semi-circle, holding musical scores in their hands, but looking at the man in front of them. He faces them, talking, gesturing, and singing musical examples. A younger man sits slightly to one side, listening, behind a small brown piano. Two women hover around the edges of the choir, standing, holding scores; and I am sitting at a table to one side with Linda, the administrator. The conductor, Tristram, finishes his instruction and tells the choir to start singing from the top of page five. The piece is Purcell's music for the funeral of Queen Mary. The pianist gives a note for each of the five parts, and Tristram raises his hands, all eyes in the room trained on him. He lifts his hands to indicate to the choir that they should be ready to sing, and gestures to the bass section, who mirror his in-breath. He mouths the words with them as they start singing, his body and hands drawing the sound out of them. Then he gestures towards the tenors for them to sing – his face exaggerates the vowel shapes of each word and the young men's faces mirror his expressions. The altos have been waiting alertly for their turn; he brings them to life with another gesture; the sound builds further – he welcomes the second sopranos in, and then finally the sopranos join the lament, the richness of the layers of sound at such close proximity assailing me like a wall of sorrow.

This chapter will explore how the charismatic authority of the conductor is constructed through the non-linguistic, affective intimacy of this musical experience. I want to use this material to try and understand how power works between bodies; and why this mode of authoritarian social relations is so important to this tradition of musical practice. I will focus particularly on the affective interaction between bodies which facilitates this mode of power, and how this structure of power inscribes itself on and affects bodies. I will examine how the charisma of conductors is constructed, sometimes working through

hegemony via tact and humour, and sometimes through more coercive practices such as humiliation and fear. Following Lisa Blackman (2012), I theorise this charisma as drawing on the willing porousness and susceptibility of young musicians' bodies, in contrast with the 'inhibition' or 'psychological control' of the conductor's mind and body (p. 27). The susceptibility and openness of the young musicians to the direction of the adults in these groups amounts to a form of spontaneous consent or trust, which works through the gendered mirroring of the conductor's body by the musicians. It is possible in these practices to examine the construction of power as a bodily and affective *craft* which is consciously learnt and performed by these conductors; and as a mode of power working through and between bodies as a form of intensive *mirroring* (Coleman 2013).

The chapter will first lay out a typology of three modes of authority used by conductors in my sites: the 'people manager'; the 'charismatic charmer'; and the 'cult of personality'. It will then explore how the physicality of the conductor works on musicians through tone of voice, gaze, gesture, and breath. Turning to examine choral singing practices in particular, I will demonstrate how in the British cathedral choral tradition, young women were susceptible to the gendered authority of the conductor in different ways to young men because they are unable to successfully mirror the body of the male conductor. This mode of authority, combining affect and surveillance, brings together nineteenth century practices of authority in both the private and public sphere, to work directly on bodies, drawing on gendered identifications and susceptibilities to construct unity – but at a cost.

The structures of charisma

Reading over my field notes from observing Cantando youth choir, the group described above, I realised I had written down a monologue from the conductor: the only speaking voice that was heard in rehearsal, for long periods of time, was his, interspersed with sung fragments by the choir. Yet the audibility of his authority in rehearsals contrasts with his silence as a musician in not making

any sound himself – a silence that only makes sense when we reconceptualise the choir (or orchestra) as his instrument, which he is playing with his hand gestures. He is therefore not silent, but using the 'body' of the ensemble in order to play the music, using his body to play their bodies. In my field notes, I eventually stop writing 'Tristram says…' and just note down his instructions, hand gestures and movements. Sometimes from the notes it could almost appear as though there is no-one else in the room. How is this consent achieved? His authority seems absolute.

There were four conductors who I interviewed and observed as part of my research. Tristram, as mentioned above, was the conductor of the youth choir, a professional conductor in his 40s. Olly was a highly successful professional conductor, also in his 40s, who had recently been brought in to conduct the county youth orchestra courses as a way of trying to revitalise their dwindling numbers. The second youth orchestra in my study, the New Symphony Orchestra, had two different conductors during the time I played with them. They booked young conductors who wanted to get experience and would work without being paid. One of these was Adam, who appeared older than his 21 years. He had recently finished at Oxford and was trying to establish himself as a freelance musician and conductor. The other was Will, who was in his mid-20s and was well on the way to a successful career as a professional conductor. Tristram and Olly both wore shirts with cuff-links and polished leather shoes with jeans. Adam and Will wore jeans and polo shirts or t-shirts. All were white British except Will who was from Hong Kong; all had studied at Oxbridge except Olly who had attended one of the highly selective London conservatoires.

I am going to characterise three different registers in which conductors used their authority in my research sites. These modes of authority draw on and reproduce the ways in which gendered authority and power operate in society. Common to all of them is a particular form of intimacy which is enabled by music as non-linguistic, embodied communication. Also common to all three modes is the carefully deliberate construction of the craft of conducting, built on

the pre-existing affordances of the white, middle-class male body. Bodily gesture, posture, tone of voice, and use of emotion were all carefully channelled by conductors in order to get particular effects from the musicians.

1. The people manager

The first mode of authority is what I have labelled the 'people manager'. This was used by the two younger conductors in my research, Adam and Will. Will in fact described his entire role in terms of 'managing personalities', an idea which frames the conductor-orchestra relationship as one of equals. This was manifested in how careful he was about singling out individuals for correction in front of the group, sometimes giving instructions to players in the breaks rather than in front of the whole orchestra, as he was aware of the possibility for humiliation which this involved. (This was more similar to the 'more collegial approach to authority' which women use on the podium, as Brydie-Leigh Bartleet (2008) describes in her ethnography of women conductors). This seemed to be a way for conductors to cope with being in a clearly authoritarian position while also making their authority socially acceptable, both to themselves and to others.

It was from these two young men that I got a sense of how the embodied craft of the conductor was constructed. Downplaying the possibilities for power and authority inherent in their role, they instead focused on embodied strategies for maintaining the consent of the musicians. Adam told me, for example, that his conducting teacher had told him never to catch anyone's eye in the orchestra. This appeared to be a technique to maintain the omniscience of the conductor. To catch someone's eyes might have created a real bond of intimacy between the conductor and an individual player, whereas we had to feel like we were being watched all the time without ever establishing a direct, personal connection with him. Another tactic which both Adam and Will described was reading the atmosphere of the rehearsal room, and using tone of voice and careful

tactfulness to maintain the delicate balance of the rehearsal, where emotions such as excitement, adrenalin, boredom, frustration, and competitiveness were constantly being cultivated or managed. Will maintained his composure perfectly even when a player threatened to walk out of a rehearsal I was in.

This mode of practice foregrounds conducting as a *craft* which is explicitly learnt. However, while in English 'craft' means an embodied skill, in German, *kraft* also means power or strength. Juxtaposing these two meanings suggests a different reading of Will's description of being a 'people manager'; in fact, all of this careful tact and managing of relationships was *because* he was highly aware of the power dynamics which were possible, and he was working to defuse them.

2. The charismatic charmer

The next category, the charismatic charmer, was exemplified by music-college educated conductor Olly. Beautifully dressed with floral shirts, cufflinks, smart jeans and highly polished shoes, he had the orchestra eating out of his hand within minutes of the first rehearsal, with his dry jokes and genial, didactic manner. I came home from my first day's fieldwork with him and wrote in my field notes how 'I was just enjoying being in his presence'. Similarly to Will and Adam, Olly relied on a careful mode of tactfulness to make sure that when he had to give correction to individual players, it wouldn't be humiliating for them. It was easy to forget this was a mode of authority because as with the 'people managers', he relied on the trust and willingness of the young musicians. Their typical mode of embodied, affective openness or susceptibility made it very easy for adults to gain their trust.

However, when I interviewed him, one lunchtime, I was taken aback that as soon as we started the interview, this warm, open, demeanour abruptly disappeared and he immediately became very serious and focused, in what appeared to be a complete personality change. The charm was clearly his

conductor persona: a tool for getting and keeping the orchestra onside. The personality which I had assumed was his 'natural' one, was in fact calculated to get a particular response from the group. He was explicit about this in the interview, saying, 'Well, you know, it's entirely deliberate, and it's 20 years of experience of knowing how to put them at their ease…If you create a nice atmosphere kids want to do it.'

Humour was an integral part of his charm. In fact, to me it seemed like jokes were necessary to leaven the potential boredom of rehearsals which involved a lot of waiting while other sections of the orchestra were being rehearsed. Humour was such an important part of the repertoire of conductors that Jeanette, one of the vocal coaches in Cantando, told me she thought this was why there were hardly any female conductors, because this kind of use of humour was gendered. This was in the context of her reflection that she had never in her 30-year career worked with any female conductors. She told me 'oh I'm not a conductor' even though she had for years conducted a choir at one of the schools where she taught singing.

Olly's humour did indeed create a nice atmosphere, but it couldn't entirely override the potential for humiliation which the power dynamic between conductor and musicians created. He was usually very careful with making his jokes very gentle and giving corrections very tactfully, but even so, sometimes I felt shame for the person who he was giving the instruction to. In one rehearsal he was trying to get the clarinets to play louder, and said to the two young women playing clarinet, 'it sounds, clarinets, like you're vacuum cleaners with the setting on 'suck' instead of 'blow'. I saw one of them go red even as she laughed, along with the rest of the orchestra, at his joke. I laughed — because it was funny, and because everyone else was laughing – but I also cringed a bit, thankful that it wasn't me who had received that comment.

This usually gentle humour was all part of his general charisma. As Lisa Blackman notes, charisma is about creating and transmitting a particular affect;

it 'conjures up a kind of incorporeal aura which allows affect and feeling to transmit between subjects but not in any direct and obvious way'. Rather than being susceptible to the influence of the group, the conductors in my study would 'read' the atmosphere of the group and then manipulate it (Blackman 2012, 31). In contrast to the susceptibility and openness of the musicians, the conductor becomes the 'self-enclosed, bounded individual' who is the limiting point at which affects are contained; whose 'will and inhibition fortify [...] against social influence processes' (p. 37). In this way, as described in the previous chapter, powerful affects can be experienced in the group without fear of a total loss of control; the conductor, with his awesome power of will, is the point at which these affects are stopped from spreading.

3. The cult of personality

The third mode of authority is what I have called the 'cult of personality'; this is how one of the tutors described it to me. This was the most obviously authoritative mode and generated the most discussion from my participants. This mode of authority can occur in orchestras as well as choirs, but it was exemplified by conductors in the British cathedral choral tradition. The conductor of the youth choir in my study, Tristram, had been trained in this tradition, having attended a cathedral choral school as a boarder from the age of eight. He himself was critical of it in many ways, consciously changing his practices in order to avoid reproducing its narrowness, but despite this he couldn't escape recreating some of its modes of practice. Singers in Cantando describe his mode of working as familiar to them from having worked with other conductors in this tradition, or having trained as cathedral choristers as children.

Jeanette, one of the vocal coaches with Cantando, described to me the norms of this tradition. They include a strongly hierarchical 'pecking order' with the conductor at the top; the conductor's mode of 'getting moody' to get the choir to

do what he wants and keeping the group in a mode of fear; and a sexualised (heterosexual) culture of innuendo and humour. Jeannette saw this modus operandi as probably necessary for attaining the high standards of musical excellence which are intrinsic to this musical culture (as described in chapter three), but she was clearly very uncomfortable with aspects of it which she could see being reproduced in conductors she worked with. Most problematic for her was the sexualised humour in this culture, which was usually gendered. This was something that is, she told me, 'in that world. The trouble is you can't get away with that anymore and if anything shows that it's the whole Mike Brewer thing, things have to change.' Mike Brewer was a celebrated choral conductor who had been awarded an OBE for his services to choral singing. Several of my participants had sung under in the National Youth Choir. He was convicted in 2013 of historic child sexual abuse of a pupil while working at Chetham's School of Music, a specialist secondary school for music. However, despite Jeanette's insistence that 'things have to change', the only sign of change I heard about was intensification of formalities of child protection policy, rather than cultural shifts.

This tradition was based on the authority of masculine charisma. The young people told me that Tristram is really 'inspirational' and 'amazing'; that 'he's always got the right answer, straight away, or if he [doesn't] he always makes a decision', and 'he's not afraid to tell people when they're wrong', 'if you're not sure he'll just tell you what to do'. As mentioned above, one characteristic of this tradition is the frequent use of sexualised – usually heterosexual – humour and innuendo. The sexualised humour would involve things like reading innuendo into the words of a song, for example Tristram said to the choir in one rehearsal I observed, 'your larynx should wobble like this' and then made a reference to Jimmy Savile. One of the tutors described a famous choral conductor she'd worked with in the 1980s who would say, 'I want this phrase to be *molto legato*'[very smooth] and stroke the leg of one of the sopranos to demonstrate what he meant.

One singer, Francesca, thought that Tristram deliberately calculated when to make a joke in order to bring about a particular response, and so his jokes were never as spontaneous as they appeared. In particular, when he made sexualised jokes, they were, she thought 'actually calculated to make us feel like he's treating us as adults'. In rehearsals when Tristram made a crude joke, everyone would laugh, but in the private space of interviews, a few of the young women expressed their discomfort with this, Holly telling me that when this happens, 'I don't know how to react. I kind of smile... '. These jokes created an atmosphere where an awareness of women's bodies was sexualised, which plays into the dynamic of the choir which I will explore of the musicians mirroring the conductor's body, with women's bodies therefore necessarily have to be 'corrected' as wrong.

Francesca thought Tristram's awareness of exactly what he was doing at every point was part of a broader scheme of what she called 'emotional manipulation': 'often, the emotional manipulation is positively gentle, more along the lines of the stuff that Tristram does of... if he's being a bit short with us then making a joke and making everyone feel better and moving on with the rehearsal'. This unveils what the use of humour was really about - controlling the atmosphere of the group, through a sophisticated and adept performance of authority. This humour, as well as the tact which was often used, was both an alternative to, as well as the flipside of, the humiliation which was always the unspoken possibility in rehearsals. Tact was a way of trying to ensure that someone wasn't humiliated in front of the group, by correcting them in front of 60-odd people. Tone of voice appeared to be an important part of this tact, and of establishing gendered authority. Instructions were given with an intonation which suggested there was no doubt that they would be followed - and indeed there wasn't. Tristram was in no doubt that the choir would do what he told them, and if they didn't, he would put on a sharp tone of voice and say, 'I've told you twice to do *x*, now I expect you to do it' and the genial, welcoming atmosphere in the room would immediately disappear, bodies would realign themselves to attentive upright postures, and any shuffling noises or movements would abruptly stop.

In interview he described this mode of paternalistic authority to me as a deliberate strategy: 'I've said, several times – I've been quite gentle and nice, and I've warned them, this needs to be in place, and then something went wrong again today, so I said, right, now I'm telling you, you're making me cross, because you know this.'

The three modes of authority I have described all drew on similar techniques to ensure obedience to authority, differing mainly in how much the conductors tried to camouflage or minimise their power. Use of the body and the voice, a discussion to which I will now turn, were integral to all three modes.

Intimacy of gaze, gesture and breath

Charisma, and the social and musical control which it was intended to bring about, was also achieved through the physicality of the conductor, in a process of mirroring which was described to me by a focus group of the nineteen to 21 year old singers. Already, before this discussion, I had become fascinated, almost fixated, by Tristram's physicality when I observed rehearsals. He had a solidity to him, a groundedness combined with an openness to his torso which allowed him to gesture with his arms to cajole sounds out of the choir, while still staying fixed in a sturdy, reliable physicality. In fact, Will told me that this openness of posture was something he had been taught by one of his conducting teachers - that all gestures a conductor makes have to have this sense of welcoming and openness, inviting the musicians to play for/with him. The singers described to me how the posture of the conductor was all-important because they, the choir, would be mirroring him; in order to create a good sound with your body, posture as a singer was integral. As one of the singers said in the focus group:

> 'The conductor will be taken as an example by those who are singing. So the conductor has to remain the most energetic and the best posture and the most on focus and everything, throughout the whole thing, because if

Tristram slumps, I bet you the choir will slump a bit, and if Tristram starts to flag, everyone will start to flag. If Tristram's mood goes a bit [laughing slightly] everybody else gets a bit...

AB: You notice that?

Oh yeah, absolutely' [agreement from others]

Note the laughter when they talk about Tristram's mood. Sometimes during rehearsals, especially in the afternoons if the choir's focus was slipping, or when things were starting to get stressful coming up to a performance, I would notice him start to get a bit short or impatient with them, the genial good humour slipping away and a slight threat of anger becoming audible in his tone of voice. As noted above, this was a deliberate tactic on his part. In particular, the rehearsal before the concert was always a risky time; one young man told me that he had been expecting Tristram to get angry during the final rehearsal as he had done so the previous two years, but this year he hadn't. This was said in a matter of fact kind of way which suggests that anger is an accepted part of participating in this kind of music-making. Jeanette, one of the vocal coaches, was uncomfortable with this, and remembered 'that feeling, the tension involved' from singing in cathedral choirs when she was younger:

'Sometimes when [the] kids are new and they don't know Tristram, when he gets a bit snappy, [...] you can feel the kids who don't know him and don't know the choir very well, just doing that feeling of, oh my god, oh my god, that tension thing'.

The conductor's mood, therefore, is read and mirrored by the choir through his physicality and tone of voice. I wondered if the way in which some of them used anger or the threat of anger was also carefully calculated, similarly to their use of jokes. In the New Symphony Orchestra, the day before a concert Adam's mood changed from relaxed and genial to brusque and slightly impatient. First thing in the morning we launched straight into a fast, difficult passage at the start of the third movement of the Sibelius symphony. I wondered if Adam was trying to

scare us. He was quite ratty all morning and starting to use a mode that I found familiar from working with many conductors over the years — being a bit mean and unnecessarily harsh, with a hint of more anger underneath. At the break one of the violinists talked about a conductor of one of the UK conservatoire orchestras who, if someone talks in rehearsal, sends them out and they're out of the orchestra for good, as there's always another player to replace them. 'But', this violinist went on to say, 'he's really good, though'. This is reminiscent of the tactics of impresario Henry Lee Higginson in setting up the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the 1880s, as noted in the previous chapter; musicians would be dismissed instantly if they weren't playing up to standard (DiMaggio 1986, 54). Such authoritarian behaviours by conductors thus became the stuff of legend, almost contributing to the charismatic aura of the conductor. These kinds of conversations would also inflect our experience of being in this orchestra. We were aware that this kind of ruthless behaviour was possible for a conductor, so therefore possible for *our* conductor.

This hint of anger or impatience which Adam (uncharacteristically) exhibited during the above rehearsal has to be placed in the context of the strong bond of trust that developed between musicians and conductors in all of the groups I worked with. This was visible both in how earnestly the young people would try their best to follow the conductor's instructions, concentrate hard and get all the details right, as well as in how they spoke about the conductors, one singer saying for example 'there's a kind of trust that Tristram *definitely* knows best'. This trust or earnestness was notable in all of the groups in my study, and as I will explore, amounted to a mode of embodied, affective openness or susceptibility among the young musicians. This meant that a couple of sharp words were enough to get a response from the group.

Why was this unpredictability of mood so powerful? This power is constructed within the intimacy of the non-verbal, musical relationship between musician and conductor, both in the conductor's gaze and in his physical gestures. In the conductor's gaze there was a both a promise and a threat – the threat that if you

make a mistake you might get a 'look', and similarly the promise that if you get it right when the rest of your section makes a mistake, you might be noticed for playing well. I was in Will's line of sight in the New Symphony Orchestra rehearsals. I was constantly looking up at him to make sure I was playing with his beat, and as his gaze ranged across the orchestra, I felt as though he was often looking at me. I found myself hoping that this was because he had noticed how well I was playing, or that I'd got a difficult passage exactly right. This response, when I didn't have anything to prove as a musician or any particular need or desire for his approval, surprised me. It seemed to be a response to the structure of being 'played' by the conductor. I realised that it was slightly ridiculous to suppose that Will would be noticing *my* individual playing, among 60-plus others and eight cellists — except that he needed to hear everything and everyone.

As well as the gaze, there were points when it felt like the conductor was almost a puppeteer, playing our instruments and our bodies with his gestures. In particular during a pizzicato section (plucking the string rather than using the bow), which requires very precise timing to get the whole section playing together, we had to watch Adam's fingers intently, mirroring our hand gestures on the string with his hand movements. My awareness at such moments was expanded to include the whole cello section — or sometimes all of the string players — but at the forefront of that focus was a hyper-alert following with my entire being his hands, body and eyes, my breathing becoming shallow with the effort of concentrating. There was an added physical intimacy of playing without the bow, but instead directly touching the string with my fingers. The conductor would give us the exact, delicate hand gesture for each note, so it was almost as if we were trying to be his fingers, or he was inhabiting our hands, the physicality of the gesture being the same for him and for us, as though he is playing our bodies. This also worked on the level of the breath — even as string players, we would be instructed to breathe together with the conductor's upbeat gesture. In Cantando, this mirroring of the breath was even more intimate, as the choir would mirror Tristram's in-breath at the same time as his hand

gestures. Adam reflected in interview on how he experimented with changing his hand gestures slightly and how the sound he gets back from the orchestra changes with these slight differences. This embodied intimacy in gaze, gesture and breath had the effect of almost allowing the conductor to inhabit our bodies and draw the sound out of us; our expression and our sound became his.

Gendered mirroring: the embodiment of 'rightness'

The mirroring of the conductor described above occurred even more intensely in choirs than in orchestras. This was in a large part because singers' bodies are their instruments, and so not only is posture an important part of making a good sound, but also there is no physical barrier between their bodies and the conductor's body. This even extended to facial expressions, for example with Tristram giving instructions or demonstrating what their eyes and eyebrows should look like as they were singing. This would make a difference to the brightness of the sound. This close attention to all aspects of posture, breathing and facial expression meant that Tristram often commented explicitly on the way individuals were standing, for example saying to one young woman, Amy, 'stand as if you know this piece, you look a bit unconfident'. This postural mirroring was inevitably gendered in that the female singers were trying to imitate the physicality of the male conductor, in a context where women's bodies were joked about as being sexualised. This was particularly difficult for the young women who were less confident, such as Gretchen, who described to me in interview the effect of this postural correction of the young women in the choir had on her:

> 'Janey is very young, she's just turned 14 I think — Tristram twice, in front of everyone personally was quite vindictive towards her I thought, and she didn't come to the next couple of rehearsals, and that's understandable because that would've really knocked me. [...] sometimes it would just be, she's standing and he would be like, don't stand like that, bla bla bla, and he'd be like oh you look like the hunchback of Notre Dame, or something [...] it's kind of quite a dangerous situation to be in because you're so

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focused on not being picked on and embarrassed in front of everyone that you focus really hard on doing everything right, like, every aspect from your body language, to the way you hold your book, to the way you sing'.

She focuses intently on doing everything 'right' so as to avoid getting picked on, but this is in a context where her body is mirroring Tristram's stance, gesture, breath, and facial expressions. This calls to mind Rebecca Coleman's (2013) work on interactive mirrors, which describes how one's body is experienced differently through a screen or mirror which reflects one's body back to oneself with differences or enhancements. As a singer, watching the conductor and being 'played' by him resembles this experience of an interactive mirror – and yet for the young women in the group this means seeing in the mirror a male body which they can never hope to match perfectly. Indeed, accounts of postural corrections from a few of the young women suggested that women's bodies were, in this practice, in need of correction to try to more accurately mirror the perfect humanity of the white male body of most conductors.

One example of this was given by Emily, who was seventeen at the time. She had explained to me earlier in the interview that she always wore four inch heels as she was uncomfortable with her body and this was a way of making her feel better about herself; taking them off made her feel very self-conscious and ill-at-ease.

> 'He did pick on me once in front of everyone when I was — like at the very beginning when I just joined — I said I like to wear heels, and I think I compromised and I wore the tiniest heels and he picked on me in front of everyone and said, no heels, he made me feel like a floozy, basically, it's not the first time it's happened, but it was quite embarrassing in front of everyone else, and just after I'd joined as well, I didn't want that to be their immediate impression of me, and so I took my shoes off and since then I've always done rehearsals in bare feet or in flats, but it wasn't comfortable for me at all.'

In fact, one of the vocal coaches always wore heels, so the extent to which this was about the posture required for singing was debatable. This emphasis on posture thus inadvertently became a mode of imposing an ideal of a physicality on the singers. It became the standard of the embodiment of 'rightness' by which all female bodies were judged as not-right; as Emily put it, 'I don't have the automatic posture thing' which could be read as 'I don't have the embodied confidence/male body that is required' (Bartleet 2008). The 'rightness' or correction that was discussed in chapter four, as experienced more intensively by those in less privileged class positions, was also used in this way to correct the female body into not being female. Emily comment that 'he made me feel like a floozy' also demonstrates how this sexualisation of female bodies is linked into the razor's edge of respectable femininity, as discussed in chapter four.

'You know that he will have heard it'. Fear and surveillance

This imperative towards rightness that Emily describes was, she went on to say, motivated by fear: 'I'm definitely quite afraid of Tristram'. This fear appeared to be the flipside to the enormous respect and trust, almost reverence, which the singers tended to have for Tristram. With this level of consent – almost hero-worship – from the group, Tristram didn't really need to use fear or humiliation tactics to make visible the coercive side of participation. Francesca, who was a veteran choral singer, saw this use of fear or domination as an integral part of choral singing culture, similarly to O'Toole's (1994) description. She described how:

> 'In one of the choirs I sing with, we're required to put all our markings in before we come to rehearse, and to have looked through all the music. And at one point I had had so much on that I hadn't managed to finish off the markings, and this became obvious [...] and the conductor said, oh Francesca I don't think you've got that in, and I said, I'm really sorry, I haven't had time to finish off the markings, and the response was [he went] completely silent for a good ten seconds, and then he said, thank you for telling me that, I wish you hadn't told me that". Which completely

devastated me, and I just... I really... I felt absolutely tiny as a result of that. And it wasn't that my failure to put in the markings had any impact on the rest of the choir. It was that in order for the very slick machine to keep going the response to not doing what was expected had to be that belittling.'

In fact, Emily, who knew Francesca well, described how 'she doesn't really have anything to fear because she's so clever and she has a really great voice, and I think that I have a lot more flaws as a singer than she does'. Even for such a confident, articulate young woman as Francesca, this power could make her feel 'absolutely tiny'.

This fear was partly produced by the surveillance of the conductor. The following exchange between Katherine and Hannah describes how it feels to work under Tristram:

> K: I like it that he's so demanding, he pushes us. Sometimes I get frustrated because, he'll be like, we sing something and he sort of stops us, he keeps stopping us and saying 'you've got to do this' and you think, well, it sounds the same, what exactly are you wanting to change? And then we suddenly get it, and he says 'yes, that's it' and it sounds exactly the same to me, and I was just like, how is that... it's just like a slight pitching in a tenor or something, because he's just so good at hearing the holistic sound, the overall sound, but actually knowing what everyone's voice... *he knows* who is not quite there.

> H: *He knows* what needs to be done to get the blend perfect.

> K: And *he knows* exactly who it is that isn't quite with it. And that can be quite...

> H: Scary!

> K: Intimidating, at times, because you know, you know if you're tired or

something, *you know* that he will have heard it. [my italics]

I was struck by their repetition of the phrase 'he knows'. They know that there is nowhere they can hide from his aural surveillance, and that every sound they make with their bodies will be scrutinised and judged by him as up to standard or not. This contributes to their openness or bodily porousness towards him, as there is nowhere they can hide their mistakes or failures from him.

Any criticisms of Tristram's mode of working only emerged in private, in my interviews with women and young women involved in this group. Two of the young women who spoke of their discomfort at his methods attended a private girls' school with a strong feminist ethos, and were two of the most confident in their feminist identity of all the young women I spoke to, so it appeared that this identification with feminism gave them a basis on which to critique the gender relations they experienced in this group. However, in public the structure of hero-worship was strongly upheld. This aspect of choral singing meant that Francesca was thinking of giving up some of the choirs she sang in. However, despite her clear and insightful critique of the relations of domination and submission in choral singing generally, she was still heavily invested in this musical practice. She explained that it isn't possible to play this kind of repertoire without a conductor; the large complex structures need to have a central organizing authority.[16] Even though she prefers working without a conductor, her love of choral singing means that she is obliged to participate in this social relation. However, most of the others accepted this mode of authority as an intrinsic part of this musical practice, appreciating the high standards of music-making that they achieved with these conductors as well as the musical learning that they got from it. Thus high musical standards were seen as more than sufficient justification for this mode of authority.

16 There are a small handful of high profile groups which work without a conductor, such as the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra in New York, Spira Mirabilis, and the Lahti Symphony Orchestra in Finland, as well as the Persimfans orchestra under the Soviet Union. The major issue with working in this way appears to be the amount of time it takes to rehearse without a conductor. Furthermore, a member of Spira Mirabilis told me that an informal hierarchy of experience still exists in their rehearsals, with the rehearsal effectively being led by a group of the most experienced players (personal communication).

Gendered identifications with authority

These tactics of gendered mirroring, sexualised humour, omniscience, and fear of humiliation, were experienced differently by young men and young women in this group. These differences drew on the ways they were positioned differently in this heterosexualised culture, as well as the different modes of identification and desire which were available to the young men and young women following gendered patterns from wider society. In a discussion group interview with seventeen- and eighteen-year-olds, I had a stark example of these different modes of identification. Having spent most of the discussion talking about how much they loved working with Tristram – hence the cult of personality – the adulation reached fever pitch when a young woman, Mollie, said 'sometimes I feel like I'm his dog! – but in a good way'. Not wanting to be outdone in Tristram-worship, a young man in the group, Dan, then topped that with 'it's like being in the military – but better than the military'.

These comments reveal differently gendered pattern of heterosexual and homo*social* desire and identification. Mollie, who declares that she feels like Tristram's dog, is able to identify with a pattern of gendered domination and submission, a submission which her comment that this is 'in a good way' suggests that she enjoys. This mode of desire, to submit herself wholly to him, is one that appears to be both acceptable and pleasurable for her to explore. Francesca, described how 'there are a lot of male conductors who do rule by that... conduct by that kind of personality, half flirting, half... um, ah, dominating.'

By contrast, the mode of identification which Dan draws on, who declares 'it's better than being in the military' is a homosocial one, a model of authority from what is traditionally a closely-bonded, male-only group. Like Mollie, he wants to submit his entire persona wholly to this authority. However, Dan's mode of

identification is differently gendered to Mollie's; the conductor's power is one that he can identify with, and identify being or becoming, while for Mollie the position of submission, while pleasurable, gives her less possibility of identifying with *becoming* powerful. The flipside of this pleasure in submission, for some of the young women in this group, was the fear and humiliation described above. The rehearsal methods of authority and correction – a discipline which was relished by some – were experienced as humiliating and belittling by others, but these emotions were not expressed by any of the young men in the group.

This therefore becomes a mode of authority which is inaccessible to the young women in my study. A few of the young women said they would like to try conducting, but most of them (unlike the young men) said they weren't interested, 'didn't have the skill', or had tried and failed. Helen described how her body just couldn't do it:

> 'We did some conducting lessons, and I was really bad, I just looked like I was doing ballet [...]. I think you can either do it or you can't, in terms of physically, it's almost a look, just a way of moving, the kind of physicalisation. It either looks like it comes very naturally, or not really. And I don't think - it's not a question of musicality. I think it's almost just a physical – can you... can you get the motion, almost. It's really weird. But I can – I wasn't very good and I don't think I'd ever be able to try it again, like I wouldn't be able to conduct a choir.'

The 'kind of physicalisation' that Helen lacked is the same as the 'automatic posture thing' which Harriet describes: the embodied, gendered confidence that Tristram epitomised, and unconsciously seemed to expect of all the members of his choir. Brydie-Leigh Bartleet (2008, 42) describes how the pedagogic literature on conducting 'examine[s] a conductor's arms, hands, neck, face, posture, and legs, and so on, without any consideration of how these corporeal regions are inscribed with societal, cultural, political and gendered significance.' Similarly, Marin Alsop, who, in 2013, was the first ever woman to conduct the

Last Night of the Proms, and was subjected to gendered abuse as a result, described in an interview how, 'I've really worked hard at trying to, sort of, de-genderize my gestures.' The instances of correcting posture which were perceived by participants as humiliating, were therefore simply part of the gendered structure of this musical practice. However, as I will discuss in chapter seven, the young women were more likely to have a sense of inadequacy because of their body image issues, which further decreases their ability to inhabit embodied authority. This exacerbates the gulf between the young men, who are able to imagine *being* Tristram, and the young women, who have the option of finding pleasure in their submission, as Mollie does, or simply trying to avoid humiliation.

Refractions of public and private

The power of the conductor comes from the combination of intimacy and authority. The affective power that goes with this intimacy, as communicated through bodies and sound, is combined with the surveillance of authority. I am going to finish this chapter by theorising this power historically, describing rehearsals as a space which draws on the histories of both the public and the private sphere. In this way, they combine the intimacy, authority and the affective intensities of the nineteenth century bourgeois family with the surveillance function of the state. In order to understand the histories which are being drawn on with the modes of authority I have described in this chapter, I will theorise the rehearsal in relation to theories of the public and private sphere. If we follow Hesmondhalgh's (2013, 87) discussion of the conceptual terrain between private and public, rehearsals are an uncomfortable fit with either public or private. While in theatre rehearsals, which according to Gay McAuley (2012, 4, 6) are a twentieth-century invention which are traditionally private, classical music rehearsals are a more liminal space. There are strict barriers as to who is allowed to participate (as described in chapter three), and the embodied, affective, intimacy is much more typical of the private sphere. However, in such large groups, often people don't know each other, which suggests that rehearsals have more in common with a form of public sociability.

This is relevant when we try to understand where the mode of authority of the conductor comes from.

The history of the rehearsal cannot be examined exhaustively here, but a few details are pertinent. As noted in chapter five, Mendelssohn was the first conductor to introduce the 'private rehearsal' in 1830s London; previously rehearsals had been held in public (Bowen 2003). The twentieth-century practice of selling tickets to attend orchestral rehearsals (Goffman 1974) shows how the liminality between public and private has been retained in the practice. Mendelssohn also instigated a new mode of rehearsal; as Bowen (2003 106) notes, his 'ability to hear and correct wrong notes' was astonishing to his contemporaries. This practice of correction in rehearsals subsequently became standard; Berlioz saw the role of the conductor in rehearsals as being to 'criticize the errors and defects' of the musicians (Bowen 2003, 106). Correction and authority are thus linked; authority legitimises itself through the correction it carries out. This occurs in private but it can also be a performance for which tickets are sold.

In chapter two I suggested that the precision which is important to correction practices is one of the values and dispositions of the emerging middle-classes in the nineteenth century (Davidoff 2002; Moretti 2014). This leads us back again to the mode of authority found in the 'cult of domesticity', which was the cornerstone of the development of the bourgeois values of the nineteenth century. This was, of course, built on the authority of the head of the family, who in turn drew on the mode of authority of the Christian minister. A description of the common bourgeois practice of family prayers from an early nineteenth-century independent minister shows how the head of the household 'acts the part of the prophet, and the priest of his household, by instructing them in the knowledge, and leading them in the worship of God, and, at the same time, he discharges the duty of a king, by supporting a system of order, subordination and discipline.' (Davidoff 2002, 109). However, this private practice had in turn a lineage in the public sphere; the role of the congregation towards their

minister were similarly 'obedience to his ministerial authority, submission to his instruction and a proper view of the ministerial character' (p.119). We see here several resonances from the authority of the conductor as described in this chapter: expertise and instruction combined with obedience and submission.

Also important in this model of authority, as I have described in this chapter, are surveillance and affect. As Donzelot (1997 58) argues (looking at France rather than Britain), the nineteenth century family became an agent 'for conveying the norms of the state into the private sphere', at the same time as it was part of the liberal defence of private property against the encroachment of the state. The head of the family therefore had authority over his family, but he had to at the same time ensure the quality of the next generation of the population (p. 6). There is a link here between the intimacy, authority and the affective intensities of the nineteenth century bourgeois family, and the surveillance function of the state ordering the population. The authority of the head of the family was the figure who brought together affect and surveillance in this way. His role was of crucial importance to guaranteeing the 'strength of the nation' (p. 6) but the family was at the same time defended from any directly political role (p. 55).

Later in the nineteenth century, this mode of authority emerges in another liminal space between public and private - the British public school culture of the late nineteenth century. As Joseph Bristow (1991 58) notes, in the 1860s-70s the middle classes entered newly-founded public schools in increasing numbers, merging with the aristocracy's sons. Gendered connotations of authority and deference become prominent in the 'new breed' of 'competitive gentlemen' which these schools fostered, combining the 'virtues of the gentleman' with the bourgeois values of 'competition, independence, and a useful strength of mind' (Bristow 1991, 69). This new competitive gentleman 'found authority hard to deal with' as it 'had a weaker 'feminine' servility about it'.

This 'new breed' was therefore treading a fine line between embodying authority but also being open to be disciplined by authority. As J.A. Mangan (1998, 18)

describes, the 'games ethic' of the late Victorian and Edwardian upper-class, as expressed in public school sports such as rugby and cricket, was about learning 'both dominance and deference'. Games were 'the wheel around which moral values turned […] By means of this ethic the public schoolboy supposedly learnt *inter alia* the basic tools of imperial command: courage, endurance, assertion, control and self-control. […] It was, therefore, a useful instrument of colonial purpose. At one and the same time it helped create the confidence to lead and the compulsion to follow'. As explored in chapter five, this meant that this agent of Empire 'will not defer to the masses' (Bristow 1991, 68); he has the 'will' to resist the affects that would sway others.

This link between dominance and deference makes sense of Dan's idolatry of his conductor, as described in the previous section. He is able to identify with Tristram, as well as submitting to his authority. In a previous century, this would have trained him to be a 'useful instrument of colonial purpose'. He has learnt how to hold his body with confidence, using his gaze to fix the objects of his command, and his stance to build this authority, while also taking orders willingly. This is a mode of education which is typical of the administrative class of Empire; Mangan suggests it is the upper-class but I would extend that to the upper-middle class and the established middle class, many of whom are among the 7% in the UK who attend private schools. Among my interviewees, there was a much higher proportion than this who had attended private schools for some proportion of their education (43%).

This is historically also a gendered mode of dominance/deference. Some young women were able to inhabit it to a degree. However, as with Helen's description, above, of trying to conduct and feeling like her body couldn't embody the mode of physicalisation required, there were limits to how much women could inhabit this mode of authority. In her role as organiser of the NSO, I observed how she successfully used an authoritative tone of voice. But the physical attributes of embodied authority were unavailable to her. None of the young women I spoke to could imagine becoming conductors. Unlike the young men, they were not

positioned as the embodiment of authority.

Conclusion: authority as embodied intimacy

I have described a mode of authority that is mostly consensual but with the coercive possibility of humiliation ever-present. Embodied intimacy is crucial to the authority of the conductor; his charisma and authority is established through his physicality, his voice, his gestures, his stance, and his gaze. This is a mode of authority which is taken for granted, accepted and desired in this musical tradition. It is seen as necessary for the aesthetic demands of the repertoire and traditions of practice where large-scale, complex pieces are the 'great' works which musicians aspire to perform, and which need this central organising mind and body of the omniscient conductor.

In theorising the affective processes of crowds and leaders, Lisa Blackman quotes Gabriel Tarde's positive reading of the leader: 'the truth is that for most men there is an irresistible sweetness inherent in obedience, credulity and almost lover-like servility towards the admired master' (2011, 25). There is an openness and trust implied in this statement which was congruent with the earnestness or bodily porousness which I have described my participants as sharing. And yet this gendered power affects the young men and young women in the choir differently. For the young women, it produces them not as opposite but as imperfect bodies. Recall Gretchen's sense of holding this 'rightness' in her body: 'you focus really hard on doing everything right, like, every aspect from your body language, to the way you hold your book, to the way you sing'. The body becomes yet again a site of contradiction. The porosity or intimacy of this mirroring is combined here for Emily with the discipline and rigidity of *willing* herself to get it right. Similarly to chapter five, this contradiction leads to a lack of movement, where bodies are trying to be so many things that they can't be anything. The body that is both disciplined and effaced is a female body.

What is interesting about the examples discussed in this chapter is how they place the authority of the gods-eye view, the omniscience of the conductor, in a *particular* body, therefore conflating the 'view from a body' and the omniscience

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of the 'view from nowhere'. Instead of believing in its disembodied nature of this omniscience, we can instead examine its construction, its effects, and deconstruct how its power works. Conducting is described by the conductors in these groups as a *craft* which they explicitly learn; while also learning *kraft,* i.e. power or strength. Comments by conductors on how they gain this power using their bodies point to the embodied nature of authority as deliberately constructed - although built on the conditions of possibility of being white, male and privileged. Similarly, these conductors are all very knowingly, explicitly, shaping the atmosphere of the group and the ways they are using their power. Participants also experienced the conductor's authority as both embodied and omniscient. Recall Katherine and Hannah's riff around the phrase 'he knows'; 'you know that he will have heard it'. And yet, while they grant him this omniscience, they are also mirroring his posture and breathing and gestures with their bodies, watching his every motion.

This mirroring is drawn on deliberately by conductors as a mechanism to help create a structure of feeling in the orchestra or choir. For the late nineteenth-century thinkers such as Gabriel Tarde or William James on whom Lisa Blackman draws, 'the borders and boundaries between self and other were considered porous and permeable', but the 'process of synthesis or unity' was a challenge for them' (2012, 30). By contrast, in the group processes I have described, synthesis or unity was achieved in a fairly straightforward way, because of the earnest openness and voluntary susceptibility of the young musicians. By choosing to participate in these groups they desired to be directed by the conductor into the embodied rightness which would produce a high quality musical performance – the thrilling sound, tight unity of ensemble, and passionate expression which this musical practice requires.

Conclusion to part two

Chapters five and six have examined the embodied micro-socialites of youth orchestra and youth choir rehearsals. Rehearsals, historically and contemporaneously, have received little critical or theoretical attention,

similarly in theatre as in classical music, as Gay McAuley (2012) notes. And yet, as we have seen, if we examine rehearsals as an historically produced cultural practice, they constitute a palimpsest of the construction of the aesthetic of classical music, in its 'controlled excitement', correction, accuracy, and order. Most notably, rehearsals in large groups such as choirs and orchestras constitute a liminal space between the public and private sphere, drawing on attributes of each, as I have described through reading the figure of the conductor as both domestic patriarch and public figure. Similarly, the affective states engendered in rehearsals are highly intimate, but they are experienced in the company of 50 or 60 others which means that this intimacy occurs in a quasi-public setting.

What is striking about rehearsals in the groups in this study is the high level of consent from musicians towards their conductors, even when this is produced at the expense of exhaustion or humiliation. This strong allegiance to the group, going against the supposed individualism of the middle class historically and today, requires explanation. I am arguing that it is produced through the powerful belief in classical music as an expression of the values of this group. This is opposed to the bourgeois norms of individualism and competition which are also sometimes visible in this 'community-in-sound'. However, as Eagleton notes, a society based only on individualism would lack the solidarity to reproduce itself (1988, 332). The experience of community therefore has an important political role in bringing about an embodied, affective solidarity. In this way, their investment in normative, bourgeois society is renewed. (This also helps to explain why, as I found in a previous study, the anarchists in the Climate Camp movement would never listen to classical music, despite consuming and playing many other genres of music (Bull 2010)). Participation in classical music can then be seen as representing a belief in bourgeois values and their associated political systems. According to this reading, the recent upsurge of programmes in the UK to teach classical music to children in deprived communities can be seen as a political project that aims to ensure the solidarity of marginalised groups to mainstream society.

I now move on to the final two chapters of this thesis, which make up part three. These chapters foreground the role of sound in creating these affective intensities, through engendering a powerful sensory, embodied experience which makes young people want to participate in these practices. Sound, as mediated through the body, is also formative of the powerful identity that goes with being a classical musician. Retaining the focus on rehearsals, part three also broadens out to examine the wider institutional conditions of classical music practice. The penultimate chapter, to which I will now turn, focuses particularly on the experience of some of the young women in the Young Opera Company. Emily, for whom choral singing was an uncomfortable space, found by contrast that being involved in the Young Opera Company gave her a sense of empowerment and voice.

Part three: How the interior self is exteriorised through sound

Chapter seven.'Instead of destroying my body I have a reason for maintaining it.' Young women's re-imagining of the body through singing opera: the radical potential of the aesthetic?

One typical rehearsal for the Young Opera Company's production of The Magic Flute takes place on a sunny Sunday afternoon in May in the music block of a state secondary school. The whole cast and chorus are there, about 40 teenagers aged twelve to nineteen, sitting on tables or on the floor, some doing homework and listening to their ipods, others watching the rehearsal while they are not needed. I am sitting behind the grand piano in the corner of the room, playing the orchestral part; the director, Sophia, perches on the edge of a table stopping and starting the scene that is unfolding to give instructions to the cast.

We come to a scene which is described both in the musicological literature (Kerman 1988) and by my participants as the emotional heart of the opera: the aria that the princess Pamina sings when she has been rejected by Prince Tamino. Emily, who is playing Pamina, sings of her grief in an aria that one boy described to me as 'spine-tingling'; it is slow, in a minor key, and heart-breakingly expressive. The atmosphere in the rehearsal room shifts from one of working on details, mistakes, fixing things, to an extraordinary feeling of everyone listening. The quality of attention becomes palpable — we want to hear what she is singing; we are hanging off every note. For me on the piano, it is a careful pleasure to be accompanying her. Her line climbs up to an ethereal, eternally sad high B flat, a note which almost seems to shimmer in its glacial strength and delicacy — then ends. The whole room stays silent as I play the coda which ends the aria, relishing each note, putting every expressive possibility into the phrase. I finish, and everyone claps — the only time in today's rehearsal. There is one girl sitting on the floor who is listening particularly intently, really riveted by Emily, her eyes following Emily even after she has finished. Emily herself has a tentative uncertain air to her as she sings; a seriousness which fits well with the melancholy of the song. She doesn't seem to

notice the attention the aria has garnered and afterwards obediently takes notes from Sophia, the director, about where to move while she sings.

This description touches on the intimacy that comes and goes in rehearsals, as well as the physicality of the voice; the sheer power and volume of the sound produced by bodies. It obscures the messiness of the opera as we tried to learn it — the continual stopping and starting, the long hours and hard work of putting together this production; and the fragmented nature of the rehearsal process so that none of the participants ever actually saw the whole production all the way through in one sitting. But then these moments of rightness such as this one came every so often, within the cosy intimacy of the rehearsal room, the sense of a world within a world which often left me with a feeling of warmth and connectedness as I cycled home after a rehearsal.

This chapter will take the experiences of some of the girls in the Young Opera Company as a starting point to explore the body as the site of contradictions in the ideology of the aesthetic (Eagleton 1990). As described in the introduction, Eagleton's is a dialectical approach where the aesthetic is seen as upholding the hegemony of the new class society of the late eighteenth century, but *also* providing a space where its antithesis can be experienced, where all of the individualism, competitiveness, isolation, and loneliness of being an independent autonomous subject can be negated and lost in the *communitas* (Turner 1969) of communal sensory experience; what I am calling 'community-in-sound'. This is where the radical potential of the aesthetic will emerge, if it does. In the Young Opera Group, the contradiction which emerged through the accounts of these young women was on one hand, the experience of making a very loud sound with their bodies as giving them a sense of power, control and embodied confidence, set against the strongly gendered institutional and cultural context in which this embodied practice took place, which individualised and undermined their emergent empowered voices.

Following the narratives of empowerment through voice which some of these

young women disclosed to me, this chapter will ask whether singing opera can be a space where the radical potential of the aesthetic is realised. Beginning with the accounts of the transformative effect which singing opera had on their lives, I will explore the sense of having control over their own bodies and bodily expression which this practice gave them. Experiencing their bodies through sound allowed them to fill public space, giving them a feeling of power and control. I theorise this in relation to the bourgeois feminine psychiatric disorders which emerged in the nineteenth century in parallel with this musical tradition (Showalter 1987; Clément 1997; McClary 2002). This experience, which was life-changing for some of the young women, would seem to suggest that opera singing can be a subversive space wherein lies 'a vision of human energies as radical ends in themselves' (Eagleton:1990). I will question the extent to which this is the case by going on to contextualising this practice within the institutional culture and the canon of opera which both work against this sense of embodied power and confidence by situating these young women within normative modes of femininity as sexually vulnerable. The impossibility of this sense of power being realised is confirmed by these young people's powerful allegiance to the classical music tradition. In particular, the ideology of 'fidelity' to origins and authenticity inhibits the radical potential of the re-imagined body through limiting the possibilities for re-imagining the musical text, thus also limiting any possibilities for changing the practices that bring the text to life. The contradictions which play out on the site of these young women's bodies can therefore be seen as the body *acting back* against the troubled, critical sense of self which is continuous between this musical practice and wider society. This self-critique is temporarily negated through the sensation of inhabiting one's body in sound, but ultimately fails to bring about any wider change.

'In singing, it's my space which is just me'. Young women, body image, and the voice

Opera singing had a powerful effect on some of these young women. There was a recurring link in their accounts between their body image and sense of control

over their bodily expression, and the experience of opera singing. In this section, I will introduce three of the young women for whom this experience was particularly powerful — Emily, Sara, and Megan — and explore why singing had this effect, before turning to my own ambivalent experience of learning to sing in this way.

Emily, the young woman playing Pamina in the scene described in the opening of this chapter, is an elegant, serious seventeen-year-old who goes to one of the top private schools in the city. She learnt piano from age five and cello from age nine, then started singing lessons at twelve. Her parents divorced when she was nine, leaving her feeling 'in between' socially because her mother is from a working class background and 'at home we're quite poor but [...] with my accent people assume I'm quite wealthy.' She linked this 'in between' position to a lack of confidence: 'there's always a sense of being insufficient with someone like me'. She told me how she initially didn't want to be good at opera singing, 'because I knew that it wasn't cool', preferring 'to be more of a pop singer', but eventually with the help of her singing teacher she 'came to terms with the fact that this is how my voice sounds best, as an opera singer'. Following her teacher's advice, she auditioned for The Magic Flute having never seen an opera before - 'I think I had no idea of what I was getting myself into...I didn't know what I was auditioning for'.

The rehearsal process, which took the best part of a year, was challenging for her as singing and acting in front of others was difficult because of her shyness and fear. This shyness stemmed from childhood; she described to me how her father, from whom she is now legally estranged, was 'a pretty abusive guy', and how this affected her:

> 'All through my childhood I never spoke to anyone, I was extremely shy, and very self-conscious and I still am, [...] and for like the first six months of the opera, like ... it was extremely difficult for me to be able to get up in front of anyone and do the singing or the acting or anything like that. Very difficult.'

The physical experience of singing in an operatic style, which uses the core muscles and full lung capacity, meant that Emily had to make a loud noise with her body: 'when I sing properly everyone always shuts up but I don't know if they're shutting up because they don't like it or because they're just stopping to listen. It's hard to tell.' Nevertheless, despite the 'times when it was really, really difficult' being involved in the opera, Emily now describes it as an 'amazing' experience which has 'given me such a boost of confidence'. Part of this boost of confidence has been body confidence: 'I tend to wear four inch heels every day […] it's part of my self conscious thing, I'm not really very happy with my body so, it makes me feel better to be taller […] It just makes me feel like, thinner and less inferior than boys'. By the end of the opera, however, she felt 'a lot more comfortable in my body'.

Emily carried her increased body confidence into the rest of her life, unlike Megan, for whom this shift in the experience of the body while singing was only temporary. Megan was eighteen and in her final year at sixth form college. Fidgeting as she spoke, Megan mentioned towards the end of our interview that:

> 'Well, actually, I've had a bit of like, body consciousness... but then when I sing I feel like ok with the size that I am because it makes a big sound, so it's actually accepting in that way, because it's like, ok I'm not stick thin and I'm not a skinny minny, but listen, I can make a huge sound, and it's like, it's pretty good. That's true, to be honest, I wasn't going to say it but there it is.'

Her reluctance to speak about her body consciousness points towards the difficulty and shame associated with admitting to it, even though such negative feelings towards one' s body are endemic among young people, especially women (APPG, 2011). However, as I spoke to more of the young women involved in this production, this link between singing and bodily expressivity and confidence emerged as a theme. For Hannah and Katherine, two close friends whom I interviewed together, singing gave them a sense of freedom and control over their bodily expression which they didn't find with playing

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instruments. This was such a powerful experience that it had led both of them to decide to go to music college to study opera. Jeanette, the vocal coach with the Young Opera Company who also taught singing to some of these girls, made explicit the link between taking up space through singing and eating disorders:

> 'I was teaching someone recently, middle 20s, who was saying to me, we were talking about posture and things and she was saying how difficult she found it to allow herself to expand. And I realised, in trying to explain to her that women in particular [...] we're not allowed to take up space, [...] so I think that personally ties in with eating disorders, I want to disappear, to be smaller, there to be less of me, because there is too much of me'.

This expansion through voice and sound is therefore working against powerful beliefs about women's bodies taking up space, and does not occur without being taught and encouraged; a difficult process, as I will discuss below.

However, the most powerful account of how singing altered the experience of the body came from Sara. Now nineteen, she had been fostered out at age seventeen due to her abusive mother. She became anorexic, but because of singing, 'instead of destroying my body I have a reason for maintaining it.' Similarly to Hannah and Katherine's accounts, she describes how since her voice is part of her body, unlike an instrument, she has control over it, and it is a space which her abusive mother can't get at.

> Sara: In singing, it's kind of my space which is just me, it's something that I've never really shared with — my mum's never really had an influence on, because it's me and it's my voice, and it's not like she can stop me going by the piano so I can't practice, because it's my voice, it's part of my body, and while yeah she's done a lot of things to my body which hasn't really helped, but still it's such a big part of me that she can't take it away. [...] And I've had quite a few mental health issues over the past few years and I'm still not doing great with that, but one thing was I was diagnosed with anorexia, and my only reason for recovering and now staying in recovery is for my

voice. Because if you don't eat, you die – well I don't care, but if you don't eat, you can't sing and yes I do care! So it really is, it's my only...

AB: So you could almost say it's saved your life.

Sara: Oh I say that, definitely. Yeah, there's no way I would've been able to recover for myself, I did it for my singing, because ... and I still do it, it's not something you just recover from like flu, it goes on and in several years' time I will still be in the same place. But I maintain my weight and I keep eating and I try not to restrict certain food groups for my voice, it's not for me.

Sara separates her 'self' from her voice; she says she would never have been able to recover from anorexia by 'for myself', but instead she did it 'for my voice, [it's] not for me'. This separation of 'self' from 'voice' is common parlance among opera singers, as described in Paul Atkinson's ethnography of Welsh National Opera, where singers talk about 'the voice' as an 'independent agent'; '[t]he voice exists, and is something that has to be found and used... The [singers'] accounts are developed as if the singer and the voice were two different identities or agencies that have developed more or less independently... the voice can almost have a life of its own, independently of the perceptions and intentions of the singer. It reveals its true identity as a voice, or as a type of voice, in a way that does not depend on the will of the performer. The voice determines what the singer will sing, rather than the singer's determining what the voice will produce' (Atkinson 2006, 179). The materiality of the voice is thus formative in and of itself, in its potentialities, which a teacher hears and works with. There is therefore a double sense of the voice as both within one's own control, formed within the materiality of one's body, but also allowing an alternative bodily 'imaginary' which expands the sense of the body beyond the boundaries of the skin to take up a much larger space (Weiss 1999). There is therefore a sense of the voice (and in this sense, the body) acting back on the self, with a power or agency of its own. This is where I am theorising the radical potential of the aesthetic as emerging from — the sense of the body's materiality having

capacities which are not amenable to discipline and authority.

I had two singing lessons with Jeanette, experiencing both the feeling of power at the bodily expansion through voice and sound, but also the sense of fear and bodily disruption that this entailed. The sensations resulting from following Jeanette's instructions were slightly uncomfortable; there was an unease, even an edge of fear, at the unfamiliar feeling of making such a big sound, which surprised me. Part of this reluctance was the usual frustration of learning a new bodily technique, in which the body feels clumsy and awkward yet also curious at this hitherto undiscovered capacity. This sense of awkwardness — almost feeling like my body was not my own – was compounded because this new bodily technique was also about producing a sound. As soon as I got into the higher register - from a D or E upwards, the part of the voice that you can't access unless you have lots of breath and lots of support in the gut — there was an exhilarating, scary, somewhat alien feeling that my voice had taken over and annihilated the rest of me with its volume and intensity of sound. There was a dizzying resonance in my head, an enormous volume of air needed in my belly, and a sense of drawing the sound up from the ground. No wonder that one of the sopranos in The Magic Flute had complained of feeling faint and lightheaded during a rehearsal where she had to sing a string of high notes in a row. My body had become only breath, resonance and noise.

However, the noise I made was an abrasive one which I would not have recognised as my own. Jeanette talked about projecting the sound outwards, imagining it taking up space, which meant that this unfamiliar sound was something that I couldn't hide but instead had to amplify. I had to trust Jeanette that although it might feel awkward and sound horrible, it was still right; Jeanette assured me that it would sound different to her, outside of my body than it did to me, inside it. I couldn't trust my own sense of what I was hearing, but had to rely on her as a kind of sonic mirror to tell me when it was right or wrong. But at the same time, it felt exciting to be making new, big sounds and to hear the difference in my voice so quickly. I was slightly in awe of the sheer

volume I got on the high notes, yet this was always an ambivalent feeling, as I would also cringe slightly at the bright, brittle, metallic sound that I felt little affinity with. This was coupled with a feeling of physical gaucheness, of not quite knowing what to do with my body and my limbs, and feeling very young and malleable. Along with this came something of vulnerability, in that I was letting myself be physically manipulated through Jeanette's instructions, with my voice taking over my body, leaving no space for anything else.

I want to link the thread I have been following in this section, of overcoming body consciousness through making sound, with a lineage of bourgeois femininity's ailments of interiority: anorexia, hysteria, and neurasthenia. As Elaine Showalter (1985, 18) describes, during the decades from 1870-1910 (a period which overlaps with the formative period for music education institutions which I described in chapter two), while middle-class women were beginning to inhabit public institutions and demand political rights, these 'female nervous disorders […] became epidemic' (p. 18). They would become the bread and butter of psychoanalysis, which theorised them as expressing an interiority that has been unconsciously repressed. Similarly to what I have been describing in this chapter, this involved something interior being exteriorised in sound; a defining characteristic of an hysterical attack was the victim sobbing and laughing (p. 130). This was theorised by contemporary commentators as related to women's unsatisfied sexual and maternal drives, rather than their social conditions as later feminist analyses have emphasised (p.131). Indeed, Susie Orbach narrates one way of understanding anorexia as being a protest against the social conditions of femininity — acting the 'good girl' and 'agreeing' to take up only a little space in the world - but retaining control by taking this act to a pathological extreme (Orbach 1993, 10).

Certainly, the link with a concealed interiority could be seen in the accounts some of these young women gave me, for example, as in Megan's confession that she has had a bit of 'body consciousness' after which she adds, 'I wasn't going to say it but there it is'. This was a matter that was private and difficult to share,

and mainly experienced on the inside rather than shared. To be tutored and encouraged towards making a big sound with the body — making exterior something that is produced in the body, and taking up space — was a strong contrast with the powerfully internalised message of having to make one's body smaller. For Emily, Megan and Sara, the effect of this re-imagining was powerful, shifting the way they experienced their bodies, either temporarily while they were singing or the effects carrying over into their everyday lives. This gave them control over their own bodies and bodily expression in a way which worked against their usual experience of body consciousness or lack of control, allowing them to assert their physical presence through sound. This sound, however, was too large to work in the private spaces of the bedroom or living room. Instead, it required public space as a condition of its production, a discussion to which I will now turn.

'I feel powerful, you just fill the room with sound'. Being heard in public space

The voices of the young women in the Young Opera Company were co-produced between the materiality of their bodies and various mediating forces: the spaces of performance and rehearsal; their relationships with their teachers; the tradition of classical music practice in which they were learning; the repertoire and roles of the operatic canon; and the broader institutional conditions of the opera industry. In this section I will focus on the role of public space in imagining the body differently through sound. For these young women, being encouraged and facilitated to make a loud noise with their bodies in large public spaces was not part of their usual lives. The rehearsal and performance venues for this group included spaces seating up to 500 people, the largest being the imposing West Road Concert Hall, but also a 220 seat concert venue, a large Victorian church, and even a shopping mall in the centre of town. Performing in these most public of public spaces, with only one's body as an instrument, involves imagining the sound which your body makes as reaching out to the farthest corner of the room; in effect, re-imagining one's body as filling that space. Producing a sound which takes up this much space therefore requires this

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different imaginative sense of the body. Megan described 'when the room feels huge and then you fill the room, you just fill the room with sound [...] I have this whole cartoon image going on of sound waves going out and filling the room.'

The space itself, therefore, is an integral part of this re-imagining of the body, which does not work in the same way in private space. Megan was nervous about being heard practising at home or at school, in spaces where this sound was out of place:

> 'When I'm totally alone that's ok, but even at home my walls are thin and there are people who can hear, and my neighbours often say, that sounds good, and at college there are always people around, and the rooms aren't soundproof, and there's been times when you're singing and people down the corridor make comments and you can hear them and that's horrible. I just stop, sometimes I can't go on, I'm just like, no, that's enough for now, and it's left on such a bitter taste but I can't do it any more, that's too tense'.

There is in Megan's account a palpable discomfort and vulnerability at *being heard* which points towards some of the difficulty around cultivating the voice in this way. This sense of constantly being judged and criticised is part of the tradition of practice of classical music, as I explored in chapter three. This discomfort at being heard and therefore being judged existed for some of these young women in tension with the feeling of power at filling public space with sound.

This sense of power, as well as being linked to the architecture of public spaces, came from the sense of using all of one's breath, diaphragm, and really going for it, as Megan describes:

> 'Sometimes when I sing a high note I'm like, grr, anchor, DAAAA! [...] Especially if I enjoy it, because I really plonk on the anchor [...] and then my vibrato just goes, then it's like, hello! [laughs] hello note!'

In her low notes, she also finds 'there's a power there' which links into the altered sense of her body when she sings. All of these young women, therefore, experienced their bodies differently by using a different sensory mode of perception - sound. Rather than experiencing their bodies as objects of shame or inadequacy as a result of their negative body image, they instead were able to be expressive, proud, and confident. Having control over their own embodied expression felt radical or 'freeing' to them. This involved a 'destabilisation of the body as a *given'* and with this the possibility of radical bodily transformation (Weiss 1999, 74), from hiding or disguising something which is shameful, to celebrating and proclaiming one's presence with a sense of pride. As Megan described, singing in this way 'uses everything' — every part of the body — which radically shifts the experience of being in the body. Holly, a singer in Cantando, described how 'it makes me feel really happy, you know. Like especially being a soprano, when you hit these top notes it's a nice feeling hearing it, and actually yeah, the physicality of it, kind of engaging your whole body in singing one piece of music'. The voice thus emerges as a site of potential for feminist re-imaginings of the body.

The social sanctioning of the group was important in providing a space where using one's voice in this way was encouraged and facilitated by adults and peers. This amounted to being given permission to make noise, as Megan described: 'people expect that, that's what you're there for'. She contrasted this with the usual conditions of childhood and young adulthood: 'that engrained thing from when you're a child – don't be loud, don't be messy [...] And then suddenly it's like, be louder, you're allowed, it's like, great!' Parents, grandparents, school teachers, music teachers, godparents, and other adults endorsed this practice by attending performances and showering praise. Singing teachers and conductors inducted the young people into the tradition of practice in classical music, organised and facilitated spaces of rehearsal and performance, and provided them with emotional support in lessons as they learnt to use their voices in this unfamiliar way; despite how good it felt to sing in this way once they knew how to do it, it was not something that came naturally to either Megan and Emily.

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They both described reluctance and difficulty in the process of learning to sing, as described in chapter three in Megan's account of how her singing lessons had shaped her as a person, not just moulding her voice. Coping with the sense of physical disruption which re-imagining the body in this way entailed, which also required continual instruction and correction from teachers, conductors, directors, and other adults, therefore appeared to rely on a supportive and trusting relationship with a singing teacher.

This is particularly important because of the historical construction of the public sphere as a masculine space (Fraser 1990). The associations of publicness with masculinity and the private sphere with femininity still have profound implications for the representation of women in public, among other issues. The claiming of public space through sound by these young women, therefore, can be seen as a reversal of the broader conditions of women in society. This assertion needs to be inflected by my participants' (mostly) middle class position. As Jeanette reminded me, compared to working class areas she'd worked in the young women in this group were, 'very outspoken'. However, as I will go on to describe, this claiming of space was only allowed to occur under heavily controlled circumstances.

The conditions of producing the voice: the musical canon and opera industry

This transformative experience of singing took place within a particular environment. It was mediated by the musical-dramatic text of The Magic Flute, as a central (although not necessarily representative) work in the operatic canon. It was also constructed within the institutional conditions of the opera world, both in the youth music scene and in what I am calling the 'symbolic ecology' of classical music which featured heavily in the imagined futures of these young women. The transformative potential for young women singing opera needs to be examined in relation to this context, to ask how this radical force might connect with social and institutional forms of power and practice. Do these expand or close off this transgressive potential? This question requires

examining how my participants experienced the text of the opera. While I am still writing against the dominant strain of analytical musicology which theorises the text of a musical work as the site of its true meaning (Goehr 1992), I have to engage with the text to an extent because the ideology of being faithful to it set limits for what was possible for bodies to do with it. Against the potential for subversion of opera singing, therefore, I will describe how the text and the institutional conditions of the opera world both tended to confirm hegemonic gender roles of normative bourgeois femininity as sexually vulnerable, objectified, and suffering. Indeed, the ideals of bourgeois femininity, as exemplified by the 'cult of domesticity' which I explored in chapter two, were dramatised and (sometimes uncomfortably) re-inscribed in practice through the staging of this opera.

Isabelle, who was just about to go to music college to study singing in the hope of becoming an opera singer, told me her experience of the music theatre and opera industry thus far had turned her into a feminist: 'I still think the whole opera and music industry thing it's men before women [...] and I think it's also pretty women over people who aren't considered pretty'. She was also highly aware of the 'sexual economy' (Yoshihara 2008, 109) that this power imbalance entails:

> 'I had a singing lesson with a tenor [...] and he said, I'll give you some advice, don't let anyone make you do something you don't want to do, just don't let them do it, they can't force you to do it, don't let them...[...] and he sort of looked at me, he said, you're an attractive girl and looks go a long way. Don't let anyone...'

In the professional music world, Isabelle sees clearly that female singers are in a dominated position, a reading which is born out by research into early career female musicians in London and Berlin by Christina Scharff (forthcoming), which shows that sexism and sexual harassment are rife in the opera world. This knowledge intersected uncomfortably with the text of The Magic Flute to reinforce the sexual vulnerability of young women in a scene where Isabelle's

character had to lie on the stage while the evil slave-master, Monostatos, sings an aria about how he is going to rape her; she had to pretend to be asleep while he paced around her body and leant over her. She told me how 'it just freaked me out the first few times he did it. Even now […] it's really disorientating.' The music is a breathlessly fast aria in a major key, and the scene is supposed to be comic rather than dramatic. Robbie, playing Monostatos, the would-be rapist, had very good diction and all his words, in the director's translation, could be clearly heard, such as 'she's lying there so luscious, I'll be damned if I hold fire!', and 'I've got what it takes as well' (complete with hip thrusts). Francesca commented on the dramatic power of this scene, noting that it was 'one of the scenes that has come together in our particular production the best' which is 'a genuine problem' because 'it's believable and compelling […] but not comfortable at all'. Isabelle thus received both from the text of The Magic Flute as well as the practices of the opera industry the message that young women were sexually vulnerable.

Another aspect of normative bourgeois femininity that emerged from the text of this opera was women's role as to suffer. In the scene described at the beginning of this chapter, the jagged, expressive intervals of Pamina's aria represent female suffering as 'rightness', or at least, as 'spine-tingling' beauty. Furthermore, not only is it written in a range in which only women can sing, but it is in a fairly high part of the female voice. This was the part of the voice which I experienced in my singing lessons as feeling the most powerful, due to the greater volume and resonance that was possible on the high notes. The tone quality in this range, sometimes called the 'head voice' as the resonance is occurring in the head rather than lower in the body, emphasises the 'purity' of tone which Jeanette described to me as the ideal which she looked for in a voice. This purity, and the deep emotional response which it effected in my participants, seemed to index a particular mode of femininity, played out through the character of the virginal, suffering princess.

By contrast, the other main female role in the opera is the Queen of the Night,

who was seen by all my participants as a strong character but as irredeemably evil. Her vocal line, especially in the famous aria which leaps up to ridiculously high notes that most sopranos can't reach, follows the stereotype of excessive or hysterical female madness being portrayed as musical excess, as McClary (2002) describes. For my participants, even Sara who played this role, the Queen shows the limits to what is allowed in making sound in space. None of them could sympathise or identity with her. She represented the irrationality which was unacceptable, while Pamina, her daughter and opposite, was the model of perfect bourgeois femininity.

A resonance between the themes of the canon and the practices of the opera industry thus emerges, as mutually reinforcing normative ideas of respectable femininity. Pamina, the princess, is beautiful and obedient, whose 'major characteristic is that she's trapped', as Francesca described it. Isabelle, one of the girls playing Pamina, mentioned to me that she spends most of the opera on her knees, and Emily, the other Pamina, told me she had bruises and scratches on her knees because of this positioning of Pamina as physically submissive throughout. As is evident in the frequent references to Pamina's beauty in the libretto, appearance is an important facet of the kind of femininity that is endorsed in this text. Similarly, back in real life, Isabelle described how at a music college audition 'you just see [the audition panel's] eyes go down, I don't know whether [...] they were looking at me or just thinking, but it really made me feel horrible'. The princess Pamina, in the Young Opera Company's production of The Magic Flute, bore out this idealised femininity in a floaty white dress, looking every inch the virtuous virgin — a costume which Hannah and Katherine agreed made her 'too perfect' for them to identify with. The congruence between the text and production of this opera as well as the institutional conditions of the wider industry is clear: that this version of femininity is an essential part of the role of female opera singer, both in and out of character. However, at the same time, being attractive makes you vulnerable to objectification or assault, as per the warning Isabelle received from the tenor, and the scene where Monostatos tries to rape Pamina.

And yet this industry was immensely appealing to many of the young women in this production. Sara, Katherine, Hannah and Isabelle all planned to train as opera singers after school or university, and Emily was beginning to consider it after her experience of this production, ambitions which both Sophia, the director, and Jeanette, the vocal coach, encouraged. As part of the 'symbolic ecology' which complemented the institutional ecology, as described in chapter four, the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden emerged as a hugely important symbolic destination for Sara. When I mentioned to her a Guardian article about Arts Council cuts which suggested that the Royal Opera House's future funding might be in doubt (Higgins 2013), she was horrified, not realising it was state funded, saying, 'I think I would cry if that happened [...] it would write off my career.[17]' By simply existing, it gave Sara a sense of possibility which had a powerful symbolic value.

This endorsement from adults in opera as a possible career could also be seen to function as their approval for the practices and texts of the opera canon. Many of the cast recounted back to me the interpretations that Sophia, the director, had given of the opera, having accepted them uncritically. Around this scaffolding, many of the young people developed sophisticated understandings of the motivations and histories of the characters, with especially strong relationships with the characters they were playing themselves, to the point where they would use 'I' to describe their character's experience, for example Toby told me: 'I think I'm more powerful than the Queen of the Night', identifying himself in the first person as his character, Sarastro. As Robbie pointed out, 'I've sort of had to live [the opera], a bit', over the year they'd rehearsed it, a length of engagement which allowed him to inhabit his character over time, developing an intimate understanding of Monostatos' motivations. The social relations and practices of rehearsal thus interacted with the text of the opera to bring it alive.

However, against scholarly readings of the meaning of the text and the musico-

17 As it happens, the ROH's fate was never seriously questioned, despite its receiving 7% of the total budget for Arts Council England in 2013, which amounts to £25 million a year until 2018 (2013b).

dramatic structure of this opera (Kerman 1988; Subotnik 1991; Stuckey 1995), as well as the ideology of the organic whole as described in chapter five, the opera was not experienced as a unified whole by most of the participants. The text was not unimportant in that it was the rationale for putting on a production in this form, but it took its place within the tapestry of influences which went into making up the experience as a whole. It was rehearsed in scenes, so that many of the cast would know in great detail the scenes they themselves were in, while not really having much idea what went on the rest of the time. The convoluted, almost dream-like 'fairytale' plot exacerbated this sense of fragmentation. Instead, particular sections or arias appeared to stand out for different people as their favourite part of the music or drama. The scene described at the beginning, Pamina's aria, was one such scene of affective intensity which several people mentioned as memorable. Even these particular affective moments within the text garnered different responses from different participants, according to their own life experience; Elizabeth, a confident young woman heading for Oxbridge saw Pamina as 'an anti-moral' — an example of how *not* to behave, when Pamina was upset at being ignored by Tamino. By contrast, Emily saw Pamina as a strong character for surviving everything that she'd been through.

The role of the text in the production is therefore somewhat contradictory. Its 'greatness' was the rationale for having a Young Opera Company in the first place (as was spelled out in the programme for the performances), but it became a different beast when put to work in the process of producing it. This is particularly ironic when seen in light of the discourse of authenticity, which was another of the forces limiting the radical potential of these young women's experiences.

The body fights back, only to be defeated by the discourse of authenticity

I have described how the experience of singing opera was, for some of the young women in the Young Opera Group, a transformative or even life-saving process

which allowed them to experience their bodies as powerful and in their own control, allowing a re-imagining of the body which negated the body image issues which affect so many young women. I have also described how this hugely positive sense of voice as empowerment was constructed within a cultural, institutional and canonic setting in which women were required to inhabit normative feminine roles, wherein aspects of appearance such as blondeness or beauty were both desirable or even necessary but also apparently left young women vulnerable to objectification or sexual assault (against the reality that all women are vulnerable to sexual assault, regardless of age or appearance (Ministry of Justice et al. 2013; RCEW 2014)). This message came from the text of the opera they were producing and the affective moments which positioned young women in this way; from the (partial) assent of the adults in this production to these messages by the costuming and direction; and from the sexist practices of the wider industry. The positive alternative sense of the body as experienced through the voice thus takes on a different resonance when we see that this empowered sense of voice was being channelled into reproducing a socio-musical text and practices which do not tend to allow women to retain the sense of power and control which they gain from singing in this way.

I am arguing, therefore, that the contradictions which play out on the site of these young women's bodies can be seen as the body *acting back* against the troubled, critical sense of self (as described in chapter three) which for these young women is continuous between this musical practice and wider society. This acting back temporarily negates the sense of the self and the body as inadequate, to-be-critiqued, through the empowering sensation of inhabiting one's body in sound. Does this contradiction, played out on the sites of these young women's bodies, mean that there is still subversive, progressive potential in this musical practice? Is there is potential to re-work the canon, reform the working practices and institutional culture, and rejoice in the life-affirming qualities of this music while shedding some of the practices and beliefs that work against this renewal? In order to discuss this question I will take a brief detour via the question of the origins and authenticity of the musical text, which

was a powerful narrative for all of my participants.

This question of authenticity, often referred to as being faithful to the intentions of the composer, shaped the limits of possibility of what could be done with the text - and therefore the limits of possibility of changing the text and its associated practices. This was particularly interesting in the Young Opera Company's production of The Magic Flute in that there had been various changes made to the text to make it suitable for the young cast: Sophia's translation altered the libretto to expunge some of the more blatantly sexist and racist elements from the text; and since the Temple of Wisdom couldn't be cast, as intended, as men only, due to a lack of boys, it became a Temple inclusive of female and male priests, which even required rewriting some of the harmonies to fit women's voices. This rewriting, for a section constituting about a minute or two of music, was on the edge of what changes were considered acceptable. Since the greatness of the music and my participants' love of it was the main justification people gave for putting on the opera, changing it in any way risked compromising this greatness.

Considering there had already been these changes made, it might seem that further changes would be possible and even desirable. Indeed, as musicologist Richard Taruskin grumbles, 'absolutely no one performs pre-twentieth-century music as it would have been performed when new. This may be so easily verified that it is a wonder anyone still believes the contrary.' (Taruskin 1995, 164). However, when I discussed this with the cast and adults in the production, it emerged very strongly that all of them thought it was crucially important to stage the opera 'as Mozart intended', in a 'traditional' way. Sarastro, for example, most people agreed, had to be a man. The director, Sophia, despite trying to write a feminist translation, was very keen that for their first time learning this opera, as an important part of the operatic canon, the young people needed to get to know it 'straight': 'they have to learn the reality of Magic Flute first. And then they can go and twist it and change it.' This assumption of an authentic work of art existing prior to any interpretive 'twists' was belied by the

changes, as described above, that Sophia herself had made to the production. However, she justified these in terms of having to get rid of the 'offensive' elements: 'I don't want to take [the cast] too far from the original, except where the original is actually offensive, to them, the audience and to me, before they have a chance to learn the original.' Changes to the libretto and the music therefore followed strongly circumscribed rules as to what constituted the parameters of this imagined originary text which must be preserved.

There is a tension here between making changes to make the opera acceptable to modern sensibilities and yet remaining 'faithful' (Goehr 1992) to a perceived 'original'. The young people followed Sophia in defending this fidelity, justifying it in different ways. Robbie thought 'maybe a female Sarastro would be great, but there's also the idea of comfort zone, and I think that would make it a bit — not avant garde, but a bit less out of the familiar, and that might be upsetting for some people' — not upsetting for himself, he hastened to add, but even so, 'I would prefer sort of a more traditional take on it'. Isabelle argued that 'I think you learn so much from singing things that were written so long ago [...] If it was written now, it's always a fusion or a development of other things, new music or theatre', seeing in The Magic Flute an undiluted originary text from which more recent culture has developed. Francesca, who was the radical voice among my participants, said she would like to do an all-female production, not as a subversion of the composer's intentions but instead seeing an all-female version as 'gender neutral' which, she argued, 'might be closer to what Mozart intended'. Staying 'true' to the intentions of the composer was therefore a clear theme. The contradiction between the radical potential of opera singing as bodily practice, and the reproduction of gendered norms and traditions, was unlikely to find a space for disruption or synthesis in the Young Opera Company. Because the text and story were mainly seen as a dramatic structure which served as a vehicle for the 'sublime' music, they had to remain intact in order to serve the music, the latter being the rationale for putting on the opera. The potential to re-work the canon to support rather than undermine the radical potential of the body as re-imagined through sound was therefore severely limited due to this powerful

discourse of authenticity.

Conclusion: the radical potential of the aesthetic?

As Gail Weiss (1999) points out, there is potential for social change in imagining the body differently. The difficulty of the process of learning to sing in this way, that Emily and Megan describe and which I also experienced, occurs because it involves such a re-imagining of the body. This potential echoes Eagleton's description of the radicalism of the non-utility of the aesthetic; its very functionless provides 'a vision of human energies as radical ends in themselves' (Eagleton 1990). The sense of human energies as 'radical ends in themselves' is exemplified in the power and pleasure of simply 'using everything' to send one's sound to fill a huge space, the voice taking over the body leaving no space for anything else. This frames the contradictions which I have described in this chapter: the young female body is an object to be controlled, directed, objectified, and shaped; a body which is experienced as insufficient, vulnerable, too fat, kneeling, trapped and suffering; and yet which is liberated — temporarily — through the voice to become powerful, uncomfortably loud, expressive, and to-be-listened-to, demanding attention. The opening scene in this chapter exemplified the sense of 'rightness' in seeing and hearing the young female body in this contradictory role. The power of Emily's voice and the rapt attention it garnered were set in relief by the trapped, suffering version of femininity she portrayed. In contrast to this circumscribed construction of femininity, in singing opera these young women were encouraged to use their bodies and voices to fill public spaces with sound. This had a transformative effect for some of them, giving them the experience of having control over their bodies and bodily expression and a sense of power and confidence. It countered their experience of a society where young women, including these women, suffer endemic levels of body dysmorphia and low body confidence; singing provided a space which reverses this usual trend. However, they were only allowed to make noise under heavily controlled circumstances. The conditions of practice for women singing opera required them to inhabit normative feminine roles as canonised in the musical text of the opera they were producing and as played out

in the wider opera industry.

The young women who have starred in this chapter had the tantalising experience of using their embodied power in public space, but this text of the opera and the broader institutional conditions meant that power was closed off without any possibility of realising it outside the conditions of this production. They were allowed to have a voice and take up space only if they did so within the parameters of normative bourgeois femininity. Singing opera is a space where they inhabit power, but they did not feel as though this is their right. They needed a heavy investment of encouragement from adults to take up this space. The two main adults in this production, Jeanette and Sophia, were both committed to building the confidence of the girls in the production. Sophia, the director, had even made her own translation of the libretto, and in this libretto as well as her direction she was trying to emphasise the feminist elements in the production. This was important, because the young people very much admired her, and she therefore created a space where talking about feminism was allowed. However, despite her efforts, the text of the opera and the wider institutional conditions, as described by Isabelle in particular, worked against the feminist slant she was trying to push.

I have situated this practice in the context of bourgeois femininity's mental disorders, which were recounted to me in the form of the body image issues or anorexia my participants experienced. This helps demonstrate the historical continuity of this phenomenon since the late nineteenth century. These connect with the institutional conditions of opera singing to exacerbate the lack of power which some of these young women recounted. Opera singing is even more women-dominated than other areas of classical music, with a notorious over-supply of sopranos. This feeds further the anxiety and competition which I have described as both part of the bourgeois self as well as endemic to classical music. The continuous self-critique, which is an integral part of classical musical practice through its technical requirements, is experienced in an intimate, hidden part of the self, while simultaneously externalised in the form of

judgements and competitiveness towards others (building on my argument from chapter three). Having a heavily circumscribed space where women can turn this anxiety into sound could be seen to work as a safety valve – safe and encouraged way to counter this – without disrupting anything on a broader social scale. For the many young women who participate in this, it offers the double bonus of both the rewards for investing in normative bourgeois femininity, along with the intoxicating sense of bodily power that comes with singing and the the radical experience of feeling in control of one's own bodily experience. This subversive potential, however, remains an individualised experience, never translating into broader social and cultural change. This is despite the powerful material effects of this practice on individuals in this production, such as Sara. The cultural conditions which position women's bodies as the site on which the contradictions of the aesthetic are inscribed and played out remained intact.

The final substantive chapter of this thesis will continue with this theme of sound and interiority, exploring the idea of 'community-in-sound' which has recurred throughout the thesis – the experience of community which makes it all worthwhile.

Chapter eight. Being in sound: the interpellation of the valued self

This chapter looks at how sound helps create and spread powerful shared affects, examining the embodied experience of community-in-sound. Teresa, talking about her first experience of playing in the National Youth Orchestra in her early teens, describes the power of the sound of the orchestra the first time she heard it:

> 'The National Youth Orchestra as a whole was an amazing experience, I remember the first piece we played, the Prokofiev Romeo and Juliet, there were sixteen double basses in this orchestra, so they were [she sings the opening] it was like, amazing! I was blown away by the sound, I remember I didn't come in, because I was like, this is AMAZING, because I'd never been in a proper big orchestra, or a really good orchestra, so it was an amazing experience'.

Teresa was so 'blown away' by the sound that she forgot to play when she was supposed to, so awed was she by being in the middle of it. In this description, she has to keep repeating how 'amazing' it was (four times) to try and convey this sense of awe. This chapter will explore this sense of being 'in sound', theorising how it contributes to constructing a community-in-sound, drawing on the idea of 'intimate Gemeinschaft' (Eagleton 1990). This works in dialectic with the competitive, individualistic, hierarchical norms of this world (as described in chapters three and four). I am going to suggest that this point where words fail was reached in response to the sense of being inhabited physically by the material vibrations of sound, which momentarily suspended thought. The underlying question this chapter asks, however, is how this powerful sonic affect connects these young people to ideas of value and identity. We have seen throughout this thesis that being a classical musician is, for many of these young people, a very powerful identity. This is visible in their striving for improvement; their desire for correction; their strong friendships; the ways in which they discipline themselves and seek to be disciplined by others; and above all their love for this music. There are many factors that contribute to this deeply-held

identity, and this chapter will explore one of the most powerful: the embodied, sonic experience of playing this music, and how this is linked with the emotional identifications which the young people bring to it, and crucially, with the ideas of value that they read into it.

The chapter begins by describing how my participants recognised a depth or interiority in this music which they didn't get in other musics or activities, and which was particularly linked to the Romantic repertoire which they preferred. I frame this idea of interiority within Charles Taylor's discussion of the sense of an inner self as a modern form of subjectivity which, as Bev Skeggs describes, is only afforded to some and not others. I argue that this recognition of a deep interiority both in themselves and in this music constitutes a form of interpellation of themselves as subjects who can recognise the value of this music. However, as described in chapter two, this music is *already constituted* as having value: through the institutional ecology and wealth of opportunities, the grand architecture, and the privileged funding and educational status of classical music. This process is facilitated by the congruences between this bourgeois self and the mode of forward-looking, rational selfhood which, as Susan McClary describes, are inscribed into the tonal structures of classical music.

This individual experience of deep interiority is combined with a powerful affective experience which I describe as the suspension of subjectivity through being in sound. I draw on Suzanne Cusick's and Julian Henriques' work to theorise how sound works on bodies and subjectivity to create an affective experience which is 'beyond words'. The music which my participants and I respond to with such 'deep interiority' as so personal to ourselves, is thus externalised as sound, creating a deep sense of connectedness. This also works on an ideological level, as this powerful affective identification connects us with 'an idea that is loaded with value' (Wood and Skeggs 2011). This is the idea that those who are able to love this music are those who are capable of the emotional depth which it evokes – an emotional depth which connects us to histories of

classed and gendered ideas of personhood.

Emotional depth as interiority

Owen, who we met at the beginning of this thesis, in chapter two, described how when he played in his first orchestra, having previously only played in brass bands, 'it was pretty much immediate, like, this is what I want to do'.

> AB: It was about the music, the type of music, the people, or...?
> Owen: Just everything about it, it sort of enticed me I think. I'd not really had that kind of experience of doing such a big collective thing with different people, different personalities.
> AB: Was it bigger and more diverse than being in a [brass] band?
> Owen: Yeah, and I think the fact that you could actually respond to the music in terms of the depth of the music, emotional depth [...] It's quite a personal thing, I think.

Owen described how the first orchestral piece he played was by Mendelssohn, when he had the reaction of 'this is what I want to do'. In response, I described to him how I suddenly got into Brahms at age eighteen (his age), listening to the piano quartets obsessively, feeling as though the contours of unknowable parts of myself were being traced in Brahms' melodies. Owen knew exactly what I was talking about, telling me that 'the first composer that happened to me with was Mahler.' I was struck that he put this in the passive voice; it was something that *happened* to him. And yet, he had actively cultivated this 'happening'. After his first experience with Mendelssohn at age 13, he had put in a lot of effort in order to get to know it and understand classical music, listening to recordings of Mahler's second symphony and Richard Strauss' Alpine Symphony while he did his homework. 'It's not something that I responded to immediately', he described; the 'epic scale' of the pieces meant that these long, complex pieces required investment on his part to learn to love them. At first he just 'got' 'bits and pieces', but eventually was able to 'respond' to the 'emotional depth' of the music. However, he is clear that this 'personal thing' of responding to the

'emotional depth' of the music first occurred *socially* within a 'big collective' of 'different people'. This was the initial 'call' that led to his wanting to learn about this music. As Blackman describes, drawing on Jean-Luc Nancy, 'our very sense of interiority emerges through our relations with others, human and non-human and in that sense we are always more than one and less than many' (2012, 184). This deep personal response was drawn out of him *within* the collective, formed by and through it.

This discourse of 'depth' was echoed by some of my other interviewees. For example, when I asked Ellie about her listening habits, she told me she didn't listen to music a lot. 'Classic FM I'll listen to, vaguely, but I just can't find that depth in music that... unless it's classical music'. Similarly, Jenny couldn't understand why people listened to commercial pop music, saying 'I think people love it so much but really there's no depth to it. I don't necessarily now think that's a bad thing because it's for enjoyment, so if it brings joy to people then fair enough, but when it's really deep music...'. Jenny is suggesting here that classical music, because of its depth, is about *more* than simply enjoyment, but similarly to Ellie, she runs out of words when trying to articulate what this depth in music does. Enjoyment or pleasure – these are not enough, and they do not adequately describe the experience my participants are trying to access. Instead, the 'depth' of this music connotes a seriousness and an importance which enjoyable musics such as pop music do not allow. As I will explore below, this link between wordless instrumental music and transcendental experience can be historically located in a shift during the first half of the nineteenth century (Johnson 1996). This discourse also draws on the construction of white music as disembodied or transcendent, and black musics as embodied (Jones 1988). My participants are thus articulating a particular historically located identity which, as we will see, is not a neutral one.

More common, though, was articulating similar emotions simply in terms of a 'love' for this music. It was often only on delving further into what they meant by 'loving' this music that ideas of 'depth' emerged. This discourse of 'depth'

points towards the existence of a particular 'ontology of the human' as Charles Taylor (1989) describes it: a distinction between inner and outer. Taylor delineates how 'we think of the depths of the unsaid, the unsayable, the powerful inchoate feelings and affinities and fears which dispute with us the control of our lives, as inner. We are creatures with inner depths'. This sense is, however, 'in large part a feature of our world, the world of modern, Western people' (p. 111). Modernity saw the process of our 'disenchantment' with the world wherein we begin to see ourselves as separate from the 'cosmic order'; 'the human agent was no longer to be understood as an element in a larger, meaningful order. His paradigm purposes are to be discovered within' (p. 193). Phillip Mellor and Chris Shilling (1997) locate the emergence of this interiority earlier, with the emergence of Puritanism after the Reformation, following Weber (2001), and link it into a 're-formation' of the body, away from understanding the sacred through the 'fleshy body' and towards the 'disembodied transcendence of the sublime'. This required 'an 'inner' search for God' rather than a communal, embodied invocation of the sacred (pp. 100, 106). The aesthetic of Romantic music relies on this understanding of 'inwardness', and the work of art as bringing us 'into the presence of something which is otherwise inaccessible, and which is of the highest moral or spiritual significance' (Taylor 1989, 420). It is the process of recognition of this notion of the self in my participants that I am tracing here.

However, as Bev Skeggs argues, this sense of interiority or 'inner depths' is 'only available to the privileged few and is premised upon the exclusion of others' (2003, 56). The bourgeois, reflexive self was built through 'cultural technologies of telling the self' such as the novel (p. 122) or the confessional autobiography or journal beloved of early Puritans, as part of a 'shift from church-centred accreditation to self-accreditation' (Mellor and Shilling, 1997, 126; see also Taylor, 1989, 184). By contrast, for the working classes, 'telling the self' was enforced as a mode of establishing or displaying respectability, for example in order to obtain poor relief (Steedman 1998). To be someone who had a sense of their inner self which they could narrate to others is therefore, historically, a

classed resource. This paradigm is clearly visible in the late Victorian literature which parallels the formative historical period for these practices which I identified in chapter three. One among many possible examples is Anthony Trollope, who gives his middle class characters a self-reflexive, inner voice, often a moral one, which his working class characters lack. A full and complex sense of subjectivity, which brings accompanying moral capacities for self-determination, is primarily afforded to the bourgeois (or in Dickens, the aspiring bourgeois) subject.

What this means for my participants is a recognition that being the kind of person who can understand this music *and love it* means that you have this kind of interiority. Owen's comment — that on playing in an orchestra for the first time he knew immediately that this was what he wanted to do — might suggest that he recognised himself in the music because he *wanted* to have this kind of interiority. Before this, he had played in brass bands and 'was never interested in orchestras, I just wanted to play in bands', following in his grandfather's footsteps; he was even thinking of joining the military as a musician. And yet, on his first experience of playing in a Saturday morning orchestra run by the local music service, this all changed.

Classical music as cultural technology for knowing the bourgeois self

The recognition of 'inner depth' as being a classed resource which is not only a product of modernity but which has historically been afforded to some groups over others, casts a different light on my participants' recognition of an emotional depth in classical music which other musics lack. It suggests a reading of classical music as a cultural technology for knowing the bourgeois self. This can be theorised through highlighting the connection between these affects of 'deep' emotion and the cognitive discourses of unity and structure which I explored in chapter five. I described how large-scale tonal structures provide a mechanism or technology for dealing with time, as Susan McClary, Christopher

Small, and others have suggested. I also described how this structure dictates the form of rehearsals, in a tripartite process of 'organising time' and 'chopping up time' in order to 'fix bits into place' and then by playing the whole piece through again in the concert, 're-organising time' back into place. In this chapter I want to develop on this argument, by also discussing this 'technology' of tonality in relation to ideas of the self.

McClary (2001) outlines a reading of the musical subject as amenable to analysis as a *social* subject, rather than appearing only as musical material which requires formal, structural analysis. This can be most clearly seen in the development of tonal structures in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In sonata form, the dominant tonal structure by the nineteenth century, for example, the subject progresses through the tonal exigencies of this clearly-defined form before finding itself back in the 'home' key for the final section of the piece.   This presents tonality as the corollary of the sense of an inner core or self which endures and develops despite going through various emotions. This is a form of narrating the self by way of a journey which parallels the development of a new 'centered subjectivity' (p. 73). This new-found stability of tonality occurs alongside the early novel, suggesting that tonality can be read as reflecting the emerging sense of an enduring self in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The self which is being trained here is one that can see its past and its future progress laid out in a knowable formal structure, which requires being able to hold large-scale temporal structures in mind (up to an hour, or more) and still locate oneself between past happenings and future unfoldings. As McClary suggests, 'tonality teaches listeners how to project forward in time, how to wait patiently but confidently for the pay-off' (p. 67). If the capacity to imagine possible future(s) and invest in their unfolding is a classed resource, then tonality and its formal structures could be seen as one way of learning or practising this ability.

Remember, in chapter three, Bethan's blithe confidence that 'everyone here is going to have bright futures'. She had learnt that practising was 'a good way to

get into that kind of mindset where you just keep going and what you do pays off'; the discipline of practising every day helps, she said, with the discipline of doing your homework every day. She was about to go to Oxford, so it had worked for her thus far. Similarly, Alice's mother had started her on the violin as a purposeful technique to learn this daily discipline, a drip-drip investment in a future of being able to play well, which takes years and years to pay off; an important lesson for middle class children to learn. As discussed in the introduction, Lareau (2011), Walkerdine et al. (2001), Vincent and Ball (2007) and others have demonstrated in studies of differences between middle-class and working-class child-rearing practices how the middle-class mode of 'concerted cultivation' sees the child as a project to be developed, through investing in their potential capacities. By contrast, working-class parents, as Annette Lareau argues, are more likely to see the child as the 'accomplishment of natural growth': already their own person, who will take part or not in activities as they wish (2002, 748). As a result, Lareau suggests that working-class parents tend to be less insistent that their child invest in these kinds of development practices such as music (and furthermore, they may choose to avoid the daily conflict of enforcing music practice, and may lack both the money and the time to sit with the child to make sure it happens). Also notable here is the link with correction. Byron Dueck's (2013) ethnography of working-class, indigenous musical communities in Manitoba describes an ethic of 'non-interference' in music teaching where the child/pupil will explore and develop musically at their own pace, in their own direction (personal communication). This ethic of 'non-interference' contrasts strongly with the ethic of correction in classical music pedagogy, and draws on a different ontology of personhood, similarly to the classed differences described by Lareau and others.

Musical structures of tonal development and progress can be seen, therefore, to have resonance with a middle-class approach to imagining and investing in a particular future. As mentioned in chapter five, this imagining of self-into-structure was also gendered among my participants, with only the young men appearing to study the full score of orchestral pieces we were playing. As

McClary further describes, with the beginnings of centered subjectivity, similarly to the novel, 'for the duration of an aria (or sonata movement...) all activity seems to operate under the control of a single governing impulse' (2001, 73). This sense of an inner core or self is also therefore *controlling* the development of the musical material, bringing it together into a unified whole.

Another point of similarity with tonality as a tool for developing 'centered subjectivity' which sees the past and future is the ways in which my participants narrated themselves to me. As noted above, 'telling the self' emerged as a classed technology whereby for the emerging bourgeoisie it was a technique for religious reflection but for the working class it was an 'enforced narrative' (Steedman 2000). Being able to narrate yourself in a coherent manner has a clear relation to the unfolding of musical structures over time where the musical subject who appears in the first section then re-appears throughout the piece, possibly fragmented, in different keys, inverted, but finally re-emerges in the home key in transformed but clearly recognisable state. For the most part, my participants were very comfortable and fluent at narrating their 'musical biographies', which was always my opening question for my interviews, and highly reliable at replying to emails or texts and turning up to interviews, by contrast with Walkerdine and Jiminez' participants from a South Wales town where the steelworks had closed down, who would frequently fail to turn up for interviews because of the instability of their lives (2012, 121).

Constructing interiority through interpellation: 'it evokes something in you'

I have established that a sense of interiority or 'emotional depth' is not only an 'ontology of the human' which emerged in modernity, but the technologies for knowing this self meant it was attributed to and cultivated by some social groups or publics and not others. In particular, it was attributed to those who were literate and had access to these technologies. The tonal structure of classical

music, which cultivates the ability to see past and future laid out in a knowable formal structure, can be seen as one of these technologies of the self, working in a similar way to the novel; and one which was unevenly adopted by my participants. I now need to explore more closely the mechanism by which this interiority is constructed by the Romantic repertoire which my participants loved. This response of deep interiority to the emotional repertoire of this music constitutes a type of interpellation, in Althusser's terms (1971), wherein participants recognise themselves as subjects who are able to experience this 'depth' of emotion in the music. This response cannot easily be verbalised but is experienced on an embodied level. This appears to be Owen's experience when he says about starting to play in orchestras that 'everything about it, it sort of enticed me'. Similarly, I asked Hannah and Katherine if they had anything in common with other young people who played classical music, other than the music.

> Hannah: I think it's just literally the music and how you react to it.
> Katherine: Yeah, I don't know if there's anything else.
> Hannah: And it evokes something in you and finding someone else who also gets really passionate about like, a symphony or something, when you listen to something and get moved by music, not everyone has that and I think that's the mark of a musician, is when you can hear that.

Hannah says it 'evokes' something in her; for Owen it 'entices' him. Also notable here is that Hannah comments that 'not everyone' 'gets really passionate' about the music or gets 'moved by music'; 'that's the mark of a musician'. There is a recognition that those who can experience the emotions evoked by this music have something that other people do not. This 'something', I am arguing, is this sense of 'emotional depth'. This particular affective experience becomes tied to the particular historical construct of the self which emerged from bourgeois Western masculine subjectivity.

Why is this a mode of interpellation rather than simply being one music that

they like among others? Firstly, Althusser argues that interpellation or the hailing of the subject involves a process of recognition; people recognise themselves as subjects through being constituted by ideology (p. 38). This describes Owen's moment of recognition that 'this is what I want to do'. They also recognise *each other*; as Hannah describes, above, when you find 'someone else who also gets really passionate about like, a symphony or something', there is a mutual recognition of a particular mode of subjectivity. Thus we have a process encompassing 'the mutual recognition of subjects and Subject, the subjects' recognition of each other, and finally the subject's recognition of himself' (p. 45). The 'Subject' he is speaking of here is 'an absolute, unique, Subject' whose prototype is God. In classical music, it is the composer who is the Subject. As Althusser describes, therefore, 'there can only be subjects on the condition that there is an absolute, unique, Subject (God) who interpellates other subjects into being — these subjects mirror the Subject' (p. 44). The deification of the composer (Nettl 1988) and the reverence towards his Word in the form of the score make more sense within this paradigm.

Secondly, Althusser describes interpellation as occurring in part through the discipline of ideological state apparatuses. Indeed, Mark Rimmer's (2014) research into El Sistema In Harmony England shows that classical music works as a prosthesis of the state education system in its Bourdieusian 'fit' with mainstream education. The disciplining of the classical music 'apparatus', of the daily importance of doing your 'practice' and the minor rituals which this practice involves, such as 'taking apart' the music, bar by bar, show how the discipline helps create the subject.

Finally, Althusser emphasises that this subjectivity has to be freely chosen. Some people playing classical music *don't* recognise themselves in the music; it fails to interpellate them. They may carry on playing it for other reasons, maybe parental pressure or the sociability of it, without getting this 'depth' – and then suddenly 'get' it, or not. No-one can make you love Mahler, or Brahms, or Mendelssohn, but when you hear a particular melody, harmony, or combination

of timbres and chord sequences, you know. Similarly, as Eagleton describes, 'The new bourgeois subject takes on structures of power, which become internalised structures of feeling – but this internal structure of freedom is experienced by the subject as being 'something I just happen to feel' (1988, 333). Jenny described one such moment in a piece we had played in together with the New Symphony Orchestra. In the fourth and final movement, the word 'sublime' could have been invented to describe it. Having spent the previous forty minutes of the symphony in a long, slow build-up, finally the majestic theme of the symphony is allowed to be heard all the way through. But after this joyous release, the brass sound a warning, while the violins start a high tremolo – a shimmering sound – as suddenly the bottom seems to fall out of the world that has been created over the course of the symphony. The cellos and basses start playing a pizzicato (plucked) line, moving inexorably down, while the violins' line moves further upwards, away from them. A chasm between these high and low sounds opens up - before finally, the brass and wind in all their power and grandeur come in to fill it, providing the awe-ful, satisfying ending to the symphony that is needed. For Jenny, this moment was 'ecstasy':

> Jenny: The Sibelius... I cried in one of the last performances because, oh it's so good! [...] There's a D in the last movement,
> AB: The big tune?
> Jenny: No, where the basses and cellos are [*she sings it*] they're pizzing, and the strings are really high and the violas come in. It's really high, all typical Sibelius, high strings, then pizz in the bass [*sings it*] I... whenever I listen to it, oh my god, like ecstasy, it's so good!

Crucially, this type of 'ecstasy' occurs in instrumental music, which has no words, allowing a reading of this depth into the music, as James Johnston describes (1996). Johnston pinpoints this shift between 'programmatic' music where the music was portraying a 'single, objective meaning' for each passage such as a storm or a love quarrel; towards 'absolute' music, a more 'romantic approach' which 'refused to assign any determinate meaning whatever to music'

as occurring in France between 1800 and 1820 (p. 207). For my participants, Romantic composers such as Tchaikovsky, Sibelius, and most often, Mahler, were those mentioned as interpellating this subjectivity. This is important because this is repertoire which is firmly positioned within the Romantic tradition of 'absolute' music which is ineffable, unspeakable, and transcendent. Particularly for the orchestral musicians, this was the tradition which they defended fiercely, most visible in the outrage over changes brought about in the National Youth Orchestra. When the new manager tried to introduce more contemporary repertoire, my participants were up in arms, as they wanted to play the big Romantic repertoire to which they saw this ensemble as uniquely suited. The lack of words was one of the qualities that made this music's interpellation a particularly powerful process. However, accounts which locate the 'transcendent' qualities of this music mainly or solely in its lack of words are following the denial of the body which this musical practice so thoroughly engenders. By contrast, I am arguing that bodily and affective experience is central to understanding the way this musical practice becomes a powerful part of people's identities. The body is most immediately experienced through the sonic dimension of this practice, to which I will now turn.

Being in sound: affective materiality and the suspension of subjectivity

I have described how Romantic, orchestral music, in particular (but also other types of classical music) evokes a particular response of emotional depth in my participants. I have argued that this sense of 'inner depth' is built on the a shift in subjectivity in modernity, as described by Charles Taylor, where this sense of inwardness is experienced as uniquely personal - even incommunicable. However, this is also the designation of 'interiority' which, as Skeggs (2003) argues, has historically been afforded to the literate bourgeoisie and not other groups. The recognition of a form of emotional depth in this music is, I have argued, a mode of interpellation whereby participants recognise themselves as subjects who are able to experience this 'depth' of emotion in the music. This is

afforded by the non-linguistic nature of instrumental, Romantic music, which affords a particular, indescribable, emotional experience.

It is to this experience of being 'beyond words' and 'in sound' that I will now turn in order to analyse the embodied mechanism by which this interpellation occurs. In a previous study of audience members at classical music concerts (Bull, 2009), several people started crying during interviews while trying to explain why classical music was so meaningful to them, one telling me 'it's beyond words, I would explain it if I could, but oh, I can't...'. An even more immediate visceral reaction was recounted by singing teacher Jeanette, who was trying to explain to me why she thought it was so important to introduce people to opera:

> 'I love opera [...] when I go to see Tosca, I don't know what happens when it comes to the third act, but the minute the tenor starts singing, I cry, and I don't know why I cry. I cried the first time I saw it [...] it's an unnameable reaction, it's just something the music does, it's about music, and it's really funny, when I hear that music it makes me cry. [...] Just something in that music that's soaring and yearning and - chokes me, it chokes me.'

The 'unnameability' of this emotion for Jeanette could be seen as a different iteration of the 'emotional depth' discussed above, but one which is expressed through an involuntary bodily response. This depth of emotional experience was shared by many of the young musicians in my study, some of whom recognised themselves as subjects capable of experiencing deep, intense emotion through hearing the emotions expressed in this music, which seems to exteriorise something that they didn't even know they felt until they heard it.

This emotional response 'beyond words', similarly to Jenny's description of the 'ecstasy' of Sibelius, above, was often articulated in relation to being within the sound of the group. For some, this was simply about the pleasure of enjoying this kind of sound bath, as Ed describes:

'It just felt - like when the whole orchestra played together and you make this huge noise, the clarinets get to sit right in the middle and experience the whole thing and it just makes a really really good noise.'

Others, such as Teresa with whom I began this chapter, and Jack, below, described being speechless with awe at their first experience of playing with the National Youth Orchestra:

Jack: 'When you go into your first tutti rehearsal with like 20-strong string sections, like, what's it quadruple wind and everything, and we were playing Shos Five [Shostakovich Fifth Symphony], so imagine the beginning of Shos Five with 'da-daaaa-da-daaaa-da-daaaa-da-daaaa' [he sings it] - it was...'

At this point, Jack waved his hands in the air looking for the words to convey the immensity of the combination of this massive sound and this dramatic, terrifying music. This experience of awe at the sound and music in these groups is an important aspect of the process of interpellation described above – the materiality of the sound acts on the physiology of the body, and this is combined with the powerful affective qualities of the music being played which act in *immaterial* ways on the psyche, following Lisa Blackman's distinction between the materiality as well as the immateriality of affect (2012). These physiological and psychological processes do not occur separately, however; this embodied sense of being 'in sound' is crucial to constructing the affective power of the experience.

In order to theorise sound as affective materiality I am drawing on Suzanne Cusick's harrowing accounts of four prisoners' detention by US authorities (Cusick 2013) as well as Julian Henriques' work on 'sonic dominance' (Henriques 2011). Cusick's article focuses on the use of music as a tool for psychological and physical torture. She describes how music, often played very loud and for long periods of time, affected the four prisoners by 'jamming' their

sense of subjectivity and interiority. This disrupted any sense of knowing their world through sound, both the exterior world of the prison which they would make sense of through piecing together sounds, as well as the interior world of their thoughts. One prisoner described how he would constantly talk to himself with his fingers in his ears in order to try and retain his link with himself, throughout the hours and days of musical torture, only then to lose this fragile sense of self once the music stopped. Another described how he lost his ability to think: 'Nothing comes to your head; it's just that the experience you're going through is so intense' (2013, 287).

Cusick theorises this loss of subjectivity from two directions, first through an anthropocentric model of subject formation in which the acoustic call-and-response, and being able to control 'our interventions in our acoustic environment' is fundamental to subjectivity. Therefore, being unable to hear yourself or your world disrupts this process of ongoing construction. Secondly, she draws on work on the materiality of sound which describes our immersion in a vibrating world. What we describe as sound is one aspect of this constant vibration. This account disrupts the 'foundational fantasy of self-containment' (Brennan, 2004:14) of the anthropocentric model of subject formation described above, but moves further towards a pre-cognitive mode of engagement with the physical world. Cusick uses both of these frameworks to interpret the moments of 'psychological shock or paralysis', as the CIA manual describes it (p. 279), where the 'world that is familiar to the subject' explodes (p. 290).

This mode of 'psychological shock or paralysis' appears to be a more invasive, non-consensual version of Henriques' (2011) idea of sonic dominance, formulated in the dancehalls of Kingston, Jamaica, where the collective experience along with the sound systems create 'the visceral experience of audition, immersed in auditory volumes, swimming in a sea of sound [...] There is no escape, not even thinking about it, just being there alive, in and as the excess of sound' (2011, xv). Similarly, as noted above, in Cusick's account, Prisoner Y describes how 'the experience you're going through is so intense...

that it takes you away from everything else, everything else besides it' (2013, 287).

What I want to take from these two accounts is the way in which sound can be used to suspend or even interrupt subjectivity – to bring enforced attention to the present moment in the immediate body, with 'no escape', so that it 'takes you away from everything else'. I am suggesting that the experience of some of my participants is similar to this. Recall Teresa's account with which I began this chapter: 'I was blown away by the sound, I remember I didn't come in, because I was like, this is AMAZING'. The sensory experience was overwhelming, and equates to a similar suspension of self through the experience of being 'in sound'. This works in dialectic with the future-oriented, accumulative, individualistic self which characterises the bourgeois self. The 'community-in-sound' which occurs in these moments allows a horizontal connection between bodies, a brief experience of the 'cultural rhizome' (Back 1996, 184) in contrast with the social relations of authority and hierarchy which snap back into place once the performance is over.

However, unlike the amplified sounds which Cusick and Henriques are describing, classical music eschews amplification. Indeed, an acoustic aesthetic is a defining feature of classical music. This plays a role in the boundary-drawing which delimits the 'proper', as discussed in chapter two; having to amplify classical instruments, for example for an outdoor concert, would be seen as compromising the music. And yet, even this acoustic sound still works on the body in a visceral way, as I have been describing in this chapter. But unlike the undeniable physicality of the sound system with its almost painfully deep bass, classical music inhabits the body in a way which still allows the sense of the body being transcended. The sound is awe-inspiring but also, at times, delicate, ethereal, floating, or distant. In particular, Romantic repertoire makes use of contrasts between high and low sounds (as described above in Jenny's moment of ecstasy), and between loud and very quiet sounds, almost as though creating a sonic analogy of the body being both present and absent. The pure, clear beauty

of tone which is cultivated in classical music does work on the body, but not in such a way that it draws attention to our flesh. The sound is sometimes sublime, sometimes beautiful, but by using contrasts of pitch and volume, it allows us to retain the sense of being taken out of the body. This contributes to the transcendence of the body; even while the sound is acting on us, physically, it is never in such a way as to draw our attention to our bodies. The sense of the sublime – the sacred as located *outside* the body (Shilling and Mellor 1997, 3) – is reinforced.

The affects that are attached to these processes, for my participants, tend to be those of awe and the sublime, such as Jenny's experience of a particular moment in a Sibelius symphony, described above: 'oh my god, like ecstasy, it's so good!'. What, then, is the role of sound in transmitting these affects? I am suggesting that the interpellation of the subject of value which I described above, is facilitated and strengthened by this process of suspension of subjectivity. This process prepares the flesh for the affective, psychological experience of interpellation which either forms part of this experience or may follow it. This sonic experience may not lead to interpellation; some people might enjoy being 'in sound' but their 'inner depths' may not be touched. Others may never play in an orchestra or sing in a choir but still experience this interpellation through playing or listening on their own. However, being part of a 'community-in-sound' breaks open the subject, facilitating this experience of connection.

In this way, the affective properties transmitted through sound are not only material, but also can have a psychological or immaterial dimension, as Lisa Blackman argues (2012). This sensation is compounded or exteriorised by the effect of 'muscular bonding' as William McNeill calls 'the human emotional response to moving rhythmically together in dance and drill' (McNeill 1995, vi). Drawing on his own experience of drills in US army, he traces a history of this 'muscular, rhythmic dimension of human sociality' (p. 156) which leads to a 'blurring of self-awareness' and a 'strange sense of personal enlargement; a sort of swelling out, becoming bigger than life, thanks to participation in collective

ritual' (p. 8). When I was playing with the New Symphony Orchestra, there were occasions where the whole cello section or the whole string section would play together and even though I was playing as loud as I could, my sound was lost in that of the group. Playing loud required large physical gestures, for example in a Sibelius symphony all the string section were using every inch of our bows to play a grand melody in unison. What I had thought of as simply really liking that melody was in fact constructed partly through the 'muscular bonding' which was occurring at that moment; it was an extremely simple melody, almost banal, but the physical pleasure of playing it in unison with forty other string players gave a wonderful feeling of being *lifted,* or even carried, within the group for its short duration.

Playing quietly together had a similar effect, but required an even more focused mode of concentration, listening for the detail of being *exactly* together, so that all the cello section changed bow direction at exactly the same moment and we really sounded like one player. The sound was also working on us in this type of musical passage, but by requiring a intense focus on the *smallest* sounds. This state of sensory hyper-alertness to hear and see what was going on around me was sometimes combined with playing a melody or section which evoked this response of emotional depth in me. I would feel an enormous tenderness for particular corners of a phrase as the melody wound its way through tension and release, moving higher, to its eventual resolution. But while this deep sense of satisfaction and delight at exploring my way through the build-up of phrases was present, the sensory hyper-alertness remained, always in the foreground. My attention was therefore always exteriorised to the group around me, and yet the music was touching that place of 'inner depth', that 'unnameable' interiority which could be called a self.

In this way, interiority is *externalised* as sound. The interiority which we experience as so personal to ourselves is made external — made audible — and shared in sound and bodily movement. This practice therefore becomes a mechanism or cultural technology, for opening up bodies and acting on them in

a powerful way. This is a huge relief after the pressure of being the individualised, competitive self the rest of the time — no wonder it is experienced as intensely emotional. The suspension of subjectivity in sound I described above works as a sonic *invasion* of our bodies and their personal space, but also as a sonic *extension* of the body, as Julian Henriques describes (2011), or in Blackman's (2011b) designation, it is the 'co-extensivity' of the body. The willing porousness of the musicians' bodies allows the creation of a 'community-in-sound'. This is both physiological but also intentional. It requires a willingness to open up to this experience, a trust in the group and a letting go towards re-imagining the body as part of a larger whole. The fantasy of bourgeois community is lived out for a brief period in time.

Being affected in the right way: legitimate culture and becoming a subject of value

What are the effects of this 'destabilising influence of audition' (Henriques 2011, xxix) and the exteriorising of interiority in sound? They are not entirely predictable, and are surely diffuse and subtle, for example, reinforcing the sense of inner depth this music works upon. However, one clearly identifiable effect is to work in conjunction with the intense socialities of this musical practice to form a powerful identity as a musician, as string player Fred describes:

> 'I think NYO [National Youth Orchestra] makes you realise, do I really want to do music or not? I think everyone has a period in NYO where they think I definitely want to do music. I definitely came back from a course once where I was like, I've got to do music.'

Fred eventually made the 'difficult decision' not to study music after he left school, but instead went to a Russell group university. This is a clear example of the habitus playing out as expected, despite all of Fred's soul-searching. This is typical of the established middle class group of young people whom I labelled in chapter three the 'bright futures' group, who realise (on some level) that the capital they would get from music would best be converted through amateur

rather than professional participation. However, it is testament to the power of this practice that this was not a straightforward decision for Fred.

The intense socialities which participation in these groups — in particular intensive courses such as NYO — produce can be read in conjunction with the feeling of being 'in sound'. This produces the 'intimate Gemeinschaft' which Terry Eagleton (1990) describes as characteristic of the functioning of the aesthetic as a category. In this powerful sense of community, both freedom and connectedness are experienced. Eagleton describes how '[i]n both the aesthetic and the ideological, subjective and universal coalesce: a viewpoint is at once mine and an utterly subjectless truth, at once constitutive of the very depths of the individual subject and yet a universal law, though a law so self-evidently inscribed in the material phenomena themselves as to be quite untheorizable' (1988, 333). I have tried to describe throughout this chapter how this process of the subjective and universal coming together in an 'unnameable', deeply personal experience of playing or hearing this music, which is also experienced as transcendent, as the self is lost in the wordless sound. Singer Francesca described an experience like this:

> Francesca: I think in a world class performance the audience should forget who they are and the performers should forget who they are and you're all concentrated with in the music.
> AB: Has that happened to you?
> Francesca: Yeah. A couple of times. Once when I've been singing, with [an adult choir] we did Israel in Egypt a couple of years ago, I did a solo, there's a duet, and it was the biggest thing I'd ever done. It was in Whitchester Cathedral [...] and it had been occupying my thoughts for literally weeks [...] There was a massive fugue, and I got to the end, we were in the last few bars, and... I realised that I didn't want it to end at all, I would have been happy to carry on singing with that group and that music – it felt like forever, and that was really really exciting.

Again, as I noted above, this experience of forgetting the self and simply existing in the music is by no means unique to classical music. It is comparable to what Henriques (2011) describes as occurring in the dancehalls of Kingston, and what countless other writers on music have attempted to put into words. But what is crucial here, and the point which I hope will bring together the significance of this chapter, is, as Skeggs and Wood (2012, 228) argue, that 'affect really matters when it is connected to an idea that is loaded with value.' I have described the powerful affects that are cultivated and formed within this musical practice, and how they create intense forms of identity and sociality. But the crucial factor of difference with Henriques' dance halls, or with most other affective musical experience, is that my participants' musical practices are connected to ideas of legitimate cultural value. This was described in chapter two where I laid out the 'institutional ecology' of youth classical music and described the wealth of opportunities for young people, as well as in the privileged status of arts and education funding which is channelled towards classical music over other musics.

This privileged status is most clearly visible, perhaps, in the architecture of this musical practice: the symbolic and physical spaces of practice. Francesca, as she describes above, was singing at age seventeen or eighteen in an enormous 15th century cathedral where any sound resonates for some seven or eight seconds amidst the vast crenellations and distant gargoyles of the space. Our concerts with the New Symphony Orchestra were in a modern 500-seater concert hall which cost the best part of £1000 to hire for the concert. These spaces form a 'symbolic ecology' of places and people around which the imagined world of classical music was constructed, complementing the 'institutional ecology' described in chapter three. Young people attended performances and played in major classical music venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, which allowed them to form an imagined or symbolic world of which some of them dreamed of becoming a part. In rehearsals, conductors would refer to symbols of greatness, such as St Paul's Cathedral or the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (supposed to be the best in the world). Groups from both the Young Opera Company and the

New Symphony Orchestra took trips to London to go to the Proms. The singers or musicians could then aspire to perform in these venues or with these groups. As I argued in chapter seven, creating sound in these large public spaces works on the body in a particular way. I am suggesting, therefore, that a sense of value is also accumulated by my participants through performing repeatedly in these kinds of venues; this is not just a one-off, special experience, but a regular occurrence which gives participants the sense of a *right* to these spaces. By contrast, Skeggs' (1997) working class women were shown they were out of place in a department store; the limits of who is acceptable in a given space are never visible until they are transgressed.

Skeggs and Wood go on to argue that 'ideology is secured once an investment is made in gaining value' (2012, 232). Recall how Owen, after his first experience of playing in an orchestra, then would listen to Mahler and Strauss symphonies while doing his homework in order to learn the repertoire and the language of this music. For him, the 'hook' or 'call' came as a sudden moment of realisation, when, as he told me, he thought 'why for the past year and a half [since starting to play horn], why have I shunned this? I realised it is so much better than playing brass band music' which doesn't have 'any real depth to it'. Classical music is thus *already* constructed as conferring a particular mode of personhood, that of interiority or depth, which for those who recognise this as a valuable form of subjectivity, means they *want* to recognise themselves in it and be given the right to inhabit the grand spaces and imagine themselves as denizens of this symbolic ecology. Owen's journey between his lower-middle class home town and 'proper middle class' classical music friends make his account particularly important – this was a choice he had to make, rather than something that was the norm for his friends and family. For him as an individual, this is a wonderful journey, but it is taking him away from his family and home town; it's an individual rather than a collective journey (Power et al. 2010). The 'call' beckoned him towards a place which he wasn't already inhabiting, with the promise from Mendelssohn, Mahler and Strauss that he, too, could be this type of subject.

Conclusion: the political work of affect

I have described how, for my participants, interpellation works through sound and affect. The music (Subjectified in the person of the composer) which is hailing the subject is *already constructed* as valuable, so then when people hear the 'call' they *want* to respond to it because it would denote them as having the kind of interiority which this music requires. However, crucially, this is all done without words, through sound acting on the body, confirming the idea of personhood as very intimate; unable to be put into words; sublime. This confirms the transcendence of the body. The sound is powerful but not so powerful as to be able to interrupt the discourse of denying the body. The body – disciplined into stillness and correctness – is present insofar as it is required to make sound, but can still be choreographed into absence in order to bring about the sense of transcendence. I have linked this simultaneous presence/absence into representations of whiteness; as Richard Dyer describes it, 'a need to always be everything and nothing, literally overwhelmingly present and yet apparently absent' (Dyer 1997, 15). This theorisation goes some way towards explaining the overwhelming emphasis on using acoustic rather than amplified sounds in the classical music aesthetic. I argued in chapter five that the aesthetic of the music can be linked with the social identifications of those playing it, through identifying an aesthetic of 'controlled excitement'. The acoustic aesthetic is another way in which the social can be *heard* in the music. Amplification would make the body undeniably present. Therefore, acoustic sounds only are permitted, as they allow the experience of the sublime which works on the body while appearing not to.

Classical music is by no means unique among genres of music in being able to interpellate subjects in this way; far from it. This process of recognition occurs in different ways in different musics. What I am trying to do here is to lay out the contours of how this process works for this genre of music in this particular

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social group. My participants clearly perceive it as working in a different way to pop music or other musics, which they see as lacking emotional depth. Furthermore, I have described how classical music's tonal structures, as unfolding in time, work as a cultural technology for coming to know the bourgeois self by learning how to see the self as a stable core which develops and can be invested in over time. It is onto these differences that much of the edifice of the privileged status of classical music is built and institutionalised. This sense that this music touches parts of the self which other musics do not reach, and does this through large-scale, complex structures, is part of what supports its status as different or special.

Teresa, with whose account of being 'in sound' I began this chapter, was turned down for the NYO the subsequent year. After more rejections, she eventually refused to audition again, despite her parents' encouragement. While her love for this music remained, she had found the whole experience of being in the NYO 'really stressful', describing sectional rehearsals as 'the worst things EVER — I just found them *so* intimidating and I felt like I couldn't play anything'. She became convinced she wasn't good enough to pursue music as a career, a decision which now, at age 20, she is '100% happy with'. Teresa had experienced being interpellated into this musical identity, which allowed her in to the warmth of community and the satisfaction of achieving and performing, but also the stress of competition, and then finally rejection and exclusion. This trajectory exemplifies the social relations of classical music practice as described in parts one and two of this thesis. These social relations constitute a political norm of community — one of hierarchy, exclusions, and competition — as being the naturalised order of things. When you fail your next audition, as Teresa did, you are excluded from that part of the community, an exclusion which she endorsed as correct and justified, because she argued that her standard of playing wasn't good enough to be in the group. She has thus accepted the rules and standards of the community which has excluded her. However, she still plays in amateur orchestras and her love for this music – as constructed through the affective, communal experience of playing it – has stayed with her. The

powerful identification which this music engenders in many of the young people in this study forms a deeper bedrock than can be shaken by failing a few auditions.

This chapter has outlined the political role of affect in this world, against a trend in affect theory which sees 'corporeal-affective experiences' as separate to the 'political images and representations that surround them (Leys 2011, 668). This works through connecting affective experiences with discourse. The experience of depth that I have described in this chapter is not only connected with the discourse of an 'unnameable' or ecstatic musical response, but *also* to the discourses of complexity, unity, and cognitive control which I described in chapter five. In conjunction with the institutional forms of value as described in chapter two, this creates a powerful political force.

While I have described in this chapter a dialectical or liminal space of 'community-in-sound' which contrasts with the competitive individualism that rules the rest of the time, this space of freedom (Eagleton 1990) is only available to some. The experiences of loss of self or ecstasy which Francesca, Jenny, and others describe are built on the condition of possibility of years and years of hard work and investment from oneself as well as teachers and parents — at least for those who are playing or singing in these groups. For the young women singing opera in the previous chapter, this experience of bodily transformation occurred more quickly (singing requires a different kind of technique to instrumental playing). What all of these accounts of bodily transformation or freedom have in common is that this transformation does not lead anywhere other than the performances themselves. For my participants, this is enough — to have that sense of unity for the duration of a movement, whenever it occurs. However, for me, as a critical sociologist, I want to know if this transformation will lead to transgression or change on a broader level. I don't think that it does. These experiences, as recounted in my fieldwork, are never linked up with any critical space or discourse. They are individually satisfying, and satisfying on the level of the group, but this works to link people more strongly into the culture

and norms of this world. What, then, does this 'world' and this music mean to those involved with it? What is the larger cultural significance of young people playing classical music, such that adults feel that this is a political cause worth devoting their lives to? In the conclusion to this thesis, I will begin with this question.

Conclusion: 'If youth is the season of hope, it is often only in the sense that our elders are hopeful for us'

(George Eliot, Middlemarch, 1994 [1872], 449)

George Eliot's Middlemarch was published at the beginning of the period I have described as formative in classical music education. This quotation captures something of the spirit of the late Victorian era of looking towards the bodies of young people as symbolising the health of the nation and hope for the continuation of Empire into the future. Indeed, youth movements around bodily discipline and health were springing up around this period; while the lower-middle-class girls were doing their piano exams, their brothers were joining the Boys' Brigade (established 1883) and then the Scouts (established 1908), organisations which combined military practices such as drill with reinvigorating the national body politic through the bodies of boys (Baden-Powell 2005, xx). The ethos of the Scouts included 'be prepared', a motto which conductors Tristram and Olly echoed, as well as 'be cheerful' (p. 368). The latter instruction, in particular, clearly resonates with many moments in my fieldwork. Especially with the younger age-groups, exhortations to 'look like you're having fun' were common. In a rehearsal with the county youth orchestra, as Olly gently mocked us for looking glum, around me I could see some musicians who were concentrating, but also slumped bodies and zoned-out expressions, amidst a palpable mood of low energy, frustration and boredom.

Why was it important for us to look like we were having fun? These frequent appeals to the young people to show enjoyment which they clearly weren't feeling draws our attention to something more going on here. Namely, drawing on George Eliot, that young people playing classical music symbolise the hope that their elders have for the future of their/our society; in short, they represent the continuation of the bourgeois social project into the future. The fantasy projected onto these young people is of a world where young people are still playing classical music, and therefore safeguarding and carrying forward the

values and practices as distilled into these treasures of our civilisation (the musical works) into the future. If we preserve this music, something of our civilisation will be preserved with it. This is why my participants all think that the justification for funding classical music is because it will die out otherwise, and this would be terrible. But the young people don't need to understand their symbolic role in order to carry it out.

This explains the disproportionate investment in 'talented young musicians' and educating young people for a career in music. The conductor of the county youth orchestra, Olly, who had worked with several youth orchestras around the UK, lamented to me the lack of commitment that he perceived in kids these days, which he thought was partly because, he opined, 'over the last 30 years the number of opportunities has increased hugely for the kids', meaning that 'talented' kids were fought over by different groups, and there were 'not enough kids' to go round. A recent report by the Association of British Orchestras into youth orchestras finds that one of the 'key challenges' facing youth orchestras is recruitment: getting players of a high enough standard as well as minority instrument players (ABO 2013, 4). Certainly this perception of a wealth of opportunities for young classical musicians was borne out through my ethnography. Many of my participants were extremely busy, often to the point of exhaustion, with many different courses, groups, schemes, lessons and other opportunities, the majority of them participating exclusively in music as their chosen extra-curricular activity. Cantando youth choir and the county youth orchestra, in particular, had problems with recruitment, to the point where there were no viola players in the county youth orchestra.

This investment seems particularly odd in light of the lack of opportunities for professional classical musicians. The sense of competition and anxiety among those who were at music college was, for the most part, very strong even though they were products of the myriad schemes targeting 'exceptionally talented' young musicians (National Youth Choir 2014). Similarly, schemes such as London Music Masters and Sistema Scotland which bring classical music

education to children in deprived areas, encourage their participants towards careers in classical music (Adediran 2014; personal communication from a Sistema Scotland tutor). There is thus a disjunction between the investment in youth classical music schemes and the lack of professional opportunities. Sometimes the justification is given that these schemes are 'building audiences' for the future (Adediran 2014). This claim supports my argument, as audiences are also needed to safeguard this music for the future, and indeed some of the moral panic around declining and ageing audiences also reflect these fears.

It's as though there's a fantasy future world which people wish existed — and are acting as though it does exist — in which all young people are able to become classical musicians. And indeed, this belief helps to bring into effect the world which is being imagined. This can be understood in light of the powerful symbolic role which classical music still carries in the bourgeois imagination. This is a world which has been extremely reluctant to examine its own processes of discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion, as evidenced by the lack of research or data on race, class and gender discrimination in the classical music profession (Scharff forthcoming). Indeed, calls to make classical music more inclusive from organisations such as London Music Masters and The Action Network, who are trying to bring more BME and working class people into the classical music profession, can be reframed as civilising missions if we see them in light of the histories which are institutionalised into the structures of this music, which are all about boundary-drawing in order to keep out, or civilise, the 'degenerate' classes.

Contradictions and paradoxes

This situation, of many opportunities for talented young players but few jobs for them to go into, is just one of the contradictions which the young people in my research were subject to, in varying degrees of confidence or confusion. Indeed, such contradictions and paradoxes abound in the youth classical music world.

Perhaps the biggest contradiction, which has been underpinning the thesis throughout, is this: within the cultural and institutional framework of youth classical music, many of these young people found an expressive voice, a strong sense of identity, and a supportive and intimate social scene. The same practices and traditions which provided these benefits were, at the same time, upholding hegemonic structures in the form of eurocentric, Enlightenment hierarchies which legitimised the value of some and confirmed the lack of value of others. This paradox — that the pleasure of playing beautiful music is reproducing gendered and classed structures of domination — was uncomfortably mirrored in the Young Opera Company's production of The Magic Flute. The plot centres on the triumph of masculine European rationality in the form of Sarastro and his Temple of Wisdom over the evil, hysterical Queen of the Night. This story is all sung in melodies and harmonies of such beauty that I was still humming them with pleasure, months after the production ended. The power of the music formed the rationale for why this was a good thing for these young people to be doing.

Other paradoxes have been explored throughout this thesis. One is that the body is disciplined and ordered and indeed central to creating sound, and yet it has to be dressed in black and transcended, to ensure that the fleshiness of the body doesn't corrupt the spirit of the music. Another is that the music is hard work — and yet it has to sound easy. The rhetoric of universalism conceals the truth that this music is the expression of a very particular cultural value system at a particular time. The young people in these groups are willing subjects to authority and yet at the same time they are learning to carry and perform this authority. And finally, a further contradiction which I haven't had space to address in this thesis centres on the Romantic repertoire which my participants adored. The Romantic movement carried a strong anti-bourgeois critique at its inception — and yet that critique has now been neutralised and the repertoire co-opted to reproduce bourgeois subjectivities of investment, order, and hierarchy.

These paradoxes will be drawn out further over the course of this conclusion, which will draw together the themes of the thesis to argue that classical music, in reproducing itself, also reproduces classed and gendered subjectivities. First, I will revisit the three 'ideal types' among my participants set out in chapter three, which will demonstrate how classical music reproduces itself. I will then turn to address in turn the four key themes laid out in the introduction, in order to ask how class and gender are being reproduced in and through this musical practice. Finally, I will ask what transgressive potential there is, or could be, in these sites. Can the aesthetic, in this instance, be a site of subversion, as Eagleton (1990) suggests? I will conclude, with Hesmondhalgh (2013), that classical music *does* contribute to modes of public sociability, but only constituting the public as a relatively narrow group. This works against one of the major building blocks of the role of the aesthetic in modernity, that is, 'the post-Enlightenment hope that aesthetic experience might establish a basis for people to live together peacefully, across different communities' (p. 9).

Uncertain capital, or how classical music reproduces itself

In chapter three, I introduced three groups or 'ideal types' among my participants, showing how their gender and class positions mapped onto their imagined futures. I suggested that classical music is an uncertain form of capital, in that it conferred very clear, tangible benefits on some people, such as a music scholarship to a private school, while for others all of the hard work and investment didn't necessary add to what they already had. In a sense, then, classical music practice often works as an *expression* of a particular social position (or of an aspiration to a particular social position), and young people and their parents invest in it more for the value-system of hard work, discipline, and for the social networks of other sociable geeks, than for the material rewards. Indeed, although this study was unable to encompass parents' motivation for their children's participation in classical music, I would suggest that examining this more closely could contribute to debates around parenting

and class, as music appears to work in a distinctive way.

I will now re-visit each of these three groups, in order to ask what they got out of being musicians. The 'bright futures' group, all from established middle-class families, were those who had decided not to pursue a career in classical music. Sam decided to join his father's law firm rather than going to music college for postgraduate study. Helen started a prestigious private sector graduate placement scheme. Elizabeth got into Oxbridge and wants to be a diplomat. David wants to do a PhD and go into academia. Bucking the trend, Laurence has followed his Oxbridge degree with a postgraduate course at a London music college, but he still has 'lots of other options' if he decides not to go ahead with a musical career. This group are still playing or singing for pleasure, and they may become patrons or at least defenders of and audiences for classical music. None of them seemed to have any regrets about not pursuing music as a career, despite how difficult this decision might have been at the time. For some of them, their violin will end up in the attic and they might get it out again in ten years, or not at all, but the sense of value and the identity of being a musician will stay with them – the years of practice were not wasted; even if they're not using their musical skills and knowledge. The strong identity of having been part of this world will stay with them, and they will periodically think about playing again or start playing again, but really, their investment is over, and it doesn't matter for them whether it results in any further rewards.

The second group were those I called the 'masters of the musical universe'. Similarly, they have many options and if music doesn't work out for them, they will carry the authority they have learned to speak with into other spheres of life – if they can adapt to giving up this powerful identity and their dominant position within this world. But there is every chance they will indeed stay in the music world and reproduce – maybe with slight alterations – the traditions they have inherited; and they will prove to be influential and articulate advocates of this tradition.

However, it is the third group, the 'wide-eyed and hard-working' young musicians, who are the most interesting, because their futures are most uncertain, and also because they are the group who are doing the most work to reproduce classical music as a tradition and a practice. Their hoped-for future may not materialise. A few of them might get the orchestral jobs or operatic career that they wish for, but these careers may also be less rewarding than they had hoped; orchestral musicians have recently been exposed as experiencing high levels of drug and alcohol addiction, bullying, boredom and low job satisfaction (Price 2013; Lander 2014). Others will work in music in different spheres: private teaching; running music organisations; high school teaching; or precarious freelance careers.

This group will do the majority of the reproductive work, in particular, the gendered dogsbody work for the masters of the musical universe. This ecology is heavily dependent on voluntary adult labour; these adults do this work because they believe in it. Their interpellation into a powerful emotional identification with this music, amounting almost to a religious belief, guarantees this. They believe that classical music is a good thing for young people to participate in – following the 'social benefits' discourse which can be traced back to the Victorians — but they also believe in reproducing this tradition, and introducing young people to great music. This may or may not be remunerated. Out of the adults in my four groups, Tristram and Olly, who are masters of the musical universe, get paid, but the female or lower-middle-class labour is paid less, if at all. While the 'bright futures' and 'masters of the musical universe' group do sometimes work for free — young conductors Adam and Will weren't being paid — they *only* do it while they're young, either as a mode of sociability or as a CV-building exercise. The 'wide-eyed and hard-working' group will continue doing this voluntary labour all their lives, if they stay involved in music. They won't mind doing it. They will *want* to do it, and enjoy it, because they believe in it. This is a hugely positive source of identity and value for many of them, as well as a mechanism for public sociability (in a certain sense, as I will discuss below). The issue is, they will be doing it for free while the masters of the musical

universe will be paid (or will have left music to do other, more lucrative work).

One of the roles that these young people such as Miriam, Andy, Owen, and Ellie will take on, if or when their musical career is blocked, is to educate the next generation of classical musicians. The proliferation of programmes such as London Music Masters and the In Harmony El Sistema programmes, which bring classical music to children in 'deprived' communities, could be seen therefore as providing employment for lower-middle-class or middle-class musicians in disciplining the working class. This model is an echo of the Youth Training Schemes in the 1980s, which as Phil Cohen (1997) describes, provided white collar jobs for the lower-middle-classes, running employment schemes for the working classes. Similarly, the In Harmony El Sistema programmes encourage working-class children to aspire towards jobs that don't exist, but in doing this they both provide employment for the oversupply of classical music graduates, while also ensuring moral discipline for the working classes.

This group will draw on the authority they have learnt to speak with in lobbying on behalf of these schemes. Their drive, motivation, efficiency, and above all, their belief in the power of classical music will spur them on in this work. It might not be what they expected to be doing. For those who are adaptable, it will be rewarding work. But as I described above, the purpose of youth classical music is not to prepare young people for jobs in the classical music world, but to reproduce the ideal for which this world stands. They might wonder if they were right to choose music as a career, and some of them will retrain elsewhere (as I did, trying to migrate via this PhD into the 'bright futures' group a few years too late). Those who are disappointed will have made the mistake of loving the music too much, unlike the 'bright futures' group, who love it but because they *already have a secure place in the world* they can see that being in an orchestra 'would get boring after a couple of years', as Fred commented, and that it wouldn't give them the status they require.

Some of the 'wide-eyed and hard-working' group, like Andy and Owen, are

wholeheartedly taking on the classed identity that goes with this music, learning to move in different circles to their families and school friends. For these young people, bourgeois culture and musical culture go together, in that they *want* to take on the middle-class identity which fits most smoothly with classical music in England. For them, there is a sense of escaping from their home culture and geography, into a new world which promises them so much. This sense of escape is an important aspect of youth classical music – it is a route out of small-town lower-working-class identities, as it is necessary for musicians to be in a major urban centre to train and then to get work. Furthermore, it gives this group access to spaces they would not otherwise have access to: spaces of cultural prestige, the spaces of the dominated pole of the dominant field, to use Bourdieu's (1991) theorisation. As Skeggs (1997; 2003) describes, one marker of class is what kinds of space people are able to enter into and feel comfortable in. For Andy, having the right to not only play in a prestigious 500 seater concert hall, but as organiser of the NSO to book the venue, and haggle over the price for it, has become something that he is comfortable doing. He feels pleased that he can pass for being an Oxford student, and would be able to fit in socially there. He has learned to inhabit these spaces with ease and humour, although this has left him some social distance away from his parents.

Finally, despite the strong classed identity which most of my participants inhabited or took on as classical musicians, it was possible to play classical music for the pleasure of it while rejecting or eschewing the classed identity that goes with it. This could be seen most clearly in one the musicians from the New Symphony Orchestra, Joe. From a middle-class but not very well-off family, he actively eschewed a middle-class identity, instead cultivating a Nigel Kennedy-esque south London accent and dress style, and a bad-boy image and behaviour which had nearly got him expelled from the music conservatoire where he was studying. He was proud of having friends who were totally different to the classical music crowd, and actively rejected the type of identity that he saw as going with being a classical musician — the identity held by most of my participants — of hardworking, geeky, smartly dressed, and normatively

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gendered. Yet still, he wanted to be a classical musician, so despite his problems with his institution he kept at it because he loved the music and loved playing. The contrast with his brother Jeremy was so great that I couldn't believe it when they told me they were brothers. Jeremy, who was also studying at music college, dressed like an Italian model, with an RP accent and a cruel sense of humour, and exemplified the image of a wannabe classical musician. Joe could reject the bourgeois identity associated with classical music *because he had already successfully acquired it*. Andy wouldn't have been able to do this, because this would have been too close to his own working-class identity. For those who chose to play classical music but not take on the associated identity, then, it was certainly not the route of least resistance. Even for Joe it was proving to be a bumpy ride.

This group, who do the ideological and dogsbody work of reproducing this tradition, are those who inhabit the most precarious positions in this world. They can therefore speak from their own experience when defending the need for classical music, and lobbying and advocating on its behalf. This fits in with a wider social mobility agenda which prioritises hard work and aspiration on an individual level, and individualises failure as lack of aspiration.

Revisiting the four key themes: how classical music reproduces classed and gendered subjectivities

1. Boundary-drawing around classed values

As described in the introduction, boundary-drawing is a defining middle-class practice, especially in education, as a way of safeguarding privilege and capitals between generations and over time. Classical music is an ideal boundary-drawing practice, as its ideology of being 'autonomous' from the social allows this to be camouflaged. I have described how boundary-drawing through musical standard and taste safeguards the borders of this world so that those who have not made a substantial investment into classical music are not able to

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access it. It is exclusions around standard which are most potent for my participants. And yet, I have shown how, despite being attributed to being the property of individual bodies, musical standard is shaped through substantial amounts of investment in moulding musical bodies, through the extra-linguistic modes of communication I described in chapter three. The quality of teaching and quality of the relationship with the teacher is hugely important here, and as my participants openly acknowledged, you play better when you are playing with others (including teachers) who are better than you. This investment is an indispensable part of joining this musical world. It is accessible to those who don't have parental support and encouragement, but only rarely, and requires another link such as a close friend who has access to this world (as Andy and Owen had), or a teacher who mentors a young person into it (as Jonathan describes).

While there are many well-meaning people who are working to make classical music open to people from all social backgrounds, this evangelism is on some level self-serving; revealed by Robbie's ironic statement, 'I want everyone to like the music I like'. This is not just cultural imperialism; this is a way of legitimising a particular value-system, which can be characterised by restraint (including female sexual restraint), time-thrift, punctuality and efficiency; disciplined labour or the 'gospel of work' as Franco Moretti (2014) puts it; an investment of time into accumulating value in the future. Many of these values can be seen in the way rehearsals were run, as described in chapters five and six. Time-thrift and efficiency were the responsibility of the conductor in making sure we ran on time and covered all aspects of the repertoire. Punctuality was repeatedly emphasised by adults as an important part of the 'responsibility' which young people were learning. The 'gospel of work' was visible both in rehearsals as well as in the ways people talked about their own practice. The young people welcomed this discipline of hard work, and carried it over into their own practice regimes.

However, those in less privileged class and gender positions, who were also less

secure in their place in this world, would invest more in their practice regime and in the credentialism of the grade exam system in order to secure their place. These young people were important players in legitimising the openness of classical music as a meritocratic system. It isn't a risk to the bourgeois reproduction which this world engages in to let in a few outsiders, in fact, it is necessary as a legitimising mechanism. The aesthetic structures of the musical practice already do enough of the exclusionary work by ensuring that a long-term investment of time and money is needed to become proficient at the instruments and repertoire. While it was possible (mainly for brass players) to start as late as twelve years old, it was more usual, especially for the more prestigious string instruments, to start at age six or seven. As chapter three described, this long-term investment and the musical standards that it resulted in allowed two of the groups in my study, the New Symphony Orchestra and Cantando Youth Choir, to re-configure themselves outside of local authority control. This can be seen as a microcosm of the school choice agenda which has also been used to explore the effects of middle-class boundary-drawing (Reay et al 2011; Ball 2002; Power et al. 2003). However, in the case of classical music the roots of this practice as embedded in the ideology of the aesthetic demonstrate how difficult it is to retain the traditions of practice as well as moving towards more social mixing.

2. The body as both disciplined and effaced

As chapter two explored, the Victorian middle-classes' boundary-drawing between their own sexual and economic restraint, and the excess of the working class (as well as of the aristocracy), was institutionalised into this musical practice. This was achieved through disciplining the body into order and decorum in order to carefully uphold this boundary with the sensuous and not be overrun by it. As chapter five argued, for my participants, in the quasi-private space of rehearsals restraint is habitualised through cultivating strong emotional, embodied responses, and then practising control over them. This disciplining of the body is also carried out in more direct ways through the

authority of the conductor, as chapter six showed. Musical standard, as explored in chapter three, is a way of performing this successful disciplining of the body. However, amidst this disciplining, the body must also be ignored, effaced, forgotten, in order to fulfil the transcendent function of this music; to remove the sacred to outside the body (Mellor and Shilling 1997). These ideas, I have suggested, can be linked with representations of whiteness and Christian ideas of the body. Indeed, this link is corroborated by the material presented in chapter five, which demonstrated how the body was choreographed to be *present* in black, African or Latin American musics, through the introduction of expressive movement, while by contrast, it was arranged into *absence* or stillness in European classical repertoire. This process was further explored in chapter eight, in which I described the embodied construction of this sublime or transcendent experience, demonstrating that the huge importance that is placed on acoustic rather than amplified sound in classical music is linked to the necessity to be able to transcend the body.

Linking together these first two key arguments of boundary-drawing and disciplining while effacing the body, I will briefly examine how female respectability and restraint are practised in classical music today. This respectability has remained unremarked, as for those of us who share this bourgeois identity (which is most people who play or write about classical music) it goes unnoticed until it is breached, at which point a moral panic around 'sexualisation' arises. In chapter two, I described how female respectability in the form of bodily decorum were institutionalised and credentialised in the nineteenth century institutions of music education which still shape my participants' worlds today. Indeed, the ABRSM still follows an almost identical model of examining musical proficiency as it did in 1890. Chapter four made the link between classical music as classed morality and female sexuality in the present. Chapters five and six demonstrated how restraint was habituated in rehearsals, and corrected onto female bodies in the British choral tradition (in particular); and how ideals of masculine authority are embodied in the figure of the conductor, who channels modes of male

authority spanning public and private, from Victorian patriarch to public school headmaster. These threads can be drawn together by framing classical music as a performance of respectable femininity – of the successful disciplining into restraint of the (female) body. This goes some way towards explaining the predominance of women in music education institutions both in the late Victorian period as well as now, when women have never been in dominant positions in any great numbers within the music world.

But how does classical music index respectable femininity today? Even if we are rehearsing restraint, and learning a particular bodily disposition, what does this signify more widely? In order to answer this we need to examine ways in which the 'virgin/whore' double standard which Nead (1988) describes in the nineteenth century is still very much with us — the respectable versus degenerate modes of femininity which were read onto class in the Victorian era. As a recent government report (Coy et al. 2013) describes, the double standard of stud (for promiscuous men) and slut (for promiscuous women) is a powerful narrative shaping young people's experience of sexual consent. Public attitudes still impose these modes of femininity onto women; the public believe that if a woman has been drinking or wearing revealing clothes she is partly to blame if she is raped (Amnesty international UK and ICM Research 2005). This also plays out in sexual assault cases where respectability on the part of the female witness is aggressively tested by the defence lawyer, for example, despite guidance that a witness should not be cross-examined about her sexual history, this practice still occurs (Smith 2013). This leads to women who report rape or sexual assault feeling as though they are the ones who are on trial rather than the defendant — because, in fact, their respectability is what is on trial.

How does this relate to classical music? This shows the power of female respectability today. It still works to legitimise the value of those who possess it. This respectability is still associated with classed ideals of femininity (Skeggs 1997; Tinkler 2003), coded by not drinking to excess, bodily decorum and control, and neat appearance — i.e., performing respectability. Classical music

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is still a way for girls and young women to perform appropriate modes of femininity. Recall in chapter four how I was policed by being asked outright 'are you a slut?'. This identity was incompatible with the cello-playing, floral-wearing norm of femininity in classical music. Classical music is therefore an excellent way for young women to win social approval as an exemplar of respectable femininity. For many of my female participants (more than the male participants) it was therefore a logical career choice, as they received high levels of encouragement and approval from adults. This demonstrates how classical music practice is heavily gendered, rewarding normative femininity. A further demonstration of how powerfully gendered it is can be seen in the modes of masculinity which are allowed. The lower-middle class boys in my study, as discussed in part one, were more likely to go on and pursue music as a career than the established middle-class boys (unless they were promised a position of power). These boys were negotiating both a classed culture which was not one they were at home in, as well as a gendered one; a precarious line to tread.

3. Correction as a route to classed self-improvement

Chapter four focused on correction, hard work, and practice as experienced differently by people in different class positions. Those in less privileged positions were the only ones who talked about being bullied by teachers, and they, along with some of the young women, were also the ones who found correction and critique most difficult to hear, as described in chapters three and six. Given that correction and critique are integral to classical music pedagogy and practice, this meant that lower-middle class people experienced classical music differently to those who were more secure and privileged in their background and identity. In short, my lower-middle class participants used classical music as a route towards classed self-improvement in a way which the established middle-class participants did not need to. They were either more likely to be bullied than the established middle-class participants, or they were more likely to recognise it as problematic and talk about it. However, they also narrated it as a necessary part of their musical education. .

I would like to push this analysis a little further here, and suggest that there is also a symbolism to the way this group experienced correction. All of the examples of tuning, 'contrast pairs', slow metronome practice, taking it apart and putting it back together, and the rest of the endless labour that goes into making it right which I described in chapters four, five, and six, can be seen to be working on an affective as well as a musical level. Anne McClintock describes one use of the word 'correction' in relation to the discourses of idleness and degeneracy that I have been drawing on throughout this thesis: the introduction of 'houses of correction' in Britain from the late sixteenth century onwards, so that the unemployed and 'unruly poor' could be put to work (1995, 252). Indeed, in New Zealand the government ministry in charge of prisons and probation is still today called the Ministry for Corrections. Correction, in these instances, has the meaning of correcting one's degenerate or criminal social status. Correction in musical terms can also be read as correction on a symbolic level, in terms of class, gender, race, or other forms of 'degenerate' status. This explains why the bullying and humiliation from teachers and conductors in the name of 'improving' are not only tolerated but welcomed. It explains the shame and fear that come with playing out of tune or making mistakes: it is an exposure of degeneracy which has failed to be corrected through hard work. 'Correction' or 'rightness' are powerful metaphors. We want to be the kind of subjects who get it right and this is especially powerful for those who are in danger of not being acceptable, or not being sure if they have got it right. This works particularly on those who because of their class, race or gender identity feel they have more at stake, feel more fear or shame when they get it wrong, and yet who invest more and expect more out of this practice. In practising this music, we can experience the seductiveness of knowing we've got it right when we can hear the rightness. But also, in practising this music, in correcting our mistakes, we have the opportunity to correct ourselves, to scrub away at the things we think are wrong with ourselves, on a powerful symbolic and social level.

Despite all of this correction that is the main substance of practice and rehearsals, nothing is being corrected structurally. In fact, this correction is entrenching the hierarchies that make people feel like they are in need of this affirmation, against the insidious sense of inadequacy and lack of confidence that some of my participants told me about. All of this corrective musical work, therefore, is futile, even destructive, in the broader scale, even while it works in favour of a few individuals within the structure. Some will, indeed, manage to rescue themselves, all the while etching in ever-deeper the structures which form the psychic scarring which they are trying to escape; remember Jonathan's dream about his trombone becoming crumpled, like paper (Walkerdine and Jiménez 2012). His sense of identity and self-worth, as he had described it to me, was formed around becoming a musician. The sense that this had become crumpled was a powerful metaphor for its fragility. In this light, his disciplined practice regime appeared to be his only bulwark against this collapse.

4. Affects of rightness and wrongness: the porous musical body

The powerful multi-sensory affective dimension of 'getting it right' collectively means that this morality of rightness and wrongness becomes diffused into all aspects of the music and musical practice. Whatever is associated with this music can come to carry this sense of 'doing something right', in a kind of affective contagion. But the affect of 'wrongness' is equally powerful. In chapter four I described the affect of shame; and in chapter six the correction of male conductors was experienced by some of the young women in these groups as humiliating and belittling. These corrections were made particularly powerful, I am suggesting, by the disposition of openness and trust which young people brought with them to this musical practice. This disposition can be contrasted with the closed bodies of the 'at risk' young black men in south London which Brian McShane (forthcoming) writes about, who do not easily trust adult youth workers. I have linked this to the 'earnestness' which Franco Moretti (2014) describes as one of the key words of the nineteenth century bourgeoisie; the sense of working hard at something important and serious which is part of the

bourgeois self. In the body, this porousness means that boundaries between self and other become more permeable, even while the individual body is ordered and ranked into individual hierarchies and standards of ability. This trusting openness which was typical to this group of white, middle-class teenagers allowed the authority of the conductor to work in particularly powerful ways, as there is little resistance available to his power. He is able to almost inhabit their bodies and *play* them, as though they were his instrument.

Within this permeable, susceptible mode of selfhood, when we get it right in the music, we experience 'community-in-sound' and for the duration of a phrase, a movement, or even a whole concert, experience a sense of adequacy, exhilaration, and unity, as described in chapter eight. As Andy described, 'when [...] it's really in tune and you all come in at exactly the same time, the unity of that is just so powerful'. In this way, the sensuous body, despite its disciplining, shares powerful affective states with others, mediated through sound. This experience is labelled with a discourse of 'emotional depth' which is used as one of the ways classical music is justified as different from other musics, which are seen to lack this emotional depth. Those who can experience this 'depth' are hailed as people who are worthy of access to classical music's many opportunities, grand architecture, prestigious institutions, and the overwhelming approval that is available from adults. These all combine to create a sense of value and importance as being linked with this musical practice. For those of my participants, such as Fred, Jack, Jonty, or Helen who already had these kinds of opportunities and approval, this was a normal experience. For others, such as Andy or Owen or Emily, the experience of being involved in youth classical music was intoxicating and made them want to pursue a career in music, in order to keep having this intensity of experience and immense source of validation.

The aesthetic as emancipatory force?

Having revisited my four key themes, I will now return to Eagleton's ideology of

the aesthetic, which has been a touchstone throughout the thesis. Can classical music, as an exemplar of the aesthetic, ever be seen as an emancipatory force, or does it simply work to legitimise class society? This dialectic is at the heart of Eagleton's theory, in that the sense of freedom in the aesthetic can work to either legitimise the bourgeois social order as 'a supremely effective mode of political hegemony', or it can 'figure as a genuinely emancipatory force' (Eagleton 1990, 28). The mode of 'deep subjectivity' described above is *both* 'what the ruling social order desires, and exactly what it has most cause to fear' (p. 28); it can be dangerous if people act from this depth *against* the established order. But if it is co-opted to reinforce belief with the political and social order then it will do so in a powerful way because it is experienced as a sense of freedom.

The potential for emancipatory force in the aesthetic can be seen in this thesis in the body's expressive power. This appeared most clearly in chapter seven, where for some of the young women singing in the Young Opera Company production, learning to sing opera had had a transformative effect on their experience of inhabiting a female body. Escaping from the body consciousness issues they reported, they experienced a sense of power and control from being encouraged to make a very loud sound with their bodies, filling public space in what was an unfamiliar sensation to them. However, the potential for this experience to become an emancipatory force which overrides the class and gender norms and hierarchies of bourgeois society was cut off. First, by the canonic text of The Magic Flute and the reverence towards the text and towards the intentions of the composer which disallowed any substantial alterations to the text. Second, this powerful embodied experience led these young women to want to enter the opera world, an institutional space which confirms women's position as sexually vulnerable and objectified, similarly to the text of the opera. However, this finding points us towards the direction in which the aesthetic might be able to emerge as emancipatory. The example of young women singing opera shows us that bodily transformation *is* a possibility in this musical practice. And, as Gail Weiss (1999 170) argues, bodily transformation and the

re-imagining of our bodies 'is a first and extremely necessary step in the arduous process of inventing new meanings, (re)significations which are required to enact lasting social and political change'. Experiencing the body differently could allow resignification towards a more positive mode of experiencing femininity. As it occurred in my fieldwork, this transformation was channelled back into respectable femininity. I will argue below that this doesn't have to be the case. But in the case of my ethnography, this exemplified the limitations of this expressive voice within the powerful tradition of classical music which circumscribes experimentation. And as we have seen, most often, through these powerful shared affects, bodies cohered to create a 'community-in-sound' which amounted to a powerful affect of rightness which spilled over to stick to everything that is associated with classical music - including modes of authority, gender norms, and classed hierarchies.

This circumscribing of experimentation and the triumph of tradition means that the bourgeois values I have identified in this musical practice — restraint, time-thrift, future-oriented accumulation, boundary-drawing, precision — remain embedded in its aesthetic. This is one of the most powerful ways in which classical music practice colludes with a class society. In chapter five I described how 'controlled excitement' could be heard, both historically and today, in the aesthetic of the music. I linked this to Wouters' idea of the 'controlled de-control of the emotions', a disposition which Featherstone (2007) links with the middle classes. In addition, I argued in chapter eight that the predominantly acoustic aesthetic of classical music facilitates the experience of the sublime — the body as both present and absent — in that sound works on the body, but in such a way that retains the experience of transcending the body. Finally, the way that classical music unfolds over long periods of time, drawing on past events to build a future narrative, is a way of practising the future-oriented, accumulating disposition which my participants exhibit in their 'imagined futures'. Susan McClary (1989) identifies this as a bourgeois trait, without suggesting *how* exactly it might be experienced as such. I have built on her argument to show how my participants' varying degrees of control over the score

— many of the young men studying the full score, with others giving up control to the conductor — mirror their degrees of control over their imagined futures. On a broader level, the high degree of difficulty of classical instruments means that a disposition of investment and accumulation over time is necessary in order to become proficient. Even Jenny, who practised for long hours as a child because she loved it, concedes that without the systematic practice techniques of her bullying teacher, she wouldn't have become as proficient as she is. While she herself didn't have the future-oriented disposition in her musical practice, her mother did, and made sure that her enjoyment of playing was converted into an investment in an imagined future.

Our allegiance to tradition and 'what Mozart would have wanted' is so deeply embedded that we are reproducing these dispositions from the musical text into our bodies. This means that in order to change the socialities of this music, we need to tamper with the aesthetic of the text itself rather than continuing to produce perfect versions of the canonic repertoire. The boundary-drawing I have described above, which safeguards the value of classical music in terms of both economic value and cultural prestige, needs to be loosened and the 'treasures' guarded by it must be let out for us to play with. Of course, composers and musical activists in the 1960s and 70s have already done this (Ross 2008, Williams 2014). But through the mechanisms I have described in this thesis — the interpellation of 'deep' subjectivity; the powerful, rich, institutional ecology; the camouflaging of social boundaries as musical ones — these moves were sidelined and have not led to lasting change. Indeed, the direction in recent years has been more towards reinforcing classical music's hegemony, particularly in music education, as can be seen from the National Plan for Music Education and the proliferation of El Sistema-style programmes. While legitimising discourses for classical music may have shifted away from its perceived status as a 'universal' culture, and more towards its perceived 'social benefits', these benefits have to be tempered by the claims made in my thesis which demonstrates that they are unevenly shared.

Indeed, far from being an emancipatory force in this new breed of music education programme, classical music can be seen on a structural level as reinforcing the same patterns of exclusion and inequality as mainstream schooling which sociology of education has been exposing and critiquing for some decades (Rimmer 2014). Against the discourse in policy and music education practice that classical music education just needs more investment in order to open up this cultural practice to everyone (Allen et al. 2014), I am arguing that classical music has stronger links with the middle class than just the economic — that the practices themselves are associated with key traits of bourgeois identity. This does not mean that this music can't be reclaimed or resignified, but that both the practices and the aesthetic of classical music have to change if classed, raced, and gendered hierarchies are not to be reproduced alongside musical ones. This requires a loosening of musical boundaries in order to open up the social boundaries – but the privileged status of classical music is dependent on these exclusions which demarcate it as different to other musics.

Concluding remarks: classical music as public sociability

David Hesmondhalgh (2013, 4) in his manifesto for a more ambivalent music sociology suggests that we explore ways in which the arts and culture might draw upon and reinforce patterns of social inequality, rather than reproducing arguments about the 'power of music' (Hallam and Creech 2010) which focus exclusively on its benefits. This thesis has contributed to his agenda with an argument which works against the ideal of the aesthetic as a unifying force in society (Hesmondhalgh 2013, 9). It was clear from my research that music does indeed contribute to the sustenance of public sociability, one of the key claims he makes for music's political contribution (p. 10). Young people in the groups in my study came together from different schools, private and state, and different ages, to form close bonds through playing and singing together. But despite the great benefits which some of my participants gained from these groups, its mode of sociability drew on a relatively narrow, self-selecting group

of young people who participated in it. As Hesmondhalgh further notes (p. 146), 'the aspiration to collectivity remains vital'. Does it matter that this collectivity is relatively narrow? I think that it does. It also matters what norms of sociability it naturalises. The mode of hierarchy, authority, and correction that I have described as characteristic of classical music's norms of practice are seen as necessary to reproduce the musical canon which this tradition rests on. However, following David Edwards (1990), I will finish by suggesting that what we currently need is not great works of art, but a critically reflexive, compassionate citizenry; this is unlikely to be cultivated by this mode of musical practice.

Appendix one: interviewees

Pseudonym	Mother's job	Father's job	Ethnicity	Type of secondary school
Andy†	Nurse	Dry-liner	White	State
Helen	Singing teacher	Vicar/Dean of HE institution	White	State
Miriam	Civil servant, used to work in family fish and chip business.	Manager, agricultural supply store chain	White	State
Nilanka*	Academic	Academic	Sri Lankan adopted into white family	Music scholarship to private school
Alice*	Dentist	unknown	White	Music scholarship to private school
Adam	Housewife	Company director	White	State
Jonathan	Accountant	Firefighter and factory safety inspector (two jobs)	White	State
Jack*	None	Runs IT company	Half Chinese (mother)	Private
Fred*	Financial analyst	Retired pharmacologist	White	Music scholarship to private school
Jenny	Runs B&B	Stepfather: business consultant	White	Specialist music secondary school
Owen	Deputy town clerk	Deputy bursar at HE institution	White	State
Ellie†	None	Runs IT company	Half Chinese (mother)	Private
Laurie	Doesn't work since having children; used to be a nurse	Solicitor	Half Chinese (mother)	Music scholarship to private school
Jonty	Priest	Unknown	White	State
Holly	School lab technician and garden designer	Chartered accountant	White	State
Thomas*	Piano teacher	Engineer	White	State secondary, then music scholarship to public school for 6th form

Sam*	'Involved with various charities'	Lawyer	White	Private
Lisa	Flute teacher	Saxophone teacher	White	State
Francesca	Physics teacher	Dean of HE institution (used to be a parish priest)	White	Private
Toby	Child psychologist	Urban planner, city council	White	State
Robbie	School lab technician	Vicar	White	State
Elizabeth	Surgeon/academic	Off work with ME	Chinese British	State
Sarah	Teacher	Unknown	White	Music scholarship to private school
Katherine*	Primary school teacher	n/a (single mother)	White	State
Hannah*	Physics teacher	Academic	White	Private
Emily	Teaching assistant (used to be a teacher)	Managing Director	White	Private
Fergus	Medical editor	Runs R&D company	White	State
Nathan	Language and humanities teacher for the Open University	Computer programmer, private sector	White	State
Isabel	Midwife	Town planner, county council	White	State
Rosie*	Secretary for husband's company	Agricultural consultant	White	Private
Beth*	Secretary for husband's company	Agricultural consultant	White	Private
Amy*	Academic	Lawyer	White	State
Bethan*	Statistician	Architect	White	State
Teresa	Not working then receptionist	Academic	White	State and private
Susanna	Not working	In telecoms, private company.	White	State
Will	Owns a shipbuilding company with partner	Civil servant in Hong Kong	Hong Kong	Public
Megan	Headteacher	Artisan baker	White	State

* denotes interview as carried out with the participant immediately above or below.
† denotes more than one interview carried out with this participant.

Adults interviewed:

Name	Role	Group
Tristram*	Conductor	Cantando
Danny*	Accompanist	Cantando
Jeanette†	Vocal tutor	YOC, Cantando
Linda	Administrator	Cantando
Olly	Conductor	WCYO
Christine	Administrator	WCYO
Kate	Administrator	WCYO
Sophia	Director	YOC
Gregory	Chorus master	YOC

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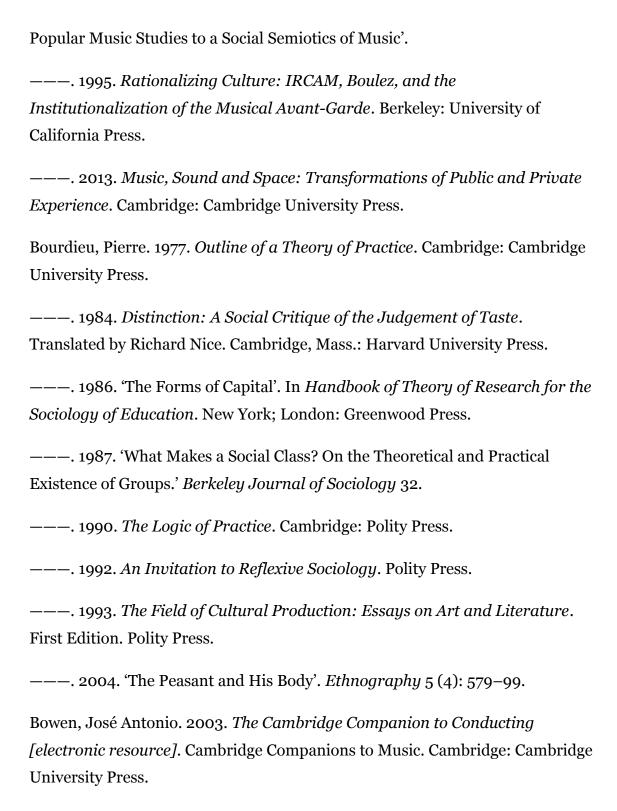
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