

**GLOBAL SONG, GLOBAL CITIZENS? MULTICULTURAL CHORAL
MUSIC EDUCATION AND THE COMMUNITY YOUTH CHOIR:
CONSTITUTING THE MULTICULTURAL HUMAN SUBJECT**

by

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Abstract

This study provides a critical ethnographic examination of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir that emerged from my concerns related to mainstream community choral music education practices. The predominantly white memberships and Eurocentric repertoire of many community children's choirs suggests that traditional structures and practices are exclusionary, even when this may not be the intent of the choir's organizers.

Interviews conducted with members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, and analysis of my reflective teaching journal, suggest that multicultural choral music education when taught within in an anti-racism discursive framework, may contribute to a newly emerging sense of identity (and its related subjectivity) which I describe as *multicultural human subjectivity*. The concept of multicultural human subject is located within a cosmopolitan sociology which acknowledges that globalization impacts the local level of life within national societies, transforming everyday consciousness and leading to new forms of self-identity that accept cultural hybridity as a new norm. In this regard, cosmopolitan sociology contradicts the official Canadian discourse of multiculturalism, which assumes cultures to be monolithic. Cosmopolitanism also conflicts with many of the assumptions guiding multicultural North American music education practices, yet paradoxically multicultural music

education practices appear to hold a form of cosmopolitanism as a tacitly implied outcome.

The purposes of this study are to: 1) examine the ways that engaging in world music (global song) within the MFYC context may be performative to an emerging identity-subjectivity of *multicultural human subject*, 2) investigate the relationship between my pedagogy as an anti-racism music educator and performativity related to multicultural human subjectivity, and 3) identify the ways discourses of race, ethnicity, nationalism, and multiculturalism may both contribute to and confound the emergence of multicultural human subjectivity. In this last objective, my reflexive journal points to areas of personal bias that stand in the way of achieving my goals for the choir.

Interviews conducted with members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir allow the study's participants an important voice in our academic understanding of performativity and the role of conflicting discourses in an individual's self-understanding. The interviews and critiques of my own teaching praxis illuminate both successes and stumbling blocks on the journey toward a self and other understanding indicative of multicultural human subjectivity.

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It is common in academic circles to hear, “writing a thesis is lonely work.” Although I cannot deny there were many long stretches of time over the past several months when my computer seemed to be my only companion, I recognize that I could not have made it to this point without the help of many people. They each had different, but equally important roles that enabled me to work through and get beyond the times of frustration, self-doubt, despair, fatigue, excitement, happiness, and euphoria that were a part of my doctoral journey. Now that the time has arrived to publicly acknowledge their individual and collective contributions to this project, I am struck by the sheer inadequacy of words to express my gratitude.

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Chapter One: Prelude and Introduction

Background: Multicultural Music Education in North America

Contested Territory

A great deal has been written in the past two decades related to the implementation of multiculturalism in educational settings in both the U.S.A. and Canada, and indeed, around the world. The discipline of music education is no exception, having gone through several phases of awareness of music beyond European art music. The mid-twentieth century through the 1970s have been called the “watershed years” (Campbell, 1994, p.67) for North American music education’s concern with musical cultures beyond the European classical tradition, although in this period the primary focus was on African-American music: spirituals, the blues, and jazz. In the 1980s, a flurry of activity developed as the discipline directed activity toward locating and incorporating non-Western musics into the curriculum. In the 1990s, the profession entered a period of reflexivity that allowed for examinations of ethical issues related to authenticity, teacher competence in less familiar musical genres, and related questions (Campbell, 1994).

In this ongoing period of reflexivity, the concept of multicultural music education is a source of controversy that continues to foster debate. The advances of technology in recent years have made available such a diverse range of music from cultures across the globe that any attempt to be all-inclusive in a curriculum is, frankly, impossible. This, of course, raises the issue of what to teach, and the implications of those curriculum choices to issues of power: “What gets taught? What doesn’t get taught? What do the textbooks, the curriculum overall, the opening exercises, extra-curricular activities, and so on, omit, negate, misrepresent” (Wright, 2000, p. 75)?

Although many music educators today acknowledge the need to incorporate multiculturalism in the curriculum, it remains contested territory. As Campbell (2004) writes, many teachers feel they are not qualified to teach anything beyond the western-styled “school music” in which they were trained: choirs, orchestras, concert and marching bands, and a variety of jazz and vocal jazz ensembles. This leads to a Eurocentric curriculum:

Yet few students know music with a capital “M,” Music, for its global and cross-cultural manifestations. Such knowledge can only come by discarding “the west is best” perspective (which all too frequently becomes “the west is the only” position) (Campbell, 2004, p. xvi).

Rationales for Multicultural Music Education

The adoption of multicultural approaches to music education necessitated the articulation of rationales for their inclusion in the curriculum. Volk outlines the most commonly invoked rationales in her 1998 text, *Music Education and Multiculturalism*. First, the changing demographics of North American society necessitated an acknowledgement of the diversity of student populations. “Through the study of various cultures, students can develop a better understanding of the peoples that make up American society, gain self-esteem, and learn tolerance for others” (p. 5), although Volk does not explain exactly how such study will contribute to the stated outcomes. The second rationale that Volk cites is the need to develop world-mindedness among students to facilitate working within a worldwide economy through enhanced knowledge of world cultures, which Volk states will “help lead to world peace” (p. 5), a conclusion based upon her readings of books by Nicholas Montalto, Geneva Gay, and James A. Banks. Volk next describes a global rationale that emphasizes ecological interrelationships between people and the earth on which they live. “The study of people and how they live, in combination with ecological issues, can foster concern for balance, tolerance, the wise use of resources, and respect for the other inhabitants of the earth” (p. 5), but once again, exactly how such studies

promotes balance, tolerance, and respect remains unexamined. Volk suggests that all three of these rationales are applicable to music education, with the inclusion of one additional rationale that is music-specific: the role of music in societies the world over. Volk suggests that music functions as a

mode of nonverbal expression in the context of rites and rituals, as affirmation of governmental or political beliefs, or as emotional release. By learning how the people in another culture express themselves musically, students not only gain insights into others but also learn about themselves (1998, p.5).

Multicultural vs. global education.

The rationales that Volk describes in her text are also associated with what some authors term *global education*.¹ These writers make a distinction between the two terms, arguing that global education seeks to foster an international perspective, while multiculturalism seeks to promote national unity out of cultural diversity. In addition, global education is concerned with global issues and systems, while multiculturalism focuses on domestic, multiethnic issues (Pike, 2000, p. 225). While I recognize that in some educational situations it may be possible to focus solely on international issues or solely on local or domestic concerns, within my own music education praxis I find it difficult to make such a clear distinction. This may in part be because of the transnational nature of Mississauga's population and the youth with whom I work; it is likely also a function of my own educational perspective and the ways in which I go about choosing repertoire for my community youth choir. Any given piece of music may raise in our rehearsals both global and local issues, and frequently these are intertwined in our discussions. Thus for the purposes of this thesis, my use of the term *multicultural* will also refer to global education, as the title of the thesis suggests.

¹ Within music education, the term that is sometimes utilized is "world music pedagogy" (Campbell, 2004, p. 26).

Technicist teaching and unreflective practice.

The rationales for multicultural music education outlined by Volk have counter-arguments that are still commonly heard in the profession. These run the gamut from “splintering what it means to be an American” (or in this context, Canadian) to arguments that suggest “teaching all children about cultural differences will actually reinforce rather than reduce the sense of difference” (Volk, 1998, p.7). Volk’s text is intended to provide an historical overview of the development of multicultural music education in the United States. As such, she avoids presenting philosophical analysis of the rationales and counter-rationales discussed above, leaving the questions a philosophical perspective might raise for the reader to wrestle with (or not), on her own.

Unfortunately, there are a considerable number of music educators who, in teaching music multiculturally, do so without reflection upon the deep issues that are implicated in the practice. Regelski (1998) writes that when rationalism and empiricism converged during the Enlightenment, they gave rise to the paradigm of technicism, resulting in a sometimes uncritical faith in techniques. Teaching within the paradigm of technicism gradually came to be understood as a technology of methods through which the learning process of the learners can be controlled (p. 3-4). Such teaching approaches rely on “tried and true” methods that are presumed to guarantee “good results” (p. 8).

What becomes important in technicist models of teaching is whether or not a lesson is practicable—whether it can be “delivered” as “instruction” takes priority over whether students “have the pragmatic ability to do anything new or better as a result of such instruction. Thus ‘delivering’ or providing ‘instruction’ is uncritically assumed to amount to ‘teaching’” (p. 8-9). The obsession with formulaic teaching methods means that too often music educators give little if any attention to the issues related to multiculturalism in music education. All manner of practices may be introduced under the banner of multiculturalism

with little if any regard for why they are included in the curriculum or what the students might gain from their inclusion.

It is not my intention within this study to provide technicist ideas or a new list of methods for multicultural choral music educators; rather, my purpose is to examine my own praxis in multicultural choral education so that it may be improved. In this way, the study will contribute to continuing philosophical and sociological analyses of the underpinnings and implications of various multicultural music education discourses.

Multicultural Music Education As Liberal Discourse

In Volk's overview of multiculturalism in music education, she acknowledges that

although multiculturalism is national law in Canada, some Canadian researchers feel that antiracist education holds more potential for change than multicultural education. They feel that multiculturalism does not do enough to promote institutional transformation and sociopolitical changes. Liberal multiculturalists, on the other hand, see antiracism as inherent within well-taught multiculturalism (Volk, 1998, p.8).

The above statement suggests the point of divergence from my own thinking and praxis in multicultural choral music education. The liberal viewpoint to which Volk alludes is the one more commonly expressed in the music education literature; antiracist philosophy is largely absent within music education discourse. Campbell suggests that the music education discipline as a whole operates on unexamined and unsubstantiated assumptions with regard to multicultural education, relying on vague definitions and goals that invoke the "world peace' and 'brotherhood' issues, sometimes as the *raison d'être* for music's continuance in the (public school) curriculum" (Campbell, 1994, p. 74, italics in original). I concur with Campbell in this allegation, and believe that we must examine the assumptions under which many multicultural music education

programs operate, including the assumption that multicultural education is inherently anti-racist.

David Elliott offers as a rationale the belief that multiculturalism “offers students the opportunity to achieve a central goal of humanistic education: self-understanding through ‘other understanding’” (Elliott, 1995, p. 209). Elliott suggests that the study of musical “micro” and “macro” cultures can help to eliminate “misunderstandings among cultures” (p. 208), yet like Volk, he does not elaborate on how such study might help to eliminate misunderstandings. This statement, I believe, is typical of the vagueness to which Campbell refers, and against which antiracism educators argue.

Aesthetic music education.

The reluctance to engage with some of the difficult issues raised by the inclusion of multicultural music in the curriculum may be in part a result of the discipline’s attachment to aesthetic-based philosophies of music education, that focus more on music’s elements (melody, harmony, rhythm, form, etc.) than on music as an inherently social human phenomenon. In the modernist, aesthetic viewpoint, music is treated as autonomous entity, one whose value resides in “more or less autonomous structures (works, pieces, songs)” (Bowman, 1994a, p. 51). One extreme version of aesthetic philosophy — formalism — allows that musical works may make reference to an “external” social context, but that “all such references are *totally irrelevant* to the art work’s meaning” (Reimer, 1989, p. 23, italics in original).²

A focus on music-as-product, however, overlooks the crucial element of human agency, ignoring the nature of music as a human activity that is always

² It should be noted that in the most recent edition of *A Philosophy of Music Education*, Reimer softens this stance by proposing a “synergistic” dependency between “contextualists” and “formalists” and other philosophical viewpoints, in a sort of “why can’t we all just get along” proposal. Nonetheless, in this new edition music is still positioned as autonomous object, one of the assumptions this study challenges.

already social in nature. Thus analyzing only the “aesthetic elements” of melody, harmony, rhythm, and form without regard to music’s sociality is reductive, setting up a false dichotomy between music and context. The dichotomy positions music as object, separate from the human social activity (context), which depends upon music and upon which music depends. Viewing music through a solely aesthetic lens obscures the reality of music as a human, sonorous experience.

Music is not an achievement of solitary individuals or sound disassociated from shared human contexts. The worlds it creates are shared, collective ones. Music is fundamentally social and fundamental to human sociality (Bowman, 1994a, p. 54).

Viewpoints that posit music as autonomous entity not only miss the point of music’s fundamentally social nature, but also obfuscate the cultural influences that organize sound into music. This is indeed problematic in efforts to teach the music of any culture, particularly when “cultural understanding” is a stated goal. But beyond making cultural understanding more difficult to achieve, the obfuscation that results from aesthetic views of music may blind us to important social issues that come part in parcel with the music: issues such as racism, sexism, classism, ableism, and other inequities of society. The aesthetic philosophy itself as articulated by Immanuel Kant in 1790 was based upon colonial, racist assumptions, previously asserted by David Hume, in a now infamous quotation:

The Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the trifling. Mr. Hume challenges anyone to cite a single example in which a Negro has shown talents, and asserts that among the hundreds of thousands of blacks who are transported elsewhere from their countries, although many have been set free, still not one was ever found who presented anything great in art or science or any other praiseworthy quality (cited in Gilroy, 2000, p. 58).

Praxial music education.

In an effort to resituate music as a human activity rather than aesthetic object for analysis, music educators such as Bowman (1994a), Elliott (1995) Regelski (1998) and others began to argue against aesthetic-based philosophies for music education, urging a more praxial approach to the discipline. As Elliott explains:

By calling this a praxial philosophy I intend to highlight the importance it places on music as a particular form of action that is purposeful and situated and, therefore, revealing of one's self and one's relationship with others in a community. The term *praxial* emphasizes that music ought to be understood in relation to the meanings and values evidenced in actual music making and music listening in specific cultural contexts (Elliott, 1995, p. 14).

Praxial music education, therefore, not only acknowledges music's social nature (Bowman, 1994b) but advocates teaching music in context to the degree possible in western educational situations. Recognizing that there is pressure for teachers to cover a broad amount of material, often in a relatively short amount of time, Elliott quotes Sparshott to make the case for depth over breadth in a multicultural curriculum:

People for whom the music of their own culture is all the music there is "can live into that music as people of broader culture cannot; their musical world is a cultural entirety that belongs to them and to which they belong" (Elliott, 1995, p. 211).

Educating ethically.

Elliott suggests that as educators, we should aim to provide cultural context for the music we teach in order to allow for deeper understanding, both of the music and of ourselves in relation to others. Although the need to understand self in relation to others, which I believe is crucial within an antiracism pedagogical praxis, remains an implied need throughout *Music Matters*, Elliott does not address in a direct manner the issue of multicultural music education as a means by which racism may be counteracted in education.

Wayne Bowman, in *The New Handbook of Music Teaching and Learning*, however, addresses the ethical considerations that may be inherent when music performance is the primary means for music education. The “failure to ‘theorize practice,’ to reflect critically on the ends to which our musical and instructional practices may lead, leaves open the very real possibility that our music engagements miseducate rather than educate” (Bowman, 2002, p.64). For example, a curriculum that includes the music of many cultures, without providing adequate socio-historical contextual information to help explain the music’s origins and meanings, may reinforce existing negative stereotypes rather than breaking down those stereotypes (Bradley, 2003). It is this concern for the ethical character of music teaching, or as Bowman puts it, its “inescapable moral dimension” that is “concerned ultimately with the development of character and identity” (*ibid*, p. 64) that motivates my research in multicultural choral music education.

Perspectives on Multiculturalism Related to This Study

Because multiculturalism is a many-faceted concept understood differently by different people and dependent upon the context in which it is discussed, I would like to introduce what I mean by the term in relation to this study. There are at least two “kinds” of multiculturalism that influence the study. Quoting Fleras and Elliott, George Dei describes multiculturalism as “a political doctrine officially promoting cultural diversity as an intrinsic component of the social, political and moral order” (G. S. Dei, 2000. p. 21). Bannerji describes two opposing articulations of multiculturalism, “official” or “elite” multiculturalism, and what she terms the “culture of resistance” or “popular multiculturalism” (Bannerji, 2000, p. 5). Bannerji’s argument suggests that official (or elite) multiculturalism is not benign by nature, but that the rhetoric of official multiculturalism masks an agenda reliant upon “cultural stereotypes and ethnicizations” that most recently have been “accompanied by the gathering strength of right wing politics” (Bannerji, 2000, p. 4). In

education, a form of official multiculturalism is articulated by school boards through curriculum guidelines characterized by “heritage days,” “black history month,” and other isolated units of curriculum that have been criticized as tokenism by anti-racism educators (Lee, Menkart, & Okazawa-Rey, 1998). Bannerji offers the concept of popular multiculturalism as a culture of resistance that

must articulate itself through a politicized understanding of cultural representation. Antiracist and feminist class politics must be its articulating basis. It is this which would prevent this popular multiculturalism from falling prey to colonial, racist discourse or to those of ethnic nationalisms (Bannerji, 2000, p. 5).

In a similar, although less blatantly political vein, Barnor Hesse also describes multiculturalism as

particular discourses or social forms which incorporate marked cultural differences and diverse ethnicities. . . The multicultural is a signifier of the unsettled meanings of cultural differences in relation to multiculturalism as the signified of attempts to fix their meaning in national imaginaries (Hesse, 2000, p. 2).

Hesse, in his description of popular multiculturalism, refers to the many visible signs of plural cultures within (British) society, such as the presence of Chinese food restaurants in predominantly white, “blue collar” neighborhoods in London. These are the “unsettled meanings of cultural differences” that exist in relation to the nationalist discourse of “being British.” Certainly Great Britain is not unique in this phenomenon; there are an overwhelming number of examples of similar “unsettled meanings of cultural differences” throughout Canada and the United States. Even so, nationalist discourse, as Bannerji argues, constructs Canada as a “white” nation through its policy of official multiculturalism, a policy that “rests on posing ‘Canadian culture’ against ‘multicultures’” (Bannerji, 2000, p. 10). Multicultural education that relies upon “the three f’s” of food, folk music, and festivals, likewise serves to construct the White nation through a focus on racial and ethnic groups other than Whites. “By ignoring White people,

and the underlying concept of whiteness, it is implied that they have no race or that their experiences require no examination because they are the standard” (Lee, Menkart, & Okazawa-Rey, 1998, p. ix).

Similarly in music education, when cultures are studied in opposition to, or in addendum to Western art music, Whiteness is implied as the “musical norm.” In music education, the term multiculturalism has come to signify any musical practice not generally included in the category of western or European art music. In North America, folk music of English and western European origins is sometimes incorporated into the category, despite the fact that western art and folk musics are sonorous manifestations of people who share more cultural similarities than differences. The inclusion of (some, but not other) western folk musics in a definition of multicultural music is paradoxically both broad and narrow, in that it allows for a multicultural music curriculum whose contents never venture beyond the borders of Canada or the U.S. In Canada, for example, the study of the Celtic music of Cape Breton usually qualifies as “multicultural” under this definition. Such narrow definitions are important if one is engaged in a project of nation-building and constructing a national identity (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 21), as this music could be used to reinforce notions of what is “Canadian” (or in the original context, “American”) (Campbell, 1994, p. 65). Like Dei, Bannerji, and others engaged in antiracist scholarship, I am suspicious of the enterprise of nation-building, because of the insularity such agendas support, and their tendency to continue the myth of Canada (or the U.S.) as a “white nation.”

Both concepts of multiculturalism influence this study. Official multiculturalism as discourse has influenced my own teacher training and my understanding of life in Canadian society, thus it impacts upon my repertoire choices for the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. At the same time, however, since MFYC is a community group whose curriculum is not determined by either a government or school board, our multicultural repertoire choices may be

viewed as a form of popular multiculturalism, and as a form of resistance to the musical Eurocentrism commonly associated with children's and youth choirs.

Defining "global song."

I believe that my own practice of multicultural music education must extend beyond Canada and North America, in order to make important socio-historical connections to the music I teach and to avoid a parochial approach to multicultural music. The students that I encounter in Mississauga, Ontario, provide evidence of the transnational nature of the local population, and this has influenced the way I approach multiculturalism. Thus the definition of multiculturalism I employ for my own choral music education setting incorporates what others term global education (Pike, 2000) or world music education (Campbell, 2004). My curricular choices include North American folk musics (derived from European sources, for example Celtic music or Appalachian folk music), as well as North American indigenous musical practices. The repertoire is comprised of what I term *global song*, defined broadly as the varied musical practices of peoples and cultures from around the world. Global song incorporates both indigenous musics and the classical or art musics of non-European cultures, as well as European-derived folk music practices that have traditionally been marginalized, for example, Balkan vocal music. I would like to clarify that the inclusiveness of this definition should not be construed to imply "anything goes" with regard to multicultural content. It does, however, point to the sometimes overwhelming choices confronting one who teaches a multicultural curriculum in the choral setting, and is a primary motivation for the study. The choices we make as teachers are frequently a reflection of our own biases, not only toward musical practices, but towards the cultural groups associated with those practices. Thus, if I want to teach multicultural music ethically, I need to understand how those biases affect my teaching praxis.

My intention, in this broad definition for global song, is to venture beyond “the familiar” with my students, and consequently, to push myself beyond my own (admittedly Eurocentric) comfort range as a teacher. “Choir” is itself a western construct, and incorporating particular non-Western musical practices into that setting is not always easy. Making the music of any culture available in “choral music form” often involves the notation and commodification (Keil & Feld, 1994) of the music of aural traditions. To use such repertoire without engaging our students in interrogation of power implications including racism and other oppressions is, I believe, to uphold Whiteness as norm. Such an approach aligns itself with official multicultural policies and directives in that it sets up multicultural repertoire as “other” to a presumed norm of Whiteness associated with western art music. In utilizing a definition for global song and a broad understanding of multiculturalism in choral music education, my intent is to allow space for a popular multiculturalism to take root within the community choir that is the focus of this study.

Songs, Questions, and the Research: Context for the Study

Questions Arising from Personal Experience

Although my formal music training³ was first as a pianist in the European classical tradition, and later as an organist, my musical passion is, and has been since childhood, choral music. I sang in choirs throughout elementary and high school, as an adult I sang in community choirs, and when I pursued a university music degree as a mature student, I sang in university ensembles. The many styles of music I experienced in those choirs, but more importantly, the variety of exciting and enlightening experiences to which I was privileged as a choir member, were, I believe, my “real” music education. Choir was the place where I began to understand myself as a person connected to the wider world. I felt that many of the songs I had the opportunity to sing held keys to the very meaning of

³ See Bowman, "Educating Musically," for an in-depth discussion of the distinction between music training and education.

life itself; for example, my exposure to the African-based spirituals and freedom songs during the U.S. Civil Rights movement helped me, I believe, to develop empathy, and to understand even if superficially, what it was like to live as a person in a country that touted “all men are created equal” while still legally mandating that black people sit in the rear of the bus and drink from separate water fountains. My choir experiences gave me the desire to teach, to pass on to others a chance for the sort of understandings about the world that I felt I had gained. My desire to teach went beyond wanting to share just the music; I wanted to share the *experience* of the music. Bowman concurs that this desire to share experience is crucial to educating musically:

The desire to share one's passion for music with others is both laudable and crucial to musical instruction. But it is important to remember that this passion is a function not just of what music is, but of our experiences with it, and what and who we have become through such experiences (Bowman, 2002, p. 74).

Now that I am out in the world teaching, I find myself wondering what type of persons am I helping my students to become through the music we share? Am I helping them to gain critical insights about the world around them, or am I merely training them to perform a variety of pieces in my own preferred interpretation? Am I a conductor who controls the choir, or one who facilitates the choir to make their own music? And beyond that, do my students understand the music at a deep level? In addition to developing an understanding that has meaning for their own lives, have they gained some insight into what that music might mean to the people from whom it has been “borrowed”? How much of my own bias, my own personal prejudices, am I passing on to my students? Are they able to recognize those biases as such, and accept or reject them according to their own thought? Is the music I bring to my choral program helping my students to shape their individual identities, to develop their sense of self in relation to others, and if so, how? What sorts of selves are being constituted through the music and my pedagogy?

Locating Myself in the Research

Questions such as these are of concern to me as a music educator partly, I suspect, because of my own experiences in choirs specifically and in the world generally. I grew up in the southern United States in a white working class family during the final years of Jim Crow legislation and during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's. Although my parents were quite outspokenly in favour of desegregation, it was not the predominant viewpoint of the community in which we lived. I remember my mother, during our dinner conversations, comparing the strategies of Martin Luther King with those of Mahatma Gandhi as she tried to help me understand how some of the laws of a democratic society could be blatantly unjust, and how citizens could use both legal and peaceful means to bring about change. Such views, however, were not popular among my (all white) classmates and teachers, most of whom tried to avoid talking about the demonstrations that filled the nightly news reports. Although school desegregation had been mandatory for a few years by the time I began high school, its implementation in many areas of the South was quite slow. Knoxville, Tennessee, was no exception.

The high school that I attended from 1964-1968 was “desegregated” in 1966: three black students were bussed across town (a drive of about 30 minutes) to attend Central High, at the time the largest high school in the area with an enrollment of nearly 2000 students. Although I tried many times to make friends with Olisya,⁴ the young black woman who was in my class year and took many of the same courses that I did, she seemed only to want to keep to herself. If I tried to talk to her during class, she rebuked me, saying she was afraid she would get into trouble for talking. Olisya developed a reputation in the school of being “stuck-up” because of her refusal to socialize with those of us who made an honest effort to be her friend. Years passed before I gained any understanding of why she was afraid she would be the one in trouble when I was the one initiating

⁴ Olisya is a pseudonym.

the conversations; but at the time I did not realize that she may have been worried about getting into trouble with teachers or school staff because of her marginalized position. She was the only black female student in the school.

I recall that, shortly after the assassination of Martin Luther King in April 1968, the conductor of our high school mixed chorus arranged a medley of protest songs from the Civil Rights movement. His plan was for us to sing them on our final concert of the school year as a tribute to the man and his work, but after complaints from some parents, the principal prohibited these songs from the performance. Some of us, however, stood on stage after the concert and sang them anyway as an impromptu encore, much to the thrill of the conductor and the chagrin of the principal who had issued the ban. I recall what a very powerful feeling that was: the principal stood offstage squirming in his shoes. It looked as though he wanted to come out and stop our performance but feared that we might, in our militant defiance, create a scene. I also recall seeing Olisya standing in the stage wings, tears streaming down her face as we sang the freedom song medley. I wanted to tell her how much I loved this music and how wonderful it felt to sing these songs in honour of Dr. King, but I never had the chance.

Perhaps my own experience with school music as expression of social conscience was uncommon (and perhaps not), but I look back at this as a transformative educational experience. From it I learned that although programming could be controlled, the songs, and the meanings I made from them, could not be taken from me. It is an understanding I would like for my own students to come to: once learned, songs are part of their mind, body, and spirit—embodied within them as individuals and as members of a group. The profundity of my high school experience may, at least in part, explain why the freedom songs of South Africa hold such a strong appeal for me today. As I watched the anti-apartheid struggle in that nation gain momentum, by way of newspaper and television journalism, it resonated with me in much the same

way as did the Civil Rights struggle of the U.S. Now that I am conducting my own choir, I ask myself, how influential was this particular choir experience to my interest in educating for social justice, in integrative antiracist education?

Integrative antiracism education recognizes that “all systems of oppression intersect and interlock and a study of one such system—racism—necessarily entails a study of classism, sexism and homophobia” (G. S. Dei, 2000). For my own practice, I include ableism in this definition. Although I believe that the potential for social change does exist within multicultural pedagogical practices, I believe that in order to effect change, we must be intentional in our efforts to bring it about, to approach multicultural education as an antiracist, critical pedagogy. We need to intentionally help our students make the connections between the songs we sing and the social realities to which the songs are evidence by engaging in an integrative antiracist multiculturalism.

Music Making as Performative

My experience with the protest songs, and the questions raised in the preceding discussion, are indicative of musical engagement as performative when I ask how the connection between my adolescent musical experiences and the desire for social justice makes up a part of who I am. The concept of performativity, itself relatively new, has only recently entered music education discourse. First developed by philosopher J. L. Austin in the 1950s and discussed in greater depth in *How to Do Things with Words*⁵ (1962), the term was later taken up and adapted by Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble* (Butler, 1990) and expanded upon in *Excitable Speech* (1997). The basic premise of Butler's theory is that gender identity is performed, rather than determined at

⁵ “performative” *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Christopher Baldick. Oxford University Press, 1996. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. 22 July 2003. <<http://80-www.oxfordreference.com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=156.000717>>

birth, that people's gender identities are socially and discursively constituted. Bowman calls upon this theory to posit music making as performative:

Musicking does not give us insights into the patterns of human subjectivity so much as it shapes and molds subjective awareness and identity. . . . In nontrivial ways, selfhood and identity are created in and through musical activity. . . . If, in short, identity is performative, and if repeated musical acts. . . become part of the fabric of our very selves, it is incumbent upon us as educators to ask whether sounding good is all there is to being good musically, and to remain ever vigilant about what in addition to expressive sonorous patterns is produced in our musical doings (Bowman, 2002, p. 76).

In *Musical Identities* (MacDonald, Hargreaves, & Miell, 2002), various contributors present evidence from studies in social psychology indicating that “music can have short-term, transitory effects as well as a more deep-seated influence on our beliefs and behaviors” (p. 11). In a chapter entitled “Gender Identity and Music,” Nicola Dibben likewise suggests, “from the ‘performative theories’ of gender, engagement in musical practices may construct and sustain individual and collective identity” (p. 123). These studies suggest that we need to determine what, besides sonorous patterns, is produced in our musical doings as teachers. I know of no current research in music education, particularly in choral music education that investigates the ways engaging in musical activities is performative to identity. According to a study by Tarrant, North, and Hargreaves, “the social context in which affiliation with music takes place for adolescents is of central importance” in the construction of identity (MacDonald, Hargreaves, & Miell, 2002, p. 124). Given the state of disagreement in the music education discipline concerning whether or not music is merely the sum of its elements (as aesthetic object) or something bigger, I believe it is time someone made an attempt to investigate the implications for music’s performativity within the social context of an educational setting. Although there have been several studies related to popular music forms encountered in “everyday life,”

such as rap or hip hop and youth identity (Ibrahim, 2000; Yon, 2000), the music education discipline has not followed suit. This may in part be due to music education's institutionalized paradigms of "high art," and the residue of other forms of cultural elitism common within the discipline (Regelski, 2000, p. 17).

The Research Question(s)

The concept of performativity as it relates to identity and subjectivity is one that has intrigued me for quite some time. I wanted to gain a better understanding of how engaging with global song within the social and pedagogical contexts of the youth choir I conduct may be performative for its adolescent members in constituting identities. My curiosity is in some respects similar to Small's (1998), who posits *musicking*⁶ as a human encounter, asking the question, "What's really going on here?" (p. 10). As he argues, the act of musicking establishes in the place where it happens a particular set of relationships, and it is in those relationships that the meaning of the act resides. He further states that these relationships

stand as metaphor for ideal relationships as the participants in the performance imagine them to be: relationships between person and person, between individual and society, between humanity and the natural world and even perhaps the supernatural world. These are important matters, perhaps the most important in human life (p. 13).

Small's statement resonates deeply with my own questions and concerns as a music teacher. I acknowledge freely that in my own choral music praxis, global song stands as a metaphor for my ideal concept of the world and human relationships. My research, then, investigates how my musical and pedagogical practice in that community youth choir setting are successful, or not, in sharing

⁶ Small defines musicking as the "the present participle, or gerund, of the verb *to music*. To music is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composing), or by dancing (Small, 1998, p. 9).

the metaphor with my students to help them create their own, similar metaphor for global song.

My investigation seeks to understand how global song and the pedagogical practices through which it is encountered may influence my students' subjective awareness. Specifically, the research addresses the following questions:

1. How does the music with which the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir engages enable choir members to locate themselves in the world, and what type of selves in relation to others do they create as a result?
2. How, if at all, does engaging in global song within MFYC's anti-racism multicultural choral music education praxis, contribute to the possibility for an emergent, socially and discursively constituted "multicultural human subject?"⁷
3. How might a multicultural human subject emerge within the particular context of the MFYC in relation to the performativity of that context?

In *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects* (Britzman, 1998), Britzman calls upon psychoanalytic reading practices to imagine a queer pedagogy that bears similarity to my own concerns for an antiracist multicultural music pedagogy in

⁷ Throughout this thesis, the term *subject* is used in the Foucauldian sense of an identity (self-understanding) brought into being within and influenced by discourses of multiculturalism, globalization, and cosmopolitanism. The abstraction *multicultural human subject* seeks to acknowledge this relationship to discourse as a condition of its formation. Despite tendencies within discourses to create rigid categorizations, subjects' agency enables them to remain dynamic and fluid, just as the conditions of their subjectivities are also dynamic and fluid. Although the term *subject* is sometimes associated with positivist research paradigms, this is not the meaning I seek to convey in the abstraction *multicultural human subject*; indeed, such meaning would be antithetical to the critical ethnographic method integral to this research. At the same time, however, subjects and subjectivities are sometimes constrained by the discourses leading to their formation. The term *multicultural human subject*, therefore, acknowledges that along with its fluidity and dynamic possibilities, the risk of hegemonic appropriation also exists.

constituting multicultural human subjects. I quote from Britzman at length to capture the various nuances in her writing:

And while it may be difficult to conceive of “self-knowledge” as a site of subjection, much of my argument is meant to unsettle old centerings of the self in education: to unsettle the myth of normalcy as an ordinary state and to unsettle the unitary subject of pedagogy. However, rather than offer a “how to” manual of pedagogy, I am trying to image a queer pedagogy along the lines of what Sue Golding calls “technique”: ‘a route, a mapping, an impossible geography—impossible not because it does not exist, but because *it exists and does not exist exactly at the same time.*’

Can a queer pedagogy implicate everyone involved to consider the grounds of their own possibility, their own intelligibility, and the work of proliferating their own identifications and critiques that may exceed identity as essence, explanation, causality, or transcendence? (p. 81, italics in original).

My research into the possibilities for a multicultural human subject likewise seeks to unsettle the “myth of normalcy” as it relates to particular types of identities and subjectivities informed by racial, ethnic, and national discourses. It is part of an ongoing, continuous revisioning of what it means to be human. My investigation seeks to understand how identities may be shifting in Canada as a result of both official and popular multiculturalism, discourses that may operate insidiously to create hard boundaries while simultaneously predisposing individuals to the possibilities for new self-understandings. As Britzman suggests, my research takes place within an “impossible geography” that strives to implicate those involved to consider the grounds of their own individual possibilities as multicultural human subjects.

Goals of the research.

Researching this impossible geography, researching what both exists and does not exist, is admittedly challenging. I have chosen to approach this problem by means of a critical ethnographic investigation of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. The purpose of this investigation is to provide insight into the

social, pedagogical, and ideological contexts of the choir in order to understand how this particular site of cultural production is performative in constituting what may be a fragile, emerging form of identity-subjectivity labeled *multicultural human subject*. (The term will be explained later in this chapter.)

In choosing the MFYC as the site for this research, it is important to acknowledge that some of the young people who join the choir do so because of its reputation for performing world musics, or because of its visible racial and ethnic diversity. Thus the participants in this study are to some degree self-selecting. The study seeks to recognize the insidious and pervasive ways in which globalized and transnational cultural artifacts influence our lives in North America, consciously and unconsciously predisposing some of us to the malleability of identity formation. Some of the participants in this study, therefore, may have already been open to the possibilities of multicultural re-formation as a central aspect of who they are, while others may not have been so insightful about their identity constitution. For the latter, joining a choir such as the MFYC would have held potential for a significant life transforming experience. For those who already had some understanding of the way discourses work to constitute identities, MFYC membership reinforced possibilities for multicultural re-formation.

The idea of a multicultural human subject is an abstraction, not a subject position with an official designation. It is not called into being by government or other authority, yet I believe that the transnational nature of Canadian society lays the ground for its possibility, particularly when that ground is fertilized by musical experience. The goals of the research, therefore, are:

1. To identify within the ethnographic narratives descriptions that are indicative of multicultural human subjectivity as a fragile and continually emerging form of self-understanding.

2. A parallel objective of the study is, as a project of critical action research, to identify areas within my own pedagogical practice where additional anti-racism work is required, so that the ideals of anti-racism education, as suggested in the concept “multicultural human subject,” may be achieved.

In many respects, this study takes on the challenge Britzman issues: “Can pedagogy move beyond the production of rigid subject positions and ponder the fashioning of the self that occurs when attention is given to the performativity of the subject in relationality?” (Britzman, 1998, p. 81).

Defining “identity” in this study.

A multicultural human subject invokes two related concepts: identity and subjectivity. *Identity* is a decidedly problematic term, since it can mean vastly different things depending on context. In the studies named in the foregoing paragraphs, identity has been used primarily to describe physical manifestations and behaviours that designate particular identifications. For instance, both Yon and Ibrahim use examples of adolescents’ choice of hip-hop fashion, and the act of listening to hip-hop or rap genres of music, as indicative of “black” identification. My intent here is not to disprove or deny such arguments, as these studies have brought important insight to educators and social scientists and are, of course, strong components of the concept identity.

However, I want to move the definition of identity, as it relates to the study, to a concept more directly imbricated with performativity. My use of the term refers to an ongoing, processual development and location of self in relation to others resulting from what we do in particular contexts (i.e., youth choir). It is a “self-other concept” that influences not only how we think about ourselves but influences how we think about and behave towards others. Brubaker and Cooper (2000) problematize the term “identity,” suggesting that the term’s ambiguity in some cases renders it meaningless. Requiring the term “identity” to stand in for

or to conceptualize “all affinities and affiliations, all forms of belonging, all experiences of commonality, connectedness, and cohesion, all self-understandings and self-identifications, saddles us with a blunt, flat, undifferentiated vocabulary” (p. 2).

In their arguments to promote a more differentiated vocabulary for the term, Brubaker and Cooper make the case that identity is more appropriately considered what Bourdieu terms a “category of practice,” rather than as the “category of analysis” for which the term is sometimes used (p.4). They suggest as an alternative the term “identification,” which carries the processual, active sense associated with categories of practice (p. 14). Thinking along this line, multicultural human subjectivity is an identification signaling an emerging, yet fragile category of practice, one that seeks to re-imagine what it means to be human within glocalized,⁸ transnational contexts. As Brubaker and Cooper explain, the discursive and socially mediated work of identification does not imply identity as a necessary outcome, since “identification may be carried more or less anonymously by discourses or public narratives” (p. 16).

Another of the key functions of the term *identity* is to conceptualize and explain action in a non-mechanical, non-instrumental manner, action governed by particularistic understandings of self and social location (p. 17.). To differentiate this meaning of identity, Brubaker and Cooper write:

“Self-understanding” is therefore the second term we would propose as an alternative to “identity.” It is a dispositional term that designates what might be called “situated subjectivity”: one’s sense of who one is, of one’s social location, and of how (given the other two) one is prepared to act. As a dispositional term, it belongs to the realm of what Pierre Bourdieu has called *sens pratique*, the practical sense—at once cognitive and emotional—that persons have of themselves and their social world (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 17).

⁸ Glocalized context: one in which global concerns have become interwoven with local concerns and aspects of life.

For this study of how engaging in world choral music may be performative in constituting students as “multicultural human subjects,” Brubaker and Cooper’s advocacy that identity be taken to mean self-understanding has a great deal of currency, and it is in this sense that the term identity will be utilized throughout this thesis. I am interested in the ways my students may be, through their musical experiences, willing to blur the boundaries separating self from other in a way that makes the sense of self more inclusive of the sense of other. My intent here is to suggest that self-understanding within a multicultural human subjectivity carries an implicit recognition of not only the commonalities and differences that may exist between groups of people, but also an understanding of the way cultures and groups are intertwined in glocalized societies such as Mississauga, Canada. This is a slightly different take on “self understanding through other understanding” (Elliott, 1995, p. 209); in my view, self-understanding as a multicultural human subject does not maintain discrete boundaries between self and other, as Elliott’s language implies. Instead, this type of self-understanding acknowledges the ways in which our understanding of others is intricately bound up in an understanding of self as a multicultural human subject.

Defining “multicultural human subject.”

In the introductory chapter of *Performativity and Belonging*, Bell (1999) asks how identity is related to theories of “‘the subject’ or the more sociological notion of ‘agency.’” She suggests that investigations into identity require that attention be turned to “the production of selves as effects” (p. 1). Her discussion thus invokes Foucault’s notion of the subject as the product of discourse (Foucault, 1970, p. xiii). As a product of discourse, the multicultural human subject is always in flux and continually emerging, since the discourses in which multicultural human subjects are implicated are themselves dynamic and fluid. In thinking of the production of the self as an effect, the concept of “situated subjectivity” (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 17) is also useful, since this study is

concerned with the specific musical practices of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, a community youth organization located in a widely diverse, racially and ethnically mixed Canadian city.

From a performative viewpoint, the term *multicultural human subject* acknowledges that there are a variety of understandings through which we may “perform ourselves” in given situations, especially in response to discourses of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, and so forth. These discourses along with others (family discourses, religious discourses, and so forth) wield subtle, sometimes unconscious influences on an individual’s self-understanding. This thesis will focus more on subjectivity as a product of discourse than on the identification form of identity. For example, I do not wish to imply that an individual might declare herself to be “a multicultural human subject” in the same way one might announce “I am Canadian” or state “I am a white woman.” At the same time, though, I believe that “something is going on” within transnational societies and glocalized situations that affects how individuals understand themselves. Thus the term *multicultural human subject* refers to an individual-level sense of identity as self-understanding that has been influenced by discourses. From this perspective, I propose multicultural human subjectivity as a form of resistance to the oppressions articulated through socially and discursively constructed boundaries of race, ethnicity, nation, gender, ability, and so forth. The term simultaneously acknowledges the fluidity and dynamism of boundaries as discursive concepts, and the continually shifting understanding of what it means to be human. A multicultural human subject, therefore, is an abstraction that I hope may prove useful for questioning “how identities continue to be produced, embodied and performed, effectively, passionately, and with social and political consequence” (Bell, 1999, p. 2). My invocation of a multicultural human subject borrows from Britzman’s stated interest in

thinking of reading practices as possibly unhinging the normal from the self in order to prepare the self to encounter its own conditions

of alterity: reading practices as an imaginary site for multiplying alternative forms of identifications and pleasures not so closely affixed to—but nonetheless transforming—what one imagines their identity imperatives to be. Then pedagogy may be conceived. . . as a technique for acknowledging difference as *the only condition of possibility for community* (Britzman, 1998, p. 85-86, italics in original).

By using the abstraction *multicultural human subject*, I hope to move beyond hard categories of race, ethnicity, and nationality by acknowledging difference as the only condition of possibility for community. In this sense, the term has something in common with “post-race” discourse: the “color-blind future” (Williams, 1997), and the “planetary humanity” of which Gilroy (2000) writes. My concept of a multicultural human subject similarly resonates with Rorty’s (1989) call for a human solidarity that asks us to “think of people wildly different from ourselves as included in the range of ‘us’” (p. 192). At a bare minimum, multicultural human subjectivity suggests the type of cosmopolitanism Brennan describes as “a level of abstraction where difference is graspable” (Brennan, 1997, p. 27).

However, the notions of community and solidarity of which Rorty and Gilroy write carry within them the potential for fascism as we continually re-imagine what it means to be human. Kieft (1994) argues that we have an “ethical responsibility” (p. 178) to resist those forms of community based on unitary identities (p. 180) as a means by which fascistic tendencies of identity may be subverted (Gould, 2004, p. 3). It is my intention that a multicultural human subject might offer the sort of resistance that precludes the emergence of fascistic tendencies of identity. It is also intended as a terminology that allows us to move beyond the common criticism that anti-racism discourse reifies race even as it seeks to dismantle racism.

I must acknowledge, however, a second possibility for multicultural human subjectivity, grounded in the here and now of this study’s location within

Canada. The discourse of official multiculturalism in some respects serves to constitute Canadian subjects as “multicultural,” as part of the project of national identity; this will be discussed in some depth in Chapter Two. Although I initially intended the multicultural human subject to suggest a future, de-racialized understanding of what it means to be human, and as a present-day term of resistance to racialization, as the study progressed I became more aware of the ways in which the second meaning related to Canadian national identity is also implicated.

Researching Praxis as Ethical Encounter

This study is, as mentioned earlier, an investigation of my own teaching praxis as “ethical encounter” (Bowman, 2002). Bowman describes the ethical encounter as one in which

the other is recognized as a concrete, unique particularity. Failure to do so distorts the other, treats it as “more of the Same,” reducing the potentially ethical encounter to a merely technical one. More to the point, an ethical encounter that fails to question the political status quo that frames it, the particular vision of the “good life” in which the issue at hand is enmeshed (and by which it is to some degree defined), implicitly endorses that vision’s adequacy (p. 68).

My specific interest in integrative antiracism has led me as a teacher to seek out multicultural choral music as a large part of the curriculum I engage with my community youth choir. This is predicated on the belief that by learning music of another culture, we not only “learn about” that culture, but we can explore the implications for local culture. In such exploration, I attempt to provide ethical encounters that search for the “space-between. . . the phenomenal space between category and experience, between language and life, between representation and reality” (Bowman, 2002, p. 68). Studying the freedom songs of South Africa, for example, opens a space to interrogate racism in North America in our own day and time. Along similar lines, in a paper on postmodern sociology and music education, Walcott (1997) suggests that

including hip-hop in the music curriculum provides an opportunity to “engage with the ‘cultures of the oppressed’”; to address what hip-hop music or rap “might mean for the black bodies that enter the classroom (and those that do not, as well)” (p. 184). Although I have not yet ventured into the musical culture of hip-hop with the MFYC, the choir’s repertoire directly engages many other “cultures of the oppressed” as a way to address what various world music practices might mean for all the bodies that enter the rehearsal classroom.

Finding the space between “representation and reality” provides unique challenges, and points to another potential tension implicated in teaching an anti-racist, multicultural choral music curriculum. Although I have sometimes worked with “culture-bearers” in an attempt to provide a more “authentic” musical experience (and to minimize my own anxieties surrounding my ability to teach particular musical cultures), this raises yet another tension. In such cases, am I honoring the musical culture or othering it, as gospel musician Mellonee Burnim suggests:

To go into the community and find someone who is a gifted gospel musician to teach that dimension of the curriculum places African American music on the periphery of instruction, as an 'other' and an 'aside' (Campbell, 1995, p. 18).

Choosing to teach music from an anti-racist stance is not a simple project, particularly when one is conscious of the many ways that doing so might contribute to a reification of racialized categories. It is in recognition of this tension that I reiterate that the term “multicultural human subject” is not intended to connote a rigid category of practice or analysis. It is, however, an abstraction suggestive of a particular type of subjective awareness towards which I believe we may slowly be moving in places such as Mississauga and Toronto – locations marked by diasporic populations and glocalized thought. I would like to think it is possible to move toward a more inclusive form of identity, and that our musical engagements may have positive effect on that

movement. Like Gilroy (2000), I want to believe we are already beginning to move beyond race as an organizing principle of society, even if that movement is painfully slow. I take the theoretical writings of Gilroy, Beck (2002), Williams (1997), and others as evidence of the desire for a post-race society. Yet at the same time, I want to ensure that moving beyond race does not serve as merely another strategy for overlooking racial oppression and upholding an ideology of Whiteness.

This study reflects upon some of the changes that 30 years of official multiculturalism have brought to the way my students and I think about ourselves. It asks if we may at times already think of ourselves collectively without regard to categories of nation, race, or ethnicity – as multicultural human subjects – through our musical engagements with global song. I felt that in order to address these issues, I needed as well to interrogate my teaching praxis from both my students’ and my own perspective. bell hooks states, “teaching is a performative act” (hooks, 1994, p. 11). In the context of this study, the intention is to determine if my own choral music praxis may be considered “education as the practice of freedom” (p. 11). This requires that I ask myself: in my desire to move beyond race, do I inadvertently uphold Whiteness as a norm through my behaviour and through the music we perform? Or are my students and I on a path to becoming “multicultural human subjects”?

Multiculturalism in Choral Music Education

Reviewing the Literature

Although multiculturalism is a popular topic for music education journals, there has been relatively little research in multicultural music education relating to multiculturalism in choral music education. Most discussions of

multicultural music education occur relative to general music⁹ classes and general music teachers. Of the sixty-plus English language theses since 1977 on multicultural music education, most are teacher-focused or directed toward teacher education, or are oriented toward general music, not choral performance programs. One thesis explores the adaptation of world music for instrumental performance (Bieber, 1997). A study in choral music (Zaretti, 1998) focuses on teacher education and curriculum development for multicultural music education. Much of the music education literature suggests that multicultural programs are best administered in the general music classroom where “music appreciation” is the goal, such as Stellaccio’s (1995) thesis examining how a teacher’s beliefs, attitudes, and goals, in conjunction with the institution’s expectations for social action, may fuse into an effective multicultural general music pedagogy. Despite the scant amount of research related to multiculturalism and music performance, there is a general and growing expectation that performance programs will incorporate music that is culturally diverse. The lack of research related to music performance programs in multicultural curricula for children and adolescents in part speaks to the need for this study.

Studies focused on performativity and identity formation, particularly as they relate to multiculturalism, are also scarce. One study by Edwards looks at multicultural “achievement” in elementary students in the areas of knowledge/skills/attitudes, cultural awareness, sensitivity, and valuing (Edwards, 1998). This study does not, however, look at the impact of these achievements upon identity. Although there have been a number of ethnographic studies related to performativity and student identity formation in educational settings (Blue, 2000; Ibrahim, 2000; Powers, 2000; Ritchie, 2001; Yon, 2000), this area of investigation has until very recently been overlooked within music

⁹ General music classes are those designed for the general population of students. Curricula for such classes often are based upon listening and “learning about” music rather than engaging students in various performance modes (choir, band, orchestra, and so forth).

education. The few studies that do exist look at pre-service teacher identity formation, not student identity, or they focus on particular ethnic identities (Benham, 2004). One recent study (Mackinlay, 2002) investigates the link between performance and identity in a university level anthropology (ethnomusicology) course on performing Australian Indigenous women's music. Although the students involved in the study were adults, not adolescents, this thesis adds an important dimension to the way engaging with music from a previously unfamiliar culture influences self-understanding and other-understanding.

Even within the broader education discipline, only a few studies seek to understand multiculturalism from the student perspective. Although music has been cited as an important factor in identity formation among youth (Ibrahim, 2000; Yon, 2000), these studies are concerned with popular music experienced outside of the classroom, not the music experienced as part of an educational curriculum. In addition, these studies tend more toward descriptions of physical manifestations of identity rather than internalized identity as self-understanding.

The preface of *Musical Identities* suggests that “the social functions of music in the lives of individuals have been seriously neglected” (MacDonald, Hargreaves, & Miell, 2002, p. 5). If we concur with Bowman that music education is performative, then there is a clear necessity to study how, within educational settings, performativity works to constitute identities.

In 1994 Patricia Campbell wrote:

Despite the profusion of literature on multicultural music education, there is little evidence that specific approaches do what they are intended to do. . . . If there are rationales in multicultural music education for helping minority students to succeed in school, or to improve social relations among groups, then assessment is needed. If the study and performance of a musical style is believed

to bring about greater musical understanding, and by extension, reduced bias, then testing ought to be enlisted to “tell the truth” of the pedagogical procedures. Assessment may enable music educators to validate the intended objectives of the movement and to note the unintended effects as well. (Campbell, 1994, p. 74).

Yet since Campbell’s advice, only a few scholars have responded: In addition to Edward’s study mentioned earlier, Baird’s (2001) thesis explores the role of singing in raising social consciousness with children. Dodd (2001) investigates how participation in a student mariachi influences the lives of those students. This study is an attempt to validate the intended objectives for the global song curriculum of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. My critical self-examination is similarly intended to note the unintended effects. Undesirable effects that are identified may then be addressed specifically as areas for change and improvement.

This study is relatively rare in music education in virtue of its location in an educational setting beyond the place called school. The study investigates multicultural music education within a community youth choir setting, where the student population comes together from not only a variety of personal backgrounds, but from a variety of school experiences, expectations, and school climates. There is no specific mandate for these students to appear at weekly rehearsals apart from their own agreement to attend weekly rehearsals; they are there because they choose to be. In this sense, then, a community music education program offers a distinctive place from which to study the impact of educational activity on identity. Campbell advocates moving beyond the confines of the school setting for music education research:

Across the spectrum of student musicians, there has arisen in recent decades the phenomenon of carefully selected and highly trained children's choirs whose artistry is evident. . . .Children's choirs, youth orchestras, summer bands, gospel groups: What do we know of their sociomusical circumstances? Our research beyond the borders of the school setting might also require techniques that

remain to be unwrapped and reassembled for use (Campbell, 2002a, p.4).

Thus, the study is important not only for its concern with multicultural music education's role in constituting identities, but also for its location outside of the school. It explores a dimension frequently neglected in other studies that focus on how youth engage the music of their "everyday lives" outside of the school setting (DeNora, 2000) to constitute fluid identities that exist both within and beyond presumed monolithic categories of racial, ethnic, or national identities.

There have been a few studies investigating links between music and cultural identity, or music and ethnic identity (Ibrahim, 2000; Klinger, 1996; Lei, 2000; Powers, 2000; Yon, 2000), and these will be discussed briefly in the following section. Some studies have also taken up performativity related to identity (Anderson, 2003; Cutler, 2002; Ibrahim, 2000; Yon, 2000). As stated previously, there is scant research in music education related to how musical engagement is performative in constituting identity, particularly regarding multicultural and global music in the curriculum. This study seeks to open up the space within the discipline for such investigation.

Static cultures in multicultural music education.

Since the specific focus of the study is multiculturalism in music education, an examination of the literature should take into account the tensions that exist between culture as represented in an educational setting, and culture as it is lived. One of the common weaknesses of multicultural music curricula is the tendency to promote a view of culture as static. This is exemplified in a 1996 thesis concerning Puget Sound Native American music in the elementary classroom. The school board in question hired "culture-bearers" to teach children in grades two and five some songs from the various groups of Puget Sound native people. The researcher notes:

As I watched Pauline work with each of the classes, I was a bit uncertain as to how much of her presentation was historical and how much was present. The children asked her questions about her life now – questions like "What is your home like?" or "What do you cook with?" Pauline responded with a glimpse at a life that no longer exists for her and her family. She answered from the past, speaking of the longhouse she lived in as a child. . . .

Similarly, Johnny Moses did little to modernize the children's view of Native Americans. While Johnny was anxious to dispel stereotypical images of Indians wearing Native costumes and living in ti-pis, he never shared with them the matter of his own condo residence. A fifth grade teacher at Ryder confirmed this view:

I don't think Johnny Moses presented enough information about himself to bring him out of the stereotypical view of Native Americans. He looked the part, with his braids and beads. In some ways he presented a stereotype (Klinger, 1996, p.108-109).

Indeed, this view of cultures as trapped in time can be a major weakness of multicultural music education. This may be the result of the “alchemy of schooling” that seems to detach what is being taught from its social mooring (Popkewitz, 1998, p.19). In music education, when we choose to teach a song from a particular time or place in a culture’s history, but fail to contextualize the music in our teaching, our students may perceive it as somehow representative of that culture in totality, drawing upon whatever cultural stereotypes and always-already Other images they have acquired. Yet in many performance programs, the need to learn the repertoire in the short amount of time available to prepare for an upcoming concert, forces many teachers to leave context for another day, one that often never arrives. By relegating context to a peripheral position in music education, we actually perpetuate cultural stereotypes and racist attitudes that support cultural “otherness.” This is one of the important issues the study examines.

The view of culture as a homogeneous, static entity represented through musical selections, however, exists alongside the popular multiculturalism

experienced by our students in daily life. As Stuart Hall maintains in his eloquent concluding chapter to *Un/settled Multiculturalisms*:

. . .in late modernity, we tend to draw on the fragmented traces and broken repertoires of several cultural and ethical languages. It is not a denial of culture to insist that ‘the social world [does not] divide up neatly into distinct particular cultures, one to every community’ . . . (Hesse, 2000, p. 233).

The very means by which some music educators seek to promote knowledge of diverse cultures runs contrary to the lived reality of hybridity and popular multiculturalism in North American society. I do not mean to suggest that it is pointless to teach a traditional Chinese folk song, or a traditional native American song, but I believe it is important that our students understand when the music we teach is historical or representative of the "traditional." With this understanding, they are better able to make links to the culture as it exists today. The ability to recognize and acknowledge the "fragmented traces" of another time and place in our daily lives can only help our students understand the world as they experience it now.

In the following passage, Campbell appears to separate the concepts of culture “here” and “there”:

Multicultural education gives focus to the groups represented within the United States, the local community, and the school; global education is centered on the study of the countries of origin of ethnic groups. Global educators teach about Mexicans in Mexico, while multiculturalists teach of Mexican-Americans who live in the U.S. at large or within their local school communities (Campbell, 1995, p. 8).

Although her attempt to prevent a conflation of the terms *multicultural* and *global* as practiced in music education makes sense, it relies upon a “them and us” dichotomy (those who are close by and perhaps more familiar versus

those who live “far away” and are more exotic). In further discussions on this topic, she makes another statement I find curious:

Contemporary proponents of a “world music education” course of study will concentrate not only on musical cultures beyond American borders (where styles are more likely to be preserved intact than to be diffused and diluted). . . (*ibid*, p. 13).

It would appear that the habit of thinking of culture as unchanging entity is a hard habit to break, especially when speaking of less familiar cultures. For some time this was also true of understandings about cultural identity; however, recent research in education clarifies that cultural identity, ethnic identity, and racial identity, are fluid, not static (Ibrahim, 2000; Lei, 2000; Powers, 2000; Yon, 2000). The two studies by Ibrahim and Yon describe in detail the ways immigrant students to Canada from various countries use hip-hop music and fashion as a means by which they can identify themselves as “black Canadian,” even though some of these students are white European or Asian. Lei and Powers both concluded from their research that children and adolescents from different cultures within one classroom adopt cultural “ways” from other cultural groups to construct their own identities. This finding is suggestive of a potentially emerging multicultural human subjectivity, yet to date there has been no similar line of inquiry within the music education discipline, which, if it has addressed multiculturalism at all, has been from the perspective of static or monolithic cultural entities. This study, then, is a departure from current music education thought that tends to promote the concept of “musical identity,” as that musical culture into which a child is born, the “musical memosphere” of which Elliott suggests teachers should take account when planning curricula (1995, p. 211). Such suggestions presuppose a solitary, or predominant, musical culture in the student’s home, and overlook the hybridization of cultures that is lived reality in Canada and elsewhere (Hesse, 2000).

Nonetheless, the concept of a centered musical identity is a powerful one, and has been the subject of research in ethnomusicology, sociology, and music education. *Bodies that Sing: The Formation of Singing Subjects* (Joyce, 2003) takes an in-depth look at the factors that lead people to identify themselves as “singers” or “non-singers.” Joyce’s research is in some ways reminiscent of Roberts’ (1991; Roberts, 1993) work on music education student identity, which investigates the importance of labeling to music education students’ self-identifications as “musician.”

One study in theology entitled, *We Sang Ourselves Free: Developmental Uses of Music Among Estonian Christians from Repression to Independence* (Pierson, 1998), is based upon Estonia’s reputation as a “singing culture.” Although Pierson’s thesis is an historical overview of the Estonian liberation struggle between 1988 and 1991 through the lens of folk music festivals, the notion of a singular musical identity underpins the research. More recently, Benham’s (2004) doctoral thesis examined the role of music education to identity construction in Ukrainian church music schools. There have likewise been many studies from ethnomusicology that rely on concepts of musical identity, but most assume a singular and centered identity, and the musical cultures described therein appear to be presumed homogeneous. Therefore, these studies will not be discussed here.

Research into negotiated identities.

With the recent understandings of identity as fluid, hybrid, and multiple, researchers have begun to shift focus, particularly with regard to youth in urban cultures. Student identification with particular musical styles and their associated fashion trends, notably hip-hop, has provided the groundwork not only for the studies previously cited by Ibrahim and Yon, but also for two recent studies by Anderson (2003) and Cutler (2002). Cutler’s study is of particular interest here in that she looks at the way white middle and upper-middle class

students in New York City private schools adapt and negotiate an identity with hip-hop in an act of what Cutler terms “crossing over.” Although the study relies upon a white/black dichotomy, the concept of adapting an alternative (musical) identity, particularly an identity that is so strongly marked racially, is related to my question concerning how we may be constituting multicultural human subjectivity through our engagement with global song. Like the earlier studies by Ibrahim and Yon, Cutler shows how youth musical identity is performative. In all of the foregoing, however, the fluidity of identity is discussed in terms of youth performances of a particular identity style (i.e., hip-hop), or outward manifestation of the identification in question, rather than identity as a form of self-understanding that may not be outwardly visible.

The studies discussed in the recent publication *Musical Identities* (MacDonald, Hargreaves, & Miell, 2002) look at identity from a social psychology viewpoint, suggesting that “one of the primary social functions of music lies in establishing and developing an individual’s sense of identity” (p. 5). In this study, the members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir choose to make association with the choir based on awareness (made explicit at the time they join the choir) that they will learn and perform a diverse repertoire of music from a variety of musical cultures. How they engage with this music to construct identities as members of a multiracial, multicultural society, as “multicultural human subjects,” is the primary focus of the investigation. A related question emerges from this focus, however: does engaging with global song disrupt any a priori musical or cultural identities the students may bring to the choir?

The ethics of hybridity in choral music.

In many respects, choral music as curricular material provides a rich terrain on which to study the realities of multicultural North American society. The publishing industry has been instrumental in making the music of non-Western cultures more readily available to teachers in North America as choral

music. However, publication transforms the music by manipulating it into recognizable (Western) forms.¹⁰ Thus any type of “world music” becomes hybrid when published for Western consumption. The act of notating and publishing music that has existed aurally within a culture may not be completely benign, however. As Sayyid explains,

Attempts to overcome the West/Rest distinction by pointing to *empirical multiculturalism* (that is, the existence of many cultures and the impossibility of thinking of one culture) and valorizing hybridity (the normative celebration of multiculturalism) fail because they ignore the way in which the West/Rest distinction is played out as the distinction between the hegemonic and subaltern and between the culturally unmarked and culturally marked (Sayyid, 2000, p. 47).

In choral music, particularly when publications are labeled as “multicultural,” there is an implicit understanding that any music acquiring that designation is not a part of the mainstream body of choral repertoire (the West), and thus falls into a category of “the Rest.” Publishing the music from aural traditions (in many cases without permission because “ownership” cannot be ascribed) and celebrating such publication as “hybridity” fails to acknowledge the ongoing power issues indicative of the distinction between the hegemonic and the subaltern, or as Sayyid puts it, a way of “playing out the distinction between the culturally unmarked [the presumed “white” West] and the culturally marked.”

Following from this, as a choral educator teaching from an anti-racist perspective, I must ask, when a South African freedom song is notated and published in a series titled “music of the world” or “global rhythms,” is the publisher upholding a “normative celebration” of multiculturalism? I am inclined to think that the answer is yes. But if that is so, do my students understand this

¹⁰ I believe this statement holds true even for alternative forms of notation, as they require translation of the original music into language and symbols that can be understood by Western readers.

normative celebration? If so, how does it influence their attitudes towards the people of that culture? In what ways does it influence their construction of self and their concept of others? Do I as their teacher unwittingly convey the hegemonic/subaltern dichotomy represented by the music, or am I able to help them see the power relationships published music represents? These are the sorts of questions and tensions that the study seeks to tease out as issues of what it may mean to be a “multicultural human subject.”

A related issue within choral music is the ambiguity surrounding appropriation and cultural borrowing resulting from the publication and use of world musics in an educational setting. In his interesting discussion of Lipsitz' interpretation of a Queen Latifah video, Timothy Brennan discusses the ambiguity that lies between “solidarity and an appropriation.” Speaking of the misunderstanding in the U.S. of what was involved when Black South African women confronted the armed police forces upholding official apartheid, he suggests the existence of a “convivial parallelism. That parallelism empowers Black American women but it also packages South Africa as an American image-for-use” (Brennan, 1997, p. 8).

I believe the argument applies equally well to world music published for use by choirs. Many of these songs are empowering, certainly, but at the same time they have been appropriated and packaged. The message gleaned by our students could very well be that the world is their oyster – if they like something, it is theirs to use at will. Klinger discusses questions of ownership of Native American music as a “problematic issue” in her study (1996, p. 164). Although she was careful to respect the wishes of the Puget Sound culture bearers in her study, her accounts of teachers' experiences of the Puget Sound program convey an undeniable frustration. They felt short-changed because they were unable to copy or “use” the songs they learned in their classrooms. Although willing to respect Native American claims of song ownership, the teachers were clearly unsympathetic to those claims.

There are many similar philosophical tensions related to the study of culturally diverse choral music in the community choir setting and its impact on constituting identities as multicultural human subjects. There are issues of appropriation, as discussed above, and tensions relating to performance venues (i.e., sacred ceremonial musics performed in non-sacred concert spaces). One tension explored in this study, touched upon earlier queries whether music that has been notated and arranged to conform to western choral music standards can be considered truly multicultural, or has it been transformed into western choral music? If we accept the assertions of Susan McClary (1991) that western classical music contains gendered messages, or of Edward Said on embedded cultural meanings (Said, 1991, 1993), then we need to interrogate racial and cultural meanings found in western and non-western musics as part of an anti-racism agenda for multicultural music education. This study examines how such issues are taken up within choir rehearsals and the discourses employed in the rehearsal context.

Mapping the Thesis

This section provides an overview of the remaining chapters of the thesis. The first three chapters include discussions of the philosophical issues that motivate the research and the methodological procedures employed in the study. Chapter Two provides an analysis of the discursive and theoretical frameworks used in examining the data, as the lenses through which a grounded theory is developed. Chapter Three describes the critical ethnographic methodology adopted for use in this study and the hybrid text used to create the narrative analysis of the study. Chapter Four is an introduction to the second part of the thesis, providing some background on the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, and Chapters Five through Seven present the narrative analysis of the research. Chapter Eight presents conclusions drawn from the study and implications arising from it.

Chapter One provides an introductory discussion of the issues related to multiculturalism in music education in North America, and the questions motivating this particular research. These questions arise directly from personal experiences in my high school choir, questions that continue to trouble me as a choral teacher-conductor working with adolescents. Chapter One also provides definitions and discussions of terms pertinent to the narrative analysis in this study, including global song, multicultural human subject, and the concept of identity.

Chapter Two weaves the framework for analysis in this study, describing the habitus (Bourdieu, 1977a) of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. It begins with a discussion of cosmopolitanism as an attitude arising during the Enlightenment that has gone through several nuances of meaning in relationship to economic conditions (Brennan, 1997). Current variations in the understanding of cosmopolitanism are presented through the work of Robbins (1999), Beck (2002), and Roudometof (2005), as a way of developing a definition for cosmopolitanism relative to this study. Cosmopolitanism as an attitude resides in the background layer of the habitus for the MFYC, and is an important, yet often understated, motivator for the global song curriculum of the choir. Joining the thread of cosmopolitanism is an overview discussion of multiculturalism in Canada as political doctrine. This provides background for the way multiculturalism is understood within the discipline of music education. The work of several prominent North American music education philosophers (Bowman, 1998; Elliott, 1995; Jorgensen, 2003; Reimer, 1989, 2003; Woodford, 2005) is presented to further investigate the differing ways multicultural music education is discursively engaged within the discipline. The final thread of the discursive framework for the study is a discussion of anti-racism education (G. S. Dei, 2000) as a critical alternative to liberal multicultural music education, an alternative that holds greater promise for eliminating racism than does liberal

multiculturalism. Anti-racism provides the discursive lens through which the narrative of this study is viewed and analyzed.

Chapter Two also examines the theory of performativity as a crucial element of how adolescents engage with global song in their individual construction of identity as potential multicultural human subjects. In this discussion, the work of Butler (1990), Bell (1999) and others sheds light on how performativity is imbricated in the identities adolescents may develop resulting from their experiences with global song as members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir.

The research methodology utilized in this study is the focus of Chapter Three, which provides an overview of critical ethnography as research method and analytic practice. The narrative analysis that begins in Chapter Five employs a hybrid text to allow for the voices of Mississauga Festival Youth Choir members, my voice as their teacher-conductor, and my voice as researcher to be made distinct. A description of the demographics of Mississauga is included in the discussions, and the members of the MFYC who participated in the study are introduced in Chapter Three.

Chapter Four sets the stage for Chapters Five through Seven by means of a comparative analysis of the structure and pedagogical practices of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir to those described in *Sound Advice* (Bartle, 2003). Many choral conductors regard this recent publication as an authoritative “how-to” manual for children’s choir organizations. The critique of *Sound Advice* serves as a point of reference for readers unfamiliar with typical children’s choir structures and practices, and helps to establish the areas where the MFYC converges and diverges from what may be regarded as common practice in community children’s and youth choirs. The chapter also includes a discussion of the way anti-racism pedagogy is enacted within the MFYC.

Chapter Five examines the experiences of first year members of the MFYC, and provides evidence that the performative nature of engaging with global song may in some cases be discernible even though these individuals had only a few months of experience with the choir. Interviews with the first year choir members who participated in the study articulate several areas of self-realization gained through engaging with global song that are suggestive of an emergent multicultural human subject as a manifestation of cosmopolitanism. In this sense, cosmopolitan attitudes expressed by first year choir members are early indicators of the potential for a multicultural human subjectivity.

The narrative analysis of Chapter Six focuses on participants in the study who have been with the MFYC for several years, including choir members who have belonged to the choir for four or more years. Their stories provide evidence to the strong sense of belonging or collective identity that their choir membership has created as an indication of performativity. The evidence for collective identity emerged from the data through use of grounded theory, and was assessed utilizing the organizing framework for the elements articulating collective identity developed by Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004). Although a sense of collective identity is not unique to the MFYC as a choir, collective identity's association with belonging is an important factor relating to the MFYC group narrative and ideology as performative (Bell, 1999), particularly the element of collective identity termed *content and meaning*. Within this element, the subcategories of *narrative* and *ideology* link the MFYC's antiracism pedagogy to choristers' collective identities and their individual self-understandings as potential multicultural human subjects. MFYC's anti-racism pedagogy, in combination with the power of global song, allows for a unique context from which multicultural human subjects might begin to emerge.

Chapter Seven examines one particularly powerful concert experience described by the interviewees who took part in the event. The narratives of the choir members about this particular event indicate that for many of them it was

a transformative experience that provides clear evidence of the potential for multicultural human subjectivity to emerge. However, other narratives from choir members indicate that discourses of race, nationalism, ableism, and official multiculturalism create dissonance in the self-understandings of the participants that runs counter to the concept *multicultural human subject*. The dual implications of the abstraction *multicultural human subject* are discussed with regard to the ambiguity many choir members expressed relative to notions of Canadian identity.

Chapter Eight presents conclusions drawn from the narrative analysis, and discusses several philosophical implications arising from the study. Since the study was conducted as critical action research, these implications have direct relevance for future policies, procedures, and directions for the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir and for myself as an anti-racism educator. Other issues arising from the study pertain to choral music teacher training and the need for an anti-racist understanding of multiculturalism in music education, so that multiculturalism's potential for developing cross-cultural understanding may be realized within youth choral education programs.

Chapter Two: I Give You a Song —Framing the Thesis

Introduction

This Chapter will look at the intersection of four specific discursive frameworks through which the investigation of the research questions and data analysis takes place. These frameworks together form a sort of background music to the specifics of the study, and in the lives of the study’s participants. Like musical polyphony, many independent melodic lines combine to create music that is at times harmonious, at other times, dissonant. In keeping with the concept of global song, though, a more appropriate analogy for this thesis is the polyrhythms characteristic of much of the music of the world beyond European traditions. For example, in music of the Ewe people of Ghana, independent rhythmic motifs are layered to create a complex rhythmic base over which melody and harmony are sung. The result is an intricately woven sound pallet. These rhythms, melodies, and harmonies are analogous to the discourses of cosmopolitanism, anti-racism, and multicultural music education that combine to create a complex performative context, from which multicultural human subjects might emerge.

The chapter’s title, “I Give You a Song” (Bernon, 2003) is also the title of a song performed by the MFYC during the year of this study. It was mentioned frequently during interviews as a song from which choir members took meaning. Borrowing from those lyrics, my investigation into the performative role global song may play in adolescent identity formation is “a song full of life, full of hope, and full of dreams.” Like the song, this study comes “from the very heart of me.”

“I Give You a Song” Track #1

Polyrhythms: Discourse and Theory

Big Questions, Large Framework

The questions guiding my research are admittedly large and require a number of concepts for the data analysis. As Walcott states, “local cultures beget expansive questions” (Walcott, 2003, p. 26). This, I believe, is necessary to provide an analysis reflective of how experiencing global song within a local community youth choir may be performative. DeNora (2000) argues that it “is probably impossible to speak of music’s ‘powers’ abstracted from their contexts of use” (p. x), and I would agree with her that questions too narrowly focused fail to explicate the social complex in which the experiences occur, particularly when calling upon theories of performativity in the analysis of identities and subjectivity. These concepts are dependent upon the dynamic social complex or *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977a) within which the MFYC members live; thus to focus only on the immediate rehearsal context to the exclusion of the wider social complex misses the point that music is a social phenomenon and performative within a particular habitus. Tastsoglou (2000) writes that it is crucial for educators to have well-grounded understandings of the borders and the intersections of the large social structures that are likely to be encountered in the classroom (p. 98-99). By describing the habitus and including the larger discourses influencing my own thinking as a teacher, I seek to avoid framing music as an autonomous entity, positioning it instead in a collage of discourses that impact upon music as human activity.

Discursive or Theoretical Framework

I have chosen to use the term “discursive framework” for this thesis rather than “theoretical framework.” Although I will employ what some authors refer to as “theory” in providing background for my analysis, for example, habitus (Bourdieu, 1977a), globalization and glocalization (Beck, 2002; Robertson, 1992), theories of performativity (Bell, 1999; Butler, 1990), my use of these theories is to provide an understanding of how multicultural human subjectivity may be

emerging within the particular context of the MFYC. The data analysis deploys discourses framed by particular philosophical principles and epistemic boundaries without attempting to prove or refute a particular a priori theory.

Given that the pedagogical impetus for this study is anti-racism education, a critical discourse providing the primary analytic lens, the research has an acknowledged emancipatory agenda. This creates a problematic with regard to how the study's emergent theory is considered. As Lather states, "it is evident that emancipatory theory-building is different from grounded theory-building" (Lather, 1991, p. 55). The issues related to theory development in critical research will be addressed in Chapter Three as part of the discussion of methodological epistemology. Although my research question, how does engaging in a choral music curriculum of global song constitute a multicultural human subject? may seem initially to imply a predetermined conclusion related to subjectivity, the use of a variety of discursive lenses allows for various open-ended interpretations of the data that, I believe, prevent reaching foregone conclusions about whether or not multicultural human subjectivity is possible, and if so, how that subject is located in the world. The term "discourse" in this thesis will be used with the Foucauldian sense in mind of:

a conceptual grid with its own rules and decisions, limits, inner logic, parameters and blind alleys. A discourse is that which is beneath the writer's awareness in terms of rules governing the formation and transformation of ideas into a dispersal of the historical agent, the knowing subject (Lather, 1991, p. 166).

Because multiple discourses operate simultaneously in the life of any individual, the rules related to the formation and transformation of an individual into a knowing subject often come into conflict. Therefore, the use of the multiple discourses of cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism and anti-racism discourses within the overall discursive framework seeks to present a richer picture of subject formation among adolescents in the MFYC context, locating the space for a potentially emancipatory theory "at the site where cultural

horizons meet, where the demand for translation is acute and its promise of success, uncertain” (Butler, 1990, p. ix). The rules of discourse are ever changing, and the distinctions between discourses continue to blur as a result. “We are not even sure of ourselves when we use these distinctions in our own world of discourse, let alone when we are analyzing groups of statements” (Foucault, 1970). Discursive frameworks therefore function as fluid spaces that engage dialogically, resist closure, and provide an ideological context for the data to develop into theories of the particular (Zine, 2004, p. 65). The use of multiple discursive lenses for the analysis avoids either relying on or creating a grand theoretical bedrock (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 33) to describe the particular social phenomena implicated in Mississauga Festival Youth Choir members’ individual experiences. The use of a number of discursive lenses allows for a multiplicity and fluidity that is consistent with multicultural human subjectivity as defined in this thesis.

Multiple discourses influencing the habitus.

In order to contextualize the data to be analyzed, I will begin by drawing the “big picture,” through a discussion of the concept of cosmopolitanism as it relates to the social phenomena of “glocalization”¹¹ (Robertson, 1992). The intention is to situate the research within a cosmopolitan sociology (Beck, 2002). Within the discursive framework of a cosmopolitan sociology, discourses of multiculturalism as official policy and multicultural music education provide background that I will argue is performative for the members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. The discourse of anti-racism, as a political and pedagogical strategy promoting an educational agenda for social change (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 35), provides the lens for analysis of the data within the cosmopolitan framework. Anti-racism argues that multiculturalism has not lived up to its

¹¹ Robertson describes *glocalization* as bringing the global into conjunction with the local. Originally concerned with marketing issues, the term has been taken up in academia in studies on intercultural communication. Its usage has grown in other disciplines to convey the intertwining of the global and the local, and to describe the increasingly complex relationship between the global and the local (Robertson, 1992, p. 173-174).

promise to eliminate racism through its failure to interrogate power. Anti-racism is a pedagogical tool for identifying and challenging power structures (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 21). Multiculturalism, as inherent in the system within which the habitus for this study is formed, is critiqued in order to assess both its positive and negative influences on the habitus.

Anti-racism as pedagogical strategy also provides the lens through which theories of performativity are understood. The work of Judith Butler, Vikki Bell, and others support the data analysis concerned with how global song as performative may contribute to an emerging multicultural human subjectivity. As Lloyd (1999) argues, the resignifications immanent to performativity are highly contingent (p. 210). Thus the resignifications related to musical engagement with global song are contextualized within the MFYC habitus, where discourses of cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, and anti-racism pedagogy influence the ways in which the habitus is performative.

The use of multiple discourses to frame the research is based upon my desire to provide as comprehensive as possible a picture of the habitus that backgrounds the data. Griffiths (1998) writes that in doing educational research for social justice, the following must be taken into account in the epistemological context:

1. There is a requirement to take the interrelations of knowledge and power into account.
2. There is a requirement to pay attention to individuals and the variety of communities they inhabit (and which inhabit them) (p. 95).

A great deal of music education research has been conducted utilizing positivist models that attempt to isolate musical events from their context in order to avoid “messy” research. DeNora (2000) suggests:

Perhaps socio-musical scholarship's failure to recognize music's powers is due more to the use of inappropriate models for conceptualizing the nature of those powers—too often, music is thought of as a stimulus capable of working independently of its circumstances of production, distribution, and consumption (p. x).

DeNora's argument is reminiscent of Bourdieu's on language as an instrument of action, rather than an object for analysis. As Bourdieu suggests, language carries with it the concepts of competence and performance, terms that are also relevant to music and music education. Bourdieu's questions are, I believe, appropriate for this study if one substitutes *music* for *language*:

What are the *sociological* effects, which the concepts of *langue* and *parole*, or competence and performance, produce when they are applied in the terrain of discourse. . .or outside that terrain? What is the sociological theory of social relations implied by the use of these concepts? A whole sociological analysis is needed of the reasons why the intellectualist philosophy which makes language [music] an object of understanding rather than an instrument of action (or power) has been so readily accepted by anthropologists and sociologists (Bourdieu, 1977b, p. 645, italics in original).

My intent in this study is to shed light on how global song's potential for performativity may be understood within the context of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. It is not the intent here to generalize on performativity in this specific context to performativity that may occur in other choir situations, but to provide an ethnographic account of the MFYC context and thus engage with the research questions both pragmatically and theoretically. The web of discourses providing the framework for my research is built of strands from a number of areas: sociology, psychology, and music education. Discourses of cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism influence and interact with an anti-racism pedagogy within the specific music education context. This habitus, I will argue, is performative, and contributes to constituting both identities and subjectivities of the individual members of the MFYC, as we will see in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven. It is the cumulative effect of these various elements that opens the space from which multicultural human subjects may emerge.

Cosmopolitanism

Shades of Cosmopolitanism

Although it is not my intention to provide an extensive history of cosmopolitanism, I would like to offer sufficient background to provide an understanding of why, in my opinion, it is implicated in the discursive framework for this study. The Oxford dictionary defines cosmopolitan¹² as: adj. 1. (a) of or from or knowing many parts of the world. (b) consisting of people from many or all parts. 2. free from national limitations or prejudices. DERIVATIVES cosmopolitanism n.

The definitions above are seemingly straightforward and relevant to my project, but they do not suggest the many nuances the term has developed within the social sciences. For my purposes I need to clarify its meaning in the context of this study. Brennan (1997) situates cosmopolitanism as the banner under which “a humanist utopia of one-world culture and, on the other hand, explicit plans for the organization of a world government, have existed” since before the time of Socrates (p. 3). Brennan discusses various meanings attributed to cosmopolitanism over time, which I will summarize here. In the seventeenth century, according to Brennan, cosmopolitanism “came into its own as a vision of practical world government enabled by the philosophical and moral buttressing of intellectuals” (p. 3). This idea became stronger and somewhat exalted during the Enlightenment. In the middle of the nineteenth century, cosmopolitanism was enlisted by the International Workingmen’s organization in London on behalf of “the wretched of the earth rather than the universally just and the classlessly enlightened” (p. 4). Cosmopolitanism acquired a negative taint during twentieth century anti-colonial movements, but Brennan suggests

¹² "cosmopolitan *adj. & n.*" *The Oxford American Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford University Press, 1999. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. University of Toronto Libraries. 21 July 2005 <<http://www.oxfordreference.com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t21.e7056>>

in the late twentieth century, the term experienced revitalization with “the legacies of decolonization as the target” (p. 4).

Contemporary discourses of globalism have added to concepts of cosmopolitanism the dimension of subjectivity, both as a form of self-reflection, and as a theoretical device to “locate cosmopolitanism’s features in the colonial subaltern who (it is implied) has not yet sufficiently theorized their (*sic*) own emergence in a common world culture” (p. 4). This usage resurrects, according to Brennan, the “romantically overdetermined” sense of the term associated with the colonial period. The following passage situates the tension currently associated with the term cosmopolitanism, a tension that I will argue later in this thesis, is also present to some degree within the concept *multicultural human subject*:

From earlier European projects of world government and international law—projects whose dream was not so much ethnic or intercultural unity as civic harmony—the current rhetoric of cosmopolitanism today (*sic*) becomes by contrast evolutionary and systemic. While it celebrates the opportunities created by unity, it wants to throw off this older utopian clothing, and through the agencies of literary theory even becomes deeply suspicious of utopia. The East-West of North-South arises at this juncture in a specific confrontation between a solidarity and a conquest: between a vision of civic harmony that continues into the present and a utopianism that is felt to have died in the United States. . . .(p. 4-5).

Brennan is unwilling to allow cosmopolitanism as concept to stand isolated from its economic context, so that even as the term calls upon ideals of a utopian civic harmony among all people on earth, it also hints at dominance and empire. This tension remains unresolved throughout Brennan’s book. The final pages both seem to support criticism of nationalism and at the same time caution against the utopian idealism in which much of such criticism is grounded. Neither nationalism nor cosmopolitan appear to provide answers to the kinds of questions Brennan raises throughout the book. His conclusion

leaves cosmopolitanism in the midst of this discursive tension when he asks, “if not cosmopolitanism, then what?” (p. 316).

Private Or Public Cosmopolitanism

In Brennan’s work, cosmopolitanism stands in opposition to nationalism, suggesting the second dictionary definition, “free from national limitations or prejudices.” His own arguments place cosmopolitanism squarely in the path of national limitations and prejudices. Similarly, Robbins’ (1999) collection of essays on internationalism positions cosmopolitanism in a binary relationship with nationalism. Both authors write from a U.S. perspective, but I believe their thoughts are important to this study as a way to understand Canadian nationalism, which differs from U.S. nationalism as a direct result of Canada’s official policies of multiculturalism. In critiquing Nussbaum’s essay “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism” in *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, Robbins argues that critics of Nussbaum

refuse to confront the core of Nussbaum’s case, which is simply that loyalty to one’s nation can and sometimes does contradict the manifest demands of justice as seen from any extra-national perspective, even a subuniversalistic one. They acknowledge no moral or political leverage against the profound rootedness of caring first and always for our own (p. 152).

Robbins, in a critique of “Private Irony and Liberal Hope,” (Rorty, 1989), argues that Rorty, in explaining the concept of “ironists,” offers a view of cosmopolitanism often associated with being “well-read,” creating the condition of literary experience as substitute for the actual experience of travel:

Ironists are afraid that they will get stuck in the vocabulary in which they were brought up if they only know the people in their own neighborhood, so they try to get acquainted with strange people (Alcibiades, Julien Sorel), strange families (the Karamazovs, the Casaubons), and strange communities (the Teutonic Knights, the Nuer, the mandarins of the Sung) (Rorty, 1989, p. 80).

The similarities to multicultural musical tourism are apparent in this passage, where Rorty locates concerns with culture as private, rather than public matters. Robbins argues that Rorty positions cosmopolitanism within the realm of the private, the individual, thus foreclosing the possibility for social action:

The privacy of culture permits us to put ourselves in other people's places, without feeling we have to *do* anything about it. The refusal of ethnocentrism is not, strictly speaking, an action, so it can never be more than private. To be public is necessarily to be ethnocentric (Robbins, 1999, p. 132).

Robbins moves his argument on to broader questions of human rights, and although this is an important facet of the argument for social justice in education, for my purpose now I would like to focus on the tension to which the above quotation points: the implied ethnocentricity of cosmopolitanism operating at the public level. This tension is implicated in much of the way multicultural education is enacted, including practices of multicultural music education, as I will argue later. As I read both Rorty and Robbins, I sense in their words an impossibility of completely avoiding ethnocentrism, despite the many ways in my own practice of multicultural choral music education I may try to do so.

Defining Cosmopolitanism in this Thesis

Beck (2002), in discussing the implications for a “cosmopolitan society,” correctly states that the recent wave of interest in cosmopolitanism has been critically associated with those elite Western individuals who were the fullest expression of European bourgeois capitalism and colonial empires (p. 17). Brennan also alludes to this in his discussion of cosmopolitanism's recent revival. Beck, however, seeks to relocate cosmopolitanism as a concept that can be useful for thinking about social conditions related to the economics of globalization. As he states, “at the beginning of the 21st century the *conditio humana* cannot be understood nationally or locally but only globally” (p. 17). He defines the term *cosmopolitanization* as an internal globalization that

“transforms everyday consciousness and identities significantly. Issues of global concern are becoming part of the everyday local experiences and the ‘moral life-worlds’ of the people” (p. 17). Beck argues for identifying a “self-critical cosmopolitanism” that recognizes macro-interdependencies and consciously acknowledges the inescapabilities and particularities of “places, characters, historical trajectories, and fate” (p. 18).

Roudometof (2005) furthers Beck’s argument concerning cosmopolitan societies where “cosmopolitan values rate more highly than national values” (Roudometof, 2005, p. 116). He, too, discusses cosmopolitanism as both a “moral and ethical standpoint” (p. 116). Roudometof equates Beck’s terminology of *cosmopolitanization* with the perhaps more commonly used term *glocalization* (Robertson, 1992, p. 173), but argues that both of these terms are better understood as *transnationalism* (p. 118), which results in the growth of transnational social spaces, social fields, and networks born out of increasing glocalization. Individuals living in a transnational world can adopt either an open, encompassing attitude, or a closed, defensive posture (p. 121). This study in part seeks to determine how performing global song in the community youth choir encourages the sort of open, encompassing attitudes suggestive of an emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

Because cosmopolitanism carries such a variety of understandings, I would like to stipulate a definition for use in this study. In doing so I borrow from the preceding authors whose insights have provided an invaluable way of looking at the attitudes and understandings articulated by the participants of this study. My objective in the following is to leave in place some of the tensions identified in the preceding discussion, since I believe those tensions are reflective of life in Mississauga as a glocal society. Therefore, for purposes of this study, *cosmopolitanism* indicates an outward-looking, interculturally sensitive moral and ethical standpoint. Cosmopolitanism’s corollary is glocalization

(cosmopolitanization), a process that transforms everyday consciousness and identities by bringing global concerns into the moral life-worlds of individuals.

Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism

A Cosmopolitan-Multicultural Link

It is my belief that there is a direct relationship between the ideals of cosmopolitanism discussed above and multiculturalism as a lived reality¹³. One of the explicit goals of multicultural music education is “to develop in students an understanding of the cultural thought and practices of populations across the globe” (Campbell, 2002b, p. 28). This statement to me implies that multicultural music education seeks to foster in students cosmopolitanism as an outward-looking cultural sensitivity. From this viewpoint, cosmopolitanism may be considered part of the hidden curriculum (Apple, 1995) in multicultural education. Indeed, the concept of a multicultural human subject is probably more “cosmopolitan” than “multicultural.” My choice of “multicultural” as descriptor for this subject-subjectivity derives from a commitment to a “critical multiculturalism” (anti-racism pedagogy) in my own teaching praxis. I believe that the term *multicultural human subject* is more immediately accessible as a concept for teachers engaged in various forms of multicultural music education than a “cosmopolitan subject” might be, since cosmopolitanism flies under the discursive radar of multicultural music education. Finally, multiculturalism as a complex discourse may be interpreted in a variety of ways. Despite music education’s apparent (if unarticulated) desire to encourage cosmopolitanism in students with multicultural curricula, other writers note the tension between the two terms:

The construction of multiculturalism as an immigrant or ethnic minority interest seems to run counter to the ethics of cosmopolitanism, where heterogeneity implies at some point the

¹³ Hesse (2000) refers to this as “popular multiculturalism”; Bannerji (2000) refers to “grassroots multiculturalism.”

dissolution of an essentialist distinction between fixed majorities (broad national community) and permanent minorities (specific groups) (Hesse, 2000, p. 28).

The above quotation refers specifically to what has been termed “official multiculturalism,”¹⁴ which was implemented in Canada in 1971 as a formal means for defining government policy and programs at both federal and provincial levels. Although originating in part as a means of assuring social harmony among competing ethnicities, official multiculturalism in Canada has considerable political and economic currency that ensures its perpetuation for the foreseeable future (Fleras & Kunz, 2001, p. 3). As Hesse argues, there is an inherent tension between official multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism, and I believe this tension should be identified relative to this study. Both positive and negative attitudes towards multiculturalism as official doctrine and as lived reality for my students are inextricable parts of the habitus within which identities are constituted, and are a part of the context in which performativity occurs. Cosmopolitanism is, in my view, an attitude that may or may not develop in relationship to life in Canada’s multicultural society; this, in turn, drives my own interest in anti-racism pedagogy and multiculturalism as global education, as explained in Chapter One. For this reason, both cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism require some exploration as they relate to the social context for this thesis.

Multiculturalism is an immense topic in its own right. The following discussion, therefore, while not comprehensive, will attempt to point to some of the key elements of the various discourses of Canadian multiculturalism that influence choral music education in Canada generally and my own praxis in particular. My purpose, therefore, is a brief critique in the Foucauldian sense of the term:

¹⁴ Hesse writes about multiculturalism in Great Britain but is cited here for this particular similarity between Canadian and British multiculturalism.

A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices we accept rest (Foucault 1988, cited in Mackey, 2002, p. 4).

As a choral music educator, I have chosen to incorporate a multicultural perspective into my own teaching practice. At the time I first began to teach “multi-culturally,” my reasons for doing so were largely unexamined and resulted primarily from my undergraduate teacher training in music education which had emphasized multicultural music as “essential” to the curriculum (Elliott, 1995, p. 207). As I incorporated more multicultural music (global song) into my community choir program, I felt the need to be more reflexive about the how and why of what I was doing as a teacher-conductor.

In the next section of this chapter, I will begin with a brief history of the evolution of multiculturalism as official policy in Canada. Following from this discussion, I will look at how multiculturalism within music education functions as a “transruption” (Hesse, 2000) that disturbs the discourse. Finally, I will address anti-racism education as a response to the perceived shortcomings of multicultural education. Taken together, the combination of discourses paints the bigger picture of how life in multicultural Canada impacts upon my pedagogical practice and the potentially performative context for an emerging multicultural human subject.

Official Multiculturalism in Canada

Official multiculturalism in Canada first emerged as the recommendation of Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson’s Bilingualism and Biculturalism Commission, whose mandate it was to

recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contributions made by other

ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada (Bumstead 1992 as cited in Mackey, 2002, p. 63).

Pearson's commission attempted to restructure what had been seen as a mutually antagonistic dualism between British and French Canada. As the commission consulted with groups around the country, protests surrounding the commission's ethnocentric and exclusionary language from a number of "ethnic groups" caused the government to slow down their work and begin to shift philosophically from biculturalism to multiculturalism. Book IV of the commission's report proposed a form of official multiculturalism, which was adopted and became official policy during the Trudeau government in 1971 (Mackey, 2002, p. 64). Mackey, citing Breton, argues that this shift to multiculturalism was "an attempt to redefine the symbolic system" of Canada as a way to manage the potentially dangerous political situation regarding emergent Quebec separatism by recognizing and managing culture (p. 64).

Recognition of diversity at the federal level allowed the government to impose limitations on diversity. When Trudeau announced official multiculturalism, the limitations of federal support were articulated in language that clearly indicated multiculturalism as a project of nation building:

- 1) Resources permitting, the government will seek to assist all Canadian cultural groups that have demonstrated a desire and effort to continue to develop a capacity to grow and contribute to Canada. . .
- 2) The government will assist members of all cultural groups to overcome cultural barriers to full participation in Canadian society.
- 3) The government will promote creative encounters and interchange among all Canadian cultural groups in the interest of national unity.

- 4) The government will continue to assist immigrants to acquire at least one of Canada's official languages in order to become full participants in Canadian society (Trudeau, 1971, p. 8545-6).

Official multiculturalism has become, since 1971, more rights-oriented, with an intent to transform the dominant society (Mackey, 2002, p. 67). By the 1980s, there was a discernible shift in focus to accommodate the number of immigrants from non-European cultures who did not share in the predominantly Eurocentric values prevalent at the time Trudeau's policy was enacted (Fleras & Kunz, 2001, p. 14). Multiculturalism became constitutionally entrenched in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1985 (p. 15), where it is framed as a distinguishing characteristic of Canadian life. The Canadian Multicultural Act of 1988 strengthens this position by enshrining multiculturalism as "a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity" (*Chapter 24: An act for the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada*, 1988). Although the act specifically named race as one aspect of diversity:

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada to

(a) recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage.

by the early 1990s another shift began to take place in official multicultural policies. Multiculturalism became equated with citizenship through its alignment with the Citizenship and Canadian Identity portfolio under the ministry of Canada Heritage (Fleras & Kunz, 2001, p. 15). This is significant in that official multiculturalism, in this reorganization, downgraded from a government department to a program, and reinforces the nation-building project by subsuming multiculturalism under the ministry charged with "citizenship and Canadian identity." Although the government may be seen to remain officially committed to multiculturalism, "its support is increasingly muted; it

reflects a disturbing trend toward complacency or expediency, and it is not beyond the pale of axing costly multicultural programs” (p. 15). Bannerji describes this as a dilution of multiculturalism as a discourse that initially held:

potential (under certain circumstances) for providing a ‘major framework for analyzing intergroup relations and its ability to confront racism. . . . the former emphasis on race and racism was replaced with an emphasis on cultural diversity (Bannerji, 2000, p. 18).

Mackey, too, critiques official multiculturalism, arguing that although multiculturalism differs greatly from the overt racism and assimilationist policies of earlier Canadian governments, multiculturalism evolved from patterns that had become entrenched during colonial times and earlier national projects. She makes the following point: although cultural diversity was allowed to proliferate under policies of official multiculturalism, the power to “define, limit and tolerate differences still lies in the hands of the dominant group. Further, the degree and forms of *tolerable* differences are defined by the ever-changing needs of the project of nation-building” (Mackey, 2002, p. 70, italics in original).

Multicultural Music Education

Multiculturalism as a transruption in music education.

I have provided the preceding brief sketch of official multiculturalism in Canada because within multicultural music education discourse, this history operates as what Foucault would term an assumed knowledge, a common sense upon which we act as Canadian music educators. In my own teacher training, I experienced this common sense as: “Since multiculturalism is official policy in Canada, we need to incorporate it into music education.” Multiculturalism’s history and significance to Canadian society was not studied. Instead, my undergraduate teacher training seemed to assume “diversity as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian heritage and identity” (*Chapter 24: An act for the*

preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada, 1988). The racial Whiteness and Eurocentric thought that gave birth to official multicultural policies in Canada remained unexamined, evident in the discipline's philosophical attempts to wrestle with "the dilemma of multicultural music education" (Reimer, 2003). Reimer's use of the term "dilemma" signals the discomfort with which many music educators deal with multiculturalism, and the somewhat antagonistic position from which Reimer and some other music education philosophers engage issues of multiculturalism.

Within music education, multiculturalism is a "transruption" (Hesse, 2000), or that born of diasporic formations and cultural entanglements that have become recurring, unsettling features (p. 2). Transruptions "continually put into question. . . matters deemed in hegemonic discourses to be settled, buried and apparently beyond dispute" (p. 18). I argue that in North America, the discipline of music education treats multiculturalism as a transruption with which it still does not know quite how to cope. As Hesse explains,

Transruptions are troubling and unsettling because any acknowledgement of their incidence or significance within a discourse threatens the coherence or validity of that discourse, its concepts or social practices (p. 17).

Music education has long considered itself the gatekeeper for the western classical tradition within North American schools and educational settings; the "voyage in" (Said, 1993, p. 216) of multiculturalism has been a rough sail in a sea troubled by multicultural transruptions.

Using this concept of multicultural transruptions, the following section looks at some of the ways music education philosophy in North America has dealt with and continues to deal with multiculturalism. It should be noted that many of the influential scholars to the discipline are located within the U.S., and their writing is imbued with U.S. perspectives. Despite the differences in the way multiculturalism is understood and enacted in education in the U.S., the

writings of these U.S. music educators words carry great weight for many Canadian scholars and educators. My purpose in the following discussion is to locate the cultural Whiteness and ethnocentricity that I feel is crucial to understanding why, in music education, multiculturalism is, three decades later, still transruptive.

Praxial music education philosophy: Elliott on multiculturalism.

During my own undergraduate music teacher education at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, in the early 1990s, the primary text for the philosophy of music education course and similar required study was *Music Matters* (Elliott, 1995), which we read as a pre-publication manuscript (Prof. Elliott taught the courses). Philosophically, Elliott argues in language reminiscent of Bourdieu, that music is a human activity made up of four dimensions: 1) a doer (music maker) 2) some kind of doing (activity of making music) 3) something done (the music produced by the doing), and 4) the complete context in which the “doers do what they do” (p. 39-40) (Bourdieu’s habitus). In his explanations defining music, Elliott differentiates MUSIC (a “diverse human practice”) from music, “the audible sound events, works, or listenables that eventuate from the efforts of musical practitioners in the contexts of particular practices” (p. 44-45), and it is on the first basis that he argues in favour of multicultural music education. Although this may be read as an attempt at inclusivity (as the Trudeau policy on multiculturalism may be read), at the heart of the definition is the implicit power to define and limit what may count as either MUSIC or music. Elliott, however, openly injected the idea of multiculturalism into the project of teaching MUSIC. His reiteration throughout *Music Matters* that MUSIC is a diverse human practice that is inherently multicultural (p. 291) was a positive attempt to broaden what counted as music within the discourse of music education, to move beyond North American music education’s narrow focus on Western classical music in the curriculum.

However, the presumed power to define and delimit the multicultural within Elliott's framework is omnipresent in his writing. His position as a white scholar comes through clearly in his own failure to recognize this positioning, as evidenced in the following discussion of Pratte's concept of "dynamic multiculturalism," the form he advocates in *Music Matters*:

This book has attempted to argue that music educators require a philosophy of music education that is conservative in its concern for preserving the integrity of all music cultures (macrocultures and microcultures), yet liberal insofar as it goes beyond local preferences and ethnocentric notions of music. Drawing on John Dewey's dictum that a great society must become a great community, Pratte suggests that we need to educate children to tackle problems willingly as a "concerned community of interest." Pratte's concept of "dynamic multiculturalism" emphasizes the need to convert subgroup affiliation into a community of concern through a shared commitment to a common purpose (p. 293).

Several hints at Whiteness, even colonialism, come through in this paragraph. The first is the phrase "preserving the integrity of all music cultures." What does Elliott mean by this? When speaking of non-western musical cultures, he seems to imply preservation in the sense of protection or salvation, i.e. mission work associated with colonialism (Smith, 1999, p. 80). Does "integrity" equate to "authenticity?" The closing sentences of the paragraph, however, using Pratte's concept of dynamic multiculturalism, most indicate Elliott's presumed right to speak from a position within the invisible norm. As I read and re-read the paragraph, my questions persist: why must the subgroup affiliation be converted and what is the common purpose to which the subgroup needs to be committed — is it the hegemonic norm? Elliott's writing is imbued with the presumed power to define, determine, and delimit. Writing from a location that is unmarked, and in failing within the text to acknowledge his own position of white privilege, he takes on the voice of invisible cultural authority:

The state of being unmarked (and therefore ‘normal’ or ‘ordinary’) is both constitutive of, and an effect of, structural advantage and power, and the cultural authority that that power brings (Mackey, 2002, p. 21).

Aesthetic philosophy: Reimer on “various cultures.”

Elliott’s book offered music educators a “new,” “praxial” philosophy upon which to base their teaching practices. It provided a counter argument to what had become the common knowledge in music education, the philosophy of modernist aesthetics. Loyalty to aesthetic education as the best way to teach music, however, remains strong in the discourse, and continues to influence profoundly the way music teachers are taught, and the way many students learn music.¹⁵ Prior to the publication of *Music Matters*, the second edition of *A Philosophy of Music Education* (Reimer, 1989) was released. I refer to this publication only to point to how much of a transruption multiculturalism represented to music education philosophy. By 1989, multiculturalism had been official policy in Canada for nearly two decades, and many forms of multicultural education existed in the United States resulting from the Tanglewood Symposium of 1967 (Campbell, 1994). Yet in Reimer’s second edition (the first was published in 1970), the word *multicultural* never appears. He does, however, make the following argument for the “relevance of music of various cultures” (p. 144). The argument is, in my opinion, ethnocentric, elitist in its attitude toward non-Western cultures, and patronizing to non-white, non-Western children in U.S. classrooms. I quote at length so as to provide a more complete context for the remarks:

Because of our devotion to “democratic principles” we can easily go to the extreme of neglecting the specific ethnic musics represented among the particular children we are teaching. That would be tragic. We need to give honor to *specific* musics, and in multiethnic

¹⁵ In much music teaching, music is reduced to a collection of “works,” or it is taught as “theory,” or reduced to a study of music’s “aesthetic elements.”

communities that requires the music teacher to use all possible community resources to bolster his or her own capacities to cope. But at the other extreme the program can get so ethnically focused as to forget that (1) the United States is part of a larger culture—the culture of Western music—that should be part of the inheritance of each of our citizens, and (2) we must also experience some of the diversity of heritages from around the world (Reimer, 1989, p. 145).

In the third edition of *A Philosophy of Music Education* (2003), Reimer frames his argument for the relevance of the music of other cultures as “the dilemma of multicultural music education” (p. 178), which he presents as a binary of contextualism/universalism. The dualistic nature of his argument and the title of this section in the book suggest the anxiety with which Reimer views multiculturalism: as a transruption in the aesthetic philosophy to which he has devoted an entire academic career. Reimer argues that it is impossible to truly understand another musical culture or the context from which it draws meaning, yet stops just short of saying we should not bother to try. Instead, he uses the other side of the dichotomy, “universalism,” to support his argument with some rather odd, colonialist language: “to understand that foreign musics are not in any essential way foreign is to have learned a fundamental lesson about the nature of the human condition” (p. 189).

Critical and liberal views on multiculturalism in music education.

Elliott and Reimer themselves represent a dichotomous view of music education, and others have sought to ameliorate the growing rift in the discipline between praxial and aesthetic music education philosophies. In *Transforming Music Education* (Jorgensen, 2003), Jorgensen, citing the work of Paulo Freire, argues for critical theories of music education as a means for transforming music education into an emancipatory discourse, through which “people come to recognize their oppression; imaginatively envisage what might be otherwise possible; gain courage to transform their community and society toward achieving freedom, justice, and civility” (p. 7). I am sympathetic with her

utopian goals for music education and society generally, since her arguments for an encompassing critical theory are compatible with anti-racism pedagogy and practice, but her discussion, too, is built upon ethnocentricity: positioning Western classical music as the norm, and assuming monolithic multi-cultures (“unified constructs”) akin to Western concepts of music. Although later in the paragraph she seems to reject the notion of unified constructs in her discussion of musical borrowing or cultural entanglements (Hesse, 2000, p. 2), Jorgensen appears, despite the acknowledgement, to maintain a “West and the rest” dichotomy even as she argues for an alternative paradigm for music education:

What Westerners understand as music represents a small part of larger, artistically unified constructs in which the arts combine within rituals to express human meaning making. It recognizes that while people in other cultures may not have words that equate to Western notions of music, they nevertheless do what Westerners think of as music; they act musically and borrow aspects of Western music, just as Westerners borrow from theirs. This conceptually fuzzy notion of music, in which rules for making and taking music are determined within the context of particular practices, necessitates forging an alternative paradigm by which music and musical instruction can be studied contextually, ethnologically, and comparatively as well as formally, curatorially, and normatively (p. 140).

Jorgensen’s call for an alternative paradigm, like Reimer’s argument for the music of “foreign” cultures, seems imbued with a way of thinking that sometimes views music as a collection of works. This is particularly evident in her desire to study music and musical instruction “formally, curatorially, and normatively.” Some might see these words as the remnants of colonial research practices that define what counts as human through systematic forms of classification and typologies of different societies (Smith, 1999, p. 25).

The most recent addition to the multicultural melee in music education philosophy is a book entitled, *Democracy and Music Education: Liberalism, Ethics, and the Politics of Practice* (Woodford, 2005). In a chapter lamenting how

“criticism’ has become something of a dirty word in contemporary music education circles,” Woodford charges:

Music education involves helping children explore and imaginatively identify with other people and their music. In that sense, the new multiculturalism is dedicated to developing a wider sense of community. This is potentially empowering, but in the absence of criticism it is difficult to imagine how students are to make qualitative distinctions and thereby gain some modicum of intelligent control over their sonic environments, let alone understand other people’s music and the political or practical implications thereof. . .Multiculturalism becomes just another form of absolutism to be imposed on children (p. 18-19).

Woodford’s commentary may be read in several ways. I was immediately struck and somewhat taken aback by his terminology “the new multiculturalism,” since we are now into the fourth decade of multiculturalism as policy in Canada. Woodford’s choice of language, “other people’s music,” centres European-based music in the curriculum as the invisible norm and implies a homogeneous “we” as teachers and students in North America. His concluding sentence, positing multiculturalism as a form of absolutism, may be read as a subtle form of white backlash against multicultural music education in an argument that faintly echoes Bennett Reimer’s on contextualization, framed in the language of criticism (or lack thereof). Woodford’s argument also brings us back full circle to the point from which I began this discussion on music education philosophy and multiculturalism. In my own teacher training, multiculturalism was imposed as something I, the teacher, needed to do in my classroom because “MUSIC is inherently multicultural” (Elliott, 1995, p. 291). Although I agree with Elliott on this point, it was presented as a prescriptive in that early teacher training. There was no analysis of the power issues implicit in Eurocentric approaches to music education, no discussion of Canada’s multicultural policy as hegemonic discourse, and no discussion of the issues of

social justice that could easily have been tied to his arguments in favour of multicultural music education.

Postmodern philosophy and musical multiculturalism.

Bowman's (1998) exploration of postmodernism indicates yet another tension in the multicultural music debates. In *Philosophical Perspectives on Music*, Bowman frames debates on the nature and value of music within various philosophical discourses beginning with pre-Platonic Greek and ending with late twentieth-century philosophies. As he argues, postmodern orientations to music and music philosophy may be construed as efforts to rescue music from the sense of irrelevance created and perpetuated by philosophies based on music's autonomy, objectivity, absolute meaning, and aesthetic value. Postmodernists reject the notion of music as an autonomous art form or unitary subject, instead arguing that there are an infinite number of ways in which the world, and music, may be construed. Thus postmodern philosophy attends to plurality, difference, and change through deconstructing, destabilizing, and defamiliarizing (p. 397-398). Multiculturalism as a postmodern phenomenon acknowledges the existence of multiple musical cultures and subcultures, and the accounts of the nature and value of music therefore appreciate music's multiplicity and diversity (p. 399). Postmodernism insists that music be situated within cultural context rather than being regarded as autonomous or the trope of "universal language" (p. 400). Bowman views this as a challenge to philosophy's quest for generalizations about music as a whole, a challenge that I believe is evidenced in the ways that multiculturalism repeatedly emerges as a transruption in several of the philosophies of music education discussed previously in this chapter.

Although concepts of multiplicity are common to both multiculturalism and postmodernism, in other respects they are not congruent. As Bowman explains, multiculturalism relies on a concept of authenticity that "reinstates

presumed centeredness in ethnically or culturally (and often, geographically) demarcated practices” that are suspiciously reminiscent of modernity’s Eurocentric notions of essentialism (p. 400). Postmodernism diverges from these essential notions of unitary multi-cultures through its embrace of what Bowman calls “the here and now,” where new musics, musical practices, and musical meanings are currently being forged (p. 401).

In the context of this thesis, the concept *global song* may be viewed as a postmodern attempt to deal with the “here and now” of the multicultural, by acknowledging the fusion of a variety of musical practices with the predominantly European notion of “choir” and “choral music.” Although within my own praxis we also work within “authentic” musical practices, such as Ewe drumming and dance from Ghana, much of what we learn and perform are the rhythms, melodies, and harmonies representing particular musical cultures arranged as choral music. Sometimes, several musical cultures are arranged into one piece, an even more pronounced influence of the postmodern on multiculturalism in music. In this sense, the creolization of musical styles is yet another instance of multicultural transruption, in this case a form of cultural entanglement, or as Hesse describes, a cultural formation marked by multiple intersections of engagement in the absence of a single or unique location of origin (Hesse, 2000, p. 22).

Multicultural resources in music education.

The contentious nature of much of the philosophical discourse in music education muddies the water for prospective music teachers who may have an interest in teaching from a multicultural perspective. It is on this point that I will mention the work of Patricia Shehan Campbell. Since the early 1990s, her work has been influential in the discourse of multicultural music education, where she has devoted considerable energy to locating and publishing resources for teachers in the classroom. Hers is a dominant voice in North American

multicultural music education. Her most recent publication, *Teaching Music Globally* (Campbell, 2004), may be described as residing somewhere in the gray area between method book and resource anthology. Although the text contains many justifications for teaching music multiculturally, it is not philosophical in the strict sense of the term, and for this reason I did not include Campbell's writing in the critiques above. Her voice will appear several times throughout this thesis. However, as much as I agree with her regarding the need for including culturally diverse music in the curriculum, and am appreciative of the diversity of materials her work has made both available and accessible, I often also find myself in disagreement with her rationale, particularly since her writing often frames musical cultures as unitary entities requiring "preservation" (Campbell, 2004, p. 26), a term that "implies a rescue of phenomena from inevitable historical decay or loss" (Clifford, as cited in Smith, 1999, p. 61). Campbell's is a strict multiculturalism in the sense Bowman articulates in *Philosophical Perspectives*, and her writing provides particular points of convergence and divergence from my own thinking that will be noted throughout the thesis.

Locating multicultural resources for choir can be challenging if one seeks "authenticity" in the arrangements readily available through music publishers. Indeed, choirs are a western, European-based form of music making, so most arrangements of non-western musics into choral format cannot be considered "authentic." Nonetheless, some arrangements are more appropriate for the purpose of providing a multicultural education in choral music than others, and I will discuss this issue at greater length in Chapter Four.

Anti-Racism Education

For my own praxis in community choral music, I found that most of the philosophical perspectives discussed above raised provocative questions for me about how to teach the music of non-western cultures in an ethical manner

(Bowman, 2002). The more I engaged with philosophy, the more I realized that these were questions without absolute answers. I was concerned about issues of appropriation in many of the choral music arrangements of global song that I encountered, as well as concerns related to the way cultures are imagined to be monolithic both in music education and in official multiculturalism. The “white face” of choral music, evident in most of the children’s choirs I saw and heard, troubled me as well. Even so, I continued to believe that global song and multiculturalism in music education provided a viable means for my students and I to “transform our community and society” (Jorgensen, 2003, p. 7). My own praxis continually adjusts and readjusts my attempts to teach musical context and cultural meaning within the choral rehearsal, and to find the pedagogical moments that might be transformative for my students. I have long questioned whether the aim of multicultural music education, “to develop in students an understanding of the cultural thought and practices of populations across the globe” (Campbell, 2002b, p. 28) is in itself sufficient to create the sort of transformation for which Jorgensen argues and that I, too, believe is necessary for social justice in education and the wider community. My questions eventually led me to doctoral studies in sociology, in the area of critical pedagogy and cultural studies, and anti-racism education.

Integrative anti-racism.

My arrival at OISE/UT was preceded by a belief that my pedagogical practice in choral music held potential for, if not “changing the world,” exerting a positive influence on some of the individuals who might come to sing in my choir. Since founding the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir in 1997, I had engaged with global song as an important part of our repertoire, but I struggled with ethical questions that this repertoire provoked for me, as articulated previously. In addition, I felt that, despite my desire to do so, my attempts at dismantling in my own praxis the traditionally hierarchical structure of youth choir that I believed to be oppressive were awkward and not entirely successful. However, I

had experienced enough success along these lines to want to clarify what was going right, so that I could expand upon it. My own experience as a child and teenager in the southern U.S.A. during the Civil Rights movement had instilled in me a strong desire to activism against racism; therefore, I came to my doctoral studies with a deeply held conviction that as a teacher in a multi-racial, multi-ethnic situation, I needed to understand racism in order to avoid its production and reproduction. My arrival in Canada in the late 1970s, where multiculturalism was already officially mandated, initially seduced me into thinking that there was no racism in Canada. As time passed, however, I came to realize that racism enacted more subtly in Canadian society than the overt forms I had experienced in my youth in the U.S.A. Although I felt that multicultural education might be an avenue toward improving the situation I perceived, I was frustrated by how little seemed to change just from “doing” the music of different cultures and practices, even when including context as part of the music teaching and learning.

As a young mother and woman in the workplace prior to entering academia, I had become interested in feminism in the 1970s as a lens for understanding some of the career barriers women (including myself) faced in North America; however, I eventually felt a vague sense of dissatisfaction with (white) feminist philosophy for its failure to address other forms of oppression (hooks, 1994, p. 46). When I decided to pursue doctoral studies, I was drawn to anti-racism because of its emphasis on the intersectionality of oppressions. Anti-racism operates on a key understanding “that all systems of oppression intersect and interlock and a study of one such system — racism — necessarily entails a study of classism, sexism, and homophobia” (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 35). Brewer (1993) refers to this as the “simultaneity of oppressions.” Because my own praxis involves children with physical challenges, I believe that ableism should be incorporated into the working definition of integrative anti-racism as another of the simultaneity of oppressions. I believe it is important conceptually to view

oppressions as operating simultaneously rather than layered as “double oppressions” (Stuart, 1992) or multiple oppressions, since it is never possible to isolate the particular basis (race, gender, class, ability, or sexual orientation) on which oppression functions.

The anti-racism discursive framework interrogates the roles that societal institutions such as schools, home and family, religion, the workplace, justice and media, and the arts play in reproducing inequalities. It focuses foremost on equity as the “qualitative value of justice” (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 34). It is also concerned with representation in recognition of the need for multiple voices and perspectives to be involved in the production of mainstream social knowledge. To this end, anti-racism examines institutional practices to determine how they respond to challenges of diversity and difference (p. 34). This necessitates an interrogation of Whiteness and white privilege; for my research study it involves interrogating my own Whiteness and the structure of my community youth choir to determine where my own praxis may be oppressive. This is admittedly a difficult task, since most oppression is unrecognized by its perpetrator without engaging in critical self-examination (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 14).

Anti-racism or multiculturalism?

Multicultural education is a term that can refer to a wide a range of educational practices. James Banks writes that in the United States, the major goal of multicultural education is to reform the schools and other educational institutions so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups will experience educational equality. Additional goals include gender equity in education, and increased interest in the interaction of race, class, and gender on education (James A. Banks, 2004). This perspective on multicultural education shares many of the goals of anti-racism education; even so, in the United States, educators such as McLaren (1997) and Kincheloe (2000) argue that critical theories and pedagogies of multiculturalism are needed in order to bring about

the systemic changes multicultural education has failed to produce. McLaren calls for a “critical/revolutionary multiculturalism” congruent with the concept of anti-racism in Canada. The term anti-racism is common in Britain and Australia, and shares a similar connotation to the term in Canada (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 20).

Since multiculturalism and anti-racism share common components (Kehoe, 1993, p. 3), it is important for the context of this research project that their differences and distinguishing characteristics be outlined. Within the discourse of anti-racism education in Canada, multiculturalism is considered to be a political doctrine that officially promotes cultural diversity as an intrinsic part of the social, political, and moral order of Canadian society. Multiculturalism works with the notion of our basic humanness and downplays inequities of difference by accentuating shared commonalities, while anti-racism education seeks to identify, challenge and change the values, structures, and behaviours that perpetuate systemic racism and other forms of societal oppressions (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 21). Multicultural education places emphasis on “intergroup harmony.” Anti-racism education focuses on “intergroup equity.” Although both multiculturalism and anti-racism are concerned with countering the racism of individuals and institutions, multiculturalism’s emphasis is on reducing bias within individuals; anti-racism emphasizes reducing institutional racism (Kehoe, 1993). Multiculturalism cherishes diversity and plurality and promotes an image of thriving, mutually-respectful ethnic and cultural communities, while anti-racism discourse focuses on persistent inequalities among communities, emphasizing relations of power, domination and subordination (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 21). Despite what may seem to be a negative concentration on society’s problems in its discursive gaze, anti-racism is ultimately a “pedagogy of hope” (Freire, Freire, & Freire, 1994) or a “pedagogy of possibility” (Simon, 1992) functioning as a catalyst for change.

Defining integrative anti-racism.

The differences noted above position anti-racism as a critical discourse that questions whether western societies including Canada are “unproblematically democratic” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000, p. 281). Critical theorists denounce practices that lead to disempowering human beings or that take away people’s control over their own lives as agents (Regelski, 1998, p. 5). Anti-racism as a critical discourse asserts that racial minorities cannot simply be presented as victims, powerless and subordinated in the study of race relations and conflict. Within this understanding, then, and for purposes of this research, anti-racism is defined as an action-oriented educational strategy for institutional and systemic change to address racism and the interlocking systems of social oppression (G. S. Dei, 2000). These oppressions include (but are not necessarily limited to) gender, class, sexism and heterosexism, and ableism. I would also propose adding extremes of nationalism to the list of interlocking and intersecting oppressions, since nationalism is a form that racism sometimes assumes (Aanerud, 2002; Kertz-Welzel, 2005; Longinovic, 2000). I make this proposal in recognition of the many ways nationalism has manifested as racism over the course of recent history, including the Gulf War between the U.S. and Iraq, and the invasions by the U.S. of Afghanistan and Iraq since September 11, 2001. Longinovic’s chapter in *Music and the Racial Imagination* (Radano & Bohlman, 2000) about the recent civil wars in Yugoslavia, implicates music’s role in promoting racism:

As Croats sing “Danke Deutschland” (Thank you, Germany) to the sponsors of their secession from Yugoslavia and Serbs glorify the “ethnic cleansing” of Muslims with songs like “Miloš era stoku preko Save” (Miloš drives the cattle across the Sava River), the uncanny presence of hatred of other “Yugoslavs” and megalomaniac glorification of one’s own newly invented “people” bears witness to the direction that European conceptions of folk music and race will take in the next millennium (p. 642).

Similarly, Kertz-Welzel's (2005) paper reminds us that the Third Reich co-opted the power of music by using music education in the schools to promote nationalism: "Singing patriotic songs, marching, and wandering were important means to celebrate community, to support the National Socialist ideology and the superiority of the German race and culture" (p. 7). The result was the murder of millions of people by the Nazis in the name of fascist German nationalism during World War II.

Connecting The Discursive Territory Thus Far

The discursive framework for this thesis thus far has attempted to link three discourses, cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, and anti-racism, as components of the social context or habitus framing my research. In the following section I will examine why I believe all three of these concepts are necessary for this research project, before entering the theoretical terrain of performativity. In "Identity and Representation," Bourdieu and Thompson discuss the implications of regionalist discourses to performativity (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). In the usage below, Canadian official multiculturalism may be viewed as a regionalist discourse:

Regionalist discourse is a *performative discourse* which aims to impose as legitimate a new definition of the frontiers and to get people to know and recognize the *region* that is thus delimited in opposition to the dominant definition. . . The act of categorization, when it manages to achieve recognition or when it is exercised by a recognized authority, exercises by itself a certain power: "ethnic" or "regional" categories, like categories of kinship, institute a reality by using the power of *revelation* and *construction*. . . (p. 223, italics in original).

Multiculturalism as official policy in Canada is an act of authority based upon recognition that, like all symbolic power, brings into existence what it asserts. It seeks to define the region Canada as multi-cultural, through a "legitimate division of the social world" (p. 222) into multiple cultures. Multiculturalism in

music education operates in a similar manner by isolating musical cultures as discrete entities: it names them, categorizes them according to differences and similarities, and legitimates them in discourses of ethnomusicology and music education instructional practice.

However, multicultural music education has as a primary goal, stated earlier in this chapter, that of enabling students to understand unfamiliar cultures and musical practices in such a way that a cosmopolitan outlook may develop among students. A cosmopolitan outlook may be suggestive of an emerging multicultural human subjectivity. Yet given the tensions inherent in the term “cosmopolitanism,” which can connote elitism and Whiteness, something beyond cosmopolitanism as the hidden curriculum of multicultural education is needed, I believe, to bring about real transformation both in education and in society. This is where anti-racism as pedagogical practice and political strategy become important to the habitus for this study. Multiculturalism is entrenched in the system of Canadian society; cosmopolitan is both an already-present and continually emerging attitude, as the analysis narrative in this thesis will show, in part resulting from multiculturalism but also influenced by the societal conditions of globalization and glocalization. Thus anti-racism education provides the critical lens through which the MFYC habitus may be analyzed and understood, as a context within which a multicultural human subject may be constituted.

Performativity

Austin’s Concept

Performativity is a concept that first came to light through J.L. Austin’s examination of the relations between signs and sign-users (Râecanati, 1987, p. 8). Performatives in this linguistic sense are utterances that, literally, do what they say. Some common examples are a judge’s utterance, “I sentence you,” or one individual saying to another, “I promise.” In both examples, the words

sentence and *promise* constitute the very acts they describe. Austin qualifies this by arguing that an utterance's "illocutionary force" is largely dependent upon the speaker's intentions to sentence or to promise; thus Austin makes a distinction between the utterance's meaning and its illocutionary force. As Râecanati explains, "sentence meaning and utterance context together fix the meaning of an utterance, the state of affairs it represents; the context then determines its illocutionary force" (p. 11).

I will provide here a musical example of illocutionary force determined by context, one that figures prominently in Chapter Seven of this thesis, the South African freedom song, "Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona" ("Hallelujah! We sing your praises") (Nyberg, 1984). When members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir performed this song before an international audience of prison reform activists, many of whom had first-hand experience with it as an anti-apartheid protest song, the song's illocutionary force took on a profound meaning that may have been missing in other performance contexts. The impact of "Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona" in the particular context mentioned here will be more fully explored in Chapter Seven, in relation to the possibility for an emerging multicultural human subject.

Bourdieu on Performativity

It is the issue of context that, I believe, has enabled scholars both within and outside of the study of linguistics to make use of performativity in theories of identity. Bourdieu put a sociological spin on performativity in his argument that regional discourses are performative. As Bourdieu writes,

The effectiveness of the performative discourse which claims to bring about what it asserts in the very act of asserting it is directly proportional to the authority of the person doing the asserting. . .but the cognition effect brought about by the fact of objectification in discourse does not depend only on the recognition granted to the person who utters that discourse: it also depends on the degree to which the discourse which announces to the group its identity is

grounded in the objectivity of the group to which it is addressed (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991, p. 223).

In this argument, Bourdieu locates identity at the collective, or group level, as something constituted by discourse when individuals recognize themselves as members of the group called into being through that discourse. Bourdieu states, “what is at stake is the power of imposing a vision of the social world” (p. 221). These imposed principles of vision and division provide the group with “a unique vision of its identity and an identical vision of its unity” (p. 224). Bourdieu’s arguments are relevant to the ways in which membership in the MFYC creates a sense of collective identity among individual choir members, wherein the performativity of “belonging ‘cites’ the norms that constitute or make present the ‘community’ or group as such” (Bell, 1999, p. 3). The performative nature of collective identity within the MFYC will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Butler on Performativity

Performativity at the individual level is perhaps best known through the work of Judith Butler who theorizes in *Gender Trouble* (1990) that gender identity is neither “naturally-occurring” or an essentialist “truth;” gender does not equate to the sex with which one is born. As she writes

If the truth of gender is a fabrication and if a true gender is a fantasy instituted and inscribed on the surface of bodies, then it seems that genders can be neither true nor false, but are only produced as the truth effects of a discourse of primary and stable identity (Butler, 1990, p. 174).

In this view, identity is the effect of performance, not the other way around (Bell, 1999, p. 3). Butler, calling upon the writings of Beauvoir, describes the gendered identity “woman” as a “cultural accomplishment, a set of meanings that are taken on or taken up within a cultural field. . . no one is born with a gender” (Butler, 1990, p. 142).

Performativity as cultural accomplishment.

The concept of identity with its corollary, subjectivity, as a form of cultural accomplishment has currency for this research into an emerging multicultural human subject. Other authors have made use of Butler's notion of cultural accomplishment in theorizing "ethnic absolutism" (Bhatt, 1999; Gilroy, 2000), religious identities (Fourtier, 1999), and race (Bell, 1999; Walcott, 2003), situating each of these concepts as a form of cultural accomplishment that appear to be part of an individual's "core of essence." A common thread among these authors, reminiscent of Butler's rejection of essentialist notions of gender, is the refusal of essentialism as part of the identity projects about which they write, and it is along this line of non-essentialist identities that I investigate the potential for multicultural human subjectivity. Neither do I present this concept as an absolute, for a multicultural human subject may manifest itself in a multiplicity of thoughts and behaviors.

Performativity and performance.

Performativity itself relies upon the concept of performance (identity as something performed); the distinction between the two concepts performativity and performance is ambiguous in *Gender Trouble* (Lloyd, 1999, p. 199) and presents a potentially sticky problem for this thesis and for the music education discipline, where the term *performance* has multiple meanings. In musical discourses, "performance" may be used as a generic label for "productive musical engagement," i.e., performing music, but may also imply any form of music-making (composing, arranging, improvising, and all forms of "authentic music making") (Bowman, 2005, p. 145). The term also calls to mind those productive musical engagements that occur before an audience. For this thesis, the term will carry both meanings: that of productive musical engagement, which will include what occurs during MFYC rehearsals, and the connotation of performing before an audience: *performances*. The instances of the latter meaning should be clear in the text, and the reader, I trust, will not be confused by my use of

performance to mean “productive musical engagement,” because it is in this sense that I believe it has the greatest currency with performativity as taken up by Butler and others.

However, as Lloyd (1999) rightly states, clarifying what is meant by performance does not clarify when a performance is performative, if indeed it is:

The lack of clarity about how a performance is to be understood leads to a paradoxical position. Since the performative produces that which it names, and since gender is understood in performative terms as the effect of the intersection of discourses and practices of gender, and since these discourses and practices also underpin performances, it suggests that a performance is itself performative (p. 209).

Performativity and a multicultural human subject.

One other concept related to performativity requires explanation. Butler bases her theory of gender performativity on the notion of “parody.” If gender is only produced as a “truth effect” of the discourse of gender (Butler, 1990, p. 174), then gender performance is “an imitation without an origin” (p. 175). Butler further argues that the power of parody to create gender as an imagined essential core only occurs through its repetition, yet she recognizes:

Parody by itself is not subversive, and there must be a way to understand what makes certain kinds of parodic repetitions effectively disruptive, truly troubling, and which repetitions become domesticated and recirculated as instruments of cultural hegemony (p. 176-177).

This paragraph suggests that not every parody may be performative, and in some of her later writings she attempts to clarify this issue by focusing on performances unmoored from their context (Lloyd, 1999). In a critique of the slippage between *performativity* and *performance* that occurs in Butler’s arguments, Lloyd suggests that Butler over-emphasizes the discontinuities in gender performance (i.e., drag as parody), in order to present them as disruptive

behaviours. This strategy, according to Lloyd, occludes “the space within which performance occurs, the others involved in or implicated by the production, and how they receive and interpret what they see” (p. 210). For my purposes here, this statement suggests that in order to understand how hegemonic notions of identity may be disrupted in the development of an emerging multicultural human subjectivity, we must also look at the MFYC rehearsal and performance context, the people involved in the performance and those who are implicated in those performances (other musical cultures). In addition, we must address how those involved interpret what they see and hear in the MFYC context. Lloyd argues that “only some performances in some contexts can impel categorical rethinking” (p. 210), and in this I concur with her; it is this argument that guides my research into multicultural human subjectivity. The particularity of the MFYC context determines if a performance, or more correctly, the reiteration of performances, is indeed performative. It also raises the question of whether or not the possibility for a multicultural human subject is a parodic performance that disrupts cultural hegemony or is a performed identity-subjectivity that may be appropriated by hegemonic forces to recirculate as an implicit normative behavior.

To restate the argument in terms relevant to this thesis: the particular context of the MFYC is a space where reiterative performances of global song occur within a pedagogy guided by anti-racism principles and practices. To define this context further, it is located within a social complex where multiculturalism is the hegemonic norm and cosmopolitanism a potential outcome of the educational practices of that norm. It is within this performative habitus that a categorical rethinking of race may occur under particular circumstances. That rethinking has the potential to be enacted through the performance of multicultural human subjectivity. Figure 1 (below), illustrates the context (habitus) within which a multicultural human subject may emerge and is performed.

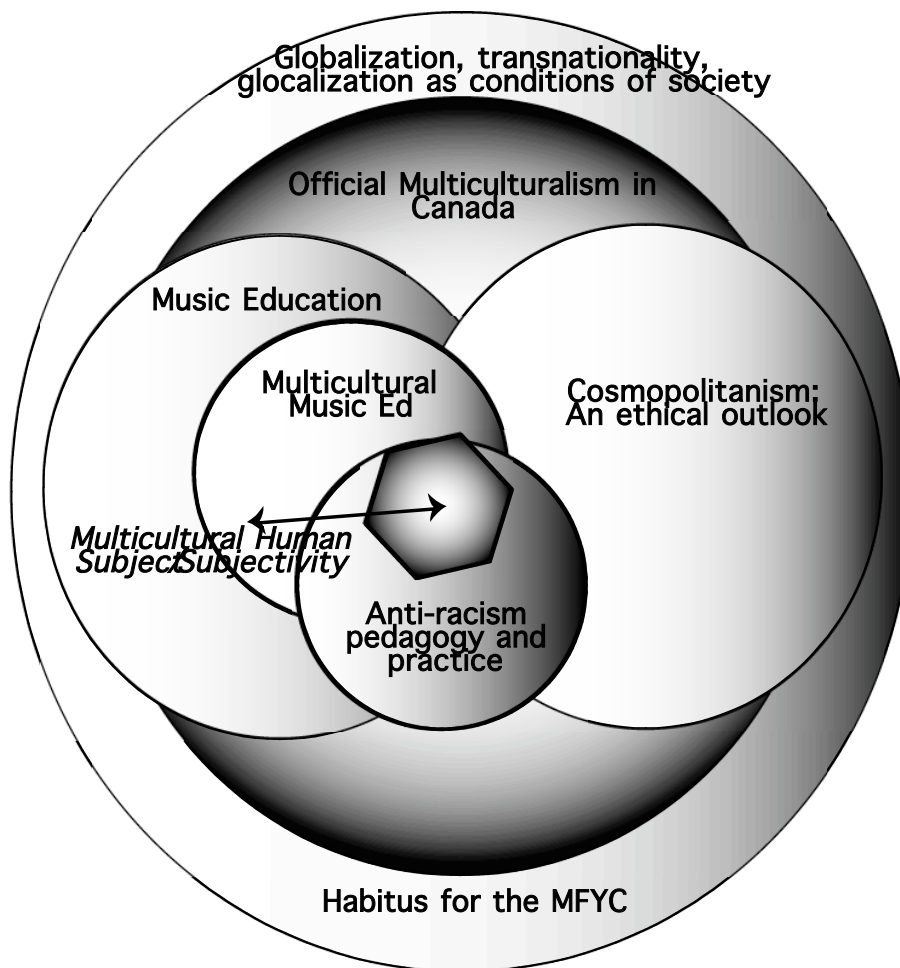


Figure 1
 Performativity at the intersection of cultural horizons
 (Habitus of the Multicultural Human Subject)

Figure 1 offers a graphic representation of the intersection of cultural horizons forming the habitus from which a multicultural human subject may emerge. The figure illustrates globalization, transnationalism, and glocalization as conditions of the society within which MFYC members live. Official multiculturalism in Canada and the discourse of cosmopolitanism are influenced by transnationality, and these discourses in turn influence the discipline of music education. Music education operates both within and beyond the discourse of official multiculturalism, while multicultural music education is situated entirely within both the discipline of music education and the discourse of official

multiculturalism. The drawing positions cosmopolitanism as an ethical outlook that is a potential, but not inevitable, outcome of either multicultural music education or the official Canadian discourse of multiculturalism. Finally, as Figure 1 illustrates, a multicultural human subject likewise is not the inevitable outcome of multicultural music education. As I will argue throughout this thesis, the possibility for a non-hegemonic multicultural human subjectivity exists only when practices of oppression and power relations are interrogated as part of an anti-racism educational strategy.

Summary

In this chapter I have described the discursive frameworks on which my research with the MFYC draws. The chapter relates the discourses of multiculturalism and anti-racism as they influence my pedagogy with the MFYC, and as they are situated within the discourse of cosmopolitanism as an outward-looking, interculturally sensitive moral and ethical standpoint. By linking these influences with Butler's theory of performativity, my desire is to provide the reader with a more complete understanding of how identities and subjectivities are formed and performed within particular contexts (the habitus). This understanding will frame the ethnographic descriptions of subsequent chapters, allowing for an "emergence of theory at the site where cultural horizons meet" (Butler, 1990, p. ix).

Chapter Three: Singing the Story of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir through Critical Ethnography

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology employed to investigate how musical engagement with global song in the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir may be performative in constituting a multicultural human subject. My approach to the research questions follows from a foundational anti-racism critical pedagogy, and utilizes critical ethnographic research methodology. Various challenges and textual negotiations inherent in critical ethnography will be discussed. These include acknowledging the researcher's implication in the research, issues concerning the researcher's power related to the representation of those who took part in the study, and the issue of theory building in critical ethnographic research. The particular methods used to compile the narrative data will be discussed: interviews with the study's participants, my own reflective teaching journal entries from the period of the study, and narrative reflections written during the construction of the ethnographic narrative. Rationales for the hybrid text format will be presented. A demographic overview of Mississauga, and of the study's participants, will provide general background information about the young people who took part in this study.

A Critical Ethnography

Choosing the Methodology

My interest in how engaging with global song may constitute a multicultural human subject is a project that necessitates some knowledge of the complexity of the social world in which we live. Such knowledge, however, can never be complete, and must be understood as “perspectival and situated, bearing the marks of the knowers” (Griffiths, 1998, p. 72). Thus my research interests require a methodology that allows for acknowledging the partiality and

situatedness of my knowledge as the researcher. In addition, as both a principal actor and a stakeholder in the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, the outcomes of the research have direct bearing on me and on the members of the MFYC. I felt it important to be able to utilize a research methodology that did not force me into researching with a “god’s eye” view, but rather one where my own questions, doubts, and reflections could be incorporated into the project as an implicit part of my position within it. My research was also predicated on a desire to use this opportunity to identify areas requiring change within my own praxis. If in my investigation I realized the existence of structures, practices, or habits antithetical to antiracism pedagogical principles, or that prohibited the sort of empowerment for my students that I believe is important within a critical pedagogy, I wanted to be able to use the research process itself as a catalyst for change. Using the research process as catalyst for change is what Lather (1991) terms “research as praxis,” that “inveighs us to develop a kind of self-reflexivity that will enable us to look closely at our own practice in terms of how we contribute to dominance in spite of our liberatory intentions” (p. 15).

The foregoing provides a partial rationale for choosing a critical ethnographic approach to the research. Quantz (1992) suggests that critical ethnography exhibits three central features which are compatible with my goals for the research. The first of these is an acknowledgement of the values imposed by the researcher on the research, values that reject an artificial division of knowledge and interest in the research. Research involving a group within which I am a principal actor suggests that any presumed boundaries between the emergent knowledge and my own interest in the research cannot really exist; I am not an impartial observer in this research project but have an interest in it as a stakeholder. Quantz suggests, however, that in addition to this acknowledgement, the researcher has a commitment to reflexivity. Reflexivity recognizes that “the knowledge we produce is inevitably limited by our own histories and the institutional forms within which we work” (p. 471). As

Griffiths (1998) suggests, it is important for researchers to acknowledge their beliefs, values and traditions and the ways in which these affect the research itself (p. 97). My positioning as a white researcher whose music teacher training was overwhelmingly centered in European classical traditions necessitates that I remain aware of the ways in which these values and musical traditions influence both what I do as a teacher with the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, and the way I approach the research conducted with that group. Reflexivity in critical ethnography furthermore suggests that as the researcher I need to include within the narrative accounts of my own experiences as related to the topic at hand, discussion of my own handling of the educational problems being analyzed, and the ways that contact with particular research participants has influenced my thinking both as a researcher and as an educator (Goldstein, 2003, p. 186).

Another feature of critical ethnographic work is its emancipatory nature, requiring researchers to "step outside of their cultural views and reflect on their positioning in the world" (Quantz, 1992, p. 473). This call for reflexivity mandates that I remain cognizant of my position of privilege as a white, middle class, able-bodied female working in academia, and sensitive to the ways this positioning influences my interpretation of the ethnographic data. Reflexivity is also an important element of anti-racism principles and practices, suggesting that critical ethnography may be especially well suited for anti-racism educational research. For example, over the course of my eight years with the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, I have realized that I need to look beyond the cultural views of the middle class values and academic training that have ingrained within me a view that suggests one often must make personal sacrifices in pursuit of a "high standard" for making music. This attitude enacts within many children's and youth choirs as "attendance rules" that sometimes become rigid beyond reasonability and are justified in the name of musical quality. This will be discussed at length in Chapter Four. The inclusion of this

and other similar discussions is in keeping with Richardson's (2000) assertion that the reader of any ethnographic text should be able to discern and make judgments about the author's own subjectivity and point of view as a result of her apparent self-awareness and self-exposure within the text (p. 937).

Third, according to Quantz, critical ethnographers "opt for those values that promote transformation of oppressive societies toward emancipation and democracy" (p. 473). As described earlier in this thesis, my interests as an educator are strongly linked to values of social justice that work against oppressive societies and societal conditions. My belief that through global song, we can learn about each other in ways that have significant impact on our own identities and self-understandings is one of the values I bring to this research project. As Lather (1991) writes,

The development of emancipatory social theory requires an empirical stance which is open-ended, dialogically reciprocal, grounded in respect to human capacity and, yet, profoundly skeptical of appearances and "common sense" (p. 65).

Assessing how my beliefs regarding global song affect the pedagogical outcomes in the MFYC, if indeed they do, requires, as Lather suggests, a healthy skepticism of the common sense of multicultural choral music education practices. Yet, despite the skepticism, I strongly believe that humans have the capacity to see what is right in our world, what is wrong, and to make conscious decisions that bring us closer to the world we want to inhabit. One of my aims in this project is to empower my students to greater awareness of the power relations that are implicated in their everyday lives, including their experiences in youth choir. Critical ethnography as a methodology, therefore, aligns most closely with my own beliefs and my goals for the research.

Because this project involves a group with which I am intimately connected and involved in a position of authority as teacher and conductor, this project is considered to be critical action research. Action research as a category

originated with classroom based research that sought to combine theory and practice (Sommer & Sommer, 1991, p. 6). Critical action research emerged from dissatisfactions with traditional classroom action research that typically does not take into account the role of social change in educational settings. Critical action research is based upon

A commitment to bring together broad social analyses: the self-reflective collective self-study of practice, the way language is used, organization and power in a local situation, and action to improve things (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000, p. 568).

I believe this description is appropriate for my project with the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. My interest as a teacher is in empowering students to understand their location within the broader social world influenced by globalization and its resulting glocalization, as well as the social world of multicultural Canada and the attitudes produced within that system.

Challenges in Critical Ethnographic Research

Challenges of representation.

Deborah Britzman (2000) suggests that the motivations for doing critical ethnographic research are: “to think the unthought in more complex ways, to trouble confidence in being able to ‘observe’ behavior, ‘apply the correct technique,’ and ‘correct’ what is taken as a mistake” (p. 28). Taken in this light, multicultural human subjectivity is a way of “thinking the unthought.” As an “unthought,” it is difficult to be completely sure what techniques might enable me to “observe” its emergence in the social world. Britzman’s suggestion that ethnography provides a vehicle for troubling such problems has provided me with the nerve, when my courage flagged, to proceed with the project of thinking the unthought:

Ethnographic narratives should trace how power circulates and surprises, theorize how subjects spring from the discourses that incite them, and question the belief in representation even as one must practice representation as a way to intervene critically in the constitutive constraints of discourses (p. 38).

Her words resonate with my project in a number of ways: a multicultural human subject, when considered as the “unthought,” is a subjectivity without a specific corollary identification, yet a subjectivity that I believe is implicated in the subtext of discourses of cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism circulating in Canadian society. As an unthought, the multicultural human subject has potential to interrupt hegemonic relations as a “non-hegemonic identity” (Bell, 1999), but it is also at great risk of being subsumed by hegemony. Representing this unthought so that it might function as a critical intervention, then, is a challenge of momentous proportion.

Representation itself has a double meaning within ethnographic epistemologies. The term “representation” has acquired a negative connotation arising from its association with anthropological ethnography. In this perspective, representation is a form of “speaking for” that denies agency to the people about whom the ethnographer writes. In the colonial period, speaking for was justified by paternalistic arguments that insisted indigenous people were like children and thus unable to speak for themselves (Smith, 1999, p. 150). Although postmodern and postcolonial discourses have discredited speaking for as a narrative attitude or technique of representation, I want to make clear that I, too, reject it. My concern here arises because the study’s participants are adolescents and children. Even though the work of this project involves minors, the narrative emerges from a belief that the participants in this project are fully capable of speaking for themselves and beyond that, of providing valuable insights about the world in which they live. It is for this reason that I conducted interviews with all of the study’s participants, as a way to ensure that their voices would be heard in their own words.

This desire for my participants' voices to be heard, though, invokes the other meaning of representation common to ethnography, that of how to "present" the study. What form of critical ethnography should this project assume? In what ways will I represent the study's participants and myself as researcher, teacher, and participant? How can I present those representations in a way that allows participants' voices to be heard as peers to my own voice within this document? Tedlock (2000) writes

The exploration of ethical issues involved in the process of generating ethnographic information and publishing ethnographic accounts encouraged ethnographers to combine the political, philosophical, and personal within single accounts. Instead of choosing between writing an ethnographic memoir centering on the self or a life history or standard monograph centering on the other, an ethnographer can allow both self and other to appear together within a single narrative that carries a multiplicity of dialoguing voices (p. 471).

These questions led me to particular decisions about gathering information and about writing the ethnographic narrative. As teacher-conductor for the students involved in this study, observation could only occur while I was in the act of teaching. Thus, I decided that the best way to find out what my students thought about their experiences with global song would be to talk to them. Although the interviews conducted for this purpose were "formal" in the sense that they took place at an appointed time and place, and were tape-recorded, I tried to maintain an atmosphere of informality during the process so that the adolescents who took part would feel, to the extent possible, as though they were just having a long conversation with me about particular topics of common interest. As a way to critique (or "observe") the rehearsal context, and to provide another tool of analysis, I maintained a reflective journal for the duration of the data collection period. Excerpts from interviews with students and excerpts from my reflective journal serve to create ethnographic narratives that present our thoughts in our individual voices. As I began to write the narrative, however, I found that I needed yet another vehicle to allow for

personal reflection on both forms of the data and its implications. To this end I created a “personal reflection” narrative voice. The overall narrative, then, is presented as a hybrid text that mixes ethnographic description, analysis, and philosophical discussion. The hybrid text allows me to both represent and write in multiple voices (Goldstein, 2003, p. 184-185). Even so, as the author of this text, editorial concerns occasionally required that the various voices be edited for inclusion in the narrative. Sometimes I undid the “necklaces of words and strung them back together” (Behar cited in Goldstein, 2003, p. 185) to represent a particular train of thought in dialogue that may have wandered off the path for some distance before finally returning to it. Although by no means a perfect solution to the many philosophical issues raised by ethnographic representation, this approach enables the various voices to speak within contexts that accurately reflect the tone of the interviews and the realities of life in the MFYC.

To distinguish between the various voices employed in this narrative, different fonts were utilized. My academic voice and quotations from other scholars all utilize the primary font of this thesis, Century Schoolbook. The MFYC choristers’ voices are in Arial font. Excerpts from my reflexive journal are in *Lucida handwriting font* and enclosed in a border to indicate they are from my journal. Finally, my reflexive comments, made while in the act of constructing this narrative, appear in *Century Schoolbook italic font*, in order to differentiate them from the journal entries and from the primary font.

This ethnography about a fragile and potentially emerging multicultural human subject is written from the postmodern perspective that believes it is impossible to actually re-present any person or group of people “realistically.” Having made this acknowledgement, however, I also admit that I stop short of utilizing techniques adopted by some other researchers, such as composite characters and creative non-fictions common to recent interests in new forms of ethnography (Behar, 1995; Denzin, 1997; Richardson, 2000), although early in the writing process I experimented with some of these forms of data

representation. I also opted not to abandon the activity of theory construction that results from postmodern skepticism toward theory (Rosenau, 1992, p. 107). In part this decision was made in view of the reality that this project is a doctoral thesis, one that demands some type of theorization. Even so, I do have control over the actual writing process: in bringing together varied aspects of the social conditions affecting the MFYC, there is an implication that I have already “theorized” what I choose to present and represent in these pages. I prefer, therefore, to attempt to make clear, in writing, those thoughts that are products of my theorizing. It is, one could theorize, a concession to the hegemonic implications of a doctoral thesis, and a divergence from postmodern perspectives that disdain theorizing in the social sciences. The particular issues related to theory building in a critical ethnography will be addressed later in this chapter.

Issues of power.

Critical ethnographic approaches to research seek to move beyond the goals of traditional ethnography, which describes cultures or ways of life from the viewpoint of those living it. Critical ethnography has as its goal, in addition to the descriptions of daily life, exposing power relations and the ways that power circulates and reproduces itself within everyday interactions. As such, the genre critical ethnography encompasses a wide range of research methodologies built on the various traditions of qualitative research, grounded in critical social theory, influenced by feminist theory, and committed to a liberatory political project (Quantz, 1992, p. 458). In this sense, critical ethnographic research draws on the work of Foucault for its understanding of power, which is not to be read in terms of one individual or group’s domination over another, but as a productive force by which “the subject which power has *constituted* becomes part of the mechanisms of power” (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 22, italics in original).

The concept of power as productive force is the focus of this examination into a multicultural human subject’s potential emergence from discourses of

multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, and anti-racism encountered in the everyday lives of the members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. Yet subjectivity need not mean victimization: Foucault's notion of power is also potentially empowering to the subjects it produces and reproduces, since the site of the effects of power is very often the body itself (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 22). Thus the subjected body can become a site of resistance. While I recognize that multiculturalism as a hegemonic discourse may ultimately lead to a multicultural human subjectivity that is disempowering, my hope is that instead, my students' developing self-understanding as multicultural human subjects will empower them to resist oppression wherever they discern it in their lives.

This theoretical orientation to power is implied in the title of this thesis and is important to the overall research project; however, there are also some very immediate and pragmatic issues of power implicated in ethnographic research generally and my research specifically. My relationship to the members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir in the dual role of teacher and researcher is potentially problematic. Although I reiterated many times both before and during interviews that participants were free to say what was on their minds during the interview process, I know for some, at least, there was a real reluctance to do so. Rather than say something that they were not sure I wanted to hear, they remained silent or gave only cursory answers to some of the questions¹⁶. There were other times when participants prefaced statements with such apologies as, "I know you probably don't want to hear this," or "Sorry, Debbie, I really didn't like that song," as if fearing their comments might be received as a personal affront. At least in these cases, the students did say what

¹⁶ This reaction occurred with the youngest of the study's participants, 10-year old Katrina, and may have been the result of her age and a less well-developed ability to articulate answers to the interview questions. Another student, Alicia, age 14, slammed her thumb in the car door upon her arrival at the interview location. Her answers were very brief as well. I had suggested before the interview began that we reschedule, as it was apparent she was in quite a lot of pain, but both Alicia and her father insisted she was fine to proceed at that time. Although I did subsequently try to schedule a second interview with her, I was unable to do so.

they were thinking and were willing to risk making the statement behind the shield of an apology. Fortunately, this was a more common response than a retreat to silence. Although I believe that there was a strong degree of trust for me among the students whom I interviewed, I cannot be certain to what degree power played a part in the answers they gave and the discussions that resulted. In structuring the interviews and in conducting the research, I tried to minimize the impact of this unequal power relation to the degree possible. I conducted the interviews in my living room to provide an informal and relaxed ambiance. We usually shared soft drinks and a snack during the course of the interview. In addition, I dressed very casually (jeans or joggers) for the interviews, sat in comfortable poses, and otherwise tried in my body language to suggest to the chorister that we were merely having a friendly conversation. Although these techniques did not eliminate the issues of power related to my position of authority within the choir, I believe they did help to reduce their impact to some degree.

Power also plays a key role in the construction of ethnographic texts. As the author of this narrative, I have the power to choose whose words among the participants are used, and how they are used. I have the power to edit and to delete, and to omit or silence particular voices within the narrative. The previous section (*Challenges of representation*) on editorial representation discusses this aspect of the power issues involved in writing ethnography.

The power held by the researcher is another of the issues that needs to be acknowledged within a critical ethnography. By using a collaborative research design, my intention was to “research with” rather than do “research on,” so that the voices that need to be heard (Lincoln, 1993, p. 32) would be heard. A collaborative design serves to lessen the implications of my position of authority as both the researcher and teacher to the study’s participants. As a participant in this critical action research project, I placed myself in the position of research subject. However, even though I, too, am a participant in the study, this actually

gives my voice greater weight than that of the other participants, since my voice is heard both as participant and as author of the narrative. The polyvocal, hybrid nature of this ethnographic text is intended as a strategy to minimize the authoritativeness of my voice as research participant within the narrative. To counter-act the potential abuses of power that ethnographic authorship may invoke, critical ethnographic principles call for reciprocity in the research process between the researcher and researched. It is a form of give and take that allows for mutual negotiations of meaning and power (Lather, 1986, p. 263) in the construction of the ethnographic text.

The need for reciprocity.

As an important characteristic of critical ethnographic research, reciprocity operates at “the juncture between researcher and researched and between data and theory” (Lather, 1986, p. 263). In this juncture, the researcher uses the research to help participants understand and change their situation through an approach of collaborative interviewing and interactive research. Lather asserts that the goal of critical research is to encourage self-reflection and deeper understanding on the part of the persons being researched (p. 266), calling upon “empowering approaches to research where both researcher and researched become, in the words of feminist singer-poet, Cris Williamson, ‘the changer and the changed’” (Lather, 1991, p. 56). In this sense, within a research as praxis paradigm, the development of (emancipatory) theory needs to be a dialogic enterprise (p. 59). This requires that participants in the research be involved in the negotiation of meaning related to interpreting the descriptive data or the construction of empirically grounded theory (p. 58). Reciprocity in this sense contributes to collaborative texts that lead to “sharing privilege, sharing literacy, sharing information—which in our world is power. . .” (Behar, 1995, p. 263).

Within this particular research project, reciprocity was ongoing: a focus group of students had input into the interview questions before they were finalized. Their suggestions helped me make sure the language of the questions was easily understandable by all the participants, one of whom was only ten years old. All participants (some with help from their parents) reviewed and approved the transcripts of their own interviews. The focus group met to discuss potential themes emerging from the interview transcripts, and also reviewed a draft of the penultimate chapter of this thesis based upon those themes. This provided an opportunity to share the information and to discuss further the implications of the research for them as individuals and for the choir as a whole. As Lather writes, an interactive approach to research invites reciprocal reflexivity and critique, which guard against the “central dangers to praxis-oriented empirical work: imposition and reification on the part of the researcher” (Lather, 1986, p. 265).

Face validity.

In research produced within positivist paradigms, the term validity implies objectivity of the research instruments and methodology, and an assumption that the researcher is able to simply forget her own biases and values when conducting research (Hoover, 1992, p. 64). Critical researchers, however, view this notion of validity as “a contradiction in terms, a nostalgic longing for a world that never was” (Cronbach, 1980, as cited in Lather, 1986, p. 270). Lather argues that in a postpositivist context, empirical rigor implies developing self-corrective techniques that check the credibility of data and minimize distortions that personal bias may impose upon the logic of evidence. This suggests that critical researchers need to move beyond orthodox concepts of validity to incorporate techniques for assessment of the validity of the research. One such technique is face validity, achieved by going back to the research participants with data and tentative results, to allow them the opportunity to participate in the interpretation of the data, or to question the researcher's

conclusions (Lather, 1986, p. 271-272). In this way, the meaning of the data is negotiated between the researcher and the participants, creating a text that provides “a click of recognition and a yes, of course, instead of a yes, but experience” (p. 271).

Griffiths (1998) also makes the case for face validity in ethnographic research. She critiques views held by some researchers that face validity gained by taking data and analysis back to the participants is a “soft form” of face validity. As she argues, the questions raised within a social justice research paradigm are of the nature of whose judgment counts with regard to the research. To whom should the research findings seem reasonable, right, and plausible? Stakeholders in a dominant viewpoint, she suggests, are unlikely to agree that research findings that are critical of a dominant viewpoint are reasonable, right or plausible (p. 132); thus it is important that the communities involved with the research are able to voice opinion as to its validity (p. 133). In this project, face validity was sought by means of the focus group, made up of five of the twenty choir members who took part in the research.

Catalytic validity.

According to Lather, the emancipatory intent of praxis-oriented research requires what Freire termed “conscientization” (Freire, 1970) or what Lather calls “catalytic validity” (Lather, 1986, p. 272). Catalytic validity is the degree to which the research enables the participants to reorient, to focus, and to be energized towards knowing their reality in order to transform it. Research possessing catalytic validity displays not only the reality-altering impact of the process of inquiry, but channels this impact so that the research participants gain self-understanding and self-direction through participating in the research itself (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000, p. 297). My research with the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir seeks to invoke catalytic validity, particularly through the post-interview meeting with the focus group, and through discussions resulting

from their reading of the data analysis chapter. For example, one of the participants, AJ, who was seventeen at the time of her interview read a draft of Chapter Seven, and emailed me the following feedback. Her comments relate to a statement in her interview that Canada's indigenous people did not have written language until the missionaries arrived (see Chapter Seven for the complete quotation):

You used my quote exactly the way I meant it—sadly. I hadn't realized I had such colonial thinking. I have always been one of those people where I'm like "Learn about other cultures, ignorance breeds stupidity." I can't believe I would just accept what I was told. And I mean who's [sic] fault is that? Not my teachers or even the people in the movies and books who have always told me the same thing. Mine and I think that's what makes me the angriest—I mean how could I be so ignorant? I'm so glad you brought that up in your chapter—it helped me understand that if I am really interested in other cultures. I should really study them, not just accept what I'm told (Personal communication, July 22, 2005).

AJ's recognition of her "colonial thinking" suggests catalytic validity: the research process involving reciprocity has brought her to a new self-understanding that recognizes that school knowledge and the media do not always tell the truth about people and cultures. This realization hopefully will inspire her to dig deeper when she is learning the music of, or doing any form of study about an unfamiliar culture. Through further email exchanges, I helped her locate several sources about Canada's First Nations written by indigenous authors, and, I hope, helped her work through some of the guilt she apparently felt when my narrator commentary in Chapter Seven provided an alternative reading of First Nations' histories than the one she had come to believe was correct.

Crystallization.

One goal of this study is to look at the question of potentially emergent multicultural human subjectivity from a variety of available perspectives. Although qualitative research initially used the positivist terminology of

triangulation to describe this process, Richardson (2000) suggests that “crystallization” may be a more appropriate term. Quoting Richardson, Janesick describes crystallization as part of the postmodern project, a research technique that recognizes the many facets of any given approach to the social world as a fact of life. Crystallization enables the researcher to investigate (what may be) diverse perspectives on the research question(s). In this particular case, the research question itself is concerned with a concept that is prismatic and multidimensional (multicultural human subject); hence, crystallization is an appropriate analytic technique. Crystallization is not intended to provide a comprehensive description of any situation, since a postmodern research approach is skeptical that any description can be truly “comprehensive”; however, it does allow a way for diverse perspectives to be given voice. “Crystallization provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic. Paradoxically, we know more and doubt what we know” (Janesick, 2000, p. 392).

Janesick suggests that crystallization may involve other disciplines (art, music, history, sociology, anthropology, and so forth) to inform the research process. This study utilizes crystallization from that perspective, in that it begins from an intersection of discourses, calling upon music, music education, sociology, social psychology, and other lenses for analysis in addition to the theoretical perspectives articulated in Chapter Two. The polyvocal nature of this narrative also suggests crystallization, in that the varied perspectives articulated by the study’s participants, including myself, offer a number of ways to view the themes that emerged from the data, much in the way a crystal reflects light from its multiple surfaces¹⁷. Janesick also suggests that reflective journals, such as the one I maintained during the research period, are another important methodological tool enabling crystallization.

¹⁷ The musical examples provided on the accompanying interactive CD provide yet another perspective.

Theory building.

One of the (many) things I have wrestled with in writing this ethnographic account of how multicultural human subjectivities may be constituted within the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir is the issue of the theory generated within the narrative. This study employs a grounded theory methodology, in that theory is inductively developed from and reflects the data (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 386). However, this term in many ways does not seem quite right when applied to my research. The research asks a specific question (how might a multicultural human subject emerge within the MFYC context in relation to the performativity of that context?) that suggests an a priori theoretical stance. Added to this, the research has a theoretically specific focus, residing within the critical discourse of antiracism pedagogy. Therefore, while I can speak of themes emerging from the data as being grounded in it, my interpretation of those themes is grounded in a particular theoretical viewpoint. As Quantz (1992) argues, “the data becomes meaningful to the researcher only when the researcher brings a theoretical focus to it” (p. 459).

In *Getting Smart*, Lather (1991) addresses this tension in a discussion of emancipatory versus grounded theory building, about which she writes, “given the centrality of a priori theory in praxis-oriented research, it is evident that emancipatory theory building is different from grounded theory-building” (p. 55). The a priori theory in this case is critical theory as utilized in antiracism discourse, and it is a framework guiding the interpretation of the data. This does not mean, however, that the outcomes of the research will be forced in any way to reflect this as an a priori theory. My intention is not to “prove” the theory of performativity, or to prove that multiculturalism within the youth choir setting produces multicultural human subjects. Instead, these issues are explored as open-ended questions that refer to theory as their points of origin. As Lather writes, understanding the differences between emancipatory theory building and grounded theory

requires a probing of the tensions involved in the use of a priori theory among researchers who are committed to open-ended, dialectical theory-building that aspires to focus on and resonate with lived experience and, at the same time, are convinced that lived experience in an unequal society too often lacks an awareness of the need to struggle against privilege (p. 55).

It is in this vein I suggest that the theory emerging from this ethnography may be more properly considered to be emancipatory theory building. Although grounded in the data itself, it acknowledges the particular political, philosophical, and theoretical bent that I as researcher bring to this project. In making this acknowledgement, I hope that I am able to learn from Lather's questions related to emancipatory theory: how does a researcher avoid reducing explanations to the mere intentions of the social actors by taking into account all the deep structures that shape human experience—psychological and structural, conscious and unconscious—without committing “the sin of theoretical imposition”? (Lather, 1991, p. 55).

In Search of Multicultural Human Subjectivity: Research Design

Research instruments.

In order to examine the ways in which engaging with global song in the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir setting may be performative in constituting multicultural human subjects and subjectivity, I wanted to hear from the choir members themselves by conducting interviews about their experiences in the MFYC. I believed that their stories might share some common characteristics that would be suggestive of the abstraction *multicultural human subject*, and would as well give some indication of how performativity functions within the youth choir setting to constitute such a subject position.

Incorporating the theory of performativity into the research question, however, necessitated that a more complete picture of the habitus be drawn, so that the conditions from which a multicultural human subject might emerge are

more thoroughly understood. This suggested to me that the influence of my particular pedagogy also needed to be considered as part of the social context in which the participants find themselves. To this end, and to provide a means by which I could both provide a “teacher’s viewpoint” to the research, and as a means of ensuring reflexivity as part of the critical ethnographic research paradigm, I maintained a reflective journal of my teaching experiences with the MFYC for the duration of the study.

In order to ensure face validity and reciprocity in the research, a focus group of five choir members was selected. The focus group members interviewed together as a group, and as individuals. The selection process and their role in the research overall is detailed in the section titled *Focus group*.

Participant selection.

At the time of the study, the MFYC was comprised of two instructional levels. Level I was designated for beginning singers in Grades 4, 5, and 6. Level II was for singers in Grades 7 and higher. This was not a rigid division, however; occasionally younger singers were placed in Level II if they came to MFYC with a strong previous music background, or if there were other circumstances (such as advanced physical development) that suggested the child might be better situated in Level II. Because the Level II group were generally older (most were in their teens), and because the questions involved in this research required that participants be able to articulate answers related to their own developing sense of self, only members of the Level II division of the MFYC were invited to participate in the study.

In order to determine how global song in the context of an antiracism pedagogy may function performatively in constituting identities as multicultural human subjects, I wanted to interview enough Level II choir members to feel confident that I had captured the diversity of potential viewpoints available. Through discussions with my supervisor, Tara Goldstein, we determined that

twenty interviews should provide a representative sampling of Level II choir members' voices. To select the twenty participants for the study, an Initial Informal Recruitment Letter was sent to the parents or guardians of all forty-five members of the Level II choir. This letter was addressed both to the parents and the choir members (see Appendix A). In the initial research proposal, I had planned to do a random draw to determine the final participants if the response to the informal recruitment letter exceeded twenty potential interview candidates. This proved unnecessary, as only twenty-one students replied indicating their willingness to take part in the study. A more formal Information Letter (Appendix B) was then sent to these twenty-one choir members and their parents to determine willingness to participate in the study. One choir member subsequently elected not to proceed with the project and withdrew. There were no further withdrawals from the pool of potential participants, and all twenty¹⁸ of these choir members agreed to take part in the study.

Formal consent to participate in the research was obtained from nineteen parents or guardians (Appendix C) of the minors who had agreed to take part in the project. The twentieth participant was eighteen years of age and therefore able to provide his own consent. One of the ethical concerns in the selection process arose from the potential for choir members to feel coerced into taking part in the study. Both the informal recruitment letter and the formal information letter articulated that choir members were free to withdraw from the study at any point, and were free not to answer any interview questions with which they might be uncomfortable. This was also reiterated at the beginning of each individual's interview. Minor participants read and signed an assent script (Appendix D) to indicate their understanding of these safeguards before the interview commenced officially. In an effort to keep the research separate from the ongoing activities of the choir (to the degree possible), the letters reiterate

¹⁸ Of the twenty participants, nineteen were aged thirteen or older; one participant, Katrina, was ten years old, as her admission to Level II was based upon considerations other than her age or grade in school.

that taking part in the study is not considered to be part of the obligation implied in choir membership, and no negative consequences would result for anyone choosing not to take part in the study, or for anyone who felt the need to withdraw from the study prior to its completion.

As discussed in Chapter One, it is possible that these twenty choristers were already predisposed through exposure to discourses both within and outside of the choir to want to take part in this study. The self-understandings of the choir members who participated in this study are influenced by the many discourses encountered at school, home, in the media, with peers, religious practices, and so forth, in addition to the anti-racism rehearsal discourse of the MFYC. In making this statement, I wish to reiterate that my intention in this research is not to suggest that multicultural human subjectivity is potentially emerging only within the context of MFYC, but rather to posit the MFYC context as a possible site for its emergence.

Duration of the study.

The data collection period for the study was ten months, from September 2003 through June 2004, or one complete "season" for the choir. During this period I maintained a critical reflective journal of my teaching related to MFYC choir rehearsals. Individual interviews with choir members, and the focus group discussion, took place during the second term of the season (January through June, 2004). The twenty interviews were conducted between February and May 2004. The focus group met for the first time in June 2004; their involvement with the study for the purposes of providing feedback on the writing continued through August 2005.

Confidentiality.

Since the study's participants were, in all but one case, minors, it was important to take measures to ensure confidentiality to the degree possible. In the first moments of each interview, the student chose a pseudonym. These are

the names by which the twenty choristers are identified within this narrative. Further measures to ensure confidentiality included discussions with each participant at the time of the interview reiterating the necessity to refrain from talking about the interview with anyone other than his or her parents.

Interviews.

Interviews were conducted with the twenty study participants at my home in Mississauga. The choice of this location was another technique intended to contribute to confidentiality for the participants. I also hoped this location would minimize the potentially formal atmosphere that meeting in our rehearsal space or a rented meeting room might evoke. Interview times were scheduled after school and on weekends at the convenience of the participants. Interviews were not scheduled back to back to ensure that no two participants ran into each other coming or going from the interview location.

The interviews sought to ascertain the members' views not only of the global song component of MFYC's repertoire, but also their understanding of its influence in their lives. The interviews incorporated open-ended questions to allow the participants latitude in their answers. Although some of the interviews involved the addition of impromptu questions as discussions evolved within the interview itself, the question guideline that I used to conduct interviews may be viewed as Appendix E. Most of the interviews were about one hour long; two interviews were ninety minutes in duration, and two were around forty-five minutes. The questions and answers proceeded more or less as a conversation as a way to ensure that the participants were relaxed and able to answer in a natural way.

Each interview was digitally audio recorded. Participants were reminded that at any point in the interview, we could stop the recorder if they were uncomfortable with it being on. This happened once in one of the earliest interviews I conducted for this study. In that situation, the participant wanted

to mention the name of another choir member and was unsure how to maintain that person's confidentiality. Since I anticipated that naming other choir members might occur fairly often during interviews, I subsequently began to advise each participant that if they mentioned someone else's name, I would assign a pseudonym to protect that choir member's confidentiality in any portions of interviews that were quoted in the thesis. This seemed to allay any further concerns for confidentiality, and confirmed to me that confidentiality was an issue that the choir members who took part in this study viewed as a serious matter.

The audio recordings of each interview were transcribed fully, and in the interest of reciprocity, transcriptions were given to each participant for his or her review and comment. Most participants were satisfied with the interviews and requested no changes to their transcripts. Three participants made corrections to a few words I had misunderstood; two of the older teens rephrased one or two statements in the transcripts to make them more succinct. In all cases, the revised versions of the transcripts were used in the data analysis.

Focus group.

My commitment to a reflexive research as praxis in this study implies that reciprocity be incorporated into the research design. To accomplish this, the results of the data analysis were taken back to the students for comment, critique, and further discussion. I believe that choir members already had a high degree of trust for me as their teacher-conductor, and this trust carried over to my role as researcher. The participants answered questions with a great deal of honesty and forthcoming, I believe, because free and open communication among choir members and between choir members and myself is a part of the MFYC culture. This will be explored in Chapter Four. However, I recognize that my position of authority as their teacher-conductor may nevertheless have imposed a presumed "need to please." To help minimize this tendency, and in order to

address the needs for reciprocity and face validity, a focus group of five senior choir members was selected from among the 20 participants. I describe them as “senior” choir members because all focus group members were at least fifteen years of age and had been with the choir a minimum of four years; the oldest member of the focus group was nineteen at the time of the study and in his sixth year as a choir member. Because confidentiality regarding who took part in the study is automatically forfeited among focus group members (since they meet as a group and hence know who all the focus group members are), it was important that the focus group be comprised of choir members whom I felt I could trust to be respectful of the need to maintain confidentiality outside of the focus group. Therefore, I invited the five students (out of the twenty who had agreed to take part) whom I felt would take the focus group responsibilities seriously. All five accepted the invitation.

The focus group had several important collaborative roles within this research project. First, they reviewed the initial list of interview questions and provided feedback as to the questions’ intelligibility for the age range of people taking part in the study. Their suggestions and feedback provided me with alternative ways of asking the questions to ensure that the participants could understand the question’s intent at the time of the interview.

Once interviews had been transcribed and analyzed for emergent themes, the focus group convened to discuss the initial findings of the research. At this meeting, I gave each member of the group a list of the various themes I had discerned from the interview transcripts. These were presented as topics of discussion, for which I acted as facilitator. In this way I was able to assess the face validity of the themes themselves. The focus group then discussed what the themes might imply relative to the notion of a multicultural human subject. Although this discussion did not solely determine the themes on which I have chosen to focus in this thesis, the input of the focus group helped me narrow down from a very long list of themes those that appeared to have the greatest

relevance to the focus group members. This meeting of the focus group was recorded and subsequently transcribed. Focus group members each received a copy of the transcript for their approval or amendment.

After completing a second draft of the analysis chapters of this thesis, each focus group member received a copy of Chapter Seven, and I requested their input and feedback pertaining to this particular analysis chapter. I chose Chapter Seven because many of the focus group's comments are represented in this chapter, and because I felt this particular chapter provided the greatest number of arguments both supporting and doubting the potential for multicultural human subjectivity and was a good example of crystallization in the research itself. Although the feedback from individuals was positive and elicited no suggestions for change to the text, this process gave evidence to the study's catalytic validity, as AJ's email to me, discussed earlier in this chapter, indicates.

Employing a focus group in this study allowed not only for reciprocity and face validity, but immersed these particular students in research as praxis, a model they may find valuable later in whatever careers they choose to pursue. Their comments and their willingness to attempt articulating their feelings about music, a subject whose enigmatic qualities often defy articulation (Bowman, 1994b), both helped me to realize the importance of the research for the choir as a whole, and confirmed my desire to produce a narrative that told a realistic story of the participants' choir experiences.

Reflexive journal.

Because of the need for reflexivity in critical ethnographic action research, and for purposes of crystallization, I maintained a reflexive journal of my teaching experiences and my experiences as researcher throughout the study. In this sense, the journal contributed to this project as a reflexive ethnography. Reflexive ethnographies focus primarily on a culture or subculture (in this case,

the MFYC), and use the author's "own experiences in the culture reflexively to bend back on self and look more deeply at self-other interactions" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.740) . My entries in the journal are a narrative record of the study, recounting the events that occurred in rehearsals and other choir situations (performances or week-end retreats). Additionally, the entries provided a means through which I could analyze experiences and interrogate the assumptions and biases I may have brought to my dual role as teacher-conductor and researcher. The journal allowed me to interrogate my teaching praxis, my praxis as researcher, and conscientized those areas where I may or may not have succeeded in achieving my goals for an antiracist, multicultural curriculum within the context of the MFYC.

Data analysis.

The interview transcripts, focus group meeting, and my reflexive journal were reviewed and coded through the use of the qualitative data analysis software program, HyperResearch. Once a complete list of codes had been created (by coding several interviews), I was able to code the remaining transcripts more quickly. The initial code list was fairly lengthy (147 different codes). This was necessitated by differences in the expressive and descriptive language used by choir members, creating slightly nuanced meanings that suggested the need for unique codes. The software allowed for such a nuanced form of coding, providing for annotations to each of the codes assigned. After each transcript had been initially coded, I went through the transcripts a second time to code for the overall themes that emerged from the individual codes. These themes provide the basis from which an emancipatory, grounded theory emerges in this thesis.

Introducing the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir

In this final section of Chapter Three, I provide demographic background information on the City of Mississauga related to the diversity of its population.

I also introduce the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir members who shared with me their time, energy, and thoughts to enable my research into the performativity of the MFYC rehearsal context and its relationship to the potential for multicultural human subjectivity.

Demographic Overview of Mississauga

The City of Mississauga is located within what is commonly referred to as the Greater Toronto Area in the province of Ontario, Canada. Mississauga covers 288 km² (111 square miles), and adjoins the City of Toronto on the west side and on the north shores of Lake Ontario.¹⁹ Mississauga is predominantly suburban, with a small downtown core of highrise offices and residences. This downtown core is home to Mississauga's city hall, and a major performing and visual arts complex, the Living Arts Centre, where Mississauga's orchestra, opera company, and many other community organizations perform, including the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir.

According to the 2001 Canada Census, Mississauga's population is 612,925. The most recent road signs at the city limits post the population as 625,000. Mississauga is the 6th largest city in Canada, and among its most diverse. As of 2001, the "visible minority" (non-white) population of Mississauga comprised 40.32 percent of the total. Fifty-two percent of Mississauga's current population was born in Canada. Of the 48 percent of Mississauga's total population who immigrated to Canada, 40 percent of those did so between 1991 and 2001.

Another Statistics Canada table speaks to the diversity of Mississauga's population. The table citing religion statistics names nine distinct religions represented in Mississauga: Catholic, Protestant, Christian Orthodox, Christian n.i.e.,²⁰ Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, and two amalgam descriptions,

¹⁹ Information obtained from Statistics Canada, <http://www.statcan.ca/>

²⁰ n.i.e. or not included elsewhere

“Eastern religions” and “Other religions.” Thirty-six percent of the population claimed an affiliation with one of the non-Christian religions.

According to the Mississauga Economic Development Office website,²¹ in 2004, 54.5 percent of Mississauga’s population claim English as their first language; French speakers make up 1.3 percent of the total. The balance represents a wide range of “mother tongues.” The website offers the following annotation to the statistics:

- Mother Tongue is defined as the 1st language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the individual at the time of the census.
- Mississauga has a diversity of linguistics and a high degree of integration without any one dominant minority language.
- Persons whose mother tongue is other than English or French make up 17.6% of Canada’s total population, 39.0% of the Toronto CMA’s population, and 41.8% of Mississauga’s population.

The second and third bullet items above combined provide an interesting insight into one aspect of life in Mississauga. Unlike Toronto and some other major Canadian cities, Mississauga’s diverse population groups tend to be integrated within neighborhoods, rather than neighborhoods populated predominantly by one ethnic group. This has led to a vastly diverse situation in public schools. Many members of the MFYC, therefore, come to the choir with a considerable amount of knowledge and experience with persons of different religions, ethnicities, and first languages. This is a key bit of information related to the habitus for the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir that is relevant to the constitution of a multicultural human subject.

About the MFYC and the Participants in the Study

The study was conducted with twenty members of the Level II division of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir (MFYC), a community youth music education program that I founded and for which I serve as the Artistic Director.

²¹ (www.city.mississauga.on.ca/edo), accessed August 13, 2005

In this capacity, I choose not only the program activities, but also the repertoire studied and performed, and I collaborate to set the organization's goals and objectives with a volunteer Board of Directors. The members of the choir are young people aged 9 to 19, representing a range of ethnicities and socioeconomic situations. The admissions procedure for the MFYC will be discussed in Chapter Four. However, the reader should be aware that, even though from its inception as a community youth choir my intentions were for the MFYC to be open to anyone who wanted to join, as an affiliate of the City of Mississauga, some of the regulations resulting from that affiliation result in specific practices that are exclusionary: first, the choir must audition all prospective members,²² and secondly, we must charge a membership fee that provides a “substantial portion” of our operating revenue. How MFYC copes with these regulations to minimize their exclusionary impact will be addressed in Chapter Four.

Having described previously the procedure by which choir members were recruited to participate in the study, I would like to close this chapter by introducing the twenty young people who are such a vital part of this ethnography. Table 1, below, provides the following information: The column *Names* contains pseudonyms that the participants chose for themselves. The column *Years in MFYC* indicates the number of years each has been a choir member; this includes the year of the study. The remaining columns, *Country of Birth*, *Parents' Country of Birth*, and *Self-Identity Terminology* are included here to give the reader a sense of the demographics of the participants in this study in comparison with the population statistics provided earlier, particularly the statistics related to immigrant populations in Canada. Although all but three of the twenty participants were themselves born in Canada, twelve of the twenty, or 60 percent, had at least one parent who had immigrated to Canada. This, too, I believe is an important point to bear in mind when thinking of the potential for

²² This was a condition of the seed money grant provided by the City of Mississauga for the first year of operation.

multicultural human subjectivity, particularly as it relates to what it means to be Canadian, an issue taken up in Chapter Seven. It should be noted that while only two participants in the study are male, this is roughly equivalent to the percentage of males in the MFYC Level II choir (five males of a total of 45 choristers) during the year in which the research was conducted.

Table 1: MFYC Participants in the Study

Name	Sex	Age	Year in MFYC	Country of Birth	Parents' Country of Birth	Self-Identity Terminology
Aileen	F	16	4	Canada	Philippines & Canada	Filipino-Austrian-German-British
AJ	F	17	6	Canada	Canada	Canadian—Scottish
Alicia	F	14	3	Canada	Jamaica	Jamaican-Canadian “but probably just Canadian”
Ally	F	12	1	Canada	US & Canada	Canadian — wasn’t sure
Amber	F	15	4	Canada	Canada & US	Canadian & Norwegian
Diana	F	16	3	Canada	Canada	Celtic
Dominique	F	14	2	Canada	Trinidad & Barbados	French
Emily	F	15	1	Canada	Canada	Ukrainian-Canadian
JoAnne	F	15	4	United States	US and Italy	Mixed: Italian, American, French, Polish
Kate	F	16	7	United Arab Emirates	Sri Lanka	Senghalese (Sri Lankan)-Canadian
Katrina	F	10	1	Canada	US & Germany	Canadian-American-German
Kristen	F	14	5	Canada	Philippines & Canada	Filipino-Austrian-German-British
Lauren	F	16	1	Canada	Canada	Italian-French but “just Canadian”
Madison	F	13	3	India	India	Indian-Canadian
Michelle	F	17	4	Canada	Canada	Canadian
Raka	M	14	4	Canada	Canada	Canadian-Scottish-Irish
Renée	F	13	4	Canada	Canada & Italy	Italian-Canadian
Ricky	M	19	6	Canada	Trinidad & Jamaica	Canadian-Trinidadian-Jamaican
Roxy	F	15	3	Canada	Canada	Canadian-Irish-Spanish
Stefanie	F	13	1	Canada	Uruguay	Spanish (Uruguay)

Summary

This chapter has focused on the methodology employed in conducting the study into how learning and performing global song within the antiracism pedagogical context of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir may work to constitute multicultural human subjects. Critical ethnography as an epistemology was discussed with regard to its applicability for this project. The key characteristics of critical ethnographic research were explored, and their implementation in this research was described. The research instruments related to this study were also discussed. The chapter concluded by providing a brief demographic overview of the City of Mississauga, to describe the larger habitus within which the study took place; it also provided an introduction to the members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir who participated in this research.

Chapter Four: An Open Door — Counter-Rhythms to Traditional Melodies

Traditional Children's and Youth Choir Models

Children's and youth choirs have a long tradition in Europe and North America. Famous groups such as the Vienna Boys' Choir and the Toronto Children's Chorus call up for many people images of a particular sound quality of voice, children dressed in cherubic choir gowns, singing with perfect diction, and with absolute attention to the conductor. It is a common understanding among choral teacher-educators that the accomplishments of choirs such as these can only be achieved through long hours of hard, difficult work — work whose goal is narrow, focused like a laser beam on the creation of a particular sound for that choir. Adjectives such as “angelic,” “pure,” and “disciplined,” are called upon often to describe the sounds of these high profile choirs. It is clear from reading the recruiting brochures of such organizations that the primary goal of these organizations is to make music of the “highest possible quality,” although rarely are such statements clarified with regard to how that “quality” is determined or who judges it. One can infer from reading the publicity literature of these choirs that everything else about their operation is subordinate to “The Music.”²³ Making The Best Music Possible serves as the driving philosophy for such organizations, and although the conductors of these groups may also discuss the ways in which their members have fun together, clearly this is a by-product of The Music. Such strictly musical objectives minimize, sometimes disregarding entirely, how music's sociality brings people together through sonorous experience to a shared, collective world (Bowman, 1994a, p. 54). Statements such as “the music is so much more significant than

²³ In this paper, capitalizing the words The Music indicates a philosophical attitude that treats music as autonomous subject, and as such, is considered by those practitioners to hold priority over other considerations (i.e., social and personal) related to music education.

we are” (Bartle, 2003, p. 91) point to a philosophy that privileges music and the musical results above other aspects of ensemble participation.

The notion of music as autonomous art form has come under attack in recent decades by music educators such as Bowman (1994a) and Elliott (1995), who seek to point out the many ways in which educational practices grounded in aesthetic philosophies contribute to, among other things, elitist attitudes and exclusionary practices. Select school-based choirs and community choirs alike have uncritically adopted practices grounded in aesthetic philosophical assumptions, practices that seem benign on the surface but are strongly exclusionary in their outcomes (Joyce, 2003). Many children audition for such choirs each year, and many are denied entry. The reasons given to these children and their parents put Music in control of the decision-making, masking the issues of racism, classism, and ableism that may in reality drive the choices related to who gains acceptance into a choir and who does not. The audition process favours only those children who can produce on demand, while under the duress of the audition situation, exactly the type of sound the conductor believes is necessary to produce The Best Music. In the Toronto area, the British boy-choir sound is the ideal model for many conductors, yet many children have not been exposed to this particular style of singing prior to their auditions. While it is difficult to equate a preferred sound quality with race, most community children’s choirs in the greater Toronto area are predominantly white, despite the GTA’s multi-ethnic, multi-racial reality. MFYC’s racial diversity is notable in comparison. Canada’s public face would have us believe that multiculturalism is working to provide equal opportunities for all people in all aspects of life, including their participation in community music and the arts, yet the memberships of many local community children’s choirs tell a different story.

When I founded the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir (MFYC) in 1997, I was aware that the way I structured the choir, the types of music I chose for the choir to perform, and the way I ran rehearsals would have a direct bearing on

whether or not MFYC could be an inclusive space. There was some pressure to follow the traditional models, since they have been proven “to work” from the perspectives of attracting many children and of producing “high quality” music. Although I wanted my choir to perform to the best of its ability, I believed at the time, and still believe, this can be achieved without engaging in practices exclusionary to those who wish to join the MFYC. As an undergraduate student in music education, I heard repeatedly from many professors that “all children have a right to music education.” This statement was often followed immediately with, “all children can learn to sing or to make music.” I believed the statements then, and I believe them now. Part of my personal mission in founding the MFYC was to provide another type of choral music experience, one that could disrupt the hegemonic models of children’s choirs so prevalent throughout the world. I wanted to make the MFYC accessible to children of all races and economic situations, and to find ways for the choir to operate as an organization that would not reinforce the Whiteness, racism, classism, and ableism, that I have observed in other children’s choirs.

This chapter will provide a description of the ways in which I intend for the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir to disrupt the hegemonic notions and practices that are taken for granted so often in the world of community children’s and youth choirs. I will discuss some of the practices that I find questionable or objectionable in other choirs from my perspective as an anti-racism music educator, and compare these with the approaches I have chosen for the MFYC. Specifically my concerns are related to the way multicultural choral music education is practiced, although in order to provide background, some of the ensuing discussion will relate to general operating practices. These practices will be critiqued using Jean Ashworth Bartle’s (2003) book *Sound Advice* as the focal point. Bartle is the founder and artistic director for the Toronto Children’s Chorus, which is widely held to be a model for children’s choir organizations worldwide. Bartle herself is considered to be one of the world’s leading experts in

all aspects related to children's choirs: musical, organizational, and pedagogical. I undertake this critique acknowledging that it is a risk for me to do so within the choral music profession. Jean Ashworth Bartle is an excellent teacher-conductor when musical results are the criterion on which excellence is based, and certainly the extensive accomplishments of the Toronto Children's Chorus (TCC) are well earned. I believe her book is a seminal text within the traditional discourse of children's choirs that serves to reproduce inequality in many areas, including race, class, gender, and ability. I focus on *Sound Advice* and TCC practices primarily because both Bartle and the choir are recognized world-wide for their accomplishments, so much so that many other choirs adopt both TCC structure and repertoire as the quintessential model for children's choirs. My criticism is in the nature of discourse analysis from an anti-racism education perspective. My purpose is to highlight the ways in which this discourse frames the accepted standard practices of children's choirs as exclusionary. In doing so, I try to remain aware of the public positioning of the MFYC as a community education program for young people, and throughout this thesis I subject my own practice to similar scrutiny. George Dei states that in order

for inclusive schooling and education to create substantive structural and social transformation, participants must avoid reproducing a dominant hierarchical ordering and classifying of bodies by race, class, gender, and other hegemonic categories. Rather the negotiation of multiple knowledges must take place on the terms of all participants and not just through conditions imposed by the ruling class (G. J. S. Dei, James, James-Wilson, Karumanchery, & Zine, 2000, p. 13).

This chapter "sets the stage" for the remaining chapters which, in many respects, offer a critique of my own practice as the founder of the MFYC, pointing out both the ways in which I have succeeded in disrupting hegemony and the ways in which my teaching practice remains complicit with it, the effects of my own Whiteness and bourgeois subjectivity. Ethnographic data in this chapter both describes and at times analyzes the context in which members of

the MFYC sing and make meaning of singing. This chapter's title, "An Open Door," is the title of a song that the MFYC sang while on tour in New York City in May 2001. It was a song that I had filed away both literally and mentally. Although the lyrics of the song carried a positive message, it did not, to me, seem exceptional. I had not chosen the song for my choir to learn. Rather, my colleague in New York City, Elizabeth Parker of the Children's Aid Society Chorus, who hosted the MFYC while we were in New York, had commissioned the song for the CAS. I had no strong feelings about the song; I did not dislike it, but it certainly was not one of my favorite pieces of MFYC repertoire. Yet in my interviews with MFYC members who participated in my doctoral research, I discovered just how much meaning many choristers attached to the song. Thus it seems fitting to title this particular chapter, which sets the stage on which my research performs, "An Open Door." Lyrics for "An Open Door" are included as Appendix F.

MFYC as a Different Space

Auditions

Assessing auditions.

It may seem contradictory to talk about auditions in relationship to a choir whose stated purpose is not to exclude. It is an area of philosophy I debate with myself regularly. I usually respond to the contradiction by stating that MFYC auditions are not for the purpose of weeding out from the potential pool of singers but solely to assess their current skill level. Auditions are a way for me to get to know the children who are joining the choir. For the most part this is true; in the eight years since I have founded the MFYC, I have only declined admission to two children, both of whom returned a year later (after following up on my recommendation to take some private ear training lessons), and were admitted to the choir. These exclusions occurred within the first two years of the

MFYC's operation; I have since offered spots to all auditionees. If a child under the duress of an audition passes even minimally the various audition tests, she is offered a spot in the choir.²⁴ This contrasts with many other children's and youth choirs, who select only the very strongest of those who come for auditions. During MFYC auditions, if a child has difficulty with pitch matching, I try to give him several opportunities to be successful. I make allowances for nervousness and excitability. Other conductors that I know will not accept children who seem excessively nervous or excited at the audition, as they presume those traits to be indicative of an inability to perform well at concert time. It is my personal goal that each child leaves the audition feeling good about herself, her voice, and what she is capable of learning. Overall, I believe my actions support the philosophy that all children can learn to sing. Both of the children who were initially denied, then later accepted into the MFYC, were young (one was 8 years old, one was 10). I have not yet been faced with auditioning an older child who could not match pitch, and I am admittedly unsure of how I would respond in that situation, since older children (14 and up) are placed by reason of their age into the advanced level choir so that they will sing with their age peers²⁵. In admitting my uncertainty, I acknowledge the amount of pull The Music still has on my actions with regard to the MFYC. My concern for the end product, the performance, still guides my thinking, and indeed, is a fact of life for any youth choir that needs to rely on grants and public funding, since decisions about who will receive funding are based largely on the perceived quality of the studio or concert recordings that are usually required for grant applications.

²⁴ I find it exceedingly rare for a child to be unable to pass the audition requirements at a minimal level.

²⁵ My experience to date with the choir informs me that most new choristers of Level II (advanced level) age apply for admission because they have a friend in the choir. To date, any older teens who have auditioned are musically experienced and thus able to fit in easily into the advanced level program.

In her recent book, Jean Ashworth Bartle describes in detail the audition process she utilizes for the Toronto Children's Chorus. She, too, discusses the many ways she attempts to make each child feel successful during her audition: "They all must leave the audition feeling they have learned something and it has been a worthwhile experience" (2003, p. 80). Her description of the audition process is strongly suggestive of a thorough assessment process, one that I am convinced is conducted in a positive, supportive manner. Nevertheless, at some point, assessment becomes exclusionary and discriminatory:

I likely would not take an older child who has a weak ear and poor tonal memory in the Toronto Children's Chorus. On my checklist I classify the ear and tonal memory into four categories: excellent, good, fair, and poor. The good and fair can certainly improve with practice, but the poor will improve only minimally (p. 80).

This particular statement leaves me with a question: would younger children who have been labeled as having poor ears be accepted into the Toronto Children's Chorus Training Choir? I believe this is the impression Bartle seeks to give, and certainly it is possible to interpret the statement in that manner. The TCC website²⁶ provides information explaining the audition process in somewhat greater detail:

Results are mailed in mid-June stating that your child a) has been accepted into a Training Choir or the TCC, b) has been placed on our waiting list, c) should wait another year, or d) was unsuccessful. (<http://www.torontochildrenschorus.com>)

The above explanation of the audition and admissions process leads me to infer that at all TCC levels, children may be denied the opportunity to join. Neither the website nor Bartle's book explains under what conditions a child might be asked to wait another year, but it seems reasonable to assume that any child whose ear test scores as "poor" will be advised that he was unsuccessful in his audition. It is possible that a child who scores poorly on the ear test portion of

²⁶ "Your Guide to TCC Auditions," <http://www.torontochildrenschorus.com/>

the audition might be offered a spot in a beginner level Training Choir of the TCC. This is another possible interpretation of the paragraph. In contrast, if at MFYC auditions the child passes the audition, she is offered a spot in the choir immediately. If there are any other concerns (behavioural, or auditory), I will delay making an offer until I have spoken privately (by phone) with the parents to try to assess if the concerns noted during the audition can be worked through successfully as an MFYC member. For example, children with ADD (attention deficit disorder) usually do not audition well because of the condition that affects their abilities to attend during instructions, particularly when they are nervous or anxious, as in an audition situation. However, in my experience those children have both performed and socialized well in choir once they understood rehearsal behavior expectations.

I believe the ranking system described by Bartle is one of the difficulties created by western musical practices that construct The Music as the primary consideration. At some point there is always a judgment to be made about who is “good enough” to sing with this group. I am wary of anyone’s ability, no matter how skilled at audition assessment, to determine that a child is not capable of substantial improvement, does not have the potential to be “good enough.” This type of auditioning results in a hierarchical grouping of children based upon their presumed abilities, and is indicative of a European-style collection code model of education. May (1994), quoting Harker, outlines seven characteristics of the collection code model, and the views of knowledge and practice resulting from such a code. Two of these views seem particularly applicable as they relate to the rationale applied to auditions for admission to traditional children’s choirs:

- (1) The pupil is seen as ignorant with little status and few rights—being initiated into successively higher levels within a subject by those who already ‘know.’

(2) Educational knowledge (high status) is kept separate from common sense knowledge (low status)—except for the less able children whom the system has given up educating (May, 1994, p. 42).

In this situation, a child's aural skills development is treated as a high status item, and the system makes almost no attempt to educate those children whose ears are considered inferior, indeed, ineducable. Granted, the Toronto Children's Chorus is a performing group that strives to achieve professional results, as is their right, yet at the same time they position themselves to the community at large as a music education program.²⁷ The elite nature of the program is masked to the public at large. I have spoken with many children's choir conductors who have no ambitions for their groups to achieve this elite level, yet they have chosen to structure their choir organizations, their audition procedures, and their educational levels within their choir organization on the Toronto Children's Chorus model.

The two children whom I initially rated as having "poor" ears but later accepted into the choir, improved noticeably during the course of their choir memberships. The improvement was not immediate and they required extra attention both on my part and the part of my assistant conductor. We often had to work with these children individually, and we had to be careful about their placement within the choir to ensure they were seated near strong singers who would not be thrown off by wrong notes. In the end, though, both were able to perform competently within the MFYC. They made friends in the choir, enjoyed their time as choir members, and their initially inconsistent vocalizations did not hinder the choir's overall musical development.

Even as I write the above I am aware of the way in which it places performance of The Music hierarchically above the social and personal aspects of

²⁷ By this I mean that the TCC's recruiting practices suggest that their curriculum is designed to accommodate all children who may want to sing in a choir, when in reality the program best accommodates those who are seeking to sing with a professional choir.

choir membership. Try as I might, I cannot completely divorce myself from the presumed need to achieve an “aesthetically beautiful” end product, and that any human flaws that might exist in that end product immediately detract from its “beauty.” Does my concern for the end product separate music from its sociality, and in this separation, do I also detract from its potential to influence an emerging multicultural human subject?

. . .the European habit of placing value judgments on everything pervades our thinking to a degree that we hardly realize (Small, 1996, p. 149).

Choir eligibility.

As a community youth organization, the MFYC encourages boys whose voices are changing or have changed to remain in the choir. In addition, we actively recruit boys with changed voices for the advanced level choir. In this regard, MFYC differs from many children’s choirs, who mandate that as soon as a boy can no longer sing in a treble voice, he must leave the choir. Unfortunately, the number of youth choirs is very small compared to children’s or treble choirs. Thus, many of these boys never return to singing once their days as a treble choir member are over.

I can understand why children’s choir conductors make this choice: it is difficult to find good, interesting repertoire for youth choirs, and the period of time when boys are dealing with voice change is musically difficult, as they are often hard-pressed to be able to replicate vocally what they are able to hear. Many teachers feel that they do their best work with younger children and thus limit choir eligibility to younger aged children. Certainly, it is a conductor-teacher’s prerogative to determine the age group with which he or she prefers to work. But in my experiences as conductor of the MFYC with teen-aged boys, as a university music instructor, and as a church musician, many young men have told me that they were asked to leave children’s choirs as their voices changed.

Many of them have inferred from that experience, “I used to be able to sing. Then my voice changed. I can’t sing any more.” Adler (2002) discusses this impact in his doctoral case study of boys’ experiences of singing in school. The irony of this situation is that conductors of both high school and adult choirs perpetually bemoan the lack of available male singers for their mixed ensembles. My decision to structure the MFYC as a youth choir that would allow young men to sing through and beyond the time of voice change was in part to provide a space where voice change was considered natural, not pathologized, and not considered an affront to The Music. It was another way to distinguish MFYC from other local area children’s choirs.

Audition fees.

The Toronto Children’s Chorus website provides detailed information about auditioning for and joining the TCC. Auditioning for the TCC requires the payment of a \$10.00 audition fee. Charging an audition fee is a topic that regularly comes up at MFYC board meetings. There is no question that holding auditions costs the choir money: we have to rent space (although I often audition in my home), we must print forms, schedules and publicity materials to give to prospective choir members’ parents, and we must pay the choir administrator if she assists with the auditions, which she usually does to free me up to audition the children while she meets with the parents. I have steadfastly refused to charge audition fees, as I am convinced it would exclude many children from coming for an audition, particularly those who are likely to need tuition assistance. Audition fees are not a universal practice; in the greater Toronto area including Mississauga, about half of the choirs charge audition fees while the remainder do not.

I suspect that my aversion to audition fees has much to do with the image it suggests about the choir: elitist, for the well-to-do. The fees serve to reinforce an attitude of privilege, and although I recognize that in the opinion of some this

might be considered a means of combating the devaluation of a musical education that seems to be occurring in North America, I think that combat might be occurring on the wrong battlefield, a battlefield that asserts a value for education based on how much it costs rather than what one gains from engaging in the activity. I suspect that any fee charged for an audition would automatically screen out many potential MFYC members whose families struggle financially, and those who “just love to sing” who have not yet given consideration to what choir membership may entail.

Registration Process

Regardless of whether or not an audition fee is levied, the registration process may be the first filter through which potential choir members are eliminated. Some choirs impose a rather complicated application process in order to qualify for an audition, requiring such items as letters of reference from a teacher or school principal, passport-sized photos, essays written by the child on a topic determined by the conductor, and demonstrated proficiency on a musical instrument other than voice (Bartle, 2003, p. 81). All of these techniques are exclusionary: children new to a geographic area are less likely to be able to get a meaningful letter of reference from a local-area teacher. Similarly, children who may have behavioral issues in the school setting may find it difficult to obtain a reference letter from a teacher. On this issue, although I am mindful of a child’s ability to pay attention during the audition, I have had several children in the MFYC who were considered “behavior problems” at school because of Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and other learning disabilities. By and large, these children have succeeded in MFYC and do not pose behavioral problems during rehearsals or on choir tours.

Other registration requirements sometimes employed by choirs are to have parents provide passport-type photos with the application or registration form. These are expensive to obtain and in my opinion, a rather pedantic

requirement in today's digital age. If the purpose of requiring photos is to enable the conductor to identify the student at the first rehearsal (assuming this occurs several weeks or months after the audition), a digital photo at the time of the audition would serve that purpose. Instead, the requirement to provide a photo in advance of the audition, as part of the registration process, serves to eliminate those who are unable to provide a photo, or unwilling to give a picture of their child to relative strangers.

Requiring a child to write an essay as part of the registration process also seems to be a highly exclusionary technology that places at disadvantage any child writing in a second language. Writing requirements also increase the degree of competitiveness surrounding choir auditions and acceptance. If two children are tied for the same single spot within a choir, and the tie-breaking device is an essay, there is little question in my mind that the child who can produce a well-written essay in standard English (in Toronto or Mississauga) would win the spot, creating an exclusion based upon dominant language skills. Such exclusion can be a form of racism and classism. As bell hooks writes,

. . .it is evident that we must change conventional ways of thinking about language, creating spaces where diverse voices can speak in words other than English or in broken, vernacular speech (hooks, 1994, p. 173-174).

A community choir, in my view, ought to provide such a space, where people can speak in words other than English. Certainly, that is my intent for the MFYC.

The foregoing technologies, when attached to the registration process, prioritize a particular set of language skills and assume middle class economic circumstances. The essay requirement, for example, is an insistence upon linguistic capital. As Goldstein explains, Bourdieu theorized that "linguistic capital" can be traded or cashed in for education or "cultural capital" (Goldstein, 2003, p. 12). In the case of children's choirs, the children's parents may be seeking a form of cultural capital on the child's behalf, but the imposition of an

essay as part of the entrance requirements may serve to exclude second language students from gaining access to the source of that particular capital. The use of registration technologies implies that only those who already possess a requisite degree of cultural capital are able to jump through the hoops leading to the inner sanctum of children's choir membership. Often the argument is made that these technologies discourage those who are not truly serious about music study; it is this same argument on which I base my objections. Since young children do not usually know if they are "serious" about studying music, I believe that my mandate as a teacher is to make it as easy as possible for them to discover what music might do for them, and by extension, make it easy for their parents to allow them that discovery.

The registration process for the MFYC is very simple. Once a child has successfully auditioned and been offered a spot in the choir, parents fill out a simple form requesting both regular and emergency contact information. The form also allows the parents or guardians to indicate areas of expertise that they might be willing to share as volunteers with the choir (i.e., accounting, legal, graphic artist, chaperone, etc.). Although we request that each family supply ten hours per year of volunteer work on behalf of the choir, there is no mandatory stipulation for this as part of the membership process. This is in contrast to other children's choirs, one of which I know requires that every family volunteer to run bingo at the local bingo hall at least twice per year. This is the choir's primary means of fund-raising. But the requirement to volunteer at bingo runs counter to many people's religious and ethical beliefs regarding gambling, and is a time imposition that has negative consequences for parents who work night shifts. Since volunteering for bingo is attached to this particular choir's registration process, refusing to volunteer may result in the child's exclusion from the choir.

Tuition Fees

Most local area children's choirs charge a tuition fee to join the choir. The MFYC also charges tuition; it is a requirement of our affiliation with the City of Mississauga. Affiliation with the city is a legitimating credential in the eyes of parents. Affiliation with the City of Mississauga also entitles the MFYC to certain important municipal benefits such as liability insurance, reduced rent to use city facilities, and priority booking of concert venues. Financially, the MFYC could not operate without the tuition fees, as they provide the largest portion of our operating income, another requirement of our designation as a city Affiliate Organization. However, any fee, no matter how small, provides a hardship to some families whose children might be interested in choir membership. The MFYC intentionally positions its tuition fees at the low end of the spectrum, which in the greater Toronto area ranges from \$200 per year to \$670 per year. In some choirs, this fee includes the uniform charge; in the MFYC the uniform fee of \$75 is in addition to the \$225 tuition fee, making the total amount required for choir membership \$300.²⁸ We offer a reduced fee for siblings, as do some other local area choirs, as a means of encouraging participation from all the interested children within a family.

In an effort to remain accessible to families of lesser economic means, the MFYC offers a "tuition assistance" plan, funded primarily through private donations to the choir. I have found that in order for this to be effective, however, we must be pro-active in making prospective choir members aware that the program exists. Whenever I am involved in an initial contact with a parent, I try to ensure that I explain the tuition assistance program as part of the discussion surrounding fees. In order to qualify for tuition assistance, all that is required is for a parent or guardian to write a brief letter explaining in very general terms why the assistance is necessary (for example, "I am a single mother with three children on a limited income"), and for what amount the

²⁸ At the time of this writing.

request is being made, up to a maximum of \$250. A form for this purpose is provided with each child's registration package. The board of directors for the choir then assesses each request and approves an amount of assistance to be granted. Because tuition assistance is funded by private donations,²⁹ we are not always able to accommodate the requests in full. In most years, however, we are able to fund at least 90 percent of the requested amounts.

Even with these measures, I am convinced that the fees act as a barrier excluding some children who might otherwise want to join the MFYC. Although I realize that for some people, the payment of any fee for the activity of singing is a philosophical issue with which they disagree,³⁰ I suspect that for many more the amount of \$300, even if phrased as \$30 per month for 10 months, or three post-dated cheques of \$100 each (all of which are ways that MFYC will accept payment if the family does not request tuition assistance), is just more than some family budgets can bear. If the family is reluctant to ask for financial help, even when it is readily offered, the result is a child who is excluded from joining the choir. Mississauga has a large population of recent immigrants to Canada, many of whom are unable to find suitable employment upon their arrival in Mississauga. Thus it is an ongoing challenge for the MFYC to reach out to the children of these potential choir families. Despite our good intentions, the MFYC structure acts to exclude some children.

Choir Structure — What is valued?

Most children's and youth choirs operate with several "choir levels," as does the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. The levels enable choir members to

²⁹ We have attempted to fund tuition assistance through granting agencies such as the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Mississauga Arts Council. To date, all have refused to support tuition assistance through grants. This is ironic, particularly in the case of the Ontario Trillium foundation whose granting funds are obtained through the operation of provincial gambling machines and casinos.

³⁰ Or for some, a statement that reflects the way music education holds less value to them than, say, sports education. Current house league hockey fees in Mississauga are in excess of \$700 per child, and this does not take into account the high cost of hockey equipment.

be grouped on the basis of age or ability. Grouping by ability seems to be the preferred method among children's choirs, whose structures include choir levels labeled as "Training Choir," "Intermediate Choir," and "Concert or Senior Choir" or similar descriptors. Graduation from one level to the next is not a foregone conclusion or one that results from longevity in the choir. Many choirs re-audition their entire membership at the end of every season, and assignment to a choir level for the next year may be determined completely independently from the chorister's previous experience with the organization. The re-auditioning procedure is another that philosophically privileges The Music over individuals. Certainly, yearly re-auditions are conducive to producing advanced performing groups, but it is another area that can be problematic and hurtful to a child. For example, a child who has been with the choir four or five years and is denied entrance to the most senior level group is likely to feel hurt, and may be so discouraged that they discontinue singing. No matter how the explanation for the decision is phrased, the child is likely to hear, "you aren't good enough to sing in this choir level." The pursuit of music of "the highest quality" leaves many casualties along the roadside.

As conductor of the MFYC, I have struggled with the issue of choir structure for each of the eight years since founding the choir. In the first three years of operation, structure was not an issue as total choir membership did not justify separate choir levels. In year four, I split the group into Level I and Level II, roughly based on age but making some allowances for a child's other musical experience and the number of years singing with the MFYC. This was the structure of the choir during the year in which this research project was conducted. At the end of year seven, however, it seemed to me that further divisions could accommodate both membership growth and encourage the best musical development of individual student members and the choir organization as a whole. We now operate with three basic choir divisions: Levels I, II, and III, again based roughly on age: Level I is for students in grades 4 and 5, Level II for

students in grades 6 - 8, and Level III is for those in high school. However, there are a few exceptions in Levels II and III, based on experience and time with the choir or a demonstrated musical ability at the time of audition. I would not place an older child in a “younger” level, but I do sometimes put younger choristers in a level “more advanced” for their age. For example, this year when we first employed the three-level system, there were several grade 8 students who had already been with the choir for three or more years (three of them were 5-year members.) I advanced them to Level III despite the fact that the entrance grade in school for that choir is Grade 9. I felt that it would have been detrimental to those long-term choir members to remain in Level II, which under the current structure (beginning level singers who are a little older than the youngest beginners in the choir), is basically a training choir. I promoted these students to Level III to the detriment of the Level II choir, which would have benefited from their experience and more advanced musical knowledge. However, from both a musical and social perspective, this decision has proven to be a correct one, in that these five Grade 8 choristers are happy in Level III and have shown themselves capable of the more advanced music studied in Level III.

In addition to the three choir divisions, there is also a Chamber Choir of up to 16 members, drawn from Level III, who are “keeners,” willing to come out to a second rehearsal each week. This, too, varies from traditional choir models, where the chamber choir usually represents the cream of the crop vocally. Although certainly many of the MFYC Chamber Choir members are strong singers, their membership in Chamber Choir is solely the result of the individual’s desire to do more music and their willingness to learn more difficult repertoire. The Chamber Choir performs the most difficult music in our repertoire, most of which is performed unaccompanied.

I do not propose this by any means as a better alternative to choir structure, as there are still many issues involved with MFYC’s structure. The fact that I made “musical exceptions” and granted early promotion to Level III

for a few students created some hurt feelings among others,³¹ and I may in future seasons refrain from making such exceptions, although this does not sit quite right with me either. I do not want to risk students becoming bored by having to remain, for example, in Level II when musically they can handle the challenges of choir Level III. I realize that my reservations are in part related to my music teacher training that emphasized musical standards as a primary determinant for any choral program. I want my choir to sing well, yet at the same time I value choir as a social experience for the MFYC members. By placing choristers in choir levels based strictly upon “musical ability,” I suspect that the result will always be jealousies between those who are and are not granted early advancement to Level III. I currently have two choir members who left other children’s choirs because they failed to “make” the top choir in those organizations. Both of these children are exceptional choir members, and I wonder why they were not promoted to the top level in those choirs. I imagine that their nerves got the better of them at the compulsory year-end re-auditions designed to determine whether or not the choir member graduates to the next level.

The MFYC’s somewhat different structure minimizes the impression that the most senior level is an “elite” or select group. Although Level III is clearly more advanced than the other two Levels, most of the members of the Level III choir have been with MFYC for three years or more. This may be a small distinction from other community children’s and youth choirs; nonetheless, I believe it is an important philosophical difference. The singers in Level III are capable of performing more difficult music because they are more experienced as choir members. I consider the current structure of the MFYC as a work in progress, and imperfect, but I believe it is an attempt to move away from a

³¹ There were four Grade 8 students who were not promoted to Level III and who expressed their disappointment in not being promoted. All four of these students had completed only one year with the choir, and I did not feel they were ready musically for the challenging repertoire Level III performs.

model that places The Music and perfect performances as the choir's primary goals by only allowing the most skilled singers into advanced performance levels. I believe that MFYC values sociality by grouping its members, more or less, according to age than by strictly musical criteria.³²

In Jean Bartle's description of the Toronto Children's Chorus structure, it becomes clear that the over-riding consideration for choir placement is achieving the best musical result, illustrated by the hierarchical divisions based upon implied musical ability:

The 300-voice Toronto Children's Chorus is made up of three Training Choruses of about 60 voices each. I conduct Training Choirs I and II, my assistant conducts Training Choir III. The Main Choir of about 120 singers is made up of a 60-voice Chamber Choir that tours and records and Cantare, for children who are developing the skills necessary for Chamber Choir. The Chamber Choir has a 30-voice Acappella Choir and there is a Choral Scholars Choir of 18 voices. . . .(2003, p. 81).

The implied privileging of The Music in the above quotation indicates its separation from social concerns, a separation that leads to exclusionary practices. Since my concept for a multicultural human subject is as a self-understanding that strives to make "us" more inclusive of "them" (Rorty, 1989), the exclusionary structures of some choirs (and this includes the MFYC) minimize, if not foreclose completely, the potential for multicultural human subjectivity to emerge in those contexts.

The mission statement of the TCC offers additional insight into the way The Music is prioritized for the organization. The statement places the choir's status as its primary consideration ("maintain its position"). The educational opportunities afforded to its members derive not from their interaction with each other, but from the opportunity to perform "the finest repertoire available":

³² As mentioned, there are some exceptions to this, but all have been in the direction of placing a younger chorister in a level with older choir members.

The mission of the Toronto Children's Chorus is to maintain its position as one of the finest treble choirs in the world. It provides unique musical and educational opportunities for children by performing the finest repertoire available, especially Canadian works and new commissions by Canadian composers, and it records this material and performs it in Canada and all over the world (Bartle, 2003, p. 73).

In contrast, the mission statement of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir places the individual child, along with the development of community, as the focal point:

Our mission is to develop within the young people of Mississauga a love of choral music and artistic singing through experiences integrating mind, body, and spirit. Our selected performance-based music education activities seek to foster each young person's personal and artistic development, contribute to the individual's self-expression and growth, and to work toward an ever-developing sense of community among the youth of Mississauga (Bradley, 1997).

Terms such as *community* carry their own baggage. Community is always at once both inclusive and exclusive (Finn & Godway, 1994), admitting some, excluding others based upon whatever criteria for inclusion the community in question adopts. Despite my ambivalence with the word *community*, the MFYC mission statement places the social nature of choir in the foreground of our thought and operating policies. By fostering a sense of community that is inclusive of those from diverse races, cultures, and abilities, I believe we enable a context from which a multicultural human subjectivity might begin to emerge.

Touring

From the description of the structure of the Toronto Children's Chorus, one can infer that although children may be musically ready for the "Main Choir," only half of those are extended the privilege of touring with the Toronto Children's Chorus. Bartle does not describe specifically how the 60 touring choir members are selected, although she does indicate:

It is important for all concerned that those children get along with others. It is important that they function well in a group. Extensive touring can be stressful and requires that the children be able to cope cheerfully with new and different situations (2003, p. 81).

There is in the above an implication that the touring choir of the TCC is only for those who have highly developed social skills, and are experienced enough in touring to be able to cope with the various stresses of travel. The description also implies a homogeneous group of children. The MFYC has toured for the past four years, and took a major tour to Santiago, Cuba in March 2005. The touring choir of the MFYC was made up only of Level III choristers. Because of the cost per person of the Cuba tour, not all Level III members were able to make this trip, as the choir's fund-raising was insufficient to pay the cost on behalf of the choir members. Thus, in reality, only those who could afford the \$1700 per person cost made the trip. I was not happy about this, and it is an issue that the MFYC board discusses regularly in order to find a better means to support touring costs. It is an issue I would like to resolve in the very near future, so that all Level III choir members are able to go on all tours regardless of their family's financial circumstances. In addition, I would like to begin to arrange touring opportunities for the Level II choir.

What drives this desire is my belief that by touring, students learn how to get along with each other, develop social skills, and learn about both the joys and stresses of travel. In addition, travel to new locations provides choir members with an opportunity to experience in small ways life in different cultures. For example, MFYC's first tour to New York City enabled choristers to experience life in a densely-populated urban culture quite different from suburban Mississauga. Touring provides a means through which students may develop a positive cosmopolitanism indicative of a potentially emerging multicultural human subjectivity. Touring also affords choir members an opportunity to learn about each other in different contexts. Such contexts potentially provide the "starting place" from which multicultural human subjectivity may later emerge.

I do, however, understand Bartle's concern for the ability of the touring group to get along with each other. There have, of course, been children in the MFYC about whom I had concerns regarding their ability to get along with the rest of the group or to adjust to the rigours of touring. To date, however, the MFYC has had no incidents while on tour that would cause me to reconsider our policy of including all Level III members in the touring choir. Our choir trips have been successful and have helped many choir members who might otherwise have felt isolated make meaningful social connections with other choristers. During my interviews with choir members, many mentioned tours as their most meaningful choir experiences, as it was on these tours that friendships developed. Roxy's description was typical of many choristers who named choir trips as the most meaningful of their MFYC experiences:

Roxy: When we went on—where did we go? I think Ottawa. That was so fun. Because that was like the first time that I started talking, like I had a few friends in choir, but that was like the first time I actually started talking to and getting to know everybody. That was the first time, on the bus ride there, that I ever met AJ, because she was like, "can you help me study for a test?" And she was like so nice—she started talking to everybody. Because like, usually when you go on trips with people from school—this was like a totally different experience. Especially in the first year—to meet everybody and stuff (Interview, April 6, 2004).

Roxy was in her first year with MFYC when she went on this tour. The experience helped her to both make friends in the choir and to make her feel as though she was really a part of the MFYC, thus contributing to her sense of collective identity and belonging as a choir member. Collective identity and its relationship to performativity in an emerging multicultural human subject will be discussed in Chapter Six. As her teacher, the trip enabled me to view Roxy through a different lens not usually available to me in the rehearsal situation. It is one of the most enjoyable parts for me of choir tours — the opportunity to get to know my students in new surroundings, to see the way they grow, adapt and learn to relate to each other differently than they might in the weekly rehearsal

setting. The MFYC touring groups over the past four years have never been initially homogeneous in the sense indicated by Bartle. We start out as very different people, and there is no pre-conceived notion of whether or not all the individuals on tour will be able to get along with all the other individuals on tour. As I stated earlier, there have been times when ability to get along may have been a pre-tour concern, yet never have any such concerns been borne out in our travels. We come home from our tours as very different people: people who have shared some common experiences, and have learned to accept both our differences and our commonalities. In many ways I believe MFYC touring contributes directly to the potential for an emerging multicultural human subject.

AJ described her experience on MFYC's New York trip, where the hosting family, whose first language was Spanish, assumed that the adult with whom their own child had stayed during CAS's trip to Mississauga, would be traveling with the MFYC to New York and staying with her family:

AJ: When we went to New York, April's mom thought I was Mrs. Green--I guess her mom wasn't really informed that Mrs. Green [the choir's trip organizer] wasn't staying with us any more, and so when I got in there looking like a teenager, I think she was taken aback. She said hi to me and she was very polite to me, but then I think she found it kind of weird that I was walking away with Lora and April rather than hanging with her at the laundramat and talking to her as an adult. And then she got home and expected food to be cooked and everything, because she thought I was Mrs. Green. And then she was like, "Oh my goodness, you aren't the adult!" No, I'm not--sorry! So it was kind of like she didn't get the message--but we still had fun after that. But I never realized that she thought I was Mrs. Green, otherwise I would have corrected her--but she never really said out loud, "hello, Mrs. Green. How are you?" (Interview March 15, 2004).

AJ's experience may have caused some moments of discomfort both for her and for the hosting family in New York; however, they were able to work through the

misunderstanding in such a way that AJ recalls the situation as humorous, not traumatic or unpleasant.

Diana also described a trip experience that demonstrates how the choristers who shared a room in Ottawa worked together to resolve a small problem:

Diana: On the Ottawa trip, when we were in the hotel, none of the girls in my room could figure out how to make the coffee machine work. Like Krissy tried to make it like tea--she took the bag and dipped it in the water. And I said, you're supposed to pour the water through the bag, and she's like, how do you know? (laughs). So we tried it her way first, and it tasted awful. So then we tried the way I knew how and we finally got something that looked like coffee--but it was gourmet coffee and it tasted awful, anyway! (Interview, April 6, 2004).

Repertoire

Repertoire is perhaps the most notable criterion that distinguishes community children's and youth choirs from typical school choral ensembles. The discourse surrounding repertoire utilizes language that refers uncritically to "music of the highest quality," "the choral art," and similar phrases that place into hierarchical ranking the various compositions and arrangements performed by the many hundreds of children's and youth choirs in North America. For example, the National Committee on Children's Choirs of the American Choral Directors' Association (ACDA, of which the Association for Canadian Choral Conductors, ACCC, is a member organization) utilizes such language in its mission statement:

The National Committee on Children's Choirs actively and effectively serves its ACDA constituency by generating interest in children's choirs, promoting significant musical activities for children's choirs, identifying and encouraging the performance of fine literature for children's choirs, and developing projects that

enhance the choral art (National Committee on Children's Choirs Mission Statement, 2005).

Within the ACDA, it is the Repertoire and Standards Committee that determines what constitutes “fine literature for children’s choirs” yet the criteria for this designation are nowhere articulated. A review of the various repertoire lists provided on the ACDA and Choral Net³³ web sites shows, however, that the “fine (musical) literature” designation is implicitly Eurocentric, with some token examples drawn from other choral traditions. These non-European traditions, however, are predominantly from art music traditions of the token cultures, or arrangements by North American and European composers that make use of musical materials from “other” world musical cultures.

In her discussion of repertoire, Jean Bartle acknowledges the importance of including music from outside the European tradition:

At other times during the year, it is important to recognize other religious festivals with concerts that celebrate the work of Jewish composers, the Chinese New Year, Native Americans, or other members of your community. (Sample programs can be found in appendix 3.) (2003, p. 75).

This acknowledgement, however, appears to derive from an additive approach (J. A. Banks, 1988) to multicultural education that “results in a well-intentioned and ineffective *ad hocism*” (italics in original) (May, 1994, p. 4). Quoting Olneck, May asserts that such approaches to multicultural education “merely ‘insert’ minorities into the dominant cultural frame of reference. . .and to leave obscured and intact existing cultural hierarchies and criteria of stratification” (p. 5).

Despite Bartle’s statement advocating inclusion of non-European music in the TCC’s concert programming, a review of Appendix 3 of *Sound Advice*, reveals little in the way of music from non-European traditions. Although there are a

³³ <http://www.choralnet.org/>

select few pieces by Canadian or European composers in the style of certain world music genres, there are no world music pieces in the various repertoire lists. One concert program entitled *Northern Passages* includes a repertoire list of predominantly Slavic and Scandinavian composers, but there are no musical selections honoring the music of Canada's First Nations people or other northern indigenous peoples. In fact, despite the paragraph suggesting that a concert "celebrating" First Nations' music would be appropriate, no such program exists in the appendix. There is very little at all in the way of world music included in the TCC repertoire lists. One composition, entitled "World Music Suite" by Canadian composer Donald Patriquin, is based upon music from Australia, Finland, Great Britain, Czech Republic, the U.S.A. and Canada. There are two or three compositions based upon music from Africa in the appendix, but the repertoire is predominantly European and North American art music. It is without question repertoire of high pedagogical value,³⁴ but the lists, through their inclusions and omissions, privilege the western musical canon even as they are presented as examples of multiculturalism. Multiple cultures are included, to be sure, but these cultures seem to share a predominantly European location.

Boyce-Tillman (Boyce-Tillman, 2004) describes current political thought in Great Britain surrounding music education, which I believe shares a great deal with the philosophy at work in organizations such as the Toronto Children's Chorus:

Within musical traditions themselves, different Value systems operate. This is reflected in the ways in which musical groups in schools operate. They vary in the degree of exclusivity that underpins them. The pursuit of excellence is a watchword in current UK political thinking and is leading to the establishment of specialist schools where musical resources will be concentrated. It also favors the Value systems of the Western classical tradition, the

³⁴ By this I mean the compositions are well-written in my estimation, and provide the sort of musical challenges that help to build musicianship within the choir.

dominant value system in Western culture. This tradition has constructed itself as basically elitist with groups of people traditionally excluded from its higher rankings on grounds of gender, race, and class. Elitism is about power over; it is about control and dependence-creation. It is a form of aggression and often leads to a lack of partnership among individuals. Competition is inbuilt and discourages many from starting on the process of entering (p. 112).

As I read the above paragraph, I realize that my deliberate inclusion of global song in the MFYC curriculum is an attempt to move beyond token gestures towards multiculturalism. I want my students to experience different life-world perspectives from which they may be transported, even if only for a few seconds, to those worlds. I realize that as I write this, many readers will disagree with my choices for the MFYC, firm in their beliefs that I should begin and end with the western musical canon. But I sincerely believe that through music, we can both enact an anti-racism education and help our students achieve a deeper level of inter-cultural understanding that informs their self-understanding as multicultural human subjects. For me there is no other choice. Certainly, I include music from the western canon in MFYC's repertoire, but there is so much more to the musical world. I want my students and I to experience as much of it as we can during our time together. Ellen Swartz (1992) has described her image of a multicultural education built upon a framework of knowledge "that has the capacity to produce non-hegemonic emancipatory narratives built upon a scholarly foundation." Within such a framework:

Multicultural education is a restatement of sound educational pedagogy and practice that requires the representation of all cultures and groups as significant to the production of knowledge (Swartz, quoted in May, 1994, p.44).

Since founding the MFYC, I have always tried to ensure that a substantial portion of our repertoire has gone beyond the boundaries of

European and North American art music, seeking to feature global song (music not considered part of the European or North American classical choral traditions) on nearly every program. On concert programs that, by theme, are “strictly Canadian,” I include music of Canada’s First Nations. My intention is to avoid setting up hierarchical categories of music. There is no “good” music versus “fun” music. We do not speak in terms of “classical” in opposition to “folk” music or “world” music. We do, of course, label genres and musical traditions; it is a necessary part of providing context for the music.

I am admittedly more successful with some programs than others with regard to the amount of global song included. It is difficult to find publications that provide good educational value without representing some sort of negative cultural appropriation. Steven Feld describes the complex issues involved with cultural appropriation in music:

Musical appropriation sings a double line with one voice. It is a melody of admiration, even homage and respect, a fundamental source of connectedness, creativity, and innovation. . . Yet this voice is harmonized by a countermelody of power, even control and domination, a fundamental source of asymmetry in ownership and commodification of musical works. . . Appropriation means that the question “whose music?” is submerged, supplanted, and subverted by the assertion, “our/my music.”(Keil & Feld, 1994, p. 238).

In choral music publication, this results in publications where copyright is attributed to the publishing companies for music that may come from the townships of South Africa, for example. It is music whose ownership has not been verified and no compensation paid for its use. Granted, with much of the world’s music, particularly that from folk music traditions, one owner cannot be identified. Nonetheless, there is frequently little or no attempt by the publishing companies to offer compensation to the people whose music has been appropriated for publication in North America (Bradley, 2002).

There is a vast number of music publications based upon various world music traditions, a great many of these are, quite frankly, musically trite, and othering to the culture. When arrangements rely on stereotypical representations of musical characteristics of the culture, they also recreate an essentialist concept of the music of that culture. An example of this would be the musical cliché of open fifths in a piano part's left hand as representing the sound of native American drums. Many typical "multicultural" choral pieces are not acceptable in my opinion to use with the MFYC because of their dependence on cultural clichés. There are also many well-written, well-arranged pieces for choirs by North American composers that draw from world music traditions. I frequently do include these pieces in my programming. Although they are not what many people consider "authentic" examples of cultural traditions, as global song they provide a passageway to such traditions through their use of known western musical conventions in conjunction with the (perhaps) less familiar conventions of the world musical traditions referenced in the arrangements. Lee Kesselman's (1995) *Mbiri Kuna Mwari* is such an example. The cover notes of the various movements of the Shona Mass (of which *Mbiri Kuna Mwari* was the first to be published) indicate that Mr. Kesselman was inspired to compose the piece following his time in Zimbabwe. He makes no claim that this is "authentic" Shona music; it is an example, in my opinion, of an original composition that displays sensitivity to and respect for the Shona culture, and a viable piece of global song in MFYC's repertoire.

Perhaps in today's increasingly globalized and glocalized world, it is splitting hairs to try to differentiate between compositions by non-indigenous composers and the music of those indigenous to a particular musical tradition, because those indigenous composers also borrow stylistic devices and quote from North American and European sources in their compositions (see Keil & Feld, 1994, p. 241). Music educators have debated their concerns for authenticity for several decades now, and I, too, admit to a sort of nervous anxiety about whether

or not a piece is “authentic.” The dilemma has been, and remains: is it better to provide some context of a musical culture than none at all? In other words, can a good choral arrangement, even if not authentic to a culture, be utilized in a manner respectful to the culture, and is this a better choice than avoiding the musical culture altogether?

Choosing to feature global song in my choir’s repertoire provides a constant challenge to locate published music that will be of an appropriate pedagogical value to the particular choir level and at the same time avoid colonial attitudes that rely upon always-already cultural images (see Bradley, 2003, for a more in-depth discussion of this issue). I recognize that my own tastes regarding global song arrangements have changed over the course of the past eight years as Artistic Director of the MFYC; music that I might have once done with the choir no longer passes my personal “litmus test.” In order for me to select an arrangement for the MFYC, it must have strong pedagogical value, both musically and from a life perspective. The music must “speak” to me in some way; i.e., it elicits an emotional reaction or a physical one such as “goosebumps,” a sense of calm, a desire to hear it again, and so forth. I would be hesitant to publish some of the MFYC’s early concert repertoire lists for this reason (and perhaps this accounts for Bartle’s selection of program lists in *Sound Advice*).

My concerns for authenticity have led me over the past few years to search for more compositions by indigenous composers, and I have found publishers whose catalogs contain works by composers whom I know to have ethical concerns about the materials they use in their arrangements. Although having ethical concerns does not necessarily imply “authenticity,” it does help me to contextualize the use of the piece for my students. For example, I recently used in concert a short set of pieces entitled, *Three African Folk Songs*. The arrangers as well as the editor are North Americans living in Canada. Yet I believe that their treatment of the three songs attempts to convey an authentic

feeling for the music, and I was struck by the declaration in the cover notes that “a portion of the proceeds from sales of this set will be donated to assist in the fight against the AIDS epidemic in Africa” (Leithead & Skinner, 2004). I have some concerns that the music has been appropriated. Although all of the songs credit “as taught to ___ by ___” there is no indication that permission to publish was part of the agreement. Even so, it is clear from the quotation above that the arrangers, the editor, and the publisher (whom I know personally) share ethical concerns about making money from this music and have constructed a means by which to utilize at least some of their proceeds to benefit the people from whom they acquired the musical raw materials. Pedagogically, including this set of pieces on our concert program opened up the opportunity to talk about the AIDS crisis in Africa as part of our rehearsal dialogue. It also helped my students realize that individuals could take actions to work toward solutions to such monumental issues as AIDS.

Similarly, Canadian music educator Kathy Armstrong, with whom I have studied West African drumming in workshops over the past several years, donates a portion of the proceeds from her performing groups’ concerts, and from her publications and CD sales, to the village of Dagbamete in Ghana, where she first studied West African drumming and dance. When the MFYC performed with her group Baobab in May of 2002, we agreed to donate part of our share of ticket proceeds to Dagbamete. Having now studied in Dagbamete myself, I know first-hand the benefits realized by the village from these donations: electricity, a safe water system, a new school, and books for the school library. These are small things, but even small amounts of money can have large impact when directly applied as they have been in this case. Making MFYC members aware of how their performance directly benefited the people of Dagbamete is one way we make apparent the huge inequalities that exist in the world. At the same time, involving choristers in this and other actions for social justice may encourage

them to similar action in other areas of their lives. It is an important characteristic of an emerging multicultural human subject.

I wish there were more publications and publishing houses taking the type of action that Leslie Music Supply, Inc. is taking with *Three African Folk Songs*; it would make my search for repertoire much easier. Although this ethical view is exceptional among North American music publishers, companies such as World Music Press and Earth Songs catalog compositions by indigenous composers who directly benefit from royalties.

I realize my concerns for these issues are directly tied to my interest in anti-racism education and equity: the more I read, the more selective I become when it comes to repertoire for the MFYC. I believe, though, that the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir is beginning to develop a reputation locally as the choir that performs the music of indigenous cultures throughout the world, including North America, and I am convinced that our inclusion of global song in our repertoire enables us to attract and keep choir members from a wider range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds than the more narrow, traditional children's choir repertoire might. This is important, because I believe MFYC's multi-ethnic membership is significant to the context for an emerging multicultural human subjectivity. For example, Kate, whose family is from Sri Lanka, comments on the importance of MFYC's repertoire to both her family's decision to enroll her in the choir, and her motivation to return year after year (at the time of the interview, Kate was in her seventh year as an MFYC member):

Kate: Well, of course when I was nine it was my parents' influence—actually, my aunt saw your little ad in the newspaper and she said, "oh, here!"—so I joined. So from then it's been a place for me to sing—to keep my voice in tune, to (inaudible).

Debbie: Okay, what are the reasons why you have continued to sing with the MFYC?

Kate: Yes--well, if you join a church choir, it's a certain kind of music — church music, and it's either Latin or English. If you join a school choir, well, they do things but I think the teachers or conductors are restricted in what they have to teach in the course outline. But in our choir we do everything, I think—all sorts of languages and a good range of different kinds of music: we've done Celtic, and classical, and African, and this year Filipino, and—I don't know what you'd call “Can You Feel the Love Tonight?” (We both laugh). (Interview, February 8, 2004).

Roxy, who self-identifies as “Canadian,” also describes the way she believes our repertoire is linked to the diversity of the MFYC’s membership:

Roxy: Everybody hangs out with everybody--it's not like a whole racial thing in the background. Like everybody--we're all friends and, I don't know—it's good, like especially if people come to watch us they realize that we're not like an "all-Canadian choir" (uses finger quotes to emphasize). Like we don't care. We'll sing different languages because our choir is filled with different people with different backgrounds. . . . (Interview, April 6, 2004).

The issue of repertoire is particularly important when looking at the ways adolescents’ experiences with global song may be performative in constituting multicultural human subjectivity. In a recent article that attempts to establish within the music education discourse a place for spirituality, Boyce-Tillman (2004) states, “In the essentially holistic experience of music all these areas interact. Decisions in the area of Materials are crucial if the ‘other world’ of Spirituality is to be effectively created” (p.110, capitalization in original). Materials in this context can be interpreted to include choral repertoire, as well as the voices and accompanying instruments involved in any given performance. Boyce-Tillman defines Spirituality as the ability to transport the audience to a different time-space dimension, enabling them to move from the concerns of everyday reality to “another world” (p. 109). I do not entirely disagree with her definition, although I think her concept of Spirituality is somewhat limiting, since her focus is entirely on audience reaction to performed music.

I believe, however, that the concept of Spirituality has a strong link to that of the multicultural human subject. As the authors of *Removing the Margins* assert, “spirituality. . . is the engine that fires our search for knowledge, love, meaning, hope, and transcendence” (G. J. S. Dei, James, James-Wilson, Karumanchery, & Zine, 2000, p. 71). Spirituality may be tapped into during performance not only by the audience, but by the performers as well. For the performers who are so transported to “another world,” as Boyce-Tillman suggests, the result is extremely powerful and can be transformative. It is a form of transcendence, a moment when boundaries of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, ability, and so forth are surpassed in the musical encounter of another world. When a performer is transported by singing songs of a culture she does not claim as her own, the transformative and performative nature of the experience is such that the performer catches a glimpse of what it feels like to be a person of that culture, even if the glimpse is fleeting (his will be taken up in detail in Chapter Seven). This is an important element of self as well as intercultural understanding, and key to a cosmopolitan sociology that asserts globalization is contributing to changes in the way we view our selves and think of our identities, key in an emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

Other authors have explored the relation between music and its constitutive powers as they relate both to the self and to society. John Shepherd and Peter Wicke write:

As we have argued, music is capable of *evoking*, in a concrete and direct, yet *mediated and symbolic* fashion, the structures of the world and the states of being that flow from them and sustain them. In operating on people through a technology of articulation, we can now argue that the sounds of music serve as well to *create* those structures, and to create them in a dialectic of perception and action *consistent* with the quintessentially symbolic character of human worlds (Shepherd & Wicke, 1997, p. 138-139).

Shepherd and Wicke compare the sounds of music to those of language to describe how this process works. Language has an autonomy created through

the relatedness of its sounds to mental concepts and to the particulars of the world. Thus, the sounds of language point outside themselves, but do not contain any necessary connection to the world. The sounds of music, as a technology of articulation, in contrast have a necessary connectedness to people and to the particulars of the world: “in symbolically creating and structuring the world, music ‘pulls it in’ rather than keeping it at a distance” (p. 138).

DeNora (2000) also takes up the concept of music as a technology of articulation in her discussion of music as a technology for articulating personal identity: “Music is a resource to which actors can be seen to turn for the project of constituting the self, and for the emotional, memory, and biographical work that such a project entails” (p. 45). If music is capable of constructing and creating the worlds in which we find ourselves, and if it is a resource through which we constitute ourselves, then repertoire choice is an even more critical issue. If, as teachers, we choose only to make use of Eurocentric, “high art” music with our students, we present a view of the world from the bourgeois vantage point of cultural Whiteness. An approach to music education that privileges European art music continues through omission to marginalize all other musics, and by extension, the people who created that music. As Dei et al, argue,

Transformative educational change must address the challenge of integrating social and cultural values that promote alternative and multiple readings of the world into pedagogies, instruction, and curricula. (G. J. S. Dei, James, James-Wilson, Karumanchery, & Zine, 2000, p. 48).

MFYC’s global song repertoire provides opportunity for alternative and multiple readings of the world. We try to make such alternative readings a regular part of our rehearsal discourse, and in this way may challenge hegemonic assumptions and attitudes. Perhaps more importantly, however, our performances of this repertoire are a public statement of the challenge to the status quo of traditional children’s choir repertoire. As Roberts (1991) argues,

claiming an identity (as musician) necessitates validating such a label through public exposure (p. 38). From this viewpoint, MFYC's performances of global song may be read as public acts that validate our emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

Choir Discipline

Tyranny of the podium.

The nature of choir structure is such that it has become a commonplace assumption within children's choir discourse that only the most disciplined choirs can become successful. This belief operates at the level of what Foucault terms the "already-said" which in reality becomes the "never-said, an incorporeal discourse, a voice as silent as a breath" (Foucault, 1970, p. 33). As Foucault explains, concepts such as discipline are unexamined. In choir discourse, discipline is often related to a structure that positions the conductor as an authoritarian figure who is responsible for all decision-making (O'Toole, 1994, p. 376) (Webster, 2004, p. 210). The enactment of discipline within a choral rehearsal can take many forms. Within children's choirs, the primary focus on discipline (as a particular form of expected behavior) is often designed to create a rehearsal atmosphere that allows for little or no social interaction among choristers. I have heard of children's choirs who regularly enlist the aid of parent volunteers to serve as security guards during rehearsals. They stand or are seated around the choir's perimeter, ready to intervene at the slightest evidence that the rehearsal might be "disintegrating" into a social space for the choir members. Talking and whispering to one's neighbor during non-singing times of the rehearsal are absolutely forbidden in some choirs, highly discouraged in others.

Other children's choirs that I have seen have had more relaxed attitudes towards talking, allowing it during the short breaks between songs. In such situations, however, there is usually a cue to which the choir has been trained

(disciplined in the Foucauldian sense) to respond as a call to attention; i.e., the conductor returns to the podium or gives some other signal that it is time to return to the business of singing. The MFYC operates on the signaling method, as I believe it is necessary for the choir members to interact with each other during the rehearsal in ways other than the interaction that occurs via singing.

Using the return to the podium approach is common among conductors, and while it may be an effective method of establishing routine for the choristers, I have concerns about the subtle meanings conveyed through this particular signal. Bartle, in talking about this particular means of “getting control” (her words) suggests the following:

If you use a podium, stand on it only to conduct. Do not use it to make announcements or for any other non-conducting activity. In this way, the children subconsciously begin to develop a respect for the *podium* (italics mine) and the person who stands on it (2003, p. 63).

The podium is usually a small wooden platform; I have difficulty with the concept that it is in and of itself something deserving of respect. When made use of in this way, the podium becomes part of the relation of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1977b, p. 646), part of a discourse that privileges the conductor as authoritarian figure, a discourse that created what Norman Lebrecht terms “the maestro myth” (Lebrecht, 1991). The maestro myth operates on the premise that the person in the position of conductor of an ensemble has unquestionable authority, exceptional musical ability and judgment, and is to be respected, whether or not s/he has earned that respect, solely because he or she is “on the podium.” Although Bartle later on the same page discusses issues of mutual respect among choir members for each other as well as for the conductor, there is no mention of respect by the conductor for the ensemble members. I doubt Bartle would think disrespectful or abusive behavior by a conductor acceptable; however, in a chapter that so carefully details items such as the tone of the conductor’s speaking voice, or what the conductor should wear during rehearsals

and for concerts, I expect to see at least some mention of the conductor's need to earn the respect of the choir members. Instead, this is assumed as the "never-said" of choir discourse.

Abuse of choir members by conductors is not all that uncommon. O'Toole's thesis (1994) begins by questioning why some people remain in choirs for years when in each rehearsal they are subjected to abusive language, personal insults, and other negative behaviors by the conductor. This, too, is part of the maestro myth, and the result of adhering to aesthetic principles that construct music as autonomous art form. Any behavior, as long as it results in "good music" may come to pass as acceptable, even desirable. Removing music from its human origins by declaring it "more significant than we are" (Bartle, 2003, p.91) and other platitudes imbuing Music with divine characteristics, reinforces the potential for abusive conductors to continue abusing their singing subjects. Over the course of my lifetime, I have sung for more than a few of these monsters on the podium. This has led me to a determined effort not to perpetuate the maestro myth with my own choirs. Autocratic approaches are antithetical to critical pedagogical approaches including antiracism education, which seek to empower students to be able to identify and challenge power structures. This is important for the contexts within which an emerging multicultural human subjectivity may be situated.

A different tactic: MFYC as social space.

Of course, I do employ disciplining routines with the MFYC; it is an unavoidable part of working with groups. These disciplining technologies will be discussed (and in some cases deconstructed) in Chapter Five of this thesis. It is my intent in this section of the paper to differentiate between routines that privilege the music over people and the conductor over the choristers from other disciplinary methods designed to help build mutual respect among all members of the ensemble. The latter approach is built upon a philosophy that places the

conductor on the same plane as the choir members and makes learning a collaborative effort between teacher and students, one that

evolves mutually from the knowledge of teacher and students. The teacher directs the process but not as a unilateral authority. The themes, thoughts, and diverse cultures of students come first: into this material the teacher integrates expert knowledge and social issues (Shor, 1992, p. 144).

As the choir's teacher-conductor, I may have more knowledge and experience in making music than my young choir members, but I believe this can be shared rather than imposed upon them. bell hooks (1994) refers to this as "education as the practice of freedom," a practice that is built upon a belief that the work of teachers is "not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students. . ." (p. 13). A multicultural human subject is one who would "care for the souls of others"; therefore, it is crucial that this quality be modeled and reinforced within the educational setting if multicultural human subjectivity is a desired outcome.

I founded the MFYC acknowledging the choir as a social group and rehearsals as musical events with a social foundation. The number one criterion for joining the MFYC is a desire to sing in a choir, and I have been accused at times of taking in choristers who should not have "passed" their auditions. As I described earlier, thus far in the choir's history I have only knowingly "sent away" two children, both of whom were later accepted into the choir, since their desires to sing were such that they were willing to brave another audition. I try during auditions to assess a child's desire to sing; those that seem truly enthusiastic about it always (now) find a spot in my choir even if there are a great many areas in the child's singing that require improvement. In a sense I view this as part of the job: to give children a place where they can learn to sing as a choir member and to experience music in such a way that they can improve upon their individual skills.

In recognizing MFYC rehearsals as musical-social events, there is more emphasis placed on getting along with one another and on learning music together. Like most children's choirs, I spend rehearsal time teaching music literacy skills such as sight singing. Unlike other choir directors I know, and as Bartle describes in *Sound Advice*, I do not test the children individually on their sight singing as a means of determining who is promoted to the next choir level. If the group as a whole is sight-singing at a competent level, I take that as an indicator that they are learning the necessary skills. I do encourage individual study at home by providing study materials. I also informally assess the children in small groups of 5 or 6 on sight-singing exercises. The assessment is almost always set up as a game and everyone plays the game as a team member. Marks are not awarded, although with younger children stickers are. These informal assessments of small groups provide me with enough information to determine who the strong readers in the choir are and who is dependent upon someone else. Unlike the meritocracies built into some children's choirs that result in the strong singers being promoted into higher skill level groups, I try to encourage stronger singers to share their skills within the choir to everyone's benefit, without pointing out directly to those who are not as proficient that they are "behind" in their learning.

In my experience, there is usually sufficient pressure in the small group assessment to encourage those who need additional work to do more study at home. Of course there are exceptions to this: some children prefer to learn aurally and thus direct their energies to learning the music in this manner. Although ideally I would like for all my choir members to learn to read music competently, I recognize that this does not always happen, and for some choir members, reading music detracts from their enjoyment of the rehearsal time and of the music itself. I strive for a balance between aural and written music learning in that I try to encourage choristers to develop both areas without prioritizing one over the other.

By stressing group learning in areas such as sight singing rather than as the more common (among children's choirs) individual assessment of achievement, I believe another of the problems of the collection code model of education Harker (1994) describes can be avoided:

The evaluative system places emphasis upon attaining states of knowledge rather than ways of knowing — how much do you know rather than how do you know it and how does it relate to other things that you know (quoted in May, 1994, p. 42).

In other words, how a chorister is able to sight-sing as an individual is less important to me than her ability to sight-sing competently as a part of the group. It is a situation where a perhaps instinctive way of knowing “what to sing when” is more important than the actual “knowing what” of isolated note names, rhythm symbols, and so forth emphasized in most sight singing and music literacy texts.

As a social space, all MFYC rehearsals allow for a certain amount of socializing, and this includes the right to talk when we are not singing. I encourage choir members to help each other understand difficult passages of music through peer teaching, which necessitates some talk time. I use my return to behind the conductor's stand (I usually do not have access to a podium and do not really like to use one, anyway) as the signal to prepare to sing. There are times when the choir members do not instantly read the signal and the talking continues; however, most of the time there is a considerable amount of peer pressure at play from the choir members who are most serious about learning the music in the shortest possible time, and this usually works to bring the group to attention in short order. It is rare for me to have to use secondary or verbal commands to gain the group's attention. The atmosphere in our rehearsal rooms is relaxed and there is a congeniality among the choir members that is easily discernible, as Ally describes:

Ally: I wanted to come to the MFYC because in (name of another choir)--I was kind of--they're more serious there and it was really a far distance to go every Tuesday, so me and my mom decided that if I didn't make the senior choir. . . my mom said maybe we should go to another choir. And I didn't make it, so then I'm like, yea, maybe we should, because it really is far away. And then we decided to go with MFYC. And I find it like so nice—like you guys are so friendly and everything, we have fun instead of like being serious (Interview March 22, 2004).

Ally has made a significant contribution to the MFYC since she joined. The less competitive nature of our structure seems to suit her personality, but her social nature does not pose a “discipline problem.” It is apparent from the above quotation that Ally’s participation in a choir is important for her parents, but at the same time her mother has concerns for Ally’s self-esteem as part of that membership. Failing to make the senior level in another choir prompted a decision to change organizations. This could be read to mean that Ally’s mom did not feel that the longer drive was worthwhile if Ally was not going to be performing in the top choir level. This certainly may have been a part of the family’s decision to change organizations, but I believe it is important to realize that Ally herself recognizes that different choirs have different objectives with regard to their structures and performances. In addition, these differences may mean that some people feel better in certain types of organizations than others. These are important realizations for a twelve-year old. Within the context of this thesis, the recognition and acceptance of difference is characteristic of multicultural human subjectivity.

I must admit that I am bothered by the implication in Ally’s statement above that the MFYC is “less serious” than other children’s choirs. I am serious about what we do. I sincerely want MFYC members to learn as much music and as much about the music we sing as is possible. I am not, however, willing to sacrifice individuals’ feelings or self-esteem in pursuit of performing well. I believe that what bothers me in Ally’s statement is that I know other choirs use

the label “less serious” in describing the MFYC to discourage their own members from changing choirs, and at the recruiting stage, as a means of encouraging potential members to join their group rather than MFYC. In my view, it is not that MFYC is “less serious” about the music. The issue is that The Music is not the pre-eminent criterion guiding what we do. My motivation as I choose music, activities, plan tours, concerts, and other related choir events has to do with providing the choir members with a worthwhile experience, or stated somewhat differently, learning and performing this music (going on this tour, performing this concert program, and so forth) should provide my students with a positive experience that will enable them to gain new self-other understanding. What is most important to me is not that the students learn The Music, but that they learn about themselves and others by engaging in music. It is a subtle difference, but one that I believe has important implications for music education and for an emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

Performative Pedagogy and the MFYC

To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin (hooks, 1994, p. 13).

bell hooks writes, “teaching is a performative act” that opens up possibilities for change and allows for spontaneous shifts. These changes and shifts may then work as catalysts to draw out what is unique in each classroom (1994, p. 11). When I first read hooks’ words, I was immediately drawn to their passion, to her desire to find ways to make each student in her class feel as though she is heard and can make a meaningful contribution. I share this passion for the MFYC: that every child who comes to sing in my choir can feel that her voice matters, that he is an important part of whatever we do. I do not want to replicate centuries-old models of what a choir “should be” or what a conductor “should do.” I want the members of the MFYC to be active

participants in ways that mean more than just singing what and how I ask them to sing. I have often felt that some music educators utilize language that implies active participation by students, but what is really being described are the often passive responses to the conductor-teacher's demands. The unique elements of their classrooms or performing ensembles are masked by the omnipresent control of the conductor, who tells the group what the music "means," how the composer intended it to be performed, and other controlling techniques upon which I have also sometimes fallen back. Such techniques render students and ensemble members passive "consumers" (hooks, 1994, p. 14; Small, 1996, p. 182-204), not active participants in musical learning and doing. Models that posit knowledge as a commodity require the teacher to transmit it to the students as an independent entity (in this case, the knowledge is musical techniques), regardless of the quality of the experience for the students (Small, 1996, p. 184). As Small explains, in systems that rely upon an abstract model of knowledge

Pupils are taken away from their experience of the world and experience instead only the hermetic world of the classroom. . . .If they are successful. . .they may even learn a great deal about the world, but, successful or not, their experience of it is seriously impaired; we have produced a generation who know more about the world, and experience it less, than perhaps any generation in history (1996, p. 192).

Bowman (2005) describes a potential outcome for the abstract model of knowledge as applied to music education, one in which musical practitioners become so obsessed with the doing of music that they fail to reflect on what they do:

It is more common than we might care to admit that performing and practical musical instruction emphasize technique and executive concerns at the expense of the bigger musical picture. . . .It may be that in becoming proficient performers, our students are not necessarily becoming the kind of people we or they might wish (p. 151).

Teaching music within a performative pedagogy places both the teacher and the students in a context where the personal, political, and experiential are all brought together in the moment of the rehearsal or performance (Mackinlay, 2002, p. 21). As Butler (1990) outlines in *Gender Trouble*, gender (identity) is a reiterative act that brings into being that which it names. Through repetition, such acts come to constitute the identities they are purported to be (Kopelson, 2002, p. 17). Citing Caughie, Kopelson states, “pedagogy might well be ‘the site where performative theory comes to have public relevance’” (p. 18). Within the context of the MFYC, performative theory takes the form of reiterating diverse cultural, national, racial, and gendered identities through music. Through a repertoire of global song, I seek to disrupt choir members’ occasionally stereotypical concepts of people and cultures, instead raising questions about notions of cultural, national, racial, ethnic, and gender identity as we corporeally reiterate border-crossings via global song. Our reiterations also interrogate power structures as a way of enabling choristers to understand the types of forces that are at work in constructing the borders we cross. As Kopelson describes it, performative pedagogy endeavors to proliferate innumerable—and inenumerable—possibilities for identity, rather than to *represent* one bounded identity or the other” (Kopelson, 2002, p. 20, italics in original). A multicultural human subject, then, is a *possibility* for identity in this sense, resulting in part from a pedagogy that attempts to destabilize fixed notions of identity in order to subvert systems of oppression. Borrowing from Butler, I would suggest that a multicultural human subject is a theory “emerging at the site where cultural [racial, ethnic, gendered, national, and ability] horizons meet, where the demand for translation is acute and its promise of success, uncertain” (Butler, 1990, p. ix).

Kopelson’s concept of performative pedagogy allowing for multiple possibilities for identity resonates with Simon’s (1992) description of a “pedagogy of possibility.” Simon identifies communicative openness, recognition of

partiality, and sense of collective venture as three dimensions necessary for a social form to be able to sustain a pedagogy of possibility, a pedagogy that allows for “that which is striving to come into being” (p. 65-66). The MFYC context represents my attempt to open the space for a performative, pedagogy of possibility to be enacted, a space where a multicultural human subjectivity strives to come into being.

Performative pedagogy is risky precisely because its specific outcomes cannot be predicted. When individual voices are allowed to speak within the ensemble, as more paths are opened up for exploring cultural articulations of identity, it becomes difficult to let go of the desire to control the outcome, to balance my desires for performance products of a particular kind with allowing the voices of my students to express themselves and their own unique understandings through the music. Yet as an educator who believes that this is absolutely necessary for transformative, anti-racism music education, I persevere in my attempt, and with each attempt, I learn more from my students.

Pedagogical practices of the MFYC: Five dimensions of multicultural education.

My intent from the outset in founding the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir was for the choir to offer a multicultural music education, as well as to provide a space where all children could feel welcome. When I founded the choir in 1997, I had not yet encountered anti-racism education as a practice or discourse; however, since engaging in anti-racism education studies, I realize that although sometimes hampered by my own Whiteness, my goals for the choir have always been congruent with anti-racism principles and practices. One of the purposes of undertaking this study as a critical ethnography was to conscientize (Freire, 1970) those areas where my unacknowledged Whiteness stands in the way of achieving a truly anti-racist pedagogy, and I believe this

study has brought these issues to light. They will be discussed in depth in Chapter Seven.

Despite my lack of experience as a multicultural educator, I did understand that at MFYC we needed to go beyond simply offering a “diverse repertoire” in order for multicultural music to have real meaning for my students. Banks and Banks (2004) identify five dimensions that must be present in pedagogy for multicultural education to be successfully implemented: content integration, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and an empowering (school) culture and social structure. Banks and Banks used these dimensions to evaluate recent research in multicultural education. In the following section, I make use of these dimensions to describe my pedagogy with MFYC. Data from both chorister interviews and my teaching journal will be incorporated to support this description.

Banks and Banks’ first dimension for successful multicultural education, *content integration*, is the extent to which teachers use examples, data, and information from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, and theories in the subject area (p. 4). Because global song is a large part of the MFYC curriculum, I think we have achieved content integration. Global song in rehearsals is not introduced as exotica (Campbell, 1994), but as part of the overall picture of MUSIC as diverse human practice (Elliott, 1995). New songs are taught in ways that provide cultural and historical framing for the music, and that attempt to link those frames to the everyday, local life of choir members. The diversity of MFYC repertoire is accepted as a given by choir members:

Aileen: I really love to sing--and it's so much fun because we sing such a wide variety of repertoire, and I really do value that in a choir (Interview, March 8, 2004).

Alicia: Well, it's good to experience other cultures and stuff, especially something I haven't done before. (Interview, March 28, 2004).

Diana: Well, most of the songs that I heard before I joined the choir were basically English, and it gets kind of a little boring — it's not new music, there's nothing new, nothing different. But when I went to the choir, here was music with different languages, a new kind of rhythm that I'd never heard before. (Interview, April 6, 2004).

Banks and Banks' second dimension for multicultural education is *knowledge construction*, which they describe as important for multicultural education when teachers “help students to understand how knowledge is created and how it is influenced by the racial, ethnic, and social-class positions of individuals and groups” (p. 4). Within MFYC rehearsals, we discuss how songs come to be circulated, created, who has ownership, and other issues related to power structures and the construction of knowledge. The following excerpt from my personal journal illustrates one example of the way knowledge construction becomes a part of the pedagogy of the MFYC:

A few kids (mostly those who had not done Bobobo before) asked if the music was written out or if they could see the words in print, rather than learning aurally. We discussed the fact that in Ghana, Bobobo is not written out, and that we are respecting both the culture and the learning method by learning aurally. It also gave me an opportunity to talk about copyright and the way many songs have been appropriated for publication. We talked a little about the many ways the S. African song Siyahamba has been appropriated. Kate asked about Tazama Bakira that we had sung in the fall, and as a group we discussed how that differed from Siyahamba since it (TB) was a Kenyan folk song arranged by a Kenyan composer, not a S. African folk song arranged by a N. American composer who may not have had permission to use the song. (Journal entry, March 10, 2004).

The third dimension, *prejudice reduction*, describes the characteristics of children's racial attitudes. As a category for assessing current research, this dimension suggests strategies useful for helping students develop more

democratic attitudes and values (James A. Banks & Banks, 2004, p. 5). Since I have never attempted to assess choir members' racial attitudes, it would not be appropriate for me to suggest here that the MFYC's global song curriculum has contributed to a reduction in prejudice among members, as that cannot be established. However, several choir members commented on their own personal attitudes towards those of other races and backgrounds and how their choir experiences have influenced those attitudes. Roxy's comments quoted on page 152 of this chapter indicate the value she places on MFYC's ethnic diversity; Kirsten's comments below indicate her openness towards people of other cultures:

Debbie: Do you think that in some way having studied music from a variety of cultures has helped you to be able to be open to people of all races?

Kirsten: I think so. I guess, again, because I didn't shut people out because of the way they were, and because I was always open, I guess it just made me respect that culture more and have a better knowledge of it.

Equity pedagogy is the fourth dimension identified by Banks and Banks. Equity pedagogy exists when teachers use techniques and methods that facilitate achievement of students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups. Although "academic achievement" does not have the same connotation in a community choir as it does in a school setting, I believe that MFYC enacts equity pedagogy in its admissions policy, discussed earlier in this chapter, to offer tuition assistance to anyone who cannot afford the city-mandated membership fees. Our membership is open to children with physical challenges; this is one very obvious difference between MFYC and other local area choirs. As the MFYC's teacher, I also try to remain conscious of who speaks in rehearsals, and to ensure that regardless of race or background, all interested students have opportunities to try out for solos, small groups and other performing opportunities that are a part of choir membership.

The final dimension, *empowering school culture*, deals with such items as grouping practices, labeling practices, the social climate of the school, and the staff's expectations for student achievement. Since MFYC is a community rather than a school choir, these items also play out differently. Our grouping practices are based upon peer groups and age, and there are no labeling practices related to individual choir members other than the designation of choir level, or assignment to a vocal line (soprano, alto, baritone). As discussed earlier, MFYC is envisioned as a social-musical space, and our expectation for choir members is that they will all learn the same material in an atmosphere that is relaxed and fun. A number of choristers suggested that their experiences in choir boosted their sense of confidence. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5, but I believe that such comments indicate that an empowering choir culture exists within the MFYC.

These five dimensions for assessing multicultural education suggest that MFYC is successful in key pedagogical areas. By incorporating these dimensions into the pedagogical practice of the MFYC, the choir becomes a place where understanding moves beyond tolerance of unfamiliar cultures and music to an active interest in learning at a deeper level. Thus, I believe that the pedagogical practices of the MFYC constitute a performative pedagogy, a pedagogy of possibility from which multicultural human subjectivity may emerge.

Performing the Dream; Dreaming the Performed

We sing together, songs from places familiar and not.

Songs from places that may become familiar

Unexpectedly.

We sing. We laugh. We cry.

We hope. We hurt.

We sing.

We question: How this? Why that? What does this have to do with me?

We sing. We laugh. We cry. We try.

We do not know the words; the languages are not our own,

Yet when we hear the meaning

and feel the meaning.

We sing. We laugh. We cry. We hurt. We hope. We hear.

I pray. (Journal entry, August 12, 2003).

Chapter Five: Uno, Dos, Y Très—Beginning to Sing as Multicultural Human Subjects

There are two things on which MFYC audiences usually comment after seeing and hearing us perform: our “ethnic diversity,” and the multi-cultural nature of our repertoire. We incorporate a broad mix of music from around the world in our concert programming (our global song). This includes music from European and non-European art music traditions, as well as folk music from sometimes widely diverse musical cultures. We have performed a great deal of music from West and South Africa, and I am continually on the lookout for more music from other parts of that continent. We also perform music from Asia and South Asia, although for some reason choral arrangements of Asian music (that meet my personal criteria; see Chapter Four) seem more difficult to locate. We occasionally perform music theatre arrangements and, more rarely, North American popular music arrangements.

I do not attempt to narrow the range of the possible in the overall repertoire plan for the MFYC, although from year to year we may focus more on certain musical cultures or genres than on others. I believe, however, that the MFYC sings more music that can be considered “multicultural” than most children’s or youth choirs in the local area, and that in each choir year we study repertoire drawn from, or at least based upon, various world music traditions. This chapter will look at the ways multicultural human subjectivity begins to be constituted within the MFYC context by looking at the experiences of choristers in their first year of MFYC membership. Ethnographic data in this chapter, and references to choir repertoire, are drawn from my interviews with MFYC members and from the journal maintained during the data collection period (September 2003 — June 2004).

Because the participants in this research were all from the Level II (advanced) choir,³⁵ most had been members of the MFYC for several years, and their responses to the various interview questions reflect different levels of understanding both about music and about their participation in choir than one might expect from first-year choir members. The possible implications for a multicultural human subjectivity articulated in these long-term choir members' interviews will be discussed in Chapters Six and Seven of this thesis. There were, however, five Level II participants in their first year as MFYC members (see Table 1 in Chapter Three). Their ages range from 10 to 16. Katrina, age 10 and Emily, 14, had no previous choir experience. Lauren, 16, and Stefanie, 13, had sung previously in school choirs. Ally, age 12, had sung for two years with another community children's choir. She joined the MFYC after she was not promoted to the most advanced level of that choir.

These five first-year choir members entered the MFYC with differing expectations of what membership would entail. Their expectations about rehearsal routine were predominantly informed by their experiences in other choirs, or from what they may have heard from their parents or peers about children's choirs. All five choristers have returned to the choir this year, from which I infer that their MFYC experiences last year were positive. In fact, the returning percentage of choristers to the MFYC for the past three years has remained at over 70 percent, which I believe indicates that most young people find the MFYC an enjoyable place to sing, a place where they feel accepted, and perhaps other motivating factors that are linked in some way to emerging multicultural human subjectivity. High retention rates for all groups may be indicative of genuine educational inclusion (G. J. S. Dei, James, James-Wilson, Karumanchery, & Zine, 2000, p. 31), thus the MFYC's record in this regard suggests that the choir does provide a space that at some level counters the

³⁵ Level II was the advanced choir at the time of this study; as of September 2004, the advanced group is now designated as Level III. Level II is now a training level (beginning-intermediate) choir for middle school aged children.

disenfranchisement felt by many racial and ethnic minority students in the school setting (p. 270) . It is my intention that my own pedagogical practice within the MFYC be one of “possibility,” described by Simon, quoting Giroux, as

a conception of pedagogy that considers the relations between knowing and the production of subjectivity in a way that acknowledges the complexities of both the production of identities, competencies, and desires and the possibilities for a progressive agenda for learning. . .(Simon, 1992, p. 6).

This chapter analyzes the various discourses invoked in the MFYC curriculum as evidenced in interviews with first-year choir members. The ethnographic narratives show some of the ways in which these discourses work in conjunction with global song as performative to begin to constitute potential multicultural human subjects. The impact of discourses within the MFYC context for choristers who have been in the choir for more than one year will be addressed in Chapter Six. In MFYC rehearsals, the performative pedagogy (Chapter Four) of anti-racism influences individual choir members’ sense of self and of others, and a developing collective identity as MFYC members. Although I do not use the term *multicultural human subject* in my rehearsals or in discussing the music we learn together, I believe that much of what happens in rehearsal enables choristers to begin thinking of themselves differently than they might based upon discourses that construct them as other types of subjects: students in school, sons or daughters, citizens of and immigrants to Canada, as racialized and gendered members of society, and so forth. Thus I believe the pedagogical context of the MFYC works to shape multicultural human subjectivity as an abstract possibility. I believe that studying and singing global song within the context of a performative anti-racism pedagogy tills the ground in which the seeds of a multicultural human subjectivity may take root.

The fertile ground for such seeds is, of course, the bodies participating in the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. In discussing how engaging with global song acts as performative in constituting multicultural human subjects, this

chapter examines some of the ways in which the body is viewed as the site of learning in the context of the MFYC. When the body is the site of learning, discourses surrounding the actions with which that body engages, as well as the actions themselves, are at work in the individual's construction of identity and self-understanding. Since a multicultural human subject is one whose self-understanding is at least partially inclusive of other-understanding, this chapter will articulate how the performance of diverse musical cultures may serve to disrupt discursive racial, ethnic, and cultural subjectivities that also influence adolescents' developing self-understanding.

Chorister Subjectivity and Language Games of the MFYC

The Language Of Being A Chorister

Technical vocabularies of singing.

New members of the MFYC must quickly learn to understand the technical vocabulary of singing in order to perform well as choir members. The physical production of a variety of vocal tone colours, appropriate choral diction, and techniques such as breath management to produce musical phrasing, dynamic variation, and musical articulations require understanding of choral music's distinct vocabulary. In addition, because at MFYC we encourage music literacy as an element of developing musicianship, the language of music notation must also be absorbed and some understanding of its various meanings gained. Beginning choir members learn to recognize notated intervals through tonic solfa, learn to understand and reproduce rhythmically notated passages, recognize and perform linguistic cues such as dynamic markings and expression marks that appear in notated music. We also focus on ear training through use of Curwen hand signals and aural interval recognition and reproduction.

These items are addressed for the most part by rehearsing and performing our repertoire for that season. I also devote ten to fifteen minutes of each rehearsal to sight singing and ear training as the means to introduce specific

musical concepts in a more structured, systematic way. These musical concepts are then reinforced as they occur in the individual repertoire pieces. Taken altogether, though, it is a steep learning curve, because most published choral music requires understanding of a wide range of music literacy concepts in order to perform it effectively.

Embodied learning.

None of the learning concepts outlined above are conceived of or presented as “facts” or isolated tidbits of knowledge in MFYC rehearsals. It is always my aim to teach the concepts through their application in the music we learn and perform in each rehearsal. It is not enough that a chorister can *explain* what a particular musical symbol such as *f* or *mp* might mean; the choir as a whole needs to demonstrate their understanding as they perform the piece in both rehearsals and in concert performances. It is a form of embodied learning. I shall return to this concept of embodiment and embodied learning a little later in this chapter. My purpose in raising the term here is to clarify that what we do at MFYC is not intended to produce a list of facts, terms, or definitions that can be described verbally or on paper. Rather, the ability of the choir to demonstrate their understanding of a wide variety of musical concepts through singing is the goal. The technical vocabularies involved in singing in a choir are demonstrated as understood through performance. I attempt in my teaching to disrupt the notion of a mind/body split, and to reinforce the concept that the mind is the body and vice versa (Johnson, 1987). Performing music well demonstrates the collective knowledge of the individual choir members; this knowledge is both verbal and embodied.

Music literacy and aural traditions.

The “learning curve” of musicianship is a steep one; no choir member ever reaches a point where she knows all there is to know. It is my aim, however, that choristers achieve a minimum level of competency as quickly as possible, so that

they are able to participate more fully in each rehearsal. Since musicianship develops over a long period of time, musical concepts become more deeply understood the longer one is involved in performing music. To encourage an ongoing development of musicianship, expected levels of competency for choristers increase with the length of time and amount of experience in the choir. It is part of a discourse that produces “musicians” as subjects and assumes that in order to be a musician in the western world, one must be able to read and understand musical notation.³⁶ In the choir setting, being unfamiliar with the technical vocabulary used in rehearsals, or being unable to read music, puts the participant at a disadvantage that may have negative impact on choir members’ constructions of self as singing subjects (Joyce, 2003). Although I attempt to minimize the exclusionary effects use of the choral discourse may carry by offering multiple explanations and examples to questions that are posed,³⁷ the type of music MFYC learns and performs would be difficult to sing well if the singers had no capacity to read notation, no understanding of musical concepts and terms, or other aspects of performance that are dependent upon the conventions of western music notation.

In order to counteract the hegemony of western musical conventions which alienates some people from the belief that they can sing (Joyce, 2003), within the MFYC we also engage in global song genres from aural (non-notated) traditions. This provides choir members with an alternative way of being musical that is not dependent upon notational literacy. In this sense, MFYC’s curriculum is hybrid and acknowledges the different ways of knowing of our diverse student membership as well as the different ways of knowing of people from cultures around the world. Recognizing and engaging different ways of knowing is important in antiracism pedagogy (G. J. S. Dei, Hall, & Rosenberg,

³⁶ The ability to read notation as essential to musicianship derives from European classical traditions of music making. Aural traditions of world musics and certain western musical practices such as the blues do not posit reading notation and musicianship as codependent.

³⁷ And encourage the choristers themselves to provide multiple explanations and examples for each other.

2000, p. 7). Acknowledgement and validation of diverse ways of knowing, including validation of indigenous knowledge, is also characteristic of multicultural human subjectivity, in that all forms of knowing are recognized as having validity, including intuition and knowledge produced within the self and the body. Through recognition and validation of various forms of self-generated knowledge, choir members and I together can produce broader social understandings of the larger social context (G. J. S. Dei, James, James-Wilson, Karumanchery, & Zine, 2000, p. 46) for the music we sing. In keeping with this belief, aural transmission methods of learning music are encouraged whenever they are embedded in the musical tradition being studied (Campbell, 2004, p. 14). Even so, most of MFYC's curriculum is drawn from published music, thus privileging western notation and music literacy as a dominant form of knowledge.

The Language Of Languages: Singing A Multicultural Human Subject

In addition to the technical vocabulary associated with singing choral music, MYFC members receive early exposure to songs using languages other than English. This usually comes as a surprise not only to choir members, but also to their parents when they attend their first MFYC concert. My desire to introduce the choir to choral repertoire in languages other than English is in keeping with my belief that singing in other languages is a way for choir members to experience the music the way it may have been intended by the composer or by the people from whose tradition it is drawn. It is an undeniably cosmopolitan attitude that I believe is important as a way to develop cross-cultural understanding and to understand the broader social context of the music, indicators of an emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

Because choral music is dependent upon a combination of pitch and the sound of the word or syllable sung on the many individual pitches that make up

a song, any translation from one language to another changes a particular song's original sound and meaning in sometimes rather significant sonorous ways. Such changes may have a tangible effect on the song's impact on both the singer and the listener. Although MFYC frequently sings translations of song lyrics, in most cases we do not do this without also singing the lyric in its original language.

Although venturing into new languages often comes as a surprise to new choir members, it became clear to me early on in the interview process for this research that most choristers highly value this aspect of MFYC membership. For example, Emily, a first-year choir member at age 15, admitted that singing in different languages made her feel "as though I had been living under a rock" because she had never really considered the vast number of languages utilized by human beings. Speaking of the "Telugu Song" in particular, she then went on to say:

Emily: A lot of my friends are from India, and when I told them that I was singing in Indian (Telugu) they were so impressed, because they don't even sing in that language. I was really happy to know that I learned that. The language was really hard to learn and to pronounce, but when I listened to the pronunciation and learned how to say it, and what the words meant behind it with the translation on the bottom — I like that a lot when there is a translation because then you connect with it faster than learning it from someone else (Interview, April 5, 2004).

Later in her interview, Emily expressed an interest in learning more languages and perhaps studying linguistics at university. It can be inferred from the quotation above that Emily felt proud of her ability to sing and perform other languages, and as the following excerpt indicates, is beginning to develop a sense of understanding about some of the cultures she had not previously experienced:

Emily: Just understanding where those people come from and understanding why they sing that way. Like going to different places and being able to start a conversation and being able to relate to them on another level is really great. Because I believe in the end, it just

matters how you affected other people's lives, and when they know that you know what their life is like, it's really cool. It's great. And so you just make like a web of opportunity to do different things and meet different people, and relate with other people (Interview, April 5, 2004).

All five first-year choristers commented on the multiple languages aspect of MYFC repertoire. Most of the comments indicated that although they initially found singing in a variety of languages challenging, once pronunciation had been learned, it became easier and even “fun,” as both Katrina and Lauren explained:

Katrina: Well, it's not like it was torture, but it took me some time to get used to, all these totally different languages. I thought at first it was like — whoa! — but now it's fun (Interview March 12, 2004).

Lauren: Well, I liked those Christmas songs in Spanish—because it was our kind of traditional song but in another language. That was really cool. Like, I don't know how to say other languages, but I am kind of interested when there are songs that are familiar to me and in a different language, and I'm like—wow, that's cool. I want to learn that.

A bit later in the same interview, Lauren and I returned to a discussion of languages:

Debbie: Let's talk a little bit about our Christmas concert where there were all those languages. You've already said that with languages, you are interested but they're not necessarily your thing to do, so how did that make you feel?

Lauren: Actually, it was a great experience. I've never — well, actually my other choir we got to do other, like Old English stuff, but never the variety that we (MFYC) had. I thought that was very interesting. I was totally willing to learn — it was like, wow, this is so cool. At first I was like, oh — how am I going to do this, and then as you learn it and get it, it becomes a lot easier just saying that. Yeah, it's pretty cool. (Interview, April 2, 2004).

Pedagogical implications.

Designing a choral curriculum heavily dependent upon music sung in languages other than English for me means more than just knowing rules of diction for the language involved. In order for anti-racism pedagogy to be

effective as a counter-hegemonic strategy for dealing with oppression (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 12), we must help students gain a broader understanding of how power operates. This means that they need to have an understanding not only of social context, but also of pedagogic and communicative practices that interrogate how questions of power, politics, and ethics are framed and mediated in textual material, and other discursive representations of society.³⁸ For example, choristers need guidance understanding how the “Telugu Song” may have fit into the lives of those who call Telugu their mother tongue, and examining within the rehearsal context the power relations that may have been at work in the creation of this song. I consider a crucial part of pedagogy to be the inclusion of cultural context for all the songs we sing. I believe this may in part be what Emily alludes to in her statement, “just understanding where those people come from and understanding why they sing that way.” Without some social and historical context, Telugu would have been just a song in a strange language from an unfamiliar, perhaps inaccessible musical practice.

Knowing something of a song’s or musical practice’s context helps “to further humanize it, personalize it. . . and provide for them an understanding of its cultural, historical, and social meanings” (Campbell, 2004, p. 217). The following excerpt from my journal describes how we contextualized the “Telugu Song” when I first introduced it:

I was really excited by the way the kids reacted to the Telugu Song. I have to admit I had put off starting it partly in fear of their potential reaction – or was that really my own fear of the music whose various idiosyncracies I didn’t feel comfortable with?

Anyway, I went online (again) to do more research on the Telugu people and their music. There is a ton of stuff available on the internet, but finding information that would help me teach the piece was challenging. I did find a

³⁸ Thus the “Telugu Song” would be considered a form of discursive representation.

site, however, that had many recordings of Telugu popular and folk songs for downloading, and I made this info available to the kids.

I also downloaded the Telugu script alphabet, which the kids thought was “cool.” Several of them wanted the web address, I suspect so they could try the script for themselves.

When we started to sing, they did a fabulous job with the vocal inflections characteristic of S. Indian music. When I felt they had enough for the night, we went on to another piece, but before putting Telugu away, I asked them if anyone knew what the predominant religion of the Telugu region is. A few correctly guessed Hindu, so then I asked if anyone had a theory or possible explanation for why the lyrics of our song were Christian when the music itself is a Telugu folk song. (We are singing in Telugu so the Christian aspect of the lyric is apparent only from reading the translation.)

One “S. Indian” girl (born in Canada and a Roman Catholic) suggested that missionaries might have put the words to the tune. Another girl offered that maybe it was a group of Christians (church members) who put the lyric to the tune, but then she added that maybe those people might have been encouraged to do that by missionaries. I did not spend any time analyzing the power implications of either of the proposed explanations, thinking at the time it was enough for the kids to have at least made that basic connection. Also, I wanted to get to several more songs before the rehearsal ended.

Upon reflection, I wonder if I should have pushed the discussion further – but then again, we have a concert to prepare, with only 10 rehearsals left, and a lot of music to learn. Also, I do think it was a good start on that piece, and that we can come back to the colonial implications at a future rehearsal.

My decision to “move on” to other music rather than continue the discussion around missionaries and power points clearly to one of the difficulties of teaching for context and interrogating power structures within a choral music program whose primary focus is public performance. My journal gives no indication that we ever returned to the issues surrounding missionary work in

any subsequent rehearsals. This was, in all likelihood, a missed opportunity for such a discussion. On the other hand, my journal indicates that I made a decision in the moment based upon my assessment as teacher that the choir needed to move on to different material, and provides evidence of the sort of ongoing balancing act that all teachers must perform.

It is admittedly a difficult task to learn what I need to know in order to teach the MFYC any piece of global song, and my methods vary depending upon my personal comfort level with the musical practice in question. In order to teach the “Telugu Song,” I needed to learn a great deal about music from the Telugu region and in particular this composition. To do so, I made use of the internet, as the preceding journal excerpt indicates. I corresponded via email with the song’s arranger, Wallace De Pue. I also had several conversations with Prof. James Kippen at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, an ethnomusicologist whose area of expertise is music from N. India and neighboring regions. He directed me to several videos and audio recordings as a way of helping me learn the musical characteristics of Bangladeshi music. For some other types of music, I have brought in what Campbell terms as “culture-bearers” to teach the music; I collaborated with Kwasi Dunyo during the course of this research project when he and I co-taught the Ghanaian dance Bobobo to the MFYC.

My efforts to learn the musical characteristics of our global song are not done in isolation. In an effort to reinforce a sense of collective learning within the MFYC, I encourage the choir members to share their thoughts and experiences with the music in the rehearsal setting, so that we can collectively develop the musical characteristics necessary for a more culturally authentic performance. The following excerpt from my journal illustrates:

What a rehearsal that was! We did a lot of work on the Telugu song, and as we were closing off that part of the rehearsal, Amber asked if we shouldn't be "trying to make it sound like 'Niska Banja' (a Serbian gypsy song arranged by Nick Page that we had learned last year). Serena, whose parents immigrated to Canada from India, took offense at the comparison of S. Asian vocal timbre to that of Balkan vocal timbre. When I say took offense I don't mean she was offended, but she rushed to try to describe the sound she thought we should strive for – then quickly discovered she really couldn't. Soon everyone was offering their own opinion on how to create a more "authentic" sound for the piece.

What struck me most about this was the sincerity with which the questions and suggestions were offered. The kids genuinely want to "do a good job" with the music, which I believe includes respecting the cultural attributes that contribute to its style (or is that what I want to believe is going on?)

It does point to the sort of cultural stereotyping that can happen, though – Amber heard the Telugu Song as needing a nasal vocal timbre that to her seems similar to Balkan music, despite the very great differences in the form and tonality, meter, etc. of the two songs. And I can understand why she might make that assumption – in fact, I was inclined to say "yes" to her question until Serena jumped in with her rather animated objection. So instead of trying to mandate a solution, I again suggested that the kids listen to Telugu music on line to get a better sense of timbre, and I told myself to do some more research on the genre.

At the end of the rehearsal, Kate came to me and said her dad had a good friend from Bangladesh who was a musician – would I like to talk to him? I enthusiastically said yes, but so far I've not heard anything from Kate or her family on that. (Journal, October 29, 2003).

Not all MFYC choristers were enamored of the "Telugu Song," despite my best efforts at providing context. For some students, it was just "too different," and as any music teacher can attest, students always have preferences and

favorites within any collection of repertoire. But for students like Emily, in her first year as an MFYC member, her experience with the “Telugu Song” and the Telugu language expanded her knowledge of the world. Her new understanding of a people with whom she was not previously familiar suggests the potential for an emerging multicultural human subject.

Finding one’s own voice.

Throughout the interviews, many choir members discussed their experiences singing in many languages as having a positive impact on their sense of self-confidence and self-esteem. In Chapter Six, I will discuss this in greater detail as it relates to developing a sense of collective identity and the implications of collective identity as belonging for multicultural human subjectivity. Emily, a first-year choir member, eloquently expressed her realization of the impact singing had upon her:

Emily: Before choir, I was really afraid of singing around people and just starting conversation in general, like in the market or anywhere. I'd be nervous to ask for a bus ticket or to order pizza off the phone—I could never do it. My mom would always have to do it because I couldn't face the other person over the phone. But now, having made so many friends and having them hear my voice, and hearing their voices, and going to different places and meeting different people and just being in different environments while we are singing, has just encouraged me to go out there and face the people and face the world (Interview, April 5, 2004).

Emily’s statement indicates how her experiences singing in the MFYC have helped her not only to feel more self-confident, but to find her own voice, empowering her to become the “author of her own world” (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 309). Although buying a bus ticket may seem like a small thing, being able to buy one’s own bus ticket in an urban space is an empowering activity that enables Emily to be able to travel around the city of Mississauga and from Mississauga to Toronto with much greater ease. Lincoln writes that “the silenced are silenced precisely because they share few if any mainstream characteristics”

(Lincoln, 1993, p. 32). In a sense, then, Emily's experiences with MFYC have helped "lift a barrier" for her that previously prevented her from speaking for herself (Lather, 1991, p. 47). Her experience has helped her to view herself as sharing the "mainstream characteristics" that enable her to make phone calls, buy bus tickets, and so on. Without delving into Emily's personal history, it is impossible to know why she felt silenced prior to coming to MFYC; however, it is clear from her narrative that she attributes her own change in confidence, at least to some degree, to her choir experiences.

Stefanie, whose first language is Spanish, likewise expressed a developing sense of self-confidence directly related to finding her "Spanish voice" in the MFYC, and the spillover of those experiences to other areas of her life:

Stefanie: I think that maybe it changed the way I think about being Spanish because I think I became more confident in myself and in how to speak Spanish. Like, all my friends in my class keep asking me how to say this and how to say that in Spanish, and so I tell them, right? And then they are like, oh, it's so cool that you can speak Spanish, right? So I'm more confident that I can speak this language, and the Philippines is a language that is pretty much close to it, right? So it makes me feel really proud and confident when I sing in that language (Interview, April 19, 2004).

Elliott observes that human beings tend to engage in actions and pursuits that order and strengthen the self. We repeat and pursue those activities from which we gain enjoyment (1995, p. 114), including those activities from which we gain a sense of confidence. Csikszentmihalyi states that "we open up consciousness to experience new opportunities for being that lead to emergent structures of the self" (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988, p. 29). Through successful experiences singing in languages beyond their first languages, MFYC members begin to open themselves to similar, new experiences in the world beyond the youth choir that may support emergent constructions of the self as multicultural human subjects. Reiterative performances of global song in multiple languages may help students find a

multi-lingual voice that not only helps them feel confident about themselves, but may encourage them to “go out there and face the people and face the world,” as Emily so aptly stated.

Go out there and face the people and face the world. . . . What is it about singing in other languages that I feel is so important as it relates to multicultural human subjectivity? I realize that the little snippets of exposure to other languages are not going to make my students fluent in any language. Yet the students themselves infer a value from it that most are not yet able to articulate. As I re-read the above, I read a subtext: helping my students acquire at least a rudimentary form of cultural and linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1977a; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) that may indeed be a necessity for success in a system of global capital. Is it my own belief that we can become multicultural human subjects, if only we do the things that help us to acquire enough cultural capital to understand those who are different? Is this cosmopolitanism at work, below the surface of multiculturalism? (Reflection August 2005).

As Bourdieu writes, students are aware, from their earliest schooling experiences all the way to secondary and higher education, of the influence of linguistic capital on their chances for success in the world (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, p. 73). Perhaps this subconsciously felt need to be better versed in a number of languages both influences the repertoire I bring to the MFYC’s programming and encourages the choristers to be willing learners of songs in unfamiliar languages. This suggests to me that perhaps the move toward multicultural human subjectivity via cosmopolitanism has begun: a social phenomenon, at least within multicultural Mississauga, that operates at the level of the unseen, influencing not only how we see ourselves, but how we want others to see us.

Embodiment and Performativity

One of the goals of my research is to examine the ways engaging in world choral music may be performative of identity (self-understanding) among adolescents. My interest in this question follows a line of thinking wherein musical performance is “ultimately a matter of learning to experience the self as *an identity in the making*” (Stubley, 1998, p. 101, italics in original). In this way of thinking about music making, performing becomes an important place where students are “working out the politics and poetics of identity” (Keil & Feld, 1994). Continuing along this line of thinking has led me to question if my students’ engagement with global song as MFYC members allows for the possibility of identities (self-understanding) as multicultural human subjects to emerge. In pursuing this question, my research enters into the area of corporeality, where the body is considered to be the site of learning, a place where it is

in itself the cultural product. . . a surface that is historically, socially, politically, culturally, and geographically inscribed and hence engages in constant dialogues with multiple and many discourses (E. Grosz, as cited in Mackinlay, 2002, p. 179).

Judith Butler’s analysis of gender performativity (Butler, 1990) has application to the concept of a multicultural human subject, I believe. In her arguments, Butler posits gender as “neither true nor false, but only produced as the truth effects of a discourse of primary and stable identity” (p. 174). Butler theorizes that resistance to hegemonic discourses of heterosexuality is enacted through the performance of drag as a contingent denaturalization of the law of gender coherence, a performance that “dramatizes the cultural mechanism of their fabricated unity” (p. 175). Following from Butler’s arguments, then, if we think of the abstract *multicultural human subject* as a resistant performance that denaturalizes laws of identity based upon race and ethnicity or other discourses of who and what we are supposed to be in a given situation, then it is

possible to think of musical performances that engage and imitate cultures “not our own” as performative acts that serve to inscribe multiculturalism on and in the body — in the body because acts and gestures that articulate the discourse at hand (gender, national identity, racial identity, and so forth) create the illusion of an interior, organizing core for that identity (Butler, 1990, p. 173).

Embodied Discourse

My students reside in a multi-racial, multi-ethnic society that promotes through official doctrines the concept of multi-cultures coexisting peacefully. In a sense, this too is a “fabricated unity,” that positions a national discourse of Canada as a multi-cultural nation in tension with the discourse of official multiculturalism that operates on a presumed separation of Canada’s many cultures as distinct entities. Bannerji describes Canada’s multicultural policy as

an apparatus which rearranged questions of social justice, of unemployment and racism, into issues of cultural diversity and focused on symbols of religion, on so-called tradition. . . Gradually a political and administrative framework came into being where structural inequalities could be less and less seen or spoken about. Antiracism and class politics could not keep pace with constantly proliferating ideological state or institutional apparatuses which identified people in terms of their cultural identity. . . (Bannerji, 2000, p. 43).

Legislated multiculturalism is one discourse among many inscribed upon the bodies of MFYC members. Official multiculturalism through its notion of monolithic, singular cultures, inscribes and naturalizes discourses of race and ethnicity. Adolescents must work out the politics and poetics of their identities not only within the confines of Canadian nationalist and official multicultural discourses, but also through a maze of gender, class, and ability discourses, through religious doctrines, family and cultural traditions, peer pressure discourses, and countless other influences on the many ways by which they come to understand themselves. It would be easy within this setting and with my students to lapse into a liberal ideology of plurality, which like official

multiculturalism, sweeps issues of social justice and racism under the discursive diversity carpet. Yet my concept of a multicultural human subject does not turn a blind eye to issues of social justice. Thus within the space of competing national, multicultural, religious, familial, gender, and ability discourses, an antiracism pedagogy enables MFYC members to realize the inequities that these discourses obfuscate. Our global song curriculum becomes the vehicle for identifying and interrogating issues of social justice through an anti-racist pedagogy that is itself performative.

MFYC rehearsals and performances provide a space where global “music is experienced, not as something given to the body, but as something done through and with the body” (Cusick, cited in Stubley, 1998, p. 95). The discussion following this quotation in Stubley’s article describes how the boundaries of individuals within a performing ensemble blur as the individuals become more aware of the ensemble as a whole during the performance, in which they are “driven by a common goal — be it musical excellence, the work, or a shared sense of community” (Stubley, 1998, p. 95). It is in this blurring of boundaries, particularly when they are blurred through performing music of another culture, where I believe the space may be created for an emerging multicultural human subjectivity. Wayne Bowman argues:

We are what we do. People’s identities and character, both individual and collective, are neither essential nor absolute: they are constructed, elaborated, modified, and reconstructed, enacted, performed. And musical doings carry out that work/play in ways that can be, because of the special way we experience sound and the special ways music making brings people together, exceptionally potent, enriching, and vital. In performing music, we are always performing more than “just the music” (Bowman, 2005, p. 163).

Although my concept for multicultural human subjectivity is one that continually acknowledges, accepts, and respects diversity and difference in ways that soften boundaries between presumed categories of “us and them,” the notion of common goals within “a shared sense of community” (Stubley, 1998, p. 95) also

connotes something sinister. The potential for fascistic expressions of community will be addressed in Chapter Six on collective identity, and revisited in greater depth in Chapter Eight.

Recognizing Self And Others—First Steps Toward A Multicultural Human Subject

During our interview, Stefanie expressed delight with the discovery that MFYC sang music in many languages:

Debbie: So, how have you been finding MFYC this year?

Stefanie: Oh! I really love it! I like how we sing in different languages. That way we get to learn a lot more, like maybe how these people might feel about, you know, Christmas, or how these people feel about this holiday. (Interview, April 19, 2004.)

In the following exchange, Stefanie shares the excitement she felt when she discovered that her own first language was “on the menu” for the MFYC’s December concert, *Holiday Greetings from Around the World*.

Stefanie: I liked the Spanish songs—the “Angels We Have Heard on High” and the other one, I don’t remember.

Debbie: “Mundo Feliz” — “Joy to the World.”

Stefanie: Yes — “Joy to the World.” I really liked those, because it was in my language. And I really liked that, too, because my grandparents could understand it, and they were there that night, and they actually did understand us, so

Debbie: And how did that make you feel, when you knew you were singing in the language that your grandparents would understand?

Stefanie: Well, I felt — once I saw the title I was like, wow—that’s Spanish. I was very excited, because I never knew that we would be singing such familiar songs in Spanish. Like, my mom phoned you, right, and she told me that you guys were going to sing songs in Spanish, but I thought they were going to be songs like I had never

heard before. But they ended up being songs that I had heard, of course.

Debbie: Had you ever sung them in Spanish before?

Stefanie: No, I had never sung them in Spanish before. So that was my first time singing them in Spanish — so now I know two ways to sing them! (Interview April 19, 2004).

Stefanie's pride in singing in the language of her grandparents points to one of multicultural education's commonly stated goals, that of allowing children to see themselves in the curriculum (Campbell, 2002b). Because MFYC's curriculum is constructed with a global perspective rather than an insular perspective (Elliott, 1995, p. 292-293), I had chosen the Spanish Christmas carols by Cuban arranger Carmen López, to introduce the choir to Cuban musical forms in preparation for our tour to Santiago de Cuba in March 2005. The positive effect singing in Spanish had for Stefanie, however, was a strong reminder for me of the importance of self-recognition for my choir members and their families.

Stefanie's encounters with other languages, though, also enabled her to see herself in others, one of the characteristics I believe is indicative of a multicultural human subject:

Debbie: When you are singing the music of another culture, and let's say the Philippines culture since you've mentioned that a few times, how does that make you feel about being Spanish?

Stefanie: Well, the Filipino music, like the way they speak it and the way the language is written—it's actually not really close to Spanish but it is a little close to Spanish

Debbie: Uhm-hmm.

Stefanie: So it makes me feel good because it's close to my language and it's almost written the same and pronounced the same. So it makes me feel just happy, you know? It makes me feel proud.

I could not be certain if at any point in rehearsals we had ever discussed the historical connections between Spain and the Philippines. Stefanie's astute observation about noticeable language similarities in the dialect of "Dandansoy" (the song we were discussing at the time she made this observation) brought this to mind, and we discussed it briefly during the interview. Her ability to infer Spanish language characteristics in a Filipino dialect was a potent reminder to me that language is a culture-carrier, and why I believe singing in other languages is important to the MFYC curriculum as a way of fostering understanding across cultures. Languages not only carry culture, they overlap with each other (Griffiths, 1995, p. 164). Stefanie's observation that the Filipino dialect she sang in choir is "a little close" to Spanish demonstrates Griffiths' point that the overlap between languages enables communication and understanding when there is motivation to communicate and understand:

there is a false problem raised by assuming that there are sharp, clear boundaries between one language and another. On the contrary, the existence of overlap means that it is possible to understand across tongues and across shared activities, values, and experiences (p.164-165).

The ability to understand across tongues and shared activities is something that I believe MFYC's curriculum in multiple languages fosters. The motivation to understand across tongues and shared activities is indicative of a developing cosmopolitanism, and the potential for an emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

Feeling connected to others

Closely related to Griffiths' argument regarding communication across languages by means of their overlaps, is the feeling of connectedness that can result from such communication. Feeling connected to other people across cultures, through the vehicle of musical performance, was a common point raised by most of the first-year choir members. It is a basic criterion, I believe, for the

possibility of multicultural human subjectivity. Stefanie, for example, described how singing in an unfamiliar language made her feel:

Debbie: Well, do you feel good about yourself because you are able to learn this different language, or do you feel good because there's something in the story of the song that you can relate to — those kinds of things.

Stefanie: Well, actually it does make me feel good about myself because I am singing in a different language that I've never sung before. And so that makes me feel proud because I'm singing a language that I've never spoken before, never sung before, and I'm actually singing to these people who don't understand English, and I'm singing to them and they actually understand it, right? So I feel happy.

Debbie: So, that gives you a sense of — I don't want to put words in your mouth but sometimes I need to restate things — does that give you a sense of being able to communicate with people in a way that you wouldn't be able to if you ran into them on the street?

Stefanie: Well, it does in some ways, but in other ways — I don't know how to speak it, but if I ran into them it's like, I know this song, and it's Filipino, right, that you are probably going to recognize, right? So that would make me feel good.

For Stefanie, the knowledge that her song might be recognized by people of another culture, that the language she performed would be recognizable, caused her to “feel good,” both about herself and her ability to perform that language. Although she never actually used the term “feeling connected,” I believe my inference of connectedness is appropriate, particularly in her description of “running into” someone from another culture from which she knows a song or some songs. The inference is an unspoken connection; Stefanie feels good knowing something of the culture of those people, whether or not they actually speak of it in person. Lauren used similar language in describing her experience with Hebrew music from the Jewish religion and Israeli culture:

Debbie: Uhm-hmm. Okay—can you think of any instances where maybe singing a particular culture has in some way influenced the way you think about the people from that area?

Lauren: which one?

Debbie: Any one—you choose.

Lauren: Well, with those Hebrew ones, I didn't really know much about them, until I've been watching shows about the Hebrew people. And with the songs — actually, we went to a synagogue so I've been learning a lot about them and how closely they are related to the Catholic religion, and how mostly they focus their religion around the Old Testament. Yeah. I just thought, well when I found more information about them, I thought that since they were so close to the Catholic religion, I felt more connected to them, and how the songs were so beautiful. They felt like — I don't know, I just felt some kind of connection. So that made me feel good inside.

Lauren at age 16 was able to speak in terms of connectedness. For her, this feeling came about as she realized commonalities between her own Roman Catholic faith and Judaism. I believe this is an important indicator of the potential for an emerging multicultural human subject, an understanding that despite the differences in these two religions, Lauren has, through singing Hebrew music, come to recognize a few of the similarities in these faith practices. This creates for her a sense of connection to those practicing Judaism. Although some of the knowledge she gained about the Hebrew people resulted from studies at school and by watching television shows, it was her study and performance of Hebrew music at MFYC in combination with that previous knowledge that prompted her feeling of connection, one which she describes as “feeling good inside.” This is an embodied reaction rather than a purely intellectual exercise acknowledging the commonalities between her own Roman Catholic faith and Judaism.

The ability to articulate experiences by the five first-year MFYC members whom I interviewed was quite different, as the range of their ages would suggest. Even so, studying the music of other cultures helped to forge an initial sense of connection through global song.

Debbie: Okay. Do you think by singing the music of another culture, has it in any way changed the way you might have thought about that culture before you learned the music?

Katrina: (long pause). Uhm — not really. Maybe like a little bit but not much.

Debbie: Okay — if maybe a little bit, in what way?

Katrina: Probably because I haven't studied most of the cultures that we are singing, it's like I'm studying them so I can feel a little bit closer to that culture and can know a little bit more about it.

Katrina, the youngest choir member to be interviewed (age 10), was not able to articulate her views with the same depth of some of the other first year choir members, yet her comment indicates that at a minimum, she felt some connection to the cultures we perform in MFYC. It also tells me that she recognizes that she does not know much about any one culture, yet her experiences through music help her to feel a little bit closer to those to which she was exposed during her first year with the MFYC. I find this an encouraging sign that presenting global song within an anti-racism pedagogy can work to offset some of the potential for othering about which I have voiced concern. By helping students recognize a sense of connection to people of diverse cultures, the space for an emerging multicultural human subjectivity may be created.

Fostering Respect For Cultures

Broadening perspective.

Most choristers whom I interviewed, including those in their first year with the MFYC, indicated that their experiences with music of other cultures in some way broadened their perspective. For some, the metaphor of opening a window or door, common to liberal perspectives on multiculturalism, describes how their choir experiences influenced a broader outlook on the world:

Emily: I wasn't — I didn't know that we were going to learn songs from India. I didn't know that they sang like that—I thought that was so interesting. It just opened so many more windows. . . .It's definitely enlightening.

Katrina: I like the variety of the music. And I think it's really great—it opens like a new door to me to everything else.

It is possible that both of these choir members were reciting the rhetoric of multicultural education to which they have been exposed in school and through the media. Here again, cosmopolitanism appears to be an outcome of multicultural education. However, if singing global song opens windows onto other cultures, and if these windows are a starting place for gaining cross-cultural understanding, it follows that an emerging multicultural human subject would use such language to indicate her initial understanding of other cultures. At the same time, the window metaphor may be understood to imply that one does not fully understand a culture merely by glimpsing it. Seeing without also experiencing does not lead to deep understanding.

One of my personal concerns regarding concert programming and our curriculum is that we may unintentionally foster a “cultural tourism” approach in an attempt to provide audience-friendly concert programs. Cultural tourism invokes the more negative connotations of cosmopolitanism associated with the colonial era. Because the MFYC is a performance group, programming with an end goal of entertaining an audience (although certainly this is not the only goal) mandates that each concert reflect a reasonable variety of musical styles and genres. It does not allow me to immerse the MFYC solely in the study of a single musical practice during the weeks leading up to a concert. I worry that by “traveling the world” in each concert (or at least vast portions of the world), my students will create stereotypical images for themselves of the cultures whose music we perform. This concern was especially acute regarding first year choir members who would not have had the benefit of revisiting cultures over multiple

years and choir seasons. Thus I attempt to prevent stereotyping through a pedagogy that strives to provide as much cultural context as is possible for each piece of music (Bradley, 2003).

My interviews with first year choristers allayed my fears at least to a small degree. All five first year choir members indicated that the impact of global song on their perceptions of unfamiliar cultures ranged from fostering respect, the sort of respect that is indicative of the potential for a multicultural human subjectivity, to encouraging additional study to learn more about the people, the language, and the culture. Emily, who spent her early elementary years in a Ukrainian school, offered the following explanation:

Debbie: So, how does singing the music of another culture make you feel about that culture?

Emily: It wasn't that I didn't have respect, but I have even more respect, because when you don't understand a culture or you don't understand where those people are from, and then you start singing their songs, or the songs of their children or family or the celebrations, it sort of makes you, submerges you into like a personal relationship suddenly, and when you are in that it really gets to you and you start to believe and understand why they do the things they do and you don't question it, you just do it. And I really like that. Because I think sometimes people are too into their heads, and when you start doing things for the sake of being nice, when you start understanding people and respecting people for the sake of who they are and not what they are, then it's wonderful because we stop asking silly questions and start doing it and it just happens suddenly.

Emily's sense of "feeling submerged into a personal relationship" suggests that performing the music of another culture helps her to feel connected to its people in a way reminiscent of the "complex spiral of relationships" that Small describes as occurring within a musical performance (Small, 1998, p. 184). Engaging with the music of another culture is a performative influence on not only how Emily thinks about herself, but also how she locates herself in the wider world. Later in the interview, her comments indicate her belief that music can serve as a vehicle to cross-cultural understanding:

Emily: Well, it [singing music from other cultures] made me realize that people will always discriminate—Ukrainian people do that, too. But singing the music of other cultures opens my eyes. My grandmother doesn't like a lot of people, and I'm not sure why. I think through singing we can get closer to an agreement between cultures.

Lauren reminded me that for some students, the school curriculum remains quite narrow and does not provide opportunity to expand students' cultural perspectives. For her, MFYC is a primary source of contact with the world beyond the local:

Debbie: Okay — so thinking about some of the music we've done in choir since you've been singing with us, do you think any of the music we have done has had any influence on the way you think about other cultures?

Lauren: Well, it's made me think, I don't behave differently in a bad sense, but it has given me an open mind to like other ethnic backgrounds and stuff. How they present songs and do songs in different ways, it's interesting to hear those types of things. Like, where I go to school, you wouldn't have the outlet to do that type of thing, so it's really cool to learn these types of things. It gives you broader knowledge and gives you a more open mind about things.

As my discussion with Lauren continued, I began to realize that she sincerely wanted to find a way to connect more deeply to the cultures to which she had been exposed through MFYC. Lauren plans to attend college to major in graphic arts and animation, and that it is through this medium she is best able to locate herself in the world:

Debbie: Okay, so when you are singing the music from another culture, how does it make you feel about yourself?

Lauren: Wow. That maybe I should learn more about the culture — do some research. I don't know — it sparks my imagination. Sometimes I want to find pictures to draw off of. And I think that kind of connects me to it better.

Disrupting stereotypes.

Stefanie's comments indicate her understanding that ideas formed from what she may have heard on the street, or in school, do not always accurately represent another culture:

Debbie: Good—okay. Has singing music with the MFYC from all the various cultures that we've studied—has any of that music changed any beliefs or opinions that you might have had about the culture before you sang the music?

Stefanie: Well, I think it has changed because I could have thought of different things of these cultures and these languages. I thought of things like what everybody says about these cultures, right? But then I sing them and it's like, oh my gosh — it's really nice. It changed my whole idea of the cultures and the way they sing and the way they talk, right?

Stefanie implies here that she has heard stereotypical descriptions of cultures that were disrupted for her in part through her exposure to their music. Although it is hard to know exactly to what she refers when she states that the music is “really nice” in opposition to “what everybody says,” I infer from this comment that her experience with global song may have provided new images of certain cultures for her, images that are more positive than the ones she had previously constructed based upon “what everybody says.”

All five first-year choristers spoke of feeling connected and being more open-minded as a result of their experiences with global song, and in various ways they expressed curiosity to learn more. It is a fledging form of cosmopolitanism, a beginning step towards a culturally sensitive, outward-looking ethical attitude that looks beyond boundaries of race, ethnicity, nation, gender, or ability. The curiosity expressed by first-year choristers may fuel further study on their part. Their choir experiences prompt them to think a little more deeply about their own place in the world in relationship to others. It is, I believe, the beginning of “identity in the making” as multicultural human subjects.

Performativity in “Make Them Hear You:” Social Justice And A Multicultural Human Subject

You are the music while the music lasts.
T. S. Eliot

As Butler describes, any act that is performative “suggests a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning” (1990, p. 177). It is important that we keep in mind the adjective *contingent* when speaking of performativity, because a multicultural human subject is fragile and highly contingent upon context for its possibility. I had not expected the first year choristers to provide strong descriptions³⁹ of the way particular songs might influence them. I had assumed the influence of global song would only be evident, if at all, after longer involvement with the MFYC. One song in particular, however, had an immediate impact upon all the choir members I interviewed. “Make Them Hear You” from the Broadway musical *Ragtime* carries an emphatic social justice message that, I believe, ties directly to an emerging multicultural human subject’s concerns for social justice. Below is the journal entry I made following the first night of rehearsal on this piece:

I introduced “Make Them Hear You” to the Level II choir. We talked about the scene from Ragtime from which the song is taken, and had a bit of a discussion (well, really, it was more of a lecture) about the periods of history portrayed in the musical and about the violence that is a real part of the U.S. history with regard to race relations. Although I’m not happy that I did most of the talking, I was very pleased with the kids’ response on their last sing-through of the song that followed the “lecture.” There was a lot more energy in their sound, and the diction to my ears seemed a great deal clearer. Granted,

³⁹ I acknowledge again the possibility that some responses may have been offered in the interests of choristers attempts to please me; however, not all interviewees indicated that they were influenced in this way by MFYC songs. For example, Katrina (age 10) had little to say on these types of questions.

they were slightly more familiar with the song on the 3rd time through but I get the sense that the little history lesson put a different spin on the words for them.

Make Them Hear You: Track #2

As the term progressed, the choir became more and more attached to “Make Them Hear You.” It was apparent in their singing that they not only enjoyed performing the song, but from my observations of their faces as they sang I sensed that they wholeheartedly believed the song’s message. After seven years (at the time of the study) with the MFYC, this song would be the one I would name as the choir’s all-time favourite. This was as true for first year choristers as for those who had been in the choir for several years, and the commentary on “Make Them Hear You” gives strong indication of how these choir members constructed personal meaning from their engagement with this powerful social justice song.

Debbie: Are there any songs that we either sang first term or that we are working on now that you find especially meaningful to you?

Ally: What do you mean — like, that really touch you?

Debbie: That really touch you.

Ally: Make Them Hear You.

Debbie: Can you tell me why?

Ally: Because I like reading black and white stories. I read uh—what was this book called?—Two Wings or something like that, and there was this girl and she had to escape somehow—like when we sing that song I feel like so proud and I feel like I’m like fighting and helping the people escape, and I feel like—because I love black history—I love that—so it really touches me when I sing that song.

Ally was not only “touched” by the song, but connected it to other readings she had done. I will address the word *touch* and its performative connotations a

little later in this chapter. The statement, she “loves black history” suggests Ally may be starting to formulate an understanding of the injustices suffered by blacks in North America. I hope that this is not strictly an historical perspective, but that she recognizes there are still many injustices in today’s society. I use the word *hope* in this case because of the problematic language utilized in Ally’s statement. That she “loves black history” suggests black history as something separate and apart from “history proper.” It is indicative of a history curriculum that continues to marginalize black people. Such marginalization is one of the primary criticisms of multicultural education as it is typically enacted in schools and in community choirs such as MFYC. Her reference to “helping blacks escape” could be construed to imply that escape from slavery was not something that could have been accomplished without assistance from whites.

However, at the age of 12, Ally’s ability to articulate clearly such messy concepts is limited. I believe it is equally possible to read into this interview excerpt that Ally includes herself in the struggle against racism and feels that when she sings “Make Them Hear You,” she is taking an active part in this struggle. Given her age, I believe Ally’s comments express a real concern for social justice, and I would argue for viewing her words in this more positive light in keeping with Dei et al’s call for philosophy that demands “we focus on the positive initiatives being undertaken in schools, off-school sites, communities and families; transformative programs that demonstrate the practical benefits of inclusivity” (G. J. S. Dei, James, James-Wilson, Karumanchery, & Zine, 2000, p. xii). This is not to suggest that my own praxis is without fault, and in keeping with this as a critical action research project, I will need to do further reflection on what happens in MFYC rehearsals that may be contributing to colonial attitudes such as the one Ally articulated. Even so, I believe that by presenting “Make Them Hear You” to the MFYC in the context of an anti-racism pedagogy, choir members constructed a different meaning for the piece than they might have had it been presented as an autonomous musical work without social

connection. The song's social justice message may be significant as performative in a nascent multicultural human subject.

In a similar vein, Katrina, the youngest first-year choir member to be interviewed, discussed how the song speaks to her about the difficult lived realities for many people:

Debbie: What do you like about Make Them Hear You?

Katrina: I think it's a very beautiful piece. Like, I have thought about some of the songs, and this one — well, you just feel so bad that somebody had to go through this.

Lauren expressed her desire to help further the cause of social justice:

Lauren: There are just so many things in this world that are unjust and wrong, and this song represents people that can't speak for themselves, and you are trying to speak for them in this song and try to make others hear them. It's very — it's a good song. It's emotional and it's trying to put a point across — I don't know, yeah, I really like it.

I want to put so much emotion into it without screaming, you know? I just want to put my heart into it. There are so many horrible things in this world that are wrong. I feel bad — I want someone to hear the people who can't talk.

Debbie: So, does singing a song like that make you feel like there's something you can do in the world?

Lauren: Yes — I hope I can! It gives me inspiration, definitely. It's very—yeah, definitely! Even though I'm kind of afraid to go out and do something like that, it makes me think more about things on those lines, and how people can be extremely ignorant to issues and problems in the world.

Lauren's description, like Ally's, utilizes problematic language. Her suggestion that the song "represents people that can't speak for themselves" calls up colonial discourses of patriarchy and imagery of a people who are powerless, without agency. I recall that I squirmed a little as Lauren spoke these words, responding to postmodern theories on representation that teach

representation is politically, socially, culturally, linguistically, and epistemologically arbitrary. It signifies mastery. It signals distortion; it assumes unconscious rules governing relationships (Rosenau, 1992, p. 94).

Lauren is sixteen years old. I cannot simply dismiss her terminology as an age-related symptom of developing language skills as easily as I did with Ally's statements. Yet the final paragraph of the excerpt quoted above suggests that although I obviously still have more (or different) anti-racist work to do with the choir, we are making some headway toward the goal of awareness of social justice issues: "it makes me think more about things on those lines, and how people can be extremely ignorant to issues and problems in the world." I believe it is important when working with adolescents, to keep in mind the potential limitations of language. Wright suggests "we cannot wait to get past the language before we attack the problem. Perhaps as we seek solutions, the language will take care of itself" (Wright, 2000, p. 71). I take Lauren's use of representation and "speaking for" as a call to further anti-racism action. At the same time, though, her recognition of issues of social justice in the world, and her budding thoughts about "going out and doing something" are encouraging. Her comments give me hope that a multicultural human subject whose concerns are anti-racist and oriented toward social justice may be emerging.

In language similar to Ally's, Stefanie also indicates that "Make Them Hear You" has "touched her heart." Several MFYC members made use of the metaphor of music as "touching" to describe the emotions called up for them in performing songs that hold special meaning for them. In the introduction to *Touching Feeling*, Sedgwick (2003, p. 16) suggests the "definition of performativity itself is inflected by the language of texture." I quote from her ensuing explanation at length in an effort to avert a reductionist understanding of my use of "touching" in this discussion:

. . . texture seems like a promising level of attention for shifting the emphasis of some interdisciplinary conversations away from the

recent fixation on epistemology (which suggests that performativity/performance can show us whether or not there are essential truths and how we could, or why we can't know them) by asking new questions about phenomenology and affect (what motivates performativity and performance, for example, and what individual and collective effects are mobilized in their execution?). The title I've chosen for these essays, *Touching Feeling*, records the intuition that a particular intimacy seems to subsist between textures and emotions. But the same double meaning, tactile plus emotional, is already there in the single word "touching"; equally it's internal to the world "feeling." . . (p. 17).

Stefanie described her feelings about "Make Them Hear You" in ways reminiscent of Sedgwick's description:

Debbie: Have you, since you've been with MFYC, you've mentioned a few songs that have moved you, but have we sung any songs this year that you find especially meaningful to you?

Stefanie: You mean like touches my heart?

Debbie: Yeah.

Stefanie: I love the song, and it just makes me feel — it really touches me actually — Make Them Hear You. It touches me so much because it's so nice — it's so emotional. I feel so emotional when I sing that. It's such a beautiful song that I could sing it all day without getting tired of it. I like the opening line, too: "Go out and tell our story, let it echo far and wide." I really love that. It's words that I would have loved to write. Like, I listen to a lot of songs, and the phrases and the words they put in, I always wish that I would have wrote that, because they are so wonderful. They are so nice, and so good. I just love them.

In addition to invoking the concept of touching as performative, Stefanie's comments remind me that the song itself, when sung, is a performative in the sense raised by Austin in *How to do Things with Words* (Austin, Sbisáa, & Urmson, 1976). In the act of singing the lyrics of "Make Them Hear You," the MFYC is very literally making the audience hear as they collectively re-tell a story about racism⁴⁰ in the United States in the early twentieth century. As a

⁴⁰ The musical *Ragtime*, from which "Make Them Hear You" is taken, is fraught with tensions surrounding representation and "speaking for." The musical is based upon the book *Ragtime* by

choir they are physically embodying the song's opening line, "Go out and tell our story." "Make Them Hear You" is a performative appeal for social justice.

In the opening of her essay in *Music and the Racial Imagination*, Deborah Wong (2000), describes the way an Asian American rap performing group "corporeally enacts the cultural memory of other racialized representations" (p. 59). In performing "Make Them Hear You," MFYC choristers also enact a racialized representation of a cultural memory, in this case, blatant discrimination against blacks in the U.S. during the 1920's, as depicted in one potent scene of the musical *Ragtime*. Wong's analysis of Asian musicians crossing into "black" territory when they perform rap has something to say, I believe, to MFYC's global song curriculum. When MFYC performs the "Telugu Song," or "Al Shlosha," or "Bobobo," are we not also articulating cultural memory by hearing ourselves through other racialized bodies, and through performances that bring the bodies of multiple races and culture together in a collective articulation of those cultural memories (Wong, 2000, p. 67)? I believe that we are, and that in those articulations, we may begin to move toward self-understanding as multicultural human subjects.

Summary

In this chapter, I have used the ethnographic data obtained through interviews and my own reflective journal to describe some of the ways performing global song within an anti-racism pedagogy is performative among first-year MFYC choristers. By singing music in languages that may be unfamiliar, choir members develop confidence in their ability to be successful in

E. L. Doctorow (1975), who is the son of Russian Jewish immigrants to the U.S. Both the book, and the musical version, written by white composers Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens (1997), weave a story that connects the lives of three families: a white family of privilege, a Jewish immigrant family, and a black family. The character in the musical who sings "Make Them Hear You" is black. The authorship of both the book and the musical raise questions of who speaks for whom. Although this topic is beyond the scope of this chapter to interrogate, I raise this issue because awareness of issues of representation are important within an anti-racism pedagogy.

new ventures. Experiencing global song in a number of languages enables first-year choristers to recognize others and to recognize themselves in others. For choristers like Stefanie, singing in her first language, Spanish, allows her to see herself in the MFYC curriculum (Campbell, 2004). It also allows her to recognize the ways in which languages overlap (Griffiths, 1995), and to see the commonalities among overlapping languages. For some students, singing in a variety of languages may enable the acquisition of a rudimentary linguistic and cultural capital that may be viewed as important for the globalized and glocalized society in which they live. Through their experiences singing global song, first-year MFYC choristers begin to broaden their personal perspectives and in doing so, develop an appreciation of the diversity of world cultures, a form of cosmopolitanism as an ethical outlook, and a first step toward an emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

Some of the repertoire performed by the MFYC during the period of this study is very strongly performative in the sense first described by Austin (Austin, Sbisáa, & Urmson, 1976). “Make Them Hear You” is one such song. As choristers described the feelings evoked for them in this composition, I realized that we still have a considerable amount of anti-racism work to do to decolonize lingering patriarchal attitudes evident in some choristers’ language. Even so, the concerns for social justice expressed by these first year choristers encourage my thinking that an anti-racism pedagogy enacted in a curriculum whose primary focus is global song is a powerful tool for helping my students recognize, and perhaps be inspired to activism against, racism in its many and varied manifestations.

One final suggestion of the performativity resulting from engaging in global song comes from first-year choristers’ acknowledgements that particular songs are “touching.” In this analysis I use a performative understanding of touch as both a tactile and emotional signifier. Choristers’ descriptions of songs that are “touching” indicate they make use of their experiences with global song

in MFYC to construct their identities in ways that enable them to develop a self-understanding reflective of their lives in a culturally diverse society. This self-understanding is embodied, physically felt and understood. Through performances of pieces such as “Make Them Hear You,” “Al Shlosha,” and “Bobobo,” MFYC members perform racialized representations of cultural memories. The embodiment of these representations is an important aspect of developing self-understanding as multicultural human subjects.

Chapter Six: When I Sing--Collective Identity and Performativity

Analysis of the interviews conducted with twenty MFYC members indicates that they all utilized language suggestive of a sense of belonging to the group, and to varying degrees, a shared sense of purpose that is associated with the term *collective identity*. Participation in any musical group holds potential for developing collective identity among group members, so in this respect MFYC is not unique. What may be unique, however, is the form that collective identity takes with MFYC members as a result of our global song repertoire, our rehearsal discourse, and antiracism pedagogy.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the variety of ways choristers expressed a sense of collective identity as MFYC members, and the relationship of this collective identity to performativity in the development of multicultural human subjectivity. Using the framework set out by Ashmore, Deaux, and MacLaughlin-Volpe (2004) for thinking about and analyzing collective identity, I will discuss how the individual-level elements they have cited for collective identity work combine with choir members' experiences with global song as performative of an emerging multicultural human subjectivity. The relationship between collective identity, performativity, and multicultural human subjectivity is implied in the language used by the choir members during their interviews, language that reveals the values they attach to MFYC membership. These values often have a direct influence on individual-level behaviour, and thus may be considered performative as they are enacted or performed in individual behavior. Ashmore et al, citing Deux 1996, and Simon and Klandermans, 2001, define collective identity as

one that is shared with a group of others who have (or are believed to have) some characteristic(s) in common. Such commonality may be based on ascribed characteristics, such as ethnicity or gender, or on achieved status, such as occupation or political party. . . This

shared position does not require direct contact or interchange with all others who share category membership; rather, the positioning is psychological in nature. Finally, collective identity is defined here in terms of a *subjective* claim or acceptance by the person whose identity is at stake (p. 81, italics in original).

This chapter looks at the ways MFYC members develop a sense of collective identity that are suggestive of an emerging multicultural human subjectivity. This emerging self-understanding gives evidence of a sense of cosmopolitanism that is linked to the performative nature of the global song with which members of the MFYC are engaged. Collective identity is experienced and exhibited at the individual level. Through excerpts from chorister's interviews, this chapter will show how the various elements of collective identity are created or reinforced in musical experiences with MFYC. A collective identity that is cosmopolitan in orientation combines with embodied knowledge created through global song performance, allowing for the possibility of an emerging multicultural human subject. The chapter will also raise the issue of collective identity's connection with fascism.

Building Collective Identity as an MFYC Chorister

Collective Identity or Social Identity

Ashmore et al are careful in their framework to distinguish collective identity from the perhaps more commonly used term *social identity*. Social identity has been the basis for recent research related to the formation of musical identity among adolescents (Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2002), and although it provides a useful tool for understanding one particular aspect of identity, Ashmore et al suggest it is limited as a framework because: 1) All aspects of the self are socially influenced; thus to term something as a social identity fails to differentiate it from other forms of identification. 2) *Social identity* is a more problematic term than *collective identity*, because of its association with Social Identity Theory (SIT), which assumes an in-group and out-group perspective as fundamental to analyses employing SIT (p. 81).

Although SIT has contributed much to the literature regarding identity, its in-group/out-group dichotomy is incongruent with my notion of a multicultural human subject, since a multicultural human subject would avoid “us and them” thinking. Thus for this particular analysis, I believe that *collective identity* as defined by Ashmore et al is a better fit than the term *social identity*.

Negus and Velazquez also have argued against types of essentialist thinking that assume a “necessary flow” from social identity to musical expression. Referring to Frith’s arguments, they observe that “as soon as we start listening to music, we find that it continually subverts our assumptions about a relationship between cultural positions and cultural feeling” (Negus & Velazquez, 2002, p. 136). Non-essentialist arguments have resulted in a new pattern of thought regarding musical identity that acknowledges music constructs identities, as opposed to reflecting pre-existing identities. Simon Frith suggests that “the issue is not how a particular piece of music or a performance reflects the people, but how it produces them, how it creates and constructs an experience” (Frith, 1996, p. 109). Music offers direct experiences to the body, to time, and to our sociability, enabling us to place ourselves in imaginary cultural narratives that work to construct our sense of identity (p. 124).

If we place ourselves in multiple cultural narratives, what sort of identities do we construct in doing so? This is the primary question of my research, asking if multiples narratives lead us to construct identities as multi-cultural within contexts that tend to view us as multi-cultural subjects. Because much of what has been written about music and adolescent identity formation relies upon essentialist assumptions about musical expression as a means of conveying social identity (as a singular entity), and because this study takes place in the context of a multi-musical culture, I want to posit a multicultural human subject as one that works against monolithic, fixed social identities. Multicultural human subjectivity suggests non-essentialist understandings of identity and subjectivity. For this reason, then, I suggest that the construct of

collective identity provides a better framework for understanding at least one aspect of music's power to be performative of our individual identities, particularly in multicultural contexts.

Identity as Self-Understanding

The fluid and shifting nature of identity, along with its multiplicity, implies that identity evolves and changes over the course of a lifetime. I am in agreement with this and do not subscribe to an essentialist sense of self. At the same time, however, the way an individual views her own identity may find resting spots along one's life journey. Brubaker and Cooper (2000), in discussing the heavy burden that has been placed on the term *identity*, ask several provocative questions that have bearing on my analysis of an emerging multicultural human subjectivity:

If identity is everywhere, it is nowhere. If it is fluid, how can we understand the ways in which self-understandings may harden, congeal, and crystallize? If it is constructed, how can we understand the sometimes coercive force of external identifications? If it is multiple, how do we understand the terrible singularity that is often striven for and sometimes realized by politicians seeking to transform mere categories into unitary and exclusive groups? How can we understand the power and pathos of identity politics? (p. 1).

My analysis utilizes Brubaker and Cooper's sense of identity as "self-understanding" which may congeal and crystallize over time. I am drawn particularly to the concept of self-understandings crystallizing, since crystals are multi-faceted and reflect light from many angles. I recall Richardson's (2000) description of crystals and crystallization:

combine symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change, and alter, but are not amorphous. They are prisms that reflect externalities *and* refract within themselves, creating different colors, patterns, and arrays, casting off in different directions. What we see depends upon our angle of

repose. . . .Crystallization provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic (p. 934).

From this perspective, a multicultural human subject is a form of self-understanding that can embody and reflect an individual's many "identities," while simultaneously embracing, even accepting this multidimensionality in other humans. Looking at the possibilities for collective identity among MFYC members is not intended to suggest a singular identity; it is merely one side of an ever-changing crystal that takes as many shapes as there are individuals in the choir. Yet the data collected in my interviews with MFYC members tells me that a collective identity forms among the choristers, as could be expected from membership in any group. What is pertinent to my project is the way MFYC collective identity expresses itself in ways suggestive of an emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

Although I would not want to believe that MFYC is a "coercive force" in the negative sense of which Brubaker and Cooper speak, I am solely responsible for choosing both the music we sing and for developing the choir's overall programming and activities. Therefore, as a critical pedagogue I must acknowledge that there is some degree of coercion at play here, even as I try to remain sensitive to the needs of individual MFYC members. I encourage choristers to make suggestions for our repertoire. Although the suggestions are plentiful, most often they are in the form of "can we sing ____ that we did three years ago?" I have on occasion programmed new repertoire as a result of suggestions made by MFYC choristers, but since I am solely responsible for developing the choir's programming, the vast majority of our repertoire comes from music I either already know or have encountered while deliberately searching for new repertoire for the choir.

My research explores the ways that engaging with global song not only influences adolescents' sense of self, but also looks at how it may play a role in disrupting the "terrible singularity that is often striven for and sometimes

realized by politicians seeking to transform mere categories into unitary and exclusive groups” (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 1). This potentially fascistic side of community suppresses awareness of the differences that exist among group members. The implications for community as fascism, as it may relate to Canadian official multicultural policy and racial discourses that continue to hold sway in the political arena, school, and in other areas of adolescents’ lives will be addressed in Chapter Seven.

Collective identity is a common outcome of the sense of group belonging evoked through music making. Keil talks about the potential in “participatory consciousness” for fascism, as well as its potential to preclude the possibility when he writes:

Participation is fascism. It becomes the bundle, all the rods united for greater strength, with the sum of the parts being greater than that of the individuals. When it’s done nation-state style, it is a horror. That is what the Holocaust was about, and every genocidal nationalism is about this false participation. . . People have to be satisfied in their localities and to feel intense local involvement, participation, and deep identification, or else those energies will be channeled into statist nightmares (Keil & Feld, 1994, p. 170).

Keil’s assertion that feeling intense local involvement and deep identification through participation suggests that within MFYC’s context, the potential for an emerging multicultural human subjectivity may counter the fascistic dangers of collective identity, particularly since multicultural human subjectivity involves an active recognition of difference and plurality. Nonetheless, collective identity’s dark side is also always present, and is one reason I am committed to anti-racism work through music education.

In discussing Brubaker and Cooper’s work, Ashmore et al observe that an identity can cross disciplinary fields. In some cases, identity refers to an enduring aspect of selfhood; it in other cases refers to a set of interpersonal processes, or to the aggregate-level product of political action (2004, p. 80). In

this study, identity as a multicultural human subject makes use in varying degrees of each of the above: enduring aspects of selfhood, interpersonal processes, and aggregate-level products of political action. Thus I prefer Brubaker and Cooper's terminology of self-understanding rather than identity for thinking of the concept multicultural human subject. In adopting this perspective for identity, I share with those who argue for adopting approaches that embrace more nuanced and less absolute notions of how music may connect with, become part of, or be totally irrelevant to our sense of self and collectivity (Negus & Velazquez, 2002, p. 133). However, since the term identity is so thoroughly entrenched in the literature, it is practically impossible to avoid its use altogether. The following section of this chapter deals with collective identity. As I use the term, collective identity is a form of self-understanding at the individual level, encompassing the three aspects of identity outlined above. These three aspects of self-understanding derive from actual or felt association with a particular group.

Elements of Collective Identity

Although the act of joining the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir makes an individual a part of the group MFYC, in one sense there is a significant difference between having official status as "choir member" resulting from payment of fees, submission of registration documents, and so forth, and actually feeling that one "belongs to" the group. It is this latter sense of belonging that is a crucial aspect of collective identity. Ashmore et al outline the elements of collective identity as individual level constructs, as indicated in Table 2 below:

Table 2: AN ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK FOR COLLECTIVE IDENTITY^{Note}*Elements of Collective identity as Individual Level Constructs*

Element	Definition
1. Self-categorization	Identifying self as a member of or categorizing self in terms of a particular social grouping
Placing self in social category	Categorizing self in terms of a particular social grouping
Goodness of perceived fit/perceived similarity/ Prototypicality	A person's subjective assessment of the degree to which he or she is a prototypical member of the group
2. Evaluation	The positive or negative attitude that a person has toward the social category in question
Private regard	Favorability judgments made by people about their own identities
Public regard	Favorability judgments that one perceives others, such as the general public, to hold about one's social category
3. Importance	The degree of importance of a particular group membership to the individual's overall self-concept
Explicit Importance	The individual's subjective appraisal of the degree to which a collective identity is important to her or his overall sense of self
Implicit Importance	The placement of a particular group membership in the person's hierarchically organized self-system; the individual is not necessarily consciously aware of the hierarchical position of his or her collective identities
4. Attachment and sense of interdependence	The emotional involvement felt with a group (the degree to which the individual feels at one with the group.)
Interdependence/mutual fate	Perception of the commonalities in the way group members are treated in society
Attachment/affective commitment	A sense of emotional involvement with or affiliative orientation toward the group
Interconnection of self and others	The degree to which people merge their sense of self and the group
5. Social embeddedness	The degree to which a particular collective identity is embedded in the person's everyday ongoing social relationships
6. Behavioral expectations	The degree to which the person engages in actions that directly implicate the collective identity category in question
7. Content and meaning	
Self-attributed characteristics	The extent to which traits and dispositions that are associated with a social category are endorsed as self-descriptive by a member of that category.
Ideology	Beliefs about a group's experience, history, and position in society
Narrative	The internally represented story that the person has developed regarding self and the social category in question
Collective identity story	The individual's mentally represented narrative of self as a member

^{Note} From "An Organizing Framework for Collective Identity," by R. D. Ashmore, K. Deaux, and T. McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004, *Psychological Bulletin*, 130, No. 1, p. 83. Copyright 2004 by the American Psychological Association, Inc.

Element	Definition
Group story	of a particular social category The individual's mentally represented narrative of a particular social category of which he or she is a member

My purpose in introducing Ashmore et al's framework for collective identity is to show the variety of ways in which the twenty MFYC choristers interviewed for this study all provided some evidence that they feel a sense of collective identity as MFYC members. Because MFYC provides a distinctive choir experience, as described in Chapter Four, a sense of collective identity as an MFYC member affects individual choir members' behaviors in ways that suggest an emerging multicultural human subjectivity. Even the five first-year choristers whose words are found in Chapter Five made statements indicative of a sense of collective identity as MFYC members. Since the interviews were not constructed to elicit answers suggestive of collective identity, its undeniable presence in the data came as a somewhat unanticipated realization. Although I expected to find stronger evidence of feelings of group belonging in multi-year choir members, it was particularly surprising to find such evidence in first-year choir members. Also, I had not anticipated the magnitude with which collective identity presented itself in the interviews. The understanding that choristers felt a relatively deep sense of attachment to the choir, though, helped me to understand how engaging with world music acts as a performative in the developing collective identity among MFYC members. A sense of collective identity can motivate particular behaviors and discourage others. In the MFYC, what is encouraged is openness and acceptance of others despite difference, and this is reiterated in our global song repertoire. Since collective identity is not unique to MFYC, what is important to this study is how the collective identity expressed by MFYC members may be suggestive of emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

Self-categorization and evaluation.

The first element of the table, “Self-categorization,” is somewhat obvious since choristers have gone through a registration process to join the choir. Because at the time of the interviews, I was not searching specifically for evidence of collective identity, my questions did not elicit answers that indicate whether or not the twenty interviewees felt that they were “prototypical” choristers. However, the high rate of return from one year to the next among MFYC members⁴¹ leads me to infer that those who return for a second, third, fourth, fifth and more years at MFYC must feel that they are “good fits” for the group, since they are, through their actions, voluntarily placing themselves in the category “MFYC member” repeatedly, labeling themselves as MFYC members.

Similarly, the interview questions were not designed to bring out interviewees’ attitudes about their membership in MFYC, although many choristers voluntarily expressed their enjoyment of choir membership. This can be considered indicative of the “Evaluation” element of collective identity, to which many of the participants in this study expressed positive feelings.

Aileen: I'm really having fun in choir. I really do like it, and I'm planning on staying for a few more years (Interview, March 8, 2004).

At the time of the interview, Aileen was in her fourth year as an MFYC member. Another chorister, AJ, discussed her “recruitment” to MFYC by a friend who moved out of town the year after AJ joined. AJ had been in MFYC for five years at the time of the interview:

AJ: Actually, my friend Lana told me about it. And I never actually, I always listened to music but I didn't really get into until Grade 8. Then my friend Lana, she was like, "I know this choir, and you can sing, so do you want to come?" And I was like — sure! Okay! So I went and I liked it, so I decided to stay. I like the music we sang and it gave me

⁴¹ Over 70 percent of the total choir, and 100 percent of this study’s participants returned to MFYC for the 2004-2005 season.

more experience with stuff I like to do so. . . .and there were fun people in the choir and everything, so—I'm still here! I guess you could say I really got into it (Interview, March 15, 2004).

Ally (a first-year choir member) offered the following evaluation of her MFYC membership:

Ally: And I find it (MFYC) like so nice—like you guys are so friendly and everything, we have fun instead of like being serious.

The idea that MFYC is “fun” was a common theme among the participants. Amber added to that by singling out our rehearsal atmosphere as well as the music as factors contributing to the “fun”:

Debbie: And what's kept you coming back to MFYC?

Amber: Well, the people—because I have made friends there. I think it's definitely a more relaxed atmosphere. We try not to talk too much but you don't totally tweak out if we do.

Debbie: (laughing).

Amber: And the music is fun, definitely.

Later in the interview, Amber explained that she values MFYC's diverse repertoire:

Amber: I think that it is a much more enjoyable experience. And I always mention this when people ask me why—like I have some friends who are in (another local area choir), and they always ask me, they say, well, you're a good singer, why don't you sing in our choir? You might find the repertoire in _____ more challenging, and I always say, it's so much more enjoyable in MFYC and so much more fun. The music that other choir does is so—it's like it's all from one brand, and I really enjoy doing all the different cultures of music. I always say that to my friends, that we do so many different kinds of music and it's like we never get bored because it is always something new, and that's something I really enjoy. So I think it's a much more interesting choral experience and maybe gets a lot more people interested in choral

music when they can do something that is out of the ordinary
(Interview, March 29, 2004).

Amber's description of her MFYC experience as "always new," "more fun," and involving "all the different cultures of music" suggests that she believes her choir experience with MFYC deviates from what others expect. Her belief that MFYC provides a different type of experience is a key component of her collective identity construction. As Roberts explains in his discussion of identity formation, the desire to be viewed by others as departing in some way from others' presumed expectations contributes to music education students' abilities to label themselves as "musicians" (Roberts, 1991, p. 26). The belief that MFYC is a different type of choir experience similarly forms a significant part of choristers' evaluation processes relative to collective identity as MFYC members. In her explanations of how MFYC differs from some other choirs, Amber includes the diversity of the choir's repertoire. Her statement that MFYC is a "much more interesting choral experience" in part because of its global song repertoire hints at a cosmopolitan attitude characteristic of an emerging multicultural human subject.

The following evaluation came at the final moments of my interview with Diana, who was in her third year with MFYC.

Debbie: So it's your turn now. Do you have any questions you would like to ask me, or anything that you would like to say?

Diana: Well, there is one thing I would like to say. Being in the choir has been the best experience I have ever actually had, because I've been in ballet class, and Guides and Brownies. But of all the activities I have done, the choir has been the best and the most fun, definitely
(Interview, April 6, 2004).

In most of the interviews, evaluative statements about choir came in response to questions about what influenced the participant to return to choir, or in the case of first-year choir members, what her choir experience was like to

date. I acknowledge that some choir members may have been trying to make statements they believed I would like to hear in an effort to please me as their teacher and an authority figure in this research. Even so, Diana's commentary was not solicited, and throughout interviews I reminded participants that they were free to disagree, tell me what they did not like, and so forth. Since the study's participants repeatedly told me that they thought choir was "fun," and since "fun" is usually understood as an important value among adolescents, I believe that the remarks were genuine and can be taken as an indicator of the *evaluation* element of collective identity. These statements also alluded to ways in which the choristers felt that MFYC differed from other choirs (or differed from their assumptions about other choirs). This sense of difference associated with MFYC membership is an element of collective identity that will be tied more directly to an emerging multicultural human subjectivity later in this chapter.

Importance.

Ashmore et al describe *importance*, the third categorical element of collective identity, as a ranking from low to high. They name *explicit importance* as "the degree of importance from low to high, of a particular group membership to the individual's overall self-concept." *Implicit importance* is

the placement, from low to high, of a particular group membership in the person's hierarchically organized self-system, where the individual is not necessarily consciously aware of the hierarchical position of his or her collective identities (Ashmore, Deux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004).

Since my interview questions were not designed specifically to evaluate collective identity, I did not ask questions that would elicit rankings of importance about choir membership to the participants' sense of self. Nonetheless, many choristers provided information indicating how important they felt their choir experiences were to their sense of self, particularly in areas

of building confidence. I will address this later in the chapter with respect to the element of *content and meaning*. However, I did specifically ask questions about the importance of other forms of collective identity, national, ethnic, and racial, as they may relate to the emergence of a multicultural human subject. I will therefore return to the *Importance* element of collective identity for analysis later in this chapter in the context of multicultural human subjectivity.

Attachment and sense of interdependence.

The fourth element of the collective identity organizing framework proposed by Ashmore et al, *attachment and sense of interdependence*, has three components: *interdependence/mutual fate*, *attachment/affective commitment*, and *interconnection of self and others*. Interdependence is fostered by an awareness of a common or shared fate, defined as the “perception of the commonalities in the way group members are treated in society” (Gurin & Townsend, 1986, as quoted in Ashmore, Deux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004, p. 90). Mutual fate develops when group members become aware that their fates and outcomes are similar despite individual differences. Although Ashmore et al use this definition as it relates to social categories (such as gender, racial and ethnic identifications, and so forth), in a very real sense, when one begins to feel attached to a group such as a choir, there is an explicit sense of interdependence. For example, ten-year old Katrina, a first-year chorister with no previous choir experience, views her membership in the MFYC as it relates solely to her own abilities to perform. She has not yet developed a sense of interdependence:

Katrina: I feel good—especially when there are really high notes and at first I can't get them, but after I practice I can, and that makes me feel good.

Debbie: So what does that tell you about yourself?

Katrina: That I'm improving (Interview, March 12, 2004).

Katrina's statement may be viewed in direct contrast with Aileen's more highly developed sense of interdependence with the other singers in the MFYC. The following excerpt provides evidence that indicates Aileen understands how successful musical outcomes for the MFYC are a group effort:

Debbie: Okay—so what about it has kept you coming back?

Aileen: I really love to sing—and it's so much fun because we sing such a wide variety of repertoire, and I really do value that in a choir, because I like being able to tell my friends that we are singing this language or that language. I don't know if they really care (laughs) but I think it's exciting. And I like to be with other people singing.

Debbie: What is it about being with other people singing, since you do so much solo performing, for yourself, anyway, on guitar. What is it about that?

Aileen: I think I like the sound of choral music, and it's good that there's a group of people that, most probably wouldn't get together for any other reason, who can, when we're focused, make some really awesome music together. And I think that's pretty cool, especially these days when people of our age range are rather cliquey. They're not always intent on creating things—they just want to be with their friends, but when we get down to it we do really good work, I think.

Similarly, Amber recognizes the group effort in her description of what choir as a “sound experience” is for her:

Amber: Well, I like singing the lower parts and the middle parts because you get to make the harmony yourself. It's like, everybody knows the melody, but you add that sort of extra thing that is like only a choir can do, you know? Sure, a solo can be really beautiful but it lacks that thing of everybody coming together and making this one beautiful sound.

The second component of *Attachment and sense of interdependence* is *Attachment/affective commitment*, which Ashmore et al define as “the emotional component (in contrast with an evaluative component) of group membership, expressed as a sense of emotional involvement with the group, or an affective or affiliative orientation toward the group” (p. 90). I believe this sense of affective

commitment may be inferred through the many choristers' descriptions of the friendships they have made in choir, and the common description, "I love to sing". These are the two most commonly stated motivating factors for returning to MFYC after the first year:

Debbie: So, what has kept you coming back since that first year?

Diana: Also a lot of my new friends are in the choir. Also I love to sing, and I especially love the music that we sing. And the trips. . .(Interview, April 6, 2004).

Debbie: So that's what got you there to begin with. What has kept you coming back?

Madison: Well, I have made friends in MFYC, and I like the type of music that we do, so that's always a good thing, and performing concerts—I like that stuff, too, and all our little trips (Interview, May 3, 2004).

Michelle's comments, below, suggest a deep degree of affective commitment to the MFYC. Michelle, who has cerebral palsy, uses a walker and wheelchair for mobility. Despite the fact that she has a strong and beautiful voice and has performed solos over the course of her 17 years, the mobility concerns raised by other choirs for whom she auditioned resulted in her exclusion from those organizations. I quote from her interview at length to show the depth of her affective commitment to the MFYC:

Michelle: I sang for the first time in public when I was 12, and I got a really warm reception. And I was like (motions floating/flying)—I'm a star—blah-blah-blah. And the teacher that worked on *West Side Story* with us recommended to my mom that I join a choir. My mom thought it would be a good idea, so we hunted around and it was really hard. Then we came upon MFYC—but I was a bit apprehensive going into my interview because of all the stuff that had happened before. But then when I came it was just like—wow. It was a totally different experience.

Debbie: A good one?

Michelle: A good one—yeah! It was a really good one. Because I think the ones before were really negative, and then I came to MFYC and everyone was really warm and would talk to me and I would be able to participate and—I would be able to sing with them—I just felt accepted.

Debbie: Okay. That's good. So, why have you continued to sing with MFYC?

Michelle: The exact same reason.

Debbie: I thought that's what you would say. Any other reasons?

Michelle: I've made a lot of friends and I really like how diverse the music is. So that's why I continue (Interview, March 23, 2004).

The third component of the element *Attachment and sense of interdependence* is *interconnection of self and others*. Ashmore et al define this as the degree to which people cognitively merge their sense of self and the group (p. 91-92), and is suggested in the type of statements that make use of “we” rather than “I” when the individual talks about himself. A brief scan of the preceding interview quotations will show the use of “we” and “our” in reference to MFYC occurs in most of these interview excerpts, and in others throughout this thesis, indicating this merging of self with the group. As discussed previously, when participation in a group lead to self-suppression, the potential for fascism increases. Although my concept for a multicultural human subject seeks to disrupt fascistic tendencies, it can only do so by maintaining vigilance against the type of self-suppression that erases difference in the construction of rigid commonalities.

Social embeddedness.

The fifth element of collective identity is *social embeddedness*. This is the degree to which a particular collective identity is implicated in the daily life and social relationships of an individual (Ashmore, Deux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004, p. 92). Although at the time my interview questions were not specifically seeking to establish social embeddedness as an element of collective identity, I did have a

sense that a chorister who had made friends in the choir might be more susceptible to particular ideas and concepts as a result of peer pressure that might influence the emergence of multicultural human subjectivity. Therefore, I asked all study participants if they had made friends in the choir, if this information had not already been volunteered in the interview. This is particularly true among the first-year choir members who, obviously, were not asked the question, “Why did you return to the choir the next year?”

Debbie: So how are you enjoying MFYC so far?

Emily: I've made so many more friends than I thought I would. It's my first time ever in a choir. I really like the choir atmosphere because—I love the company because I am an only child and I don't get that much interaction with people on my own, and so this—I make a lot of friends easily in choir because we're all in the same boat when we are learning something for the first time, we're all beginners. And when there is someone that's really good, you learn from them, so you are constantly learning. That's what I like—it's nothing tedious, it's always fun (Interview, April 5, 2004).

Debbie: Have you made friends in the choir since you joined?

Lauren: Yeah, actually. I was really worried about that, which is why I was kind of iffy about joining, because at first everybody has cliques, right, and some people weren't as inviting as you might have thought, like in the alto section and in the sopranos—but I have made friends, like with Michelle, and Stefanie who is new, and quite a few other people (Interview, April 2, 2004).

Although these two statements do not give a particular indication of true social embeddedness, merely its potential to develop, other MFYC choristers explained how their choir friendships spill over into other areas of their lives:

Debbie: And have you made friends since you joined the choir?

Dominique: Yes—I've made quite a few. And I've done a few things out of the choir with the friends that I've made (Interview, April 12, 2004).

Debbie: So-have you made friends in the choir since joining?

AJ: yes—oh yes. It's fun also because I get to know younger kids as well, not just people my age. Because generally in school I don't know anyone under Grade 9 except for like a few kids, and this way I get to know some other kids who have really great voices and are very smart and talented, so I can like talk to them and have fun with them. That's why I'm actually really looking forward to the retreat, because I know some people are going on the retreat that I haven't talked to at choir because they don't sit near me. . . .

Debbie: That's interesting, you know, because many young people your age are only comfortable with their very close friends or a few people.

AJ: Well, I used to do that in middle school, but then I kind of didn't have good experiences in middle school, so now I'm like, I've been there, I've done that, and I want to know new people, and so when I started getting involved in sports and stuff even at school, now I know people a grade younger than me, and I know a lot of people in my school even if they are just acquaintances. So I think that's a whole lot better than just sticking to my one group, where you go, I'll hang with you every Friday night—but then that kind of gets old, so I'm like, let's move on to new people even for just a bit, and then you come back to them, and then you are all happy again because you aren't getting sick of each other all the time (Interview, March 15, 2004).

AJ's comments indicate her deliberate inclusion of friends from choir in her social circle both within and outside of choir, along with an analysis of what motivates her to do so. Within the choir, AJ is a recognized leader; many younger choristers look up to her as an older teen whose actions they emulate. Indeed, she is a “model chorister” whose musical and social leadership in the MFYC is encouraged and reinforced both by me and by the choir members.

Katrina, in her first year as a choir member and the youngest of the study's participants, indicates ways that her choir friendships are beginning to become socially embedded:

Debbie: Okay—so since you've joined the choir, have you met any other kids that you would consider friends?

Katrina: Yes.

Debbie: Anyone that you might want to see outside of choir?

Katrina: I've actually met up with some of them to go to the movies (Interview, March 12, 2004).

One fourteen-year old boy in his fourth year as an MFYC chorister, who used the pseudonym “Raka Darkwood,” also provided an indication of the way choir friendships have become socially embedded:

Debbie: You mentioned that you have friends in the choir. . . . These friends that you've made since you joined the choir, do you see them socially outside of choir or communicate with them?

Raka: Sometimes.

Debbie: When — how—do you ever talk to them on MSN or like that?

Raka: Yes.

Debbie: Okay—and who are they? I mean, without naming names—are they people from your section or from all over the choir?

Raka: From all over. And I still am friends with some people who are no longer in the choir because they have gone to college, but we still stay in touch (Interview, March 20, 2004).

There are many more examples within the interviews of the ways that choir members acknowledged, if unconsciously, the social embeddedness of MFYC in their lives. MSN and other instant messaging services were commonly called up in interviews as indicators of the ways in which social contact between weekly choir rehearsals is maintained. As well, many talked of going with choir members to parties, to the movies, shopping, and other activities that are a routine part of the lives of adolescents in Mississauga.

Behavioral involvement.

The sixth element of collective identity in the framework set out by Ashmore et al is that of *behavioral involvement*. In their definition, behavioral involvement is a key element of collective identity, and is acknowledged as “the

degree to which the person engages in actions that directly implicate the collective identity in question” (p. 92-93). Their discussion of this element links it directly to outcomes. For the purposes of this thesis, the potential outcome of MFYC membership in question is a developing self-understanding as a multicultural human subject. As Ashmore et al suggest,

. . .indices of behavioral involvement do not involve theoretical networks that link one domain to another. Rather, behavioral involvement is a clear expression of the identity itself, requiring no additional theorizing to make the connection (2004, p. 93).

From this perspective, then, choristers who choose to remain in MFYC for several years indicate by the act of rejoining the choir their degree of behavioral involvement as MFYC members. Since time in role is identified as one index of behavioral involvement, it can be inferred that the longer an adolescent remains in the MFYC, the stronger this element becomes as an indicator of collective identity. Ashmore et al cite Phinney (1992) in their discussion of other measures of behavioral involvement found in statements related to participation in cultural practices of one’s own ethnic group as an indicator of *ethnic behavior*, and language is named in their discussion as an important form of behavioral involvement. Likewise, other displays of group membership were named as indicators of behavioral involvement.

By wearing certain apparel (i.e., a university sweatshirt [or in this case, an MFYC t-shirt]), waving a national flag, or donating time and resources to organizations that promote the collective identity (p. 93).

Because this element of collective identity is in itself performative (“behavioral identity is a clear expression of the identity itself,” p. 93), it is difficult to offer an example of this element from chorister interviews that do not resort to circular references. However, as Ashmore et al state, behavioral involvement is a *key element* (p. 92) of collective identity (italics are mine), and I

believe its understanding as a key element of collective identity is vital to the analysis of an emerging multicultural human subject, since it is through observations of performed identity that we know how an individual self-identifies. The MFYC members who took part in this study all show strong indicators that they have or are developing individual-level self-understanding that invokes their sense of collective identity as MFYC members. The high return rate of members to the MFYC suggests that their behavioral involvement in MFYC is highly valued, and is thus related to the element of *importance* discussed previously in this chapter. In order to understand these implications to multicultural human subjectivity, however, we need to look at the final element of the collective identity framework in greater depth than the preceding elements. I believe that this final element, *content and meaning*, has a direct link to the conditions that may allow for a multicultural human subject to emerge, both as a discursive subject, and as a performed identity.

Content and Meaning: The Performative Element

Content and meaning refer to the “semantic space within which an identity resides — a space that can include self-attributed characteristics, political ideology, and developmental narratives” (Ashmore, Deux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004, p. 94). This is the space where members of a group begin to incorporate traits, discourses, and histories of the group into their own personal understandings of self. As an element of the Collective Identity Organizing Framework, *content and meaning* are considered through three subcategories: *self-attributed characteristics*, *ideology*, and *narrative*.

Self-attributed characteristics.

Self-attributed characteristics are the traits and dispositions associated with a particular social category taken up by individual members of that category in their self-descriptions. The traits and dispositions associated with particular collective identities sometimes harden into stereotypes that an

individual adopts as part of her personal performance of that identity. Because collective identity in the preceding sections of the thesis deals specifically with group membership in the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, the self-attributed characteristics of MFYC members reported here do not invoke the stereotypes typically associated with gender, race or ethnic group descriptions. Neither were my interview questions designed to elicit self-attributions as they relate to MFYC membership. However, there were, particularly among multi-year MFYC members, a few indications of self-attributed characteristics reflecting the popular discourse associated with multiculturalism. Such indicators are found in the following statements given in response to my question of how singing the music of another culture makes the chorister feel about herself:

Diana : Well, I feel enlightened, because it's like—wow, this is so cool. Because like, when I was little, all I knew were the songs we sang in English. But singing a different language—that is like so cool!

Emily: Singing the music of other cultures opens my eyes. My grandmother doesn't like a lot of people, and I'm not sure why. I think through singing we can get closer to an agreement between cultures.

Both of these statements reflect multicultural educational discourse, which connotes as social ideal “a policy of support for exchange among different social groups to enrich all while respecting and preserving the integrity of each” (Elliott, 1995, p. 207). I do not wish to imply that the students who labeled themselves “open-minded” or “enlightened” through singing global song were not sincere in their statements, as I do take these self-attributions at face value. However, I must acknowledge here that multicultural discourse frequently espouses open-mindedness towards other cultures as an end goal (a form of cosmopolitanism). Thus my students may in part be responding to a discourse that has predisposed them to believe a multicultural education will make them more open-minded. It is not my intention here to claim that their MFYC experiences with global song are solely responsible for attitudes of open-mindedness. Rather, my purpose is to focus on MFYC’s context as it contributes

to the conditions that may influence emerging multicultural human subjectivity. Open-mindedness towards other cultures is one such condition.

Most of the study's participants described their primary reason for joining the choir as they "love to sing." This particular phrase is part of MFYC's ongoing recruitment campaign (one of our regular newspaper advertisements features an attention line that asks, "Do You Love to Sing?") Thus, "loving to sing" is part of MFYC's self-produced rhetoric and its own narrative, and can be viewed as an example of self-attribution that may also be performative, although not specifically performative for multicultural human subjectivity. Other self-attributed characteristics mentioned in interviews rely upon outside discourses (those not developed by MFYC but in schools, popular culture, and so forth), that suggest "what kinds of kids join choirs." For example, AJ's comment (quoted earlier in this chapter) about getting to know "kids who have really great voices and are very smart and talented" is fed by elitist discourses of music and music education that perpetuate the myth that only the talented should join and perform with groups such as children's choirs. From a somewhat different perspective, Emily also alludes to prevailing discourses of children's choirs. In her statement, though, she also provides a strong indication of her developing sense of belonging, touching upon both the private and public regard categories of the element of *evaluation*:

Emily: I really like the fact that we have concerts to go to and places to be and perform—that's my favorite part, performing. I like how professional it is, that we have little meets and we have uniforms and choir bags—it really makes you feel cool—not in an elitist way but it's just something to say to people: I belong to this choir and we've accomplished this and it's really cool to be a part of it. Like, a lot of kids in my school don't know what that's like because they are too busy in their own little garage band and they haven't really performed much—they're just playing alone with themselves. But this way we affect more people, so it's cool.

It seems clear from Emily's statement that she feels very connected to the MFYC and is proud of both her individual accomplishments and the choir's

accomplishments. I am pleased that Emily also has perceived that MFYC is not structured to be an elitist organization as some other children's choirs are (see Chapter 4). This was perhaps the strongest evidence among the interviews of self-attributed characteristics reflecting the anti-racism pedagogy I bring to my teaching practice in the MFYC, but other more subtle hints may be located and will be addressed in the following section of the chapter which deals with the *ideology* of the MFYC.

Ideology.

Ideology is defined by Ashmore et al as beliefs about a group's experience, history, and position in society (Ashmore, Deux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004, p. 83). Most of the students I interviewed referred to MFYC as "fun" in some way or another. This can be interpreted as belief in the group's experience and history (including choir tours as fun), as well as a reference to MFYC's "position in society" as a musical performing group for young people that provides a fun, social space in which they can experience music together. This position exists as a belief that contrasts with attitudes about other children's choirs described by some choristers as "serious" or "more serious." Although in reality these choirs may also be providing fun for their members, MFYC members perceive that we have "more fun."

MFYC's print media (such as our current recruiting brochure) reinforces the perception that our rehearsals are fun and relaxed. The language of the brochure is subtle with regard to our anti-racist philosophy and pedagogy, but it makes use of language intended to convey the multi-cultural nature of our programming. Such public proclamations of MFYC's pedagogical philosophy may be equated to Ashmore et al's *ideology* subcategory of the element *culture and meaning*. In the following sections of this chapter, I will analyze the MFYC "ideology" as taken up by MFYC choristers, in order to show how they adopt the particular ideology of the group as part of their self and other understandings.

Through ideology, as well as the *narrative* of the MFYC, we can begin forging links between the performativity of global song and an emerging multicultural human subject.

One aspect of the MFYC “ideology” that is perceived by many choristers is also a part of what is termed the *collective identity story*. I will look more closely at this collective identity story in subsequent sections of this chapter; however, one particular belief about MFYC’s position in society also has one foot in the sands of ideology. As discussed in Chapter 4, it has always been my intent that the MFYC be discernibly “different” from traditional children’s choirs, yet I never discuss this directly with the choristers. Even so, they have discerned that there are some real differences between MFYC and other choirs:

Debbie: Okay, so it was your mom’s suggestion to join a choir—how is that working out for you?

Dominique: Quite well. I find that our choir is amazing. It’s fun, and it’s different from other choirs. Like we do all types of music. It’s all cultural and all around the world type music and stuff like that (Interview, April 12, 2004).

Roxy: We’re different than other choirs—like everybody is accepted. Everybody hangs out with everybody—it’s not like a whole racial thing in the background. Like everybody—we’re all friends and, I don’t know—it’s good, like especially if people come to watch us they realize that we’re not like an “all-Canadian choir” (uses finger quotes to emphasize). Like we don’t care. We’ll sing different languages because our choir is filled with different people with different backgrounds, so. . . I think that’s good (Interview, April 6, 2004).

Roxy’s observation that MFYC is not “like an all-Canadian choir” alludes to the myth of Canada as a “white nation” (Bannerji, 2000), and marks MFYC as racially diverse and more inclusive than she perceives other choirs to be. Her remarks resonate with Michelle’s, also quoted previously:

Michelle: Then I came to MFYC and everyone was really warm and would talk to me and I would be able to participate and—I would be able to sing with them—I just felt accepted.

As a young woman with many physical challenges, in a world where exclusion is still the norm for those who are differently-abled, feeling accepted is a statement that implies MFYC is “different” than the other choirs she had wanted to experience, but from which she had been excluded.

For some choristers, the differences have been experienced first-hand. Joanne explains how MFYC differs from her choirs at a regional arts high school:

Debbie: What kinds of things are different—what have you done there that is different?

Joanne: Well, like in MFYC, we do all sorts of different kinds of music, and many different languages. At school we do some Broadway, but mostly it’s classical. I mean, we do some different languages but even that is mostly Jewish and French (Interview, March 30, 2004).

Lauren also describes how MFYC differs from choirs she has both been in, and those she has observed with which her father sings:

Debbie: Okay. Since you've been with the choir, have you had any experiences that have been especially meaningful to you?

Lauren: Well, just making the friends finally, and these songs are just so—well picked out. No really, honestly, I just—if there were any other group, like my dad was in a choir for a couple of years, and they had the same music every year, which was pretty cool but they weren’t—they weren’t professional. They were run by a couple and they had a whole bunch of members for the longest time, like yours, but you are kind of professional, right?

Debbie: We try to be (laughing).

Lauren: But your choice of music is like from a whole bunch of ethnics and everything, and theirs was just—it was but not to the same extent. They would have some songs from other things but nothing like what our choir does. It’s a different vibe—it’s very upbeat and different vibe here in our choir. Like with my dad’s choir, it was upbeat and a good vibe, too, but he said that he didn’t vocally get to spread his wings type of thing, because they mostly sang the same kinds of stuff every year. I

really like this music! It's really cool. And like, I've been in choirs for a long time so I know. . . .

In the discussion earlier in this chapter related to self-attribution of characteristics, “open-mindedness” was called up as a trait of multicultural discourse that some choir members adopted in their self-descriptions, naming their global song experiences as contributing to this feeling. This self-characterization bears a direct relationship to one aspect of MFYC group ideology (as expressed by the choir members): we perform global song because it is good to learn about the music of other cultures. Performing the music of diverse cultures is also part of the MFYC’s public narrative, in that our recruiting brochures make specific reference to our world music repertoire, as do our newspaper recruiting ads. Our concert programs usually have a global perspective conveyed in the repertoire. It seems, however, that many choristers accept this ideology without question, as an inherent good. Although I personally believe in our global song programming and curriculum, I do wonder why there is so little resistance to it, even among new choir members. This compliant attitude towards the discourse of multiculturalism has implications for the emergence of multicultural human subjectivity, in that it suggests a state of mind that is already open to and accepting of diversity as a sort of “Canadian norm.” My students’ willingness to experience cultural diversity in a community choir is indicative of the subjectivity constructed through Canada’s official multicultural policies and programs:

Alicia: Well, it's good to experience other cultures and stuff, especially something I haven't done before like all these different languages. So like if I'm reading something I can learn, or I can know how to pronounce them (Interview, March 28, 2004).

Amber: Well, it's not coincidence that people in society all like the same music—it's because we are exposed to it, right? So I think the more exposure to we get to something different—people are afraid of what they don't understand, I guess. That's why we need to keep trying new songs and new cultures.

Dominique: Okay, from what we've done so far this year, I've found it different, like I said, because it's music from all around the world. I don't think there's anything I don't like in particular. I wouldn't change anything in that aspect, I guess, because it's something that I guess I've never done before, but knowing that it's music from around the world and different stuff like that, just doing that is a good thing, I guess.

Kirsten: I also like learning music from parts of the world that I haven't studied much before, because I really think it's important for us to learn how to get along with everybody in the world—to try to understand at least some of their music. I mean, you can't learn one song and understand the culture — but at least if you can catch a glimpse of some of it, then you've got some basis for understanding, I think (Interview, March 8, 2004).

Michelle: Yeah. It was really cool because I hate just singing English songs. I like expanding into different cultures—so things like the Telugu Song, even though I could never get those notes, I really liked the language and sounding out the syllables. It intrigued me — I was intrigued in the fall.

Ashmore et al suggest that there may be a limited set of themes defining a group's ideology, and offer that possible themes vary among “an emphasis on assimilation, separatism, and intergroup contact and conflict” (p. 96). It is the latter theme that I believe is most descriptive of the belief that “it is good to experience other cultures.” Ashmore et al further suggest that one means of analysis would be to consider the degree to which particular beliefs are culturally embedded, or the degree to which they are socially embedded. Since the number of choristers who expressed opinions indicating that they thought it was good to experience other cultures did not seem to be influenced by the chorister's cultural or ethnic background, we can infer that this is a socially embedded belief that is reinforced through official discourses of multiculturalism with its subtext of cosmopolitanism, and in the ideology of the MFYC. The authors also caution that ideologies are idiosyncratic; thus it should be reiterated here that I am not attempting to generalize behaviors found in other groups of adolescents, nor predict the outcome of multicultural human

subjectivity as a generalized phenomenon. My point is that within the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, a multi-ethnic group of young people who voluntarily agree to learn diverse musical genres and practices delivered via pedagogical practices that are anti-racist, the space exists from which a multicultural human subject may emerge.

Narrative.

Ashmore et al define the final element of collective identity as *narrative*, or the internally represented story developed by an individual regarding self and the social group in question. They distinguish two types of narrative: *collective identity story*, defined as the individual's story of self as a member of a group, and *group story*, defined as the story of the group (Ashmore, Deux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004, p.96). *Group story* deals primarily with an individual's mental pictures about the group's past or history. MFYC was only in its seventh year at the time of the study, thus any "history" is also a part of the study participant's recent experience. There has been little time for a long "MFYC story" to develop, although I certainly believe that a group story surrounding the MFYC is emerging, and I will address this aspect of group story following my analysis of collective identity story constructed by MFYC choristers.

One example of collective identity story as reflected at the individual level might include Michelle's discussion of feeling included as a full member of the MFYC as part of our "difference" (as an inclusive organization) from other choirs. This sense of MFYC as a different kind of choir makes up one facet of the evolving MFYC group story, as I will address a little later on. Another example of collective identity story is Roxy's description of her increased sense of confidence, derived at least in part from her experiences with MFYC, thus becoming a part of her individual collective identity story as a member of the MFYC:

Debbie: Okay. Thinking about the music that we do in MFYC, do you think that anything we have done has influenced the way that you think about yourself?

Roxy: Not any song in particular or any language in particular, but I feel more confident if someone says, "sing for me." Like, I'll feel more confident because I've been here for like 3 years—I've learned so much and my voice has improved so much, so I feel more confident to like sing in front of people and stuff.

Later, Roxy elaborated more on her personal collective identity story in which she constructs herself as a singing subject (Joyce, 2003) as a result of her MFYC experience. As she explains, many of her friends have trouble imagining Roxy in an activity that ruptures their stereotypic images of "people who sing":

Roxy: . . .because my personality does not go—when I tell them that I sing and I play the piano they are like, what? You sing? Like they could never see me doing that. I'm like too outgoing and too crazy. Like even my boyfriend that I have right now, I was telling him about Bobobo and I was like singing it at the top of my lungs, and he was like, I can never see you singing. Like nobody can. And when I tell people that I sing and whatever they are like, Oh my God! You sing? I guess it's just that people who usually sing are all like quiet or soft or whatever, but I'm so like loud and outgoing and hyper. But people never see that about me.

Aileen constructs a similar collective identity story for herself:

Debbie: And does having that experience in some way affect the way that you think about yourself?

Aileen: I think it makes me a lot more confident, because I know that in Grade 6 and 7, and even in the beginning when I joined the choir, I wasn't really that confident to sing in front of other people or to even sing at all in a public situation, but now people are like, "You sing?" And I'm like "yes" and they'll say "do you want to sing now?" and I'll say, "of course!" And then they say, "You will?" because other people are like, "no—no I'm not going to sing in front of anyone else." Any opportunity to sing I will, like when my friends come over or in the cafeteria I will. I know it has given me a lot of confidence.

I also asked Aileen directly if there was some knowledge of herself that she could directly attribute to her experiences with music and with MFYC:

Debbie: Okay—I'm going to ask you to think about your experiences with music, and if there is anything in particular that you know about yourself that you've only learned through music—particularly through the MFYC but any music.

Aileen: I've learned that I am free to express myself, mainly from writing my own songs, but I do have the capacity to really create something that I like and that other people enjoy. And through the choir, and through singing, I realize that I really do have a lot to offer, and that I do have the confidence to share that. Because even if you have the most amazing voice in the world but you don't have the confidence to share that, then it's kind of wasted. And even if you don't have the most amazing voice, as long as you work hard to contribute, it's still worth more than the amazing voice in the end, I think.

AJ and Amber's stories below clearly implicate their choir experiences in their individual self-understanding. Their collective identity stories reflect upon some of the changes that they have experienced as members of the MFYC:

Debbie: So you think of it as fun. Does it (making music with MFYC) ever make you think of yourself in a particular way?

AJ: How far I've come.

Debbie: So you can see your own growth and development?

AJ: How I've become more outgoing (brushes away a tear). Yes, more outgoing and proud that this is music I can sing.

Amber: As a singer, the big turning point for me was when I auditioned for one of the solos, I think it was We Rise Again. I had never really come out as a singer until then, and I wasn't as shy anymore. And I felt like, I remember after I did it, no one had really heard me sing alone before, and after I did that audition, everyone was like where did this come from? And I remember people started clapping and everything. And after that I wasn't afraid to sing out anymore or to make mistakes—I remember before I would like mumble along so no one would hear my mistakes, and now I'm like—well, if you are going to make a mistake, make sure people hear you.

Aileen, AJ, and Amber are all in Year 4 or longer as MFYC members. Roxy is in her third year with MFYC. I believe it is telling that they not only

recognize some of the changes in personality they have experienced in their young lives, but that they attribute these changes to experiences related to their individual collective identity stories as MFYC members.

Although the MFYC's history is brief, and *group story* as defined by Ashmore et al (2004) implies a sense of time more congruent with Braudel's sense of *durée*, or that invoking the "substance of the past into the fabric of the present" (cited in Blommaert, 1999, p. 3), the examples provided in foregoing sections of this chapter indicate that part of the evolving MFYC group story is that, as a youth choir, MFYC is "different" from some others based on more "traditional" structures, or that operate from principles of exclusion rather than inclusion. Our developing reputation as a youth choir whose repertoire is multi-cultural also feeds into this group story:

Aileen: I really love to sing—and it's so much fun because we sing such a wide variety of repertoire, and I really do value that in a choir. . .

Diana: Well, most of the songs that I heard before I joined the choir were basically English, and it gets a little boring—it's not new music, there's nothing new, nothing different. But when I went to the choir, here was music with different languages, a new kind of rhythm that I'd never heard before.

Kirsten: I guess that's one thing I should point out, because we've sung so many different cultures, I guess it's easier for me to learn certain words and pronunciations, because I've learned it from another song, so I'm more familiar with it.

Lauren: I thought it was cool that I could be part of this and sing other songs in different languages—I thought it was really cool that all of us got to do this. Really interesting.

Another part of MFYC's group story is the inclusive nature of our structure and the open attitudes toward members of diverse backgrounds. Michelle's narrative presented earlier in the chapter is a part of the group story surrounding inclusivity. Other aspects of the same group story point not only to the racial diversity of the MFYC membership, but to MFYC as a space where

people of differing backgrounds are able to cooperate and enjoy each other's company, as Madison, a thirteen year old originally from India, acknowledges:

Debbie: Okay. Thinking about some of the different kinds of music that we've done at MFYC, has it influenced, or do you think it influences, the way you think about yourself in any way?

Madison: Yeah—I think so. Because we do a lot of different songs, right? And I like the fact that everyone in choir—like there's no racial discrimination or anything, because there are a lot of people in choir who are from different countries. And about myself, I guess I like the fact that I enjoy different music from different cultures. That again makes me think about wanting to visit those countries. I like that (Interview, May 3, 2004).

I have tried to show in the foregoing discussions and examples how the MFYC choristers who took part in this study use language suggestive of collective identities as MFYC members. Many of the elements of collective identity are observable through answers given to questions designed for other purposes. Once I realized the strong collective identity elements present in the interviews, however, I began to understand its potency for multicultural human subjectivity to emerge within particular contexts. This prompted me to go back to the data and code responses that were indicative of the various elements of collective identity. Table 3 indicates the high degree to which choristers indicated a sense of collective identity in their responses:

Table 3
Participants' Statements Indicating Collective Identity as MFYC Members

Name	Sex	Age	Years in MFYC	Seven Elements of Collective Identity as Individual Level Constructs*						
				1. Self Categorization	2. Evaluation	3. Importance	4. Attachment & Interdependence	5. Social Embeddedness	6. Behavioral Involvement	7. Content and Meaning
								a) Self-attributed	b) Ideology	c) Narrative
Katrina	F	10	1	✓	✓				✓	
Ally	F	12	1	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Stefanie	F	13	1	✓	✓				✓	✓
Emily	F	15	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lauren	F	16	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dominique	F	14	2	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Madison	F	13	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alicia	F	14	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Roxy	F	15	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Diana	F	16	3	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Renée	F	13	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Raka	M	14	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Amber	F	15	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
JoAnne	F	15	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aileen	F	16	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Michelle	F	17	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kristen	F	14	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
AJ	F	17	6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ricky	M	19	6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kate	F	16	7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

*Ashmore, R.D., Deux, K.I., & McLaughlin-Volpe, T. (2004). An organizing framework for collective identity: Articulation and significance of multidimensionality. *Psychological bulletin*, 130 (1), 80-114.

There appears to be a correlation between length of time in the MFYC and how many elements of collective identity were present in the interviews, although Lauren, at age 16 and a first year choir member, gave answers indicative of all seven elements. She has had experience with other choirs so may have felt part of the MFYC very quickly. Her interview supports this supposition. Another explanation might be her age, since Emily, age 15 and also in her first year with MFYC, provided answers that were indicative of collective identity in all but one category. The possibility for an emergent multicultural human subjectivity within the MFYC is fed by discourses of multiculturalism experienced at school, in the media, as well as the anti-racism discourse encountered in choir rehearsals. It occurs in a context where embodied ways of knowing multi-cultures are encouraged. In the final pages of this chapter, I shall look at how a collective identity as an MFYC member combines with learning and singing global song as performative, creating a habitus from which a multicultural human subject may emerge.

Performing the Multicultural Human Subject

Belonging and Performativity

I will begin this section by pulling a few threads from the preceding discussion on collective identity into the discussion related to performativity and an emerging multicultural human subjectivity. Interviews with the twenty choristers indicate that even for those in their first year of choir membership, a sense of belonging to the group develops fairly quickly. (The implications of the term “belonging” will be addressed within this section of the chapter.) Making friends with other choristers allows choir membership to become socially embedded in a young person’s life as collective identity embodied at the individual level. When collective identity is socially embedded, the group’s ideology merges with group members’ self-understandings in potent ways. The

MFYC group ideology is reflective of multicultural discourses that promote exposure to diverse cultures; this enacts as a form of subliminal cosmopolitanism. This ideology appears to be accepted by the choir members whom I interviewed. My pedagogical approach, however, which has become interwoven with the group ideology, is decidedly anti-racist. Within choir rehearsals, we discuss social and historical contexts for the music we study from a variety of perspectives, including discussion of the power relations at work. For music representing events of the past, we also try to make connections to ongoing power struggles in the world today. All of these factors become threads of the MFYC's narrative, both at the individual level (collective identity story) and at the group level (group story). The group story, although only seven years in the making, constructs MFYC as a "different choir": an inclusive and accepting space for young people of all races and abilities. The MFYC group story values our repertoire of global song, which involves singing in many languages.⁴²

To these threads, I wish now to add those of performing and performativity. My objective is to weave a tapestry of potential. An individual's sense of collective identity with a group suggests that she feels a sense of "belonging." Bell (1999) connects belonging with performativity, implicating connectedness (a term that came up repeatedly in the interviews and has been used extensively in this analysis) in the questions: "What makes us who we are within a particular social complex? How are we to understand ourselves, our politics, our desires and our passions as produced within this historical present?" (p. 1). Her use of the word "belonging" is as an abstraction that begins from the position that no one simply ontologically "belongs" to the world or any group, gender, religion, and so forth. What creates the situation in which an individual feels that she belongs to a particular group is that "the performativity of

⁴² The December 2003 concert program featured repertoire in eleven languages including English.

belonging ‘cites’ the norms that constitute or make present the community or group” (Bell, 1999, p. 3). The “norms” of the MFYC regularly cited are its “difference”: its reiteration of openness and inclusiveness of people from diverse backgrounds, our global song repertoire reiterates this openness and inclusivity in music making and doing. As we rehearse and perform global song, we make present a sense of community that is both local and global; MFYC choir members belong both to the immediate community of the youth choir, and to the community of the world at large.

As Hesse argues, the *multicultural* is a signifying relation of the unsettled meanings of cultural difference that exist in relation to *multiculturalism* as a signifier of official attempts to fix the meanings of difference within the national imaginary (Hesse, 2000, p. 2). The *multicultural* as experienced at the popular or lived level, is a “transruption” of our way of thinking about identities, a recurring exposure of discrepancies in the fixed definitions that official multiculturalism seeks to impose. These discrepancies manifest themselves through a multitude of cultural entanglements and hybridities (p. 17). A multicultural human subject is not solely a product of discourse, it is as well a form of self-understanding. A multicultural human subject suggests a rejection of artificial boundaries of race and ethnicity, and an embracing of the transruptions created by cultural entanglements and hybridity.

The song goes in you.

In Chapter Five, first-year choristers expressed some of the ways that musical experiences with MFYC helped them to feel connected to people of other cultures through the songs we sing together. Ally’s statement, “the song goes in you,” is a very literal expression of performativity. Among long-term choir members, many expressed various pieces we have studied with MFYC as ones with which they “identified” or “related to” in some way. When I coded the various interview transcripts, I made use of three different codes based upon the

chorister's response language: 1) identifies with the song, 2) relates to the song, and 3) personalizes the song. Although slightly different nuanced meanings may be inferred from each of these codes, they all represent ways in which choir members make use of song as a “technology for spinning the continuous tale of who one is” (DeNora, 2000, p. 63).

In researching the ways engaging in global song is performative for the adolescents in the MFYC in their developing self-understanding as potentially multicultural human subjects, I specifically asked interview questions that would allow a chorister to locate herself in a particular song, or conversely, locate the song in her personal experience. The range of explanations given by choir members about how each constructs meaning from particular songs was diverse, but brought to light how very deeply many of these young people identified with the music we experience in choir. The following narratives from interviews will illustrate how choir members make meaning from the songs themselves, and how this meaning quickly becomes a part of who they are as people. Through this process of making meaning as part of choristers' self-understanding, engaging with global song is performative in the development of multicultural human subjectivity.

Track #3: “Eamonn n’ Chnoic”

Many choristers named “Eamonn n’ Chnoic” in their interviews as one example of global song that was particularly meaningful for them as individuals. “Eamonn” is the first movement of *Planxty Kelly* (Dolloff, 2002), a suite of Irish folk songs in the ancient Celtic tradition, commissioned by the Western New York Children’s Choir (WNYCC) in memory of Kelly Ryan, a WNYCC member who died tragically on the night of her high school graduation. In her interview, Ally indicated how singing *Planxty Kelly* made her feel:

Ally: So it's like really—to donate those songs, like to try to remember her—I didn't even know her before, and a lot of people probably don't

know her or know a lot about how she died, and they explain it more. So to donate the songs to them, I find that really good.

Debbie: So, in some way you sort of feel connected to Kelly Ryan by singing these songs?

Ally: Yeah—yes it does, because it just feels really good when I sing those songs because this girl used to sing—and it feels really good.

The connection Ally felt for Kelly Ryan was brought about in part by the context I had given for the composition of the suite *Planxty Kelly*, as a piece commissioned in her memory by the children’s choir with which she had sung for many years. In the following section, I will look at the meaning some choir members construct from the opening movement of *Planxty Kelly*, a piece entitled “Eamonn n’ Chnoic.” The song’s first verse is in Gaelic; the remaining verses are in English and tell the story of Ned of the Hill, an outcast searching for protection and comfort by asking his former girlfriend to help him escape from political persecution. The story of Eamonn resonated with several choir members, calling up feelings of empathy in some, while for others, the story of Eamonn seemed to be telling their own personal story:

Amber: I like—it's one of the *Planxty Kelly*⁴³ ones —“Eamonn N Chnoic”—the message in it is really beautiful. My favorite line is “when shots fall like hail, they us both shall assail.” I love that. I think it is a really powerful piece and I can connect to it.

Debbie: How do you connect to it?

Amber: All the dynamics and the words and previous events that happened in the song—it's like a story, and it all sort of builds up to this point—you know what's going on and you can understand it—and you sort of feel for these people who are, I don't know exactly what is happening to them, but they are standing together in some traumatic event, which happens to every person I guess at some level in their life.

⁴³Suite of Irish folk songs (Dolloff, 2002)

Debbie: Have you found any songs that you've sung with the choir that you find especially meaningful to you as a person?

Diana: Well, the Eamonn song. Sometimes I feel like I am Eamonn, just wandering the road, banging on the door to be let in. Because it's kind of tough. Like whenever I read a story that had a hero or a heroine in it, I would always imagine that I was the hero, that I was facing all these hardships. I was teased when I was little, and I've never completely healed from that, so it's kind of like the knife except in an emotional way. I'm better now, but I haven't completely healed.

Amber's comment suggests the performativity of "Eamonn N' Chnoic" in that the story raises empathy within her for people who have experienced trauma. Even though she gives no indication that this is something she has experienced personally, she acknowledges that it is likely to happen, and sees traumatic events as something common to all humans. Through the song "Eamonn N' Chnoic," Amber locates herself empathetically in a common human experience. Diana, on the other hand, takes the lyrics of Eamonn quite literally, applying them to her own childhood experiences of being teased ("banging on the door to be let in"⁴⁴). Her construction of meaning from the lyric helps her to understand that she is not alone in feeling outcast. The song is one way through which she performs this emotional trauma, and finds a sense of belonging within the MFYC.

"Make Them Hear You" and "An Open Door."

There is no doubt in my mind that the MFYC's "favourite" song from the year of this study, as discussed earlier, is "Make Them Hear You" (Flaherty & Funk, 1998) from the musical *Ragtime*. The song has a strong anti-racist message, occurring within a powerful scene in the musical that portrays a horrific injustice by white firefighters against a young black man. I rarely had to ask direct questions about this song, as most choir members whom I interviewed

⁴⁴ Verse two of Eamonn N' Chnoic begins: "Oh, who is without that with loud, angry shout is beating my closed and bolted door?"

raised it in their answers and were eager to talk about the impact of this song on their thoughts and feelings. I noted the powerful effect the song seemed to have on the choir after one particular rehearsal:

I am quite thrilled with the progress the kids are making on “Make Them Hear You.” They really seem to be taking a great deal of meaning from the song and sing it with a lot of power and emotion. Since that first night when I talked about slavery, I haven’t said much about the context for the song, other than one short description of the scene from Ragtime in which the song occurs. But the kids do seem to be interpreting, in a very personal manner, when they sing this song, especially the line about “your sword may be a sermon or the power of the pen. . . .” Sometimes I think this one song has more of an anti-racist message built into it than anything I could ever do on my own (Personal journal, March 1, 2004).

Debbie: Okay. Can you think of any music that we've done at MFYC that has influenced the way you think about yourself?

Dominique: Hmmm—I think it would have to be Make Them Hear You. I think, like I said, that song has to do with kids reaching out to their folks and letting them know, please just listen to me. I think that had to do with my family and just letting them know that, yeah—my mom is remarrying and just letting them know that I have feelings, too. And that what I have to say in taking part in this, I guess, family—yeah, I think when I sing that song it makes me connect with what my family is really about and just, yeah.

In the above explanation, Dominique indicates how she re-interprets the lyrics of “Make Them Hear You” to personalize them. Her mother had recently remarried, they moved from Montreal to Mississauga, and Dominique suddenly had to cope with attending school in English, her second language. Although far off the track of the anti-racist message I had used in rehearsals to contextualize “Make Them Hear You,” Dominique found the song performative for her on important family issues, a way to construct the capacity within which she was

able at the time to act (DeNora, 2000, p. 64), to tell her mother how she felt about the remarriage. Kate, likewise interprets the song in ways that speak to her personal life, rather than the social justice context in which I first presented it. Kate describes how “a lot of songs” are performative in the way she thinks about her own life:

Debbie: Are you able to get or to make some meaning from that music even if we haven't specifically talked about the culture?

Kate: Well—we're doing one song—it's Make Them Hear You—it has a really large meaning behind it—and even before you said anything I read the words and thought—well, it just had a lot of meaning behind it. There are a lot of songs that make you think not just about the song but about your life. I think it means—well, not just what it's meant for you but for people who are alone, or depressed—sad or in times of trouble. Even for teenagers—we have all these things to do—we don't always just think about makeup and boys. . . (Interview, February 8, 2004).

The excerpts from Dominique and Kate above exemplify how they created personal meanings from “Make Them Hear You” that were unrelated to the song's intended social justice message. This is a reality that those of us engaged in anti-racism education must accept: there is no guarantee that an intended social justice message will be dominant. Students create meanings for themselves that sometimes differ drastically from the meaning the teacher may have intended. As Simon (1992, p. 61) indicates, pedagogical practice cannot guarantee meaning. Even so, the fact that both Kate and Dominique made use of “Make Them Hear You” to make sense of their own personal situations indicates the power of music as performative in the construction of identity. The song reminds them of who they were at a certain time in their lives (DeNora, 2000, p. 65). Later in her interview, however, Dominique returned to “Make Them Hear You.” Her remarks indicate that its powerful message of social justice had also been embodied:

Dominique: Well, like for "Make Them Hear You," it's a song against racism, and knowing that I am black, it just makes me think of what blacks in general have done to make themselves and to make their communities stronger people, and just knowing that you can be kind of proud of that. I guess with every other person, they have some confidence in knowing that where they are from has some goodness in it, in their background.

In the above discussion, Dominique "sees herself" in the story of "Make Them Hear You." This is an important component of anti-racism education and critical multiculturalism: "multiculturalism is a metadiscipline of sorts, and it aims for increased educational equity for all students and for representation of their values and worldviews within the curriculum" (Campbell, 2002b, p. 2). From this perspective, Joanne, a fourteen-year old white young woman, also sees herself in "Make Them Hear You":

Debbie: Are there any songs that we are singing currently or from the past that especially speak to you as a person?

Joanne: I could say Make Them Hear You almost.

Debbie: How so?

Joanne: Because, as a person, I can say I am really into human rights and stuff, and that song is really talking about human rights. It really stands out that way and portrays what I believe.

If the song portrays Joanne's beliefs, her performance of the song is an embodied performance of her beliefs concerning justice and human rights. Madison, although less succinct in her comments, also draws an analogy from "Make Them Hear You" that she can relate to her own experiences with racism as a thirteen year-old immigrant from India. It should be noted that she does not name racism per se in her comments, merely alluding to it in oblique language and distancing herself from it by referring to Africa, and then Pakistan, as more problematic than her own identity as an immigrant from India:

Debbie: All right, let's talk then a little bit about—you mentioned Make Them Hear You. So what is it particularly about that song that you like?

Madison: I like the way it flows, and there are the splits—that sounds really good, especially the guys' part. And the lyrics, too, because of the story.

Debbie: Okay. What about those lyrics?

Madison: Well, it talks about speaking your mind, something I always wanted to do but sometimes I keep things away from people because they might judge my opinion the wrong way. I read a book once about slavery, and Africa, and the whites against blacks and stuff like that. I really liked the book, and the song—like, their fight for freedom—you know—it's not right.

Debbie: Is there anything about that fight that you can relate to personally in any way, even though times have changed somewhat and there is no longer slavery in North America?

Madison: There's always like that little—when people think you are different, especially when you are from India, there's always that relation to Pakistan and stuff like that. I never had an extreme problem with that, but it was always there.

In a manner quite similar to Madison in the above interview excerpt, sixteen-year old Kate from Sri Lanka found another song, “An Open Door” (Louis & Brown, 2001) (one which MFYC had performed three years before the time of this study), to be particularly performative for her:

Debbie: Let's think now about the whole time you've been in choir, because you have been in choir as long as anybody⁴⁵—have you experienced any particular music, anything that we've done in particular that you have felt really connected to you as a person, or something that says "this is a song that says a lot about who I am or who I would like to be" or anything like that?

Kate: I think the Open Door was one that did that.

Debbie: Okay—how so?

Kate: It talks about someone who is really isolated inside themselves, and they needed to express themselves more. I don't know—I think I had problems with that sort of thing when I was younger—when I came

⁴⁵ Kate joined the MFYC in its first year of operation, 1997.

to Canada I didn't have much—didn't have friends, I guess you'd say. . .

Debbie: It's really hard to move from one place to another.

Kate: But because I was young, maybe—I don't know all the reasons and I don't really want to go into it—but it took some time to make friends and that song sort of related to that period of time. Maybe it was something I was doing, maybe it was somebody else—you know, kids can be a little mean. . .

I tried to follow up with Kate on this last statement, wondering if perhaps she had experienced racist forms of harassment at school when she first came to Canada, but she seemed unwilling to pursue this discussion, despite the fact that she was quite articulate on other topics in her interview. Kate and Madison's reluctance to name racism to me, their white teacher, the authority figure in an activity in which I have the power to say who may belong and who may not, recalled for me bell hooks' descriptions of white terror and its lingering impact on discourses of race:

Black people still feel the terror, still associate it with Whiteness, but are rarely able to articulate the varied ways we are terrorized because it is easy to silence by accusations of reverse racism or by suggesting that black folks who talk about the ways we are terrorized by whites are merely evoking victimization to demand special treatment (hooks, 1992, p. 345).

I wish I had been able to discuss racism in greater depth with all of my students. Madison and Kate have both felt its sting, and perhaps in this situation, the wounds were better left closed — I don't know. It is very easy for me to say we should have discussed it; I did not experience what they may have experienced in their young lives. I do not wish to inflict more pain on these students whom I love. But is it enough that I examine my own Whiteness without deconstructing it with them? Do they need to name the terror in order to "break racism's hold?" How else can we decolonize our minds and our imaginations? (hooks, 1992, p. 346)

<p><i>“Make Them Hear You”: Track #2</i></p>
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Decolonizing ableism.

Michelle is a very bright seventeen-year old who has cerebral palsy. She is able to walk with the assistance of a walker but must have another individual “spotting” for her, since self-mobility comes only with great effort on her part. When MFYC performs, she uses the walker as a seat after being assisted onto the stage. The first few weeks of MFYC membership were likely very difficult for Michelle, as the other children in the choir stared and seemed not to know what to do or do around her. However, Michelle is a strong singer, and gradually the choristers who sat near her in rehearsals came to appreciate her vocal skills. This led to conversations between Michelle and other choristers in her section of the choir, and one night at the conclusion of rehearsal, I noticed that two choir members voluntarily helped Michelle move towards her father, rather than making her father come to assist her. It has been this way ever since; choir members volunteer to help Michelle on and off stage. If for some reason she is missing from a choir event, there is always concern and disappointment. I think we are all beginning to walk down a path that can “decolonize” ableism, although I recognize how much further we have to travel to truly break down the barriers that exist for Michelle and others like her. I quote at length from my interview with Michelle, as her words powerfully express both her frustrations as a person with challenges, and her sense of agency:

Debbie: Okay—so let's try to think about the music we have been doing. What of that music have you liked or do you like if it's something we're working on now?

Michelle: (Very emphatically). Make Them Hear You.

Debbie: “Make Them Hear You.” Okay—and what do you like about that song?

Michelle: Because it speaks to me in so many different ways. Like it was written with a racial intent but it applies to me and I guess my

situation. It kind of gives me a voice, I think. Also “An Open Door.” That’s another song that gives me a voice, because, if I have ever been frustrated with anything, which I have, that song completely tells everyone about it.

Debbie: What kinds of things frustrate you?

Michelle: You know that lyric, “crippled in a world of dancers?” I really like that lyric. It really speaks about me. There have been times in my life when I watch people walking by me, and I wouldn’t be able to move. And I couldn’t ever articulate myself as to how frustrating that can be. Because people are running, people are dancing, people are going places and I’m stuck (slaps her leg). So that’s exactly how it feels—I’m crippled in a world of dancers. And now I don’t feel like that—but I have felt like that.

Because it’s a fight—it’s a constant fight, especially for me socially. It’s becoming easier now, but it’s been a constant fight socially—and those are social battle songs, or inward, like having a battle with yourself. Open Door is about that, and I’ve had that inward battle. And so it kind of reiterates what I was feeling at that time in my life.

Debbie: Now, you said socially it’s been hard for you, but that it’s starting to get easier. Why do you think it is beginning to get easier?

Michelle: Because of music.

Debbie: You think so? In what way?

Michelle: Because I could never define myself, so I’d just hide away behind a façade that I’d make up because I had nothing to tell people about. I had no substance. And music became my substance. Because now I can say, “guess what! I sing!” And I know all this information about so many different musical groups and musicians, and they are like, “wow—how did you know that?” So I can carry on a conversation and make more friends because I’m involved in theatrical adventures—and it’s just become easier ever since I discovered theatre and arts and music. It has given me a personality.

Yes—I’ve always had to sing—I’ve always had to like have the radio on or something. And I’ve always like idolized these unbelievable singers. It’s just a part of me—music has become a part of me—like it has made me who I am. (Interview, March 23, 2004.)

(Lyrics for “An Open Door” may be found in Appendix F.)

Michelle appears to have come to terms with her physical condition, and I believe, because of our connection through music, felt comfortable to discuss it in some depth with me. With her help, I was able to interrogate my own complicity in ableism:

Debbie: Okay—let me ask you, how does it make you feel—and I apologize for never directly asking you this before—how does it make you feel when we are doing something that involves a lot of movement like the African dancing? Do you feel excluded when we do that?

Michelle: Uhm—I wouldn't say excluded because you can't really help it because it is movement, you can't really help moving, but it is frustrating when I have to sit there and figure out how I'm going to adapt to the movement.

Debbie: Would you like it better if I gave you more help with the adapting?

Michelle: No, not really—I really should maybe just tell you more often. (Shrugs her shoulders).

Debbie: Can we make a deal, then? Can you tell me

Michelle: If I'm having a problem with it?

DB: Yeah. Please do.

Michelle: Maybe I should—I just thought about that.

Debbie: Yes—because I want you to take part in whatever way works best for you, you know, and

Michelle: I know that! But I can never figure things out, so maybe I should speak up.

Debbie: So maybe we'll both have to put some thought into Bobobo⁴⁶ and how we can—because I'm committed to doing the piece. . . .

Michelle: Well, it's a really cool piece!

⁴⁶ Bobobo is the name for a group of songs popular in Ghana associated with Bobobo drums. MFYC had performed parts of Bobobo in past years, and were in the process of preparing it again for performance at the time of the study.

Debbie: And you know a lot of the calls already, so I'm happy if you want to do some of the calls, but other things, too.

Michelle: Yeah

Debbie: So we'll continue to talk about that.

Michelle: That just crossed my mind. That was a good question!

Debbie: Always, always—please tell me, because I need your input—I need to know what you are thinking.

Michelle: Yeah, that might be a better plan of action. (Interview, March 23, 2004.)

During the MFYC choir retreat in the Haliburton Highlands in May 2004, we worked with drumming master Kwasi Dunyo, where we learned the Ghanaian dance Bobobo. We performed this celebratory dance on June 12, 2004, at our final concert of the season. During Kwasi's rehearsal with those who wanted to play percussion for the performance, Michelle sat quietly, watching the potential drummers work, while the rest of the choir was outside doing physical recreational activities. Michelle's hand coordination is sometimes suspect, but I wanted to involve her. I found a tokei (a small metal clavé played with a metal rod), and placed it in her hand. Kwasi stopped for a moment and clapped the tokei rhythm for Michelle. She caught it almost immediately. Within a few moments she was able to maintain the pattern with few if any errors. The look on her face was one of pure joy, and her mother, who also was in the room, brushed away the tears that had begun to flow freely. Michelle played tokei for our performance of Bobobo in June (Reflection, March 1, 2005).

<p><i>"Bobobo": Track #4</i></p>

My interview with Michelle and the reflection above are indicative of the catalytic validity within this research project. The particular focus of this conversation with Michelle would likely not have occurred had I not been conducting research into performativity and a multicultural human subject. As a

result of our discussion, I began to consciously and actively think about different ways to include Michelle as an MFYC member whose different abilities enhance the choir, while respecting her sense of belonging.

Imaginary Cultural Narratives

Music constructs our sense of identity through the direct experiences it offers the body, time and sociability, experiences which enable us to place ourselves in imaginary cultural narratives (Frith, 1996, p. 124).

The opening portion of the above quotation from Frith states unequivocally that music is implicated in constructing one's sense of identity. Michelle confirmed this in her interview when she stated, "I could never define myself. . .I had no substance. And music became my substance. . .music has become a part of me — like it has made me who I am" (Interview, March 23, 2004). During the interviews with MFYC members, I wanted to find out how singing the music of another culture might influence constructing the self. Thus I asked each of the study's participants, "Does singing the music of another culture in any way make you feel other than ___? (insert the student's own self-identity terminology.) The answers I received give credence to the quotation from Frith; singing the music of other cultures indeed seemed to help my students create imagined cultural narratives. Cultural narratives also emerged in the interviews as answers to other questions not designed specifically to elicit statements of cultural narrative. I take this as evidence that Frith is correct. Creating imaginary cultural narratives, of course, is not an irrefutable good, and I will address this in Chapter Seven as it relates to creating narratives based upon stereotypes. However, in a discussion of performativity, creation of narratives is a key factor for the construction of identity and the development of self-understanding as other-understanding. The following are just a few of the many cultural narratives my students create when describing their experiences of singing global song:

Debbie: Can you think of a time when singing the music from another culture has made you think about yourself in some way, either in relationship to that culture or to another person who's background is that culture?

Renée: Sort of.

Debbie: Can you give me an example?

Renée: When we were doing "Siyahamba" and the songs from around there, I sort of thought about the road -- the one that was about the train to freedom?

Debbie: "Tshotsholosa"?

Renée: Right—that one! I really thought about that one because—well, maybe life is a train to freedom. (Interview, March 16, 2004).

Later in my interview with Renée, who was thirteen years old, she, too mentioned "Make Them Hear You" as a song through which she constructed a cultural narrative. She was not alone; many choristers expressed similar constructions as evidenced in the following interview excerpts:

Debbie: Anything that we are doing this year that you think may have particular meaning for you?

Renée: Oh—the one with—I was singing it today—the one from the musical—I can't remember the titles, I'm so bad with things.

Debbie: Can you remember some of the lyrics, or hum a few bars?

Renée: Oh—something about your sword can be the power of the pen

Debbie: Oh! "Make Them Hear You"—what is it about that song?

Renée: It's like a really powerful song about how somebody is fighting for justice and for their rights as a person, so I really like it.

Debbie: So when we sing those kinds of songs, how does that affect you?

Renée: I sort of think about the lyrics, and then I put all my energy, or my anger or whatever, into my singing to make it sound better. (Interview, March 16, 2004).

Madison: Hmm—let's see. It's hard to remember, but I think mostly the Jewish ones, “Lo Yisa Goy” especially. I really, really like that because it was the first time I had performed in front of an audience, so that was really fun for me. Remembering all the Jewish parts—I was proud of myself, too, that day, because I learned the Hebrew part. It made me feel a little bit like an Israeli. (Interview, March 3, 2004).

Debbie: Does singing the music from other cultures in any way make you think of yourself as other than Spanish?

Stefanie: Well, yes it does. Like *Planxty Kelly*—that's all Irish folk songs, right, and when I sing those songs I'm on a totally different planet. I'm singing those songs and I want to go to Ireland. I'm singing those songs and I feel Irish, right? Well, you know, they speak English there but like the way at the beginning of Eamonn

Debbie: The Gaelic dialect?

Stefanie: Yes. The Gaelic—so I just feel Irish, then.

Debbie: So, you sort of put yourself in the place we are singing?

Stefanie: Yes. (Interview, April 19, 2004).

Michelle: I fell in love with the “Skye Boat Song,” I don't know why. They make me want to go to Scotland, Ireland, those places—like I said, I like that type of music to begin with. (Interview, March 23, 2004).

Kirsten described her experience singing “Make Them Hear You” and “Vestigia” (1993) by Canadian composer Imant Raminsh which draws heavily on his native Estonian culture:

Debbie: Yes, musically it's very challenging. Okay—I just want to go back and ask you to think really hard for a moment—because you've mentioned Make Them Hear You and Vestigia, can you think a little bit about what is it in those songs that you think touches you?

Kirsten: I guess, particularly for Make Them Hear You, I haven't actually seen the musical but the song, it's my interpretation of someone who has been the minority, but now they are coming out to overpower a larger party, and they are going to change something that's been a certain way, but they are going to rebel it, and they are going to really express their feelings. I guess it's really touching to

know that some people, even if they are just one person, can really make a big difference in the world or in a certain culture.

And for Vestigia, I guess, first of all just the music, the way it is, and the instruments, and the whole searching for God and someone really dedicated to it—they went on a journey to find God—it's kind of the believing in something even though you can't see it, it's there, but she—well, I guess he or she in the song, made themselves believe that, I don't care what anyone else says but God does exist—I saw him, whether it be spiritually or physically, but I still believe in God and (inaudible).

Debbie: You mentioned putting yourself in someone else's shoes—a song like that helps you do that, you think?

Kirsten: I think I can imagine myself searching for something and because I want to see it, I'll see it—I'll believe in it. (Interview, March 8, 2004).

Ricky, in his first year of college at the time of this interview, talked about how his six years with MFYC have helped him expand his interests, and think about himself in different terms:

Debbie: So, thinking about the music we have sung in choir—all of it or any particular one—just using choir as the context—has any of this music helped you in the way you think about yourself? Or influenced the way you think about yourself?

Ricky: Yes. It's made me think beyond what other people may think—I don't know if that sounds right. . . .like—if you see a lot of teens walking around Square One there, they are basically all about hip-hop and into pop culture. But like, with the music from all around the world, from MFYC, I'm not restricting myself to one culture.

Debbie: So, if you're not restricted, how does that influence how you feel about yourself or who you think you are?

Ricky: Hmm—it makes me feel different and I like to be different. Yeah. I like to be someone who can't be categorized (Interview, March 6, 2004).

Perhaps Ricky's desire to "be different" is an allusion to something he cannot yet name — a multicultural human subject? (Reflection, August 2005).

Summary

In the preceding pages, I have shown how membership and participation in the MFYC leads to the development of a sense of collective identity among the choir's members. The element of collective identity labeled *Ideology* suggests that when one considers one's self to be part of a group, acceptance of the group's ideological stance is a determinant implicated in self-identification as a group member. This self-identification as a group member creates a sense of belonging that is itself performative (Bell, 1999) as the individual adopts behaviours congruent with group ideology to support the sense of belonging. Thus within the MFYC context, an ideology of anti-racism is prevalent in the pedagogical practices and has become part of the group story. Choir members' individual experiences with global song within the MFYC context have contributed to some understanding of racism and other exclusionary practices. The interviews indicate that many choristers may be developing a desire for social justice. Many MFYC members expressed not only an acceptance of cultures beyond their own, but also a strong desire to understand more and to continue learning. Although this attitude is also fostered by both official and popular multicultural discourses, choristers' experiences with global song are performative reiterations of this form of cosmopolitanism. The understanding of racism and exclusion, the desire to change oppressive systems, and a willingness to immerse oneself in new cultural learning are characteristics of multicultural human subjectivity as I envision it, but I believe these characteristics are more likely to develop within contexts that encourage a critical (anti-racist) multiculturalism.

One of the ways engaging in music is performative in the construction of identity (self-understanding) is in the way choristers create imagined cultural narratives related to their experiences with global song in the MFYC context. I believe this is an important element of performativity for an emerging multicultural human subjectivity, since my concept of a multicultural human subject is one whose understanding and acceptance of cultures ranges beyond

those most familiar. This aspect will be explored further in Chapter Seven. Before leaving this chapter on collective identity and performativity, however, I would like to give the closing words to a young man of relatively few words (when compared to interviews of some other choristers):

Raka: Yeah. I like to sing so much that the music is starting to get control of me. (Interview, March 20, 2004).

Performative, indeed!

Chapter Seven: Multicultural Human Subjects? Hints, Hiccups, and Vestigia

As discussed in the previous two chapters, this study seeks to provide insight into how engaging in world choral music (global song) may be performative in adolescent self-understanding as “multicultural human subjects.” An answer to such a question, however, resides at the level of the unconscious, or the “uncanny” (Britzman, 1998). This chapter examines the way particular moments of epiphany, or “uncanny moments” are performatives that shape our attitudes towards people of other cultures, and under particular circumstances, can move an individual closer to a self-understanding as a multicultural human subject. Such epiphany moments are rare, and usually take place in rather unique environments, yet I believe these are the types of moments that propel us toward multicultural human subjectivity, since these occasions provide potent opportunities for that subjectivity to be experienced and embodied.

As Britzman points out, however, such learning is nearly impossible to measure, since it resides beyond consciousness. This is why Freire and others have argued for conscientization in anti-oppression education, to bring to consciousness the ways in which oppression operates at levels of everyday existence, including within educational settings. My suggestion is a more positive look into the same problem: I seek to bring to consciousness the ways multicultural human subjectivity is experienced by MFYC members. Of course, this self-understanding cannot be seen, heard, or felt by anyone other than the person having the experience. Britzman argues that the difficulty in measuring learning as uncanny experience is one reason for the antinomy that exists between the disciplines of education and psychoanalysis (as that dealing with the subconscious), a relationship that leads to education’s intolerance of

psychoanalysis (Britzman, 1998, p. 29). As she writes, “there is something deeply disturbing about. . .how the work of learning puts the self into question” (p. 30).

Introduction of the unconscious into theories of learning introduces “noncoherence at the root of identity,” and herein lies the education discipline’s intolerance with psychoanalytic theories of learning (the difficulty of describing or measuring the noncoherent subject). Yet it is this noncoherence that “inaugurates the subject’s fragility in identity and in the social” (p. 30), and within this noncoherence, the rejection of fixed boundaries in describing one’s understanding of herself, opens the possibility for a fragile, and continually emerging multicultural human subject. My interviews with MFYC members document uncanny moments as choristers describe thoughts and feelings evoked while performing music. Arriving suddenly, and sometimes passing as quickly, performative musical moments are felt deeply and serve to provide an understanding of self and other that cannot be taught by verbal means alone, and certainly cannot be taught by treating music as an aesthetic object. Uncanny moments become performative only in an individual’s experience. I believe Britzman’s notion of education directed towards the level of uncanny, the unconscious, is integral to understanding how the MFYC pedagogy contributes to the possibilities for an emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

This chapter will look at the narratives of one such moment: a moment experienced at the level of the uncanny, a moment that indicates the unique power of music and musical experience on both the learning and the self-understanding of individuals in the MFYC. However, these moments of uncanny learning exist in competition with a number of discourses that also work to shape identity and individuals’ self-understanding. In this chapter, I will therefore also explore some of the ways in which discourses of Whiteness, ableism, nationalism, and racial identities exist in tension with the potential for multicultural human subjectivity.

“Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona” and the Uncanny Moment

The following excerpts are from my personal journal and from interviews with choir members that focus on one moment in particular: one song, sung during a concert on August 6, 2003, for the quadrennial Convocation of the organization, Prison Fellowship International. The mission of Prison Fellowship is to “mobilise and assist the Christian community in its ministry to prisoners, ex-prisoners, victims, and their families; and in the advancement of restorative justice” (Prison Fellowship International Mission Statement, 1979). Over 900 delegates representing more than 180 countries around the world attended the Convocation at the Sheraton Centre, Queen Street, Toronto. The MFYC had been contracted to perform for this event on the recommendation of a professional colleague, based upon her knowledge of both our ethnically diverse membership and our experience in performing world music.

I was actually quite nervous going into this event. Because it was summer, and the choir had not rehearsed since June, I accepted the engagement knowing that at best only about 20 choristers could attend. The repertoire chosen for this concert was drawn from our year-end concert program in the hope that everyone who could make the event would know the songs well enough to perform them convincingly. We did hold one rehearsal two nights before the concert. I had intended if that rehearsal sounded “rough,” we could then rehearse again the following night. However, I realized as soon as the group of 22 who were able to attend the rehearsal and concert began to sing, that the second rehearsal would be unnecessary. They remembered the music well, and the small group exuded a confidence and a musicality that I could not have anticipated, although I had suspected that this particular group would “sound good” despite their small numbers. My post-event journal entry follows:

<p><i>On August 6, 2003, the MFYC performed for the opening ceremonies of the Prison Fellowship International Convocation at the Sheraton Centre in</i></p>

downtown Toronto. Over 900 people from more than 180 countries were in attendance as delegates to this event. We had been hired for the event as a result of our prior collaboration with Valerie Mero-Smith's quartet at a concert at Humber Valley United Church back in April. The event coordinator had specifically requested that we focus on our gospel and world music repertoire, as well as a more "traditional" sacred opening piece. We were also to sing the Canadian national anthem. The original plan called for me to submit a list of 7 or so songs, from which the PFI programming chair would choose 2 or 3 for us to perform. However, the President of PFI liked our repertoire suggestions so much that we were given time in the program to include them all. Our program thus consisted of:

Set 1

O Canada

Jubilate Deo by David Brunner

The Needs of the World by James Mulholland

The Storm is Passing Over – traditional gospel song arranged by Barbara Baker

Set 2

Gabi, Gabi – S. African freedom song

"*Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona*" – S. African freedom song

We Rise Again

Here's to Song

We were well received during our first set, and the audience clapped in rhythm with us in "Storm," not something we are used to when we perform for our usual audience of parents, relatives, friends, and neighbours.

However, when we began our second set with *Gabi, Gabi*, a S. African freedom song, I could feel a change in the energy of our audience, and I thought, although I couldn't be positive, that I heard a few voices singing along with us. We were singing in Zulu.

But when we began “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona” there was an absolute explosion of energy in the room. There were cheers and whoops and other exclamations, and I could literally feel the joy in those outbursts on my skin. Although I was, of course, facing the choir and so could not see the audience, I could sense that people were on their feet and were dancing to our song, a sense that was confirmed by the expressions of wide-eyed delight I saw in the eyes of the choir members. There were claps and stomps on the offbeats, whoops and hollers in the rests, and for the first time in my several years of experience with this particular freedom song I realized why I had struggled, and why Zoran had also struggled, with an appropriate drumming rhythm for this piece. The meter is in 3/4 – but the rhythm I heard in the slaps and stomps was in 2, a hemiola.

..

But it was from this energy, this joy, this fleeting moment, that I caught a glimpse of how meaningful, how very deep a meaning, this particular song held for South African delegates to this event. Many of these people had been imprisoned during the apartheid era for the “crime” of seeking justice. I think many of the MFYC members caught a similar glimpse, but this is something I’ll have to investigate more with them. (Journal entry: August 12, 2003).

Real Songs, Real People

Several choir members talked about the Prison Fellowship Convocation concert in their interviews without any prompting from me. I believe this makes a strong statement about the impact of that evening on the individual choir members, as evidenced in the following interview excerpts.

Kate: Yes! And all the Africans started dancing as we sang—because I think they hadn't heard it (“Haleluyah! Pelo Tsa Rona”) since they left—

Debbie: Since they left South Africa (?)

Kate: And they were SO happy. . . .it was amazing to see their faces just light up—and even the people around them—they didn't know what was going on but they were happy to see these people happy—

and I think—well, myself and another girl, we were both talking about it for days afterwards, how they were just (puts her hands to her face in a gesture that implied a sort of joyous radiance but adds no words)

Debbie: Yes, that was a pretty special moment, I think, for all of us.

Kate: It was a really big moment. I think we weren't expecting that—we were definitely not expecting that.

My interview with Amber in itself created a performative moment of deep realization for both of us:

Debbie: Any particular experiences you have had with MFYC that you feel are especially meaningful for you?

Amber: The Prison Fellowship—I always go back to that. I loved that—I loved seeing people who knew it (the song)—that was so cool. Now I want to go to like Ghana and do Bobobo and everyone will know it—that would be so cool. . . . And they just started cheering and they got up dancing, and it felt very powerful, because they knew what it was, and we knew what it was. Like we're so used to our parents going, "oh, that was an interesting, fun piece" but they don't understand—but this was like—they are dancing and we know the dance! It was so cool! I can't really describe it but it was like that barrier was just gone.

Later in the interview, Amber returned to the PFI concert:

Amber: But these people who have virtually completely different lives, these delegates from a country half way across the world from us, it was like it was one common thing—for a minute there it was like there was nothing between you, I guess. I don't know—I probably would have gone over and danced with them if we weren't on stage.

Singing “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona” created an epiphany moment for Amber with a profound depth of understanding. Her exclamation, “they knew what it was and we knew what it was!” suggests to me that this was a moment of recognition for her that transcended race, ethnicity, and nationality. Gilroy (1993) argues in *The Black Atlantic* that these moments of recognition, “produced in the intimate interaction of performer and crowd,” are actually signifying practices mediated through the body. In Gilroy’s argument, this

musical recognition produces “the imaginary effect of an internal racial core of essence” (p. 102). I would like to co-opt Gilroy’s argument for my purposes here. Although I, too, reject notions of essential internal cores, racial or otherwise, is it not possible that in Amber’s moment of recognition, she realized a possibility for herself as a multicultural human subject, where despite discourses of race, ethnicity, and nation, there was, at least briefly, only humanity?

I refer here again to Deborah Wong’s characterization of an Asian-American rap group’s performance as “corporeally enacting the cultural memory of other racialized representations” (Wong, 2000, p. 59). This idea resonates deeply with me, particularly as it relates to the PFI concert, but also to MFYC’s curriculum of global song generally. Was not our performance of “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona,” sung by children of differing racial and ethnic backgrounds to an audience also widely diverse, a corporeal enactment of racialized memories and cultural meanings? Recall Amber’s exclamation, “They knew what it was and we knew what it was!” Racialized memories and cultural meanings are heavily implicated in this freedom song. Having learned “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona” within an anti-racism pedagogy, the song brought these understandings, I believe, into the local MFYC culture. Its performance before an audience who understood it as a signifying practice brought “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona” into the moral life-worlds of the choir members who took part in the concert. In the moment when the boundaries disappeared between performers and audience, the space opened for a multicultural human subject.

Authentic emotion.

Raka’s description of the same event is perhaps less poetic than Amber’s or Kate’s; nonetheless, it speaks to the impact this moment had on him as an uncanny moment of realization, the flash of recognition that the song was “real” and carried meaning for “real people.”

Debbie: So let's talk about that—about singing at the Prison Fellowship International convention and people getting up to dance in the audience, do you want to describe that for me a little bit?

Raka: I nearly broke down in tears because nobody ever does that at our concerts, and it just made me very very happy—they doing that.

Debbie: What did you think about the people in the audience who were doing the dancing and the cheering?

Raka: I thought that they were very joyous because they were going exactly with the beat—but they were all smiling and happy—they all definitely recognized the song!

Debbie: Yea—like it was as soon as we started it they jumped up—and I couldn't even see them but I could hear it and feel it happening, you know? Yea—it was pretty amazing. Did you have any thoughts on us singing a song that these people who were from quite far away actually knew?

Raka: I just basically thought—wow! They recognize this song!

As Raka described that particular moment, tears formed in his eyes and in mine as we collectively remembered both the moment and the emotions that it called up. His realization that the South African delegates recognized the song, knew the song, changed Raka's context for his own understanding of "Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona" from an isolated bit of knowledge, just another song among many that he knew, to an emotional moment directly connected to the struggle against racism, a moment that may briefly have brought him to a new self-understanding as an emergent multicultural human subject.

The emotions that he and I both felt in the recall of the event suggest that what we experienced that night at the Prison Fellowship concert are authentic emotions (as opposed to mere sentimentality). Griffiths (1995) argues that such authenticity is "implicit in the discussion of the apparent tension between creating oneself through others, while being oneself" (p. 174), and is a necessary condition for the emotion to be assessed by the individual as "really me" or "true

to myself” (p. 175). Such spontaneous moments, experienced through this performance of global song, created an authentic emotional response, helping us each to understand more fully what is “really me.” Because this particular spontaneous moment was one in which a joyous sharing of culture occurred among people of diversely different backgrounds, it is the type of moment in which the space for a multicultural human subjectivity may be located. In this moment, a real sense of global community presented itself, if only for two minutes. It was a moment supporting Britzman’s argument criticizing some forms of antiracism pedagogy, as she challenges educators to look beyond typical practices that reify the self/other divide. Her provocative questions are directly relevant, I believe, to the “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona” event, an event that provides a strong indication of our capability to move beyond the self/other dichotomy:

The pedagogical problem is twofold. How might any body come to be called — in the name of community — to the service of the self/other divide? How might the field of antiracist pedagogy rethink the problem of community in ways that allow community to be more than a problem of repudiating others through those narcissisms of minor difference? (Britzman, 1998, p. 102).

Multidimensional self-understanding.

It is not my intent to suggest that this particular spontaneous, uncanny moment of learning and self-other recognition was universal among the MFYC participants, although I believe there is some level of commonality to their various descriptions of the event. For example, Ricky’s description in particular indicates that his moment of learning was multidimensional, impacting on several levels of his self-understanding:

Debbie: I wanted to go back because you talked about the sense of pride from — where was that? Yes, pride from doing African music. Can you talk about that a little bit more?

Ricky: Oh! It was when we sang at that government thing. What was that?

Debbie: Last summer? The Prison Fellowship?

Ricky: Yes. And uh, we started singing Bobobo — no, we started singing “Gabi, Gabi” and uh-----

Debbie: “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona”

Ricky: That's it. I started smiling and people started looking at me and going (points and nods), and people started jumping up and carrying on and all. It just felt really cool that I could sort of be in Africa, sort of, mentally, for that little bit of time.

Debbie: So, were people in the audience actually pointing at you?

Ricky: Well, I could see them looking at me going (nods his head as if trying to get someone to look in a particular direction).

Debbie: You mean making eye contact as if, "you're one of us, brother" kind of thing?

Ricky: Yes, exactly. That's what it felt like.

In this excerpt, Ricky’s uncanny moment clearly demonstrates the recognition of self through the recognition of others. His mental trip to Africa is one indicator of how our engagement with global song can disrupt boundaries of time and space, allowing him in this instance to envision himself in an elsewhere, perhaps with those audience members who were sharing their joy in our music through their spontaneous dance. It is another example of creating an imaginary cultural narrative. This moment for Ricky was uncanny on several levels and points to the multidimensional nature of the multicultural human subject. In addition to contributing to his sense of belonging (collective identity) as an MFYC member, singing in a language not native to him, and involved in a performance that very clearly created a moment of connection between the choir and the audience, there is an obvious reference to his own evolving racial identification as a young black man. From the excerpt above, one cannot tell which level of uncanny learning is dominant in his sense of self. I would like to

think there is no hierarchical list, since my own personal agenda would call for the end of racialized categorizations, but I recognize that at 19 years old, Ricky's developing racial identification is an important aspect of his self understanding (Tatum, 1997).

Sense of Community as a Multicultural Human Subject.

What is common to the four narratives above is that this brief but spontaneous and performative moment of recognition operates at a conscious as well as an unconscious and emotional level. The result was two minutes or so (the length of the song) of a profound connectedness among 900 people from around the globe who were in the ballroom at that moment, a connectedness that lives on in my memory and in the memories of the MFYC members who sang that night:

Amber: For me, it was when you explained to us about the African freedom songs, because this is what I like the best out of all the multicultural stuff that we do is the African, like the freedom songs and Bobobo, when we were at the Prison Fellowship, when the South African delegates got up and started dancing, it was like an affirmation that this really, really meant something to some people. It was like, there is more than just you in the world alone; like, other people from a totally other world, who live completely different lives — we had something in common, like one thing that brought us together even though I never really talked to them or anything, you know what I mean — us as a full choir together with them (Focus group meeting, June 20, 2004).

The sense of connectivity that Amber described above and that the other MFYC members alluded to in their interviews indicates a level of understanding that moves beyond the boundaries of the self, and beyond the boundaries of a collective identity as a member of the choir. All four mention that for a brief period of time, they felt connected to the audience, to people from vastly diverse cultures who were in the room at that moment. There was, of course, a particularly poignant connection with the delegates from South Africa whose spontaneous dance was a powerful expression of that connectivity, but I believe

that there was generally a widespread feeling of community within the ballroom at that moment. Bowman (2005) posits that it is only through musical performance such connections take place. I believe that the four narratives offered in this chapter, all describing the moment when the South African delegation jumped to their feet to dance as we sang, are indicative of what he describes as “music’s remarkable and unique” qualities:

What is truly remarkable and unique to musical performance is the way it brings them all together at once; temporal fluidity, vivid presence, mental alertness, centeredness, embodiment, sociality, productive agency, and sound. Performing music is an immensely potent synthetic experience that blends, balances, and fuses together elusive and fleeting aspects of human existence as nothing else does (Bowman, 2005, p. 10).

Over the course of my life, I have experienced many moments of connection with an audience while performing on stage as a member of a choir or as a conductor. However, there was something particularly potent about the connection that occurred as MFYC sang “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona.” It was, in Griffiths’ terminology, an authentic experience whose potency, I believe, lies somewhere in the cross-cultural nature of that moment: twenty Canadian children of mixed ethnic backgrounds performing a song from the South African anti-apartheid struggle to an audience of people from over 180 countries. Every person in that room had their own self-understanding and individual cultural identity through which they interpreted what they saw and heard as we sang “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona,” corporeally enacting and reiterating through our performance its racialized memory and cultural meaning. It was a moment when collectively we as choir members and audience engaged in a “*mestiza* act” that blurred boundaries between people of different backgrounds, of different races, nationalities, ethnicities, abilities, sexual orientations, and other labels that humans have created to separate the “us” from the “them.” Deborah Miranda describes such blurring in an email to Ana Louise Keating:

Mestiza means that which does not obey or even see boundaries, that which blurs sharp distinctions in favor of what is best or most appropriate; that which thrives in ambiguity because ambiguity means survival, creation, movement. Thus, all people who engage in breaking boundaries are engaged in what I would call “mestiza acts” (Miranda & Keating, 2002, p.207).

Although this single mestiza act created an authentic moment of uncanny learning whose entire duration was only about two minutes, its memory will remain with me for the rest of my life. The experience and my memory of it reinforce my belief that it is possible to teach for such moments, and our task as educators is to prepare our students for those moments, even though there is no guarantee of their occurrence. Britzman (1998) reminds us, “learning occurs in belated time” (p. 26). Although one cannot predict belated time’s arrival as a performative moment, it is in its arrival that learning’s potential to be transformative is truly realized. In the “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona” moment, and in the memories of that moment, I believe multicultural human subjectivity can be located. During those two minutes, as the MFYC sang, the South African delegates danced and sang with us, and the audience responded with wild enthusiasm, there seemed to be no “us” and “them;” our individual and collective differences made no difference as we shared one brief moment of song and dance. The borders between us were gone.

“Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona”: Track #5

Multicultural Human Subject? Hiccups and Hurdles

Michelle’s Story of the Same Night

During my interviews with MFYC members, I was anxious to get input from every choir member who had taken part in the Prison Fellowship International concert. I wanted to determine if all the participants had felt some degree of profundity from the experience. Therefore, I began to ask choir

members to recall the event if they did not mention it voluntarily. This occurred in my interview with Michelle:

Debbie: I know that you were there last summer when we did the thing in downtown Toronto? Do you have any particular recollections about that?

Michelle: What — the Sheraton one?

Debbie: Yes.

Michelle: I fell!

Debbie: Oh yes, I remember that. . . .

Michelle: That was not very cool. That wasn't a very memorable one for me. But apparently one of my teachers was like in Sheraton mall and a person who was at that performance who I know, said that like Michelle was really good and blah-blah-blah, but I don't

Debbie: You don't remember it because of the fall?

Michelle: I don't remember it as being very positive.

Debbie: So

Michelle: And I was really mad at the building and the people in the building, because the least they could have done was had a ramp. That's the least they could have done! Well, the least they could have done was situated their stairs so that it wasn't near a curtain — like, they have to complete their stairs! Because I fell through a hole!

Debbie: Right.

Michelle: I was really mad at them. I was like, grrrrrr, and the guy said, "I'm sorry about that." And I felt like saying, you know what, maybe you should go back to the drawing board, buddy! Then you won't have to feel sorry (Interview, March 23, 2004).

As Michelle recalled the night, I could feel my face redden. How insensitive of me to bring up that event! As soon as she mentioned the fall, I also remembered it, remembered my panic as I tried to catch her before she hit the concrete floor a

few feet below. Her fragile body dangled for what seemed like minutes over the edge of the makeshift stairs to the stage. Fortunately, Ricky was able to grab one of Michelle's arms before she was too far over the edge. Her walker crashed to the ground and I remember my thoughts in that awful moment. I recall that I winced at the noise and thought, "what will the audience think?" (Personal reflection, September 2004).

Michelle's narrative and my reaction to it serve to illustrate how any single moment can simultaneously include some people while marginalizing others. For Michelle, who has cerebral palsy, the night of the PFI concert is one she would rather forget. She lost her balance and fell as she was making the difficult climb up makeshift stairs, with no rail, to the temporary stage. Although Ricky and I were able to catch her and prevent possibly serious injury, I knew that she would be sore and likely bruised the next day from our clumsy efforts. Yet once she was on the stage, in front of the audience, she put on a very brave face, and seemed to be singing with the intense energy and concentration that I had come to expect from her over the four years she has been a choir member. I became completely focused on our performance, and was swept away by the magic moment of "Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona." Michelle's embarrassment and physical pain disappeared in my own mental reconstruction of the night.

What was I thinking in asking her about the PFI concert? Even if I can forgive myself for having forgotten about her fall, how can I forgive myself for my insensitivity to the challenges her body presents to her every moment of her life? How must Michelle have felt watching the reaction of the South African delegates as they jumped up out of their seats to do a thing that she cannot: dance? And yet, here I am, asking her what she thought and felt that night — asking a question completely grounded in my own position as an able-bodied person. I am embarrassed (Personal reflection, September 2004).

My personal reflections on both the night of the PFI at the moment of Michelle's fall, and of my interview are indicative of the many human frailties that stand in the way of a multicultural human subject's evolution, and indeed, the fragility of the moments in which multicultural human subjectivity might be located. My own subjectivity as able-bodied prevented me from understanding what Michelle may have felt that night when she fell. I have known Michelle for four years, and although I strive to find ways to include her in all choir activities, I am admittedly still not comfortable with her body and its limitations. Most times, I forget about her particular issues. Most of what we do at MFYC is within her ability to perform without special allowances for her limited mobility. But my ability to forget is also a form of "colour-blindness," or perhaps I should say "body-blindness" in its negative sense. This blindness to Michelle's physical challenges is like blindness to racism related to my Whiteness; it makes me unable at times to see from her vantage point, insensitive to her needs. She is an invisible member of the choir. It is very easy for me to look at Michelle as a symbol of my own open attitude, my desire for the MFYC to be an inclusive organization: *Look! My choir includes a child with physical challenges.* It is an especially comforting thought, since I know that at least one other local choir refused to even grant her an audition when they saw her with her walker. (*How can she possibly perform if she cannot stand up?*) Her presence in the MFYC invokes a feel-good reaction not only in me but among parents of the able-bodied choir members. We may feel good that Michelle is in our midst, but what are we doing for Michelle? In our efforts to include her, how do we exclude her?

It is painful for me to realize that my own able-bodiedness prevents me from understanding Michelle's situation more fully. Perhaps this is the wall that prevents human beings from fully connecting. The wall behind which I stand — built of misunderstandings I have developed as an able-bodied, white, heterosexual, middle class, educated woman is one at which I must continue to

chip, pebble by pebble, stone by stone, chunk by chunk — eventually, I pray, causing it to collapse completely. I am but one person. We all position ourselves behind similar walls — walls that continue to hide and protect our own racism, ableism, heterosexism, and other forms of oppression even from ourselves
(Personal reflection, September 2004).

Joseph and Bobobo Drumming

May 7, 2004

My worst nightmare as a teacher — I can't believe I allowed this to happen. Wednesday's choir rehearsal went well despite the fact that one of our regular rooms had been refloored and the fumes from the glue made it impossible to use it for rehearsal. I had to reconstruct my rehearsal plan and fast! However, it did in retrospect all seem to make sense. My friend Juliet had come to help coach African drumming, and so she was working with interested potential drummers in groups of six. I had asked who wanted to drum, made a list of all the waving hands, and we worked from that. But yesterday morning when I checked my email, I found the following message:

From: Harold@hotmail.com
Subject: Drumming
Date: May 5, 2004 11:40:02 PM EDT
To: conductor@mississaugafestivalyouthchoir.org
Cc: admin@mississaugafestivalyouthchoir.org
Reply-To: Harold@hotmailcom

Dear Debbie and Helene:

Astrid and I have much to thank both of you and we appreciate very much your dedication to the MFYC and the invaluable exposure the choristers are gaining.

We are also very grateful to you for understanding our financial position as new immigrants to Canada, our recourse to survival jobs, and your assistance in defraying in part, expenses that Joseph would in normal circumstances have had to incur.

He is very excited about the proposed week end trip to the Bark Lake Retreat. However, he is also disappointed that he will not be able to participate in the drumming workshop.

Nothing pleases him more than drumming, for which he has a natural talent. From age eight [he is now twelve years old], he has been playing the drums for his school band, the school march past, the youth choir in the Cathedral back home, as well as for all the Carol Singing competitions in which his group “Kids Kids” competed with seasoned seminarians.

He has several photographs of himself playing the drums on various occasions. In the attachment to this email, the first photograph features the members of the “Kids Kids” with the trophies won in the Carol Singing competition in December 2002. Joseph is in the second row, fourth from the right. In the second photograph, he is playing the drums at one of the competitions.

May I request that you personally administer a test to him next Wednesday to determine his drumming ability? If, after the test, you deem him to be below average, we will in all humility, accept your decision.

Do excuse me for this note — but I thought I must make you aware of his ability in this area.

Thank you once again Debbie for ALL that you have been for the MFYC and to Joseph in particular.

Sincerely, Harold

Did I overlook Joseph? He is a small boy, and quiet — and yet, I already knew he was interested in drumming because he had both mentioned it to me and to the choir administrator. Yet when his name did not appear on my list, no bells went off in my head. How can I be such an airhead? And of course, I have to ask myself the ugly question — was this racism? Of course I would not have deliberately left Joseph off my list — but how did he become invisible to me

among the waving hands in the room when I asked “who wants to try drumming?” Especially when I already knew he was keen and actually had some drumming experience. Why didn’t Joseph try to get my attention about wanting to try drumming? I know he is shy, so perhaps he thought he could not question my authority in the room.

I remember feeling so good at the end of the rehearsal when we had chosen the drumming ensemble for our final concert. I was so pleased that it was racially mixed (and it was), and that both girls and boys were represented (although there were more girls in the ensemble – only one boy who has had a lot of percussion experience). The ages were mixed – I felt good about that. There were kids who had not ever drummed before along with ones who had. And then I read my email the next morning. . . .

Of course I responded to the parents immediately to reassure them that Joseph would get a chance to drum with Kwasi the drumming master at Bark Lake, and next week in rehearsal if Juliet is able to return to work with the drummers. If Joseph were a white child I think I could just say I made an unfortunate mistake – but Joseph is a recent immigrant from India. His family is struggling with the adjustment to life in Canada – neither parent has found meaningful employment yet and they have been here for over 6 months now. I can sense the embarrassment of the father and mother that they are still underemployed when I speak with them. Yet I heaped insult onto this injury by slighting their son, whose drumming ability is obviously a source of pride to the family.

I know my intentions were good in the rehearsal plan last night, and I think all the other kids who wanted to try drumming received a chance. But why not Joseph? How did this happen? What does it say about me as the teacher – no,

what does it say about me as the White Woman Teacher? I'm way too cocky about my own equity policies in the choir – too quick to criticize other conductors and choir organizations about the way they operate and their predominantly white choirs – too proud of the racial mix apparent in the MFYC – too, too, too, too. . . . If racism is the result of the action, whether or not any harm was intended, then in this instance, I was involved in a racist moment. This is a bitter pill for me to swallow – I hope I can stand the medicine and that it will make me more alert in the future. Joseph, I am really, really, really sorry. I hope I can make it up to you. (Journal entry, May 7, 2004.)

I have included the entire journal entry surrounding this incident because of the many hurdles associated with multicultural human subjectivity presented in the entry. Before analyzing the preceding journal entry, the reader should know I spoke with Juliet about the drumming auditions, and both she and Tara (MFYC's assistant conductor) assured me that Joseph had indeed been given an opportunity to drum. Both Juliet and Tara agreed that he was not rhythmically consistent enough to play drums for the performance. At the Bark Lake retreat, we gave Joseph another opportunity to work within a small group with Kwasi Dunyo. I observed this workshop, and talked with Kwasi about Joseph. It was apparent that Joseph struggled with the patterns involved in the various Bobobo songs, but it was also equally apparent that Joseph was keen to perform with the drummers, not the dancers. As a compromise, we asked Joseph to play gonkogui for the performance, where the pattern repeated continuously with no changes. Kirsten also played gonkogui, and she was quite steady with her rhythm and stick technique. This both helped Joseph to stay with the group rhythmically and made any mistakes he made less noticeable. On the night of the final performance, Joseph performed competently.

Although not a perfect solution, I think the gonkogui was a reasonable negotiation given the limited amount of time we had to prepare Bobobo for performance. I wonder if Joseph had perhaps experienced a sort of percussion “culture shock” when he attempted the West African rhythms, whose patterns are significantly different from the South Indian drumming style he has known from a very young age. His comments following the performance indicated to me he was happy to have been given a chance to be a part of the percussion section, even though he did not play a drum. The gonkogui is crucial to West African percussion as the timekeeping instrument, and Kwasi reiterated this several times over the weekend at Bark Lake. I hope that Joseph believed him.

Joseph’s story is a very real reminder to me that as a teacher, particularly as one who professes to adhere to antiracism principles and practices, I must constantly be vigilant not to marginalize any of my students. Although witnesses to the rehearsal of May 7 tell me that I did not overlook Joseph in the sea of hands of those who wanted to try drumming, I did fail to record his name on my sheet of auditionees, and so when questioned by his father about the evening, I had no recollection of whether or not he had been given a chance to drum. I am, therefore, still guilty of having marginalized Joseph, although perhaps in a different manner than I thought when I first made the journal entry. It would be easy to dismiss my oversight by making a laundry list of all the things I did “right” at that rehearsal, a laundry list that would include the names of the children who were happy just to be able to try drumming regardless of whether or not they were selected for the percussion ensemble, a list that would include the ecstatic children who were chosen to play percussion for the final concert. I could easily enumerate the many good things that were a part of the rehearsal on Wednesday, May 5, yet none of these can change the fact that one child (or one of whom I am aware, perhaps there were more?) went home that night disappointed, perhaps with his self-confidence undermined. Yes, I did try to rectify the situation once I became aware of it, but the incident is a harsh

reminder that teaching music is tricky business because of the pressure to produce “polished” performances, to uphold a standard of proficiency that will by its very nature always hurt some children even as it encourages others.

“Vestigia:” Colonial Hiccups and the Work of Decolonizing

“I took a day — I took a day to search for God and found him not.”
—Bliss Carmen

“Vestigia”: Track #6⁴⁷

Racial and National Identity Discourses.

Although moments such as the one at the Prison Fellowship International convocation, described earlier in this chapter, have powerful transformative impact, they are not regular occurrences in the musical world. Granted, a very skilled performing ensemble can usually manage “wow” moments in most concerts, but there are no givens. By “wow” moments I do not mean the more-or-less routine performer’s high that occurs from a good performance with good audience response, nor the audience euphoria of having experienced an especially moving performance — these do occur fairly regularly for strong performing ensembles. The moments of which I speak are those that truly impact self-understanding at the level of the uncanny: moments where something profound is experienced, moments whose memories keep the profundity of the experience alive within us. Griffiths (1995) describes “wow” moments as authentic:

There is a strong element of an individual in the “here and now” in the feeling of being authentic. Authentic feelings and emotions come unbidden, are unforced. They are not the result of some cleverness by those skilled at playing on our response to music or to pictures, or on a crowd’s reactions. . . (p. 174).

⁴⁷ Many choristers mentioned this song as one with special meaning for them. It might more properly be classified as representing western contemporary classical choral music than global song, but its profound lyrics and music seemed to “speak to” many of the participants, and hence is included here, drawing on the title as a double entendre within the context of this thesis.

Because such “wow” moments are rare, their impact competes with other performative events in an individual’s life. Discourses of identity not only shape what any one person will do with the knowledge gained in such a moment, but also work against the memories of the uncanny moment, minimizing the ongoing power the memories might otherwise have. I believe that, in particular, pressure from the discourses of race, ethnicity, and nationality pose large hurdles to multicultural human subjectivity, although discourses of multiculturalism in Canada both contribute to and hinder an emerging multicultural human subject.

I believe that discourses of race and ethnicity operate similarly in the effects produced, and therefore, I will knowingly conflate the terms “race” and “ethnicity” in the following discussion, keeping in mind that sometimes “nationalism is another form that racism takes”(Aanerud, 2002, p. 76). Throughout my interviews with members of the MFYC, I was continually surprised by the number of members who evidenced attitudes of cosmopolitanism (in the sense of a moral and ethical outlook and hence indicative of an emerging multicultural human subject) (Beck, 2002; Brennan, 1997; Roudometof, 2005), while at the same time I was equally dismayed by the vestiges of colonial attitudes that were present among a number of MFYC members.

One of the questions that I asked, in some form or another, in each interview was: “How does singing the music of another culture influence the way you think about that culture?” I also asked the question, “how does singing music of another culture influence the way you think about being _____ (inserting the student’s own identity terminology.) The responses to these and similar questions elicited answers from several choristers that in some way included the phrase “I feel lucky to be a Canadian” or “lucky to be living in Canada.” The answers both acknowledged an understanding of the privileges that life in one of the G8 countries brings, while at the same time invoked a stereotypical picture of life beyond North America or Europe.

Debbie: Okay, well let me ask you something else. You said that hearing those songs and singing those songs makes you feel kind of lucky—lucky in what way—lucky about what?

Joanne: Lucky about the good quality of life I've had.

Debbie: Okay. And, can you be a little bit more specific about quality of life—to which kinds of things are you referring?

Joanne: Like, I've had—I can go to school, I can have healthy water, I can grow up with my parents—like I don't suffer as much as some people do.

Joanne's response is typical of many of the comments made by MFYC members when asked to think about "other cultures." Although she acknowledges that she is privileged to live in a society where education and conditions that promote good health are widely accessible, I became uneasy with the implication that everyone outside of the "fortunate world" experiences suffering in their daily survival. Joanne's words called up images of starving children, filth, devastation, the common vernacular of charitable organizations' television campaigns to recruit new donors. These media images work as stereotypes, as always-already assumptions of what life in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and so forth must be. These always-already images do not project images of societies that also include modern cities, technology, education for rural village children, clean healthy water in rural villages, or any sense that life in the third world is in any way pleasurable. The images are chosen to invoke a sense of pity in the television viewer. Not surprisingly, then, a sense of pity for those in developing areas was a common theme among the interview participants:

Debbie: Okay. When you are singing African music, how do you feel about being Italian and Canadian?

Renée: Makes me feel glad that I can wake up every day and know that I don't have to break my back in a field every day, and that my

parents will be there for me, that they will always be there for me, and I'll always have enough food.

While neither Renée nor Joanne (or other choir members who made similar comments) actually said that they “felt sorry” for people in Africa, the tones of voice, the somber looks on their faces as they spoke conveyed, I believe, a sense of pity for those living in Africa and other “developing” parts of the world. Although this is not an entirely inappropriate reaction, for pity can sometimes provide motivation for good, productive work to improve social conditions, my concern is that in these statements, there is an unexpressed but clearly present implication that *everyone* in Africa is starving, is unable to obtain an education, that most children are orphans, that life in those areas simply cannot be good on any level because of the lack of material possessions. It is the sort of thinking that continues to propagate misunderstanding through a reliance on stereotypes. My concern derives also from the implied binary of “us” and “them,” and the unquestioning acceptance that life in Canada is equally good for everyone living here, while life in the developing areas of the world is unequivocally one of suffering and misery. I believe this, in part, results from Canada’s ongoing nation-building mythology: people from all over the world are welcome here, and they immigrate to Canada not only in the belief that their quality of life (as measured in material terms) will immediately improve, but that their very immigration here implies that their lives prior to immigration were somehow deficient. It is this reliance on the logic of deficit that continues to feed racism in Canadian society.

What have I done during weekly rehearsals with my students to disrupt the images that are so widespread on television — images that convey the impression that all children in Africa are dirty, starving, crying? Of course there are areas where HIV orphans children daily, where drought means that few people have enough to eat and starvation is widespread, but these realities are not all there is

to Africa. There are, even in rural areas throughout the continent, villages where children can and do go to school, where there is a good supply of food and clean drinking water, and people enjoy good health. How do I also convey those images to my students? How can I counteract what television and media reinforce relentlessly every day? I am glad that my students recognize their privilege as residents of Canada; I am however, concerned that feeling “lucky to be Canadian” at the same time blinds my students to the positive values found in societies and in lifestyles in the world outside of North America (Personal reflection, September 2004.)

Just as discourses of “lucky to be Canadian” may contribute to attitudes that hinder our understanding of people in other parts of the world, discourses of race work to build walls around our individual selves that prevent acceptance of others. Kate’s commentary in the following excerpt indicates how much ethnic discourses within official multiculturalism have shaped her sense of self as a Sri Lankan:

Kate: Well, in Canada it's not really—you don't really need to say you are Canadian—it's not really an issue. Your close friends, you can say—Oh, I'm Canadian now, and they'll be really happy for you. But yes, I sort of get a little mad if people say, "oh look—that Indian girl," or "you're Indian" and I'm like—no—no—I'm not. I don't know—maybe because for me it's the way I grew up. There is a difference—although we are so close to India as a country, physically, I don't know what it is—I just don't like it when people call me Indian. I don't like being called Tamil, even though it's still my country—I don't want to be called Hindu, or Pakistani—it's sort of like calling the Polish, I mean Portuguese uh-

Debbie: Spanish?

Kate: Yes, Spanish or like calling Canadians

Debbie: Like calling Canadians Americans (she nods agreement).

Kate: Even that I get mad! (We both laugh). The Scottish, the English—it's not that it's bad to be the other culture, but you just want

to be your own. There's no real reason behind it I don't think—you're different, but there's no way to really explain it.

DB: Do you think in the long run — in the overall picture for the human race, that that's a good thing or a bad thing?

Kate: The fact that we really don't want to be the other culture is a little sad, because you should be able to say that the other culture is good, too—but you should be individually in your culture. You should be able to express and be happy that you are what you are.

Debbie: Okay—so when you are singing the music from another culture, does it sometimes affect how you might think about yourself as a Singhalese-Canadian young woman? Does it have any impact on that at all?

Kate: Hmmm, not as a Singha . . . I wouldn't be able to say anything along that. . . it took me a while to accept myself as a person of Singhalese background—as soon as I came to Canada it's just different cultures. So the music of different cultures has just made me open-minded pretty much, made me look at people in a different way, a different perspective, but at the moment, not anything really to my culture. I have been listening to my own music—I have been beginning to appreciate my own type, my own culture's music. My parents played it and I used to hate it (makes a face)—I used to absolutely hate it and say, "turn it off! Turn it off! Put something else on!" But now, maybe it is the effect of choir, but now I'm more—there's different kinds of music and I am more influenced to listen to that. I'm actually taking one Singhalese CD with me to France.

Although Kate states that she has become more open-minded towards other cultures, indicating the development of a cosmopolitan attitude through her experiences with music and the MFYC⁴⁸, she also has a strongly expressed sense of a national identity that is both Canadian, while simultaneously grounded in the Singhalese culture of Sri Lanka, where her parents were born. Ethnic and national discourses work to place boundaries around people, to describe them in singular ways, to make the acceptance of the pieces of ourselves that do not fit within the national or ethnic box difficult to accept, as Kate has alluded to in her own struggle to accept herself as Singhalese. This may be an

⁴⁸ And through her experiences and exposure to discourses of cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism in other areas of her life.

indicator of the psychological impact racism has had on Kate, and the way it has been internalized within her (hooks, 1992, p. 346).

In Kate's description, her experience with music of other cultures has spurred her interest in Singhalese culture, and is consistent with emerging racial identity (Tatum, 1997). What we cannot know is how, in the long-term, will this play out for Kate or other students. My sense of Kate is that she will remain open-minded and will not become locked into any sort of unitary cultural identity as either Singhalese or Canadian that might block her potential self-understanding as a multicultural human subject. Even so, there is discursive tension at work here, evident in Kate's comments, between acceptance of all cultures and the desire to immerse herself in "her own culture." Canada's official policy of multiculturalism reinforces Kate's notion of a unified cultural identity as Singhalese, yet she has lived in Canada most of her life and is a Canadian citizen. It is evidence of the subtle form racism sometimes takes in Canadian society. As Walcott (2003) suggests, "in Canada, the discourse of heritage is central to how those who are not the founding peoples of the nation mark their belonging to the nation" (p. 135). Even though Kate is Canadian, she continues to think of herself as Singhalese: it is "the paradox of both belonging and non-belonging simultaneously" (Bannerji, 2000, p. 65). Kate's cultural curiosity and desire to learn, at least in part prompted by her experiences with the MFYC, suggest an emergent multicultural human subjectivity, while racial and national discourses push against that emergence with equal force.

Cultural exotica and cultural jealousy.

Kate's desire to find "her own culture" was not unique among MFYC members. Interviews pointed to attitudes indicating that many choir members experience the music of cultures beyond Canada as exotica. Some choristers offered comments that suggest they believe Canada to be a place without a

distinct culture, or that the culture of Canada is derived solely from its multi-cultures and hence not “really Canadian.” Indeed, it is commonly claimed within cultural studies that Canada does not have a popular culture (Walcott, 2003, p. 132). The idea that Canada has no culture or that Canadian culture only derives from multi-cultures is based upon a misconception of culture as a static entity. In fact, Canada’s heritage discourse, which is invoked as a part of the official multicultural discourse, is “steeped in static, transparent discourses of cultural artifact” (Walcott, 2003, p. 134). Thus, the many cultures that are found in the Canadian population are assumed to remain pure and distinct, without any form of borrowing or blending with other cultural traditions.

Although any attempt to identify a singular Canadian cultural identity would indeed be foolish, the myth of “no cultural identity” is part of a discourse of Whiteness, where the presumed “white culture” of Canada is invisible or neutral and everything else is in some way exotic:

The state of being unmarked (and therefore ‘normal’ or ‘ordinary’) is both constitutive of, and an effect of, structural advantage and power, and the cultural authority that that power brings (Mackey, 2002, p. 21)

From discussions with my choir members, it has become apparent to me that my own teaching practice is doing little to disrupt such discourse, or even to point out its fallacies to my students.

In the following excerpts from interviews, choir members’ remarks indicate what I have termed “cultural jealousy.” The remarks in some way all reflect the concept that Canada has no unique culture of its own. What I found most interesting is that many of the choristers holding such impressions were of mixed racial or ethnic backgrounds, indicating that Canada’s discourse of official multiculturalism, which continues to frame non-English cultures as monolithic, holds greater influence in their current thinking than perhaps discourses of race or ethnicity hold. The desire to “be (white) Canadian” creates a tension in their

lives regarding their attitudes towards the culture of their ethnic heritage. For example, Aileen, a sixteen year old, self-describes as “half Filipino, 1/4 German, an 8th British and an 8th Austrian,” yet views herself as “lacking culture” because she does not personally have any of the visible signs (“costumes”) of a distinct, “pure” culture:

Debbie: Has doing the music of other cultures influenced the way you think about people from that culture?

Aileen: Yes.

Debbie: How so?

Aileen: I think they're lucky to have a culture that is so interesting—well, maybe they don't think it's as interesting as I do (we both laugh), but that they do have that attached to their culture. Because I really feel that—well, you see cultures like the Indian culture, and they have their sari's and their Indian music, and I think it's really—I don't know how to describe it—but there's lots of different aspects to their culture, but I'm also kind of jealous that I don't have my own costume to put on here. Even though there are Filipino costumes, we aren't really involved in the Filipino community like that, and I didn't have a pair of Lederhosen from Austria.

Later in the same interview, Aileen explains further:

Aileen: But I never really had a costume or a specific type of music or customs, so I'm interested in other people because I think they are lucky to have such a deeply ingrained culture, more so than I've really gotten to experience.

Debbie: Do you think that is because of your mixed ethnicity that you aren't as deeply immersed in one culture?

Aileen: I think that might be a bit of the reason, but I don't think there's a very big Austrian, or German or British community in Canada with a very different culture than our own. And my mom doesn't really get involved with the Filipino community, so, yeah, I think that's why—because we're not really in a majority.

Aileen's apparent fascination with “costumes” as indicative of culture may in part be related to the way cultures are represented in school when

multiculturalism takes the form of token celebrations focused on “the three f’s” of food, fashion, and festivals, or, as Lee et al (1998) have suggested, “heroes and holidays.” Her comments also point to two distinct but related aspects of Canada’s cultural myth: first, that “other people” in Canada have a “more deeply ingrained culture,” and secondly, the idea that there is little if any difference to be found in the way Austrian, German, and British culture is experienced in Canada; it is an essentialist white culture. The national multicultural discourse implies that there are no differences among white people in Canada, despite vastly divergent histories and cultural backgrounds, while for non-white people, in this case Filipinos, culture is “deeply ingrained,” in Aileen’s words. Although I believe Aileen’s cultural curiosity is predominantly positive, her sense of deficit regarding “her own” culture, is, I believe, influenced by Canadian multicultural discourse, which promotes a concept of “white” culture that is neutral, without distinguishing characteristics, and the Canadian norm, while “ethnic” cultures have unique and “interesting” qualities.

Madison is a thirteen-year old whose family immigrated to Canada from India when she was quite young. They recently became Canadian citizens, but have maintained ties with family living in India. Madison’s remarks echo Aileen’s regarding cultural immersion and cultural jealousy:

Debbie: When you are singing African music, does—how does that make you feel about being a Canadian girl from India?

Madison: Again, with the envy, because they are so much more diverse. I mean, Canada is a diverse country, but you don't get a lot of chances—well, Carassauga you get to experience different cultures in Canada, but it makes me envy them because they have that culture throughout, and it's like one culture, and they know exactly what it's like, so that's a nice thing to have.

Madison’s comments indicate a frustration with Canadian cultural diversity: she believes that she cannot experience the cultures of Canada’s populations unless she attends events intended to highlight those cultures as

particular, identifiable, and pure entities (food and festivals). Although she attends school with children of many different cultural backgrounds, and sings in the MFYC, she does not view this as “experiencing culture,” perhaps because these types of cultural entanglements (Hesse, 2000) are so much a part of her daily life that they go unrecognized. Amber, a fifteen-year old who claims Norwegian, British, and Scottish heritage, expressed similar sentiments during her interview:

Amber: Sometimes I wish we had these strong cultural influences, because Canada is basically a mix of all these different people who immigrated, like the British and French people who were here after the natives, we're all immigrants if you think about it—even if you've been here for a long time. And it's like we don't really designate one specific culture—it's like we don't have our own style of music. Like, there's Western music and that's ours, and then there's French Canadian music, but that doesn't feel like me because I'm not French Canadian, so it's sort of like you wish that there was a sound that you could say, oh—that's Canadian!

Lauren, who describes herself as “just Canadian,” also alludes to a Canada that is populated by those who “have,” and those who do not “have” a culture:

Lauren: I guess I'm glad that Canada has accepted all these religions — not religions but groups and their cultures, and that we can have all these diverse cultures in our day and age so that we can learn from them. How they do things differently and just grow from that experience. I don't know—I'm proud to be Canadian but sometimes I wish I could be other things so that I could be connected to that. I don't know what—maybe something else that has more respect—I don't know—everything has—not equal respect but—I don't know. . . something else sometimes.

The common thread in these excerpts is a mildly stated jealousy towards the assumed cultural attributes of “other” people (both within and outside of Canada.). This may be reflective of the human tendency to believe “the grass is always greener elsewhere.” Emily described this phenomenon quite succinctly:

“everyone thinks their own culture is boring and they want to learn about someone else's,” but the foregoing interview excerpts also support what has become a tacit part of Canadian national discourse that reinforces the notion white Canada has no specific cultural identity. While the national discourse of tourism emphasizes Canada’s British and French heritage, it also promotes the multi-cultural nature of Canadian society. Thus the discourse of multiculturalism suggests that Canadian cultural identity derives solely from its multi-cultures as isolated, static entities that exist within Canadian society but are rooted elsewhere in the world:

Multiculturalism as an official practice and discourse has worked actively to create the notion and practices of insulated communities. Politically constructed homogenized communities, with their increasingly fundamentalist boundaries of cultures, traditions, and religions, emerged from where there were immigrants from different parts of the world with different cultures and values (Bannerji, 2000, p. 48).

How easy it is to fail to see our own cultural norms, to fail to point them out when teaching a piece of music that exemplifies those cultural givens. As a white, North American woman, how easy is it for me to be invisible, to look with envious eyes of my own when I am teaching music from a non-white, non-English culture? Is it actually possible not to create An Other when teaching global song? Is it actually possible not to create An Other when Canadian children sing songs from Africa, or the Philippines, or India, or any place not Canada? Is the issue creating The Other, or the way we think about that Other?

Paying greater attention to local cultural expressions and pointing them out to my students will be, for me, part of a project of decolonization. Our collective thinking still relies upon discourses of the primitive, the exotic, the helpless, the uneducated — discourses that rationalized acts of colonialism, discourses that continue to rationalize ongoing economic colonization of the developing world. (Personal reflection, September, 2004)

Colonial vestigia: Negative stereotypes.

As many of the interviews have exemplified, engaging with global song does create imaginary cultural narratives for the singer (Frith, 1996). Although these may be narratives that bring us closer to understanding, they may also be based upon stereotypes and negative images. Many of the choristers' descriptions seemed to view cultures of the world as exotica; moreover, I was equally concerned by the number of stereotypes about life in other parts of the world that emerged during the interviews. For example, in discussions about music taught aurally, I became aware of my own lack of knowledge about indigenous languages here in North America when one of my students made the following comment:

AJ: Well, it's probably like the native American culture, also—it's story-telling. So they didn't write anything down at all until the Americans or the Canadians started to teach them to write.

This comment prompted me to do a little research of my own. I had once heard that the Cherokee people of Tennessee and North Carolina had a written language that predated missionaries from Europe, but I could not say for certain if the same was true for the First Nations people of Canada or other North American indigenous peoples. Yet one very quick Google search located the following information in the "Frequently Asked Questions" of the website⁴⁹:

Q: Were Micmac, Cree, or other Amerindian writing systems invented by European missionaries?

A: No. Many people believe this, primarily because they have the concept of Indians as illiterate. Most were, but some have traditions of literacy which they claim predate Columbus. This could theoretically be untrue--but isn't it strange that in the many native tribes with no such traditions, the missionaries sensibly provided alphabets based on their own, while for the natives with literary traditions they inexplicably provided weird pictographs and

⁴⁹ ("Native languages of the Americas: Preserving and promoting American Indian languages", <http://www.native-languages.org>)

rotating syllabaries unlike anything they'd ever seen before? Isn't it more likely that the Indians are telling the truth and they had these scripts to start with?

While I do not blame AJ for her lack of knowledge about Canadian Aboriginal languages, I can accept responsibility for having taught music from these traditions without having first searched out the history of their languages. I was neglectful in my preparation, and hence neglectful in my teaching. I was not alone in this neglect, however, since it would appear that native histories and languages are not usually taught within the Ontario school curriculum, either (Dion, 2002). Such neglect perpetuates the presumption of aboriginal illiteracy within the discourse of Canadian history, and AJ, an intelligent, 17-year-old choir member, has not yet encountered anything to disrupt that form of colonial thinking. (In Chapter Three, I discussed AJ's realization and commitment to "really learn about a culture" as an example of the catalytic validity of this research project.)

Other stereotypical images emerged during interviews. Ally, aged twelve, offered the following description of her experience of learning the Kenyan folk song arrangement "Tazama Bakira":

Debbie: Okay — what did you think about people from Africa when we sang Tazama Bakira?

Ally: It's like, a song from Africa and it was — I don't know — it's like I learned how to speak it and it was just good but, I did learn like the dance moves. I learned a lot of culture, like how they danced and how they sing their songs. Like how they actually live there and how they did, how did they do their things, you know (laughing), like the dance moves? Like, maybe they went around a fire and started dancing and singing.

Ally's remarks speak to the ongoing problem of representation (Rosenau, 1992) in multicultural music education: the sliver from a culture that is one song often comes to represent the whole of that culture in a choral music program (Bradley, 2003). This is implied in Ally's comment about learning "how they

actually live there.” I suspect she may have been trying hard to say what she thought I wanted to hear, but her reference to dancing and singing around a fire made me realize how many of our images of unfamiliar cultures can be based on media, fiction, or presumption. I do not know if dancing around a fire is common practice in Kenya. I do know it is not common practice in West Africa, where wood is viewed as a precious commodity, and fire is rarely, if ever, built for entertainment. I did, during the course of the interview with Ally, share my limited knowledge about the use of fire in Ghana, but I wonder how many more of my students sing music from various parts of Africa with similar, fictional cultural narrative images in mind?

Other comments made in some of the interviews indicate even more startling vestiges of colonial thinking:

Diana: I could tell that Africans were a more primal society than a sophisticated society like Victorian, because I can hear that in the music. Like when I hear the Bobobo stuff—it's the kind of thing that makes everyone in the audience want to sing right along, even if they don't know the words. But in a sophisticated society, like with Mozart and stuff, people in the audience will just go quiet and listen to it. I personally think music from a sophisticated society is like—it's more the music you listen to, you don't sing to. Whereas societies like West Africa, Ghana, that kind of thing, the songs they make up—they are meant to be sung by everyone. They're meant to be shared by the whole gathering.

Diana's comments about music for active sharing and participation versus music for listening shows interesting insight into one of the positive benefits of learning global song, for at least she has captured a glimpse of one purpose of music in Ghanaian culture. However, her choice of the terms “primitive” and “sophisticated” made me squirm during the interview and makes me squirm now as I type. The imaginary cultural narrative that Diana constructs for herself when she performs West African music is based on a racist, colonial discourse that neither multicultural discourse nor even anti-racism pedagogy in rehearsal has dislodged. Even though I know she did not hear this terminology from me, I

must ask, *what can I do about this?* The work of decolonization is far from finished.

Despite All That: Hints of the Multicultural Human Subject

Despite the number of negative images and stereotypes that emerged from my interviews with choir members, there was an equal, if not greater, number of discussions indicating that much of the cultural awareness gained through studying global song is positive and may influence a fragile, emerging multicultural human subjectivity. One common thread found in the interviews was a positive form of curiosity about other cultures, a curiosity that I trust will continue to develop constructively throughout the lives of these young people as a result of their experiences in the MFYC. It is indicative of cosmopolitanism as an outcome of multicultural education. The positive attributes of cultural curiosity include respect for other cultures and ways of life, and an understanding of people in those cultures as also being human rather than constructions of the imagination. Many choir members voiced these and other indicators of a positive cultural curiosity, a positive cosmopolitanism, over the course of the twenty interviews.

Aileen: I was really happy to do Filipino songs. And I kind of saw learning a different language, or a song in a different language, from a different viewpoint. It made me a lot more conscious of how I would be singing someone else's culture's song, because if I heard something wrong I wouldn't criticize it at all. I knew that it was hard so I would always think, "oh, how am I venturing with someone else's song?" -- and it made me really think about how I should work on another culture's song because other people will notice. Just like I knew I would notice or that my family would if we messed up the Filipino song.

Aileen's comment indicates her desire to do her best possible work when singing in an unfamiliar language, and her recognition that language is a critical component of the lives of real people, something deserving her respect for both the language and the people who speak it. In a similar vein, Amber expressed the insight she gained from singing the Telugu Song (from Bangladesh):

Amber: It was a personal accomplishment. Just learning sort of all about—well not all about—but I had never heard of the Telugu language before, and it was just interesting I guess, period. Like you don't think about other languages in your everyday life and stuff.

Debbie: So, it was interesting and it made you think about other languages—in what regard?

Amber: As being existent—because you don't hear it in your life. Because, for me there's English—well, French too because I was in French immersion, so with French stuff I don't have trouble relating because I can translate it and stuff, but it's like that awareness that there are so many different languages and so many different cultures that you don't even realize are there.

Amber's admission that she had not previously realized the existence of “so many different languages and different cultures” gives me confidence to continue to search for repertoire for the MFYC that can help make the invisible visible to its members. Amber's realization suggests that global song taught from an anti-racism perspective may provide a space from which a multicultural human subject can emerge.

Emily is a fifteen year old with strong ties to the Ukranian community in Canada. Her experience singing music of several cultures over the course of the year has piqued a desire to study languages:

Debbie: So, you've sung a couple of musical cultures this year at MFYC that you hadn't experienced before — how did singing that music make you feel about yourself?

Emily: So many! It's definitely enlightening. And now I watch the different channels with different languages. I don't know exactly what they are saying, but I sort of understand how they are saying it and why they are saying it. It has made me more aware empathetically, because the languages sort of responded differently to the same situation, you know? I thought that was very interesting.

Later in the same interview, Emily indicated that singing the music of cultures to which she had not previously been exposed has given her new insight

regarding forms of cultural expression and behaviors that have cultural roots. I quote her at length because of the number of insights she describes:

Debbie: So, how does singing the music of another culture make you feel about that culture?

Emily: It wasn't that I didn't have respect, but I have even more respect, because when you don't understand a culture or you don't understand where those people are from, and then you start singing their songs, or the songs of their children or family or the celebrations, it sort of makes you, submerges you into like a personal relationship suddenly, and when you are in that it really gets to you and you start to believe and understand why they do the things they do and you don't question it, you just do it. And I really like that. Because I think sometimes people are too into their heads, and when you start doing things for the sake of being nice, when you start understanding people and respecting people for the sake of who they are and not what they are, then it's wonderful because we stop asking silly questions and start doing it and it just happens suddenly.

I remember I used to question why Jewish people do some things and why Indian people do some things like where and what they eat and why they say certain things about other people — and then I understood them because — it's because of what they've gone through. I mean, you can't say that one man has suffered more than another because you can't measure suffering, because in the end it's all the same. I learned that from just singing and it was so amazing! I used to think that this group had more hardships than this person because they had to do all this — it's not fair. And when I sang their songs it was sort of like, oh, of course, why didn't I see that before? The gray matter had just vanished. Like, was I awake? What was happening? Were my eyes closed the whole time? I realize now that you can't measure and you can't judge people because of what they believe in or who they are or what happens around in their country, because they're not doing it — it just happens.

Emily's comments in the first paragraph of the excerpt above speak directly to the performative nature of choral singing ("it submerges you into like a personal relationship") and its impact on our individual self-growth and understanding of other human beings as individuals. I find her commentary on suffering intriguing; I suspect it derives at least partially from her in-depth

knowledge of Ukrainian culture and history, gained from her early education in a Ukrainian-language school. Her comments throughout the interview led me to infer that this education had framed Ukrainian history as one of severe suffering and oppression. Her remarks in the excerpt above, however, indicate that she has moved beyond this belief to an insight that suffering is common among many groups of people, and that one cannot place such suffering into any sort of meaningful hierarchy by degrees. I am not attempting to make the claim that Emily gained this insight solely from her experiences in choir, but I think she clearly suggests that her experience in the MFYC with the music from a number of cultures helped her in forming her new understanding of culturally-related suffering.

Emily indicates a deep level of insight that not all choir members were able to express in their interviews. Nonetheless, it is clear from several MFYC members' statements that their choir experiences with global song have prompted the desire to learn more about unfamiliar cultures and their people, indicative of an increasing sense of cosmopolitanism:

Kate: Yes, I definitely can say that — that it has made me open minded towards everybody and to different things. I think I had a really narrow-minded view when I came to Canada at first because you don't meet many people in places like the Middle East — it's a lot of dark, brown-skinned people, but when you come here. . . .The music has made me feel that there are a lot of cultures and music is a way to experience that. Actually, because we've done African music I've done several projects in school on Ghana and other parts of Africa.

She later explains that her interest in and her experiences in MFYC with global song have influenced a change in her mother's attitude towards black and Asian people :

Debbie: Can you think of any ways that the music you have sung in choir has influenced the way you maybe think about or act towards other people, from another culture?

Kate: Well, my mom used to think about Black people, from television especially, that Black people were all these gangsters, doing the drugs and being bad people — but when she came to—well not even. She had a few African friends in Sri Lanka, but when she came to Canada she met more African people, and she learned that they're not bad people. And so when I'm singing, right away, from the music, she can tell this isn't anything close to rap, maybe they got the drumming from rap — or that the rap dates back to Africa — still their culture holds on and you see all these bright costumes, and you're thinking, it's not just the Caribbean — there's more to Black people—and Filipino as well. In the Middle East, Filipinos are treated very badly by the Arabs—it's not a good outlook on the Filipinos in the Middle East. So my mom thought Filipinos are bad people — but then she came to Canada and met these — well, my friends are ALL Filipinos, because the school I used to go to in elementary school was a Filipino school, San Lorenzo — he was a Filipino saint — and our area is Filipino, and Chinese, and they're good people—they're smart — so she learned through my friends that they are good people. And songs have also helped that — because she sees that they have good songs and good music. . .

The change in attitude Kate describes in her mother cannot, obviously, be solely attributed to her experiences with global song in the MFYC; however, Kate's interest in music and her family's desire for her to pursue that interest allowed them all to experience, even if only in small doses, the music of other cultures. In addition, it has placed both Kate and her family in contact with people of many cultures and ethnicities in situations that appear to be predominantly positive. It is one example of the ways Canadian multiculturalism, and experiences in the MFYC with global song in an antiracism pedagogy, combine to contribute to the sort of changes that may be indicative of fragile, yet emerging, multicultural human subjects.

An interest in meeting people from the cultures experienced musically in the MFYC is also evident from many choir members:

Debbie: When you are singing the music from another culture, let's talk about maybe African music, does it make you have any particular thoughts about people from Africa?

Michelle: I think they are really cool — for them to start singing songs like that! They are so warm and easy going, and just fun. I'd really like to get to know people from that country because of the fun I had singing the songs.

Debbie: Do you think performing African music has in any way changed the way you think?

AJ: I have a lot more fun with it now. I think differently about how I see the dances and stuff. Like even from different cultures and stuff like that. Like we had something in our school — what was it? It was called Sonny and Sophie's wedding — it's kind of like that where we are guests at a wedding — but the only thing was when I saw the dancing I thought, oh that looks like so much fun — I want to be up there dancing — I want to learn how to do that kind of dance. When before I would have been, that's cool but I don't think I would have made an attempt to actually learn it. I would have been more like, the music is cool but I don't want to put myself in that position. But now I'm like — oh! I want to do that! It looks like so much fun! So that has changed my point of view and the way I think about stuff.

Debbie: Has singing African music changed any opinions or beliefs you may have had about the people in Africa before you learned that music?

Madison: Yes -- because before I would feel like, okay, there are African cultures so it didn't really excite me. But now that I've actually seen and sung and danced what they do, it's cool, because now I know actually first-hand — well, not first-hand but I know now what it is like to dance and sing and do a lot of African music, so in a way I am experiencing their culture.

Debbie: Okay, so let's talk about African music for a little bit. Has doing African music influenced the way you think or talk to other people or the way you think about other people in any way?

Raka: It makes me get along better with African people at my school, because learning some of these words that are in the African culture made me get along better with my African friends. And I now have a pen pal that lives in Africa.

In all of the preceding interview excerpts, what emerges is that learning the music of another culture gives the MFYC students a sense of first-hand experience with some aspect of that culture, leading to a more positive image of the people of that culture. Some, like Raka, put that experience to practical use such as communicating with an internet pen pal in Africa, and by helping him find more constructive ways to interact with the African students in his school. Likewise, Michelle, whose mobility difficulties were described earlier in this thesis, feels she would be more willing to interact with people of another culture because of the positive impression that the music of that culture has created within her, enabling her to see other people as “warm and easy going.” Madison and AJ both gained a sense of a culture that they find helps them understand themselves to a greater degree and has bolstered their own willingness to try something new.

Despite the number of stereotypes described earlier in this chapter that were not challenged in choir, the MFYC’s experiences with global song have helped some students to understand that broad categorizations of people (black, white, Asian, and so forth) are not very helpful in their understanding of other cultures. In the following excerpt, Stefanie, a thirteen year old whose first language is Spanish (Uruguay), describes the insight she gained from singing music from the Philippines:

Debbie: Good — okay. Has singing music with the MFYC from all the various cultures that we've studied — has any of that music changed any beliefs or opinions that you might have had about the culture before you sang the music?

Stefanie: The Phillipines — well before I thought they were pretty much, you know, just like Chinese people — I thought they were the same as Chinese people. But when I started to sing the songs, my whole idea of the Philippines changed. Like I just forgot what I said before and I got to a new place, right? So I thought the Philippines were very interesting and very happy people, and they were very nice

but I could tell that they were different from Chinese people, right? So I learned a lot.

It would be so easy for me to look at this comment and think, “is that all she learned — that China and the Philippines are not the same?” But in the context of my project of discerning whether or not our lives in multicultural Canada are contributing to the emergence of a multicultural human subject, to more cosmopolitan attitudes, I am happy that in experiencing music from the Philippines, Stefanie came to her own realization that she had been generalizing across groups of people, and that this generalization was not sufficient as a means of understanding. I am also happy that many of my students have expressed not only willingness, but a real desire to learn more about people of other cultures as a result of their experiences with global song. I take this as confirmation that at least some of my goals for engaging in antiracist, multicultural music education are being reached at the individual level by many of my students. Stereotypes still abound, however, and I know I have some work to do to decolonize both my own and my students’ thought in several areas. Progress is made in slow steps, sometimes, but it is progress nonetheless. I have faith that a multicultural human subject is possible in a future that is closer than it is far away.

Building bridges to a Multicultural Human Subject

The foregoing interview excerpts and discussion point to the many challenges inherent in enacting a critical music education pedagogy within the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. Choristers’ descriptions of the “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona” epiphany clearly suggest that such uncanny moments of learning and border crossing are potent performatives in constituting multicultural human subjectivity, as evidenced by Kate, Amber, Raka and other choir members’ stories of that night. This was an isolated event, however, and it must compete for “psychic time” with the many discourses contributing to individual

choir members' self-understanding, as Diana's comments about "primitive" and "sophisticated" societies indicate. Although the stereotypes Diana invoked were the most extreme called up in the twenty interviews, other choir members' comments also suggest the ways Canadian multicultural discourse constructs Canada as having no particular culture of its own, reinforcing Whiteness as neutral and all else as exotic. MFYC members are bombarded with official multicultural discourses, national discourses, racial and ethnic discourses, sexism, ableism, stereotypical media images, and the alchemy of school knowledge (Popkewitz, 1998) on a daily basis, and these influences also contribute to the people they are. Neither am I, a teacher committed to anti-racism, immune from negative influences of discourse, as my personal reflection regarding Michelle portrays.

Christopher Small (1998) argues that any musical performance constitutes an exploration, affirmation, and celebration of "right relationships" (p. 183). We may be predisposed toward certain concepts of right relationships (such as multicultural human subjectivity) resulting from the myriad of discourses to which we are exposed on a daily basis, yet these right relationships take on a different meaning within the act of musicking. As Small explains:

Musicking is about relationships, not so much about those which actually exist in our lives as about those that we desire to exist and long to experience: relationships among people, as well as those between people and the rest of the cosmos, and also perhaps with ourselves and with our bodies. . . .By bringing into existence relationships that are thought of as desirable, a musical performance not only reflects those relationships but also shapes them. It teaches and inculcates the concept of those ideal relationships. . . .In articulating those values it allows those taking part to say, to themselves, to one another and to anyone else who may be paying attention: these are our values, these are our concepts of ideal relationships, and consequently, *this is who we are* (p. 183, italics added).

When I reflect upon MFYC's performance of "Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona," taking place as it did before an international audience who shared a common vision for social justice through prison reform, Small's words are both poignant and potent in their suggestion that the potential for a fragile, emerging multicultural human subjectivity does exist. I believe that during that performance, even if only for a few seconds, we collectively experienced what it might feel like to live in a world where all humans understood themselves as multicultural human subjects.

Despite the many hiccups and hurdles that confound the potential emergence of multicultural human subjectivity that this chapter has highlighted, the kernel of hope for a multicultural human subject is present throughout the excerpts. In the "Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona" moment, my students recognized, some for the first time in their lives, the real people beyond the media images of despair. In the two or so minutes when there were no boundaries between us, a space opened for the ability to understand those who are different from ourselves; in that space we also come to understand ourselves.

As Canadian society becomes increasingly multi-cultural, and as students have more contact with those of different races and backgrounds in places such as the MFYC where anti-racism is the pedagogy, I believe the uncanny moments of learning will become less isolated, and the performative power that engaging with global song can wield will occur more frequently as those "unique situations" of cultural entanglement become more commonplace in Canadian society. The desire to understand others, the wish for a better world, seems very strong among the members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, expressed in their willingness to share their thoughts, feelings, and to experience global song with me in weekly rehearsals and public performances.

Christopher Small puts it this way: "*How we like to music is who we are*" (Small, 1998, p. 220, italics added). MFYC's global song experiences fan for me

the flame of hope that through our musical border crossings, we continue to blur boundaries of race, nationality, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, and other labels that humans have created to separate the “us” from the “them.” I believe that when MFYC performs global song, “who we are” sometimes comes close to the ideal of multicultural human subjectivity. Moments such as “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona” open the space for its emergence, and I have faith that such spaces exist elsewhere, too, created by other musickers who allow for their possibility.

In crossing the disciplinary boundaries that continue to determine what a youth choir should be and should do, I hope the act of crossing becomes easier for my students. Perhaps in some future day those boundaries will no longer be there. My students encourage me to keep on this path, and every once in a while, when we sing “Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona,” or “Dandansoy” from the Philippines, or when Michelle plays tokei in “Bobobo,” we find ourselves standing momentarily on a bridge to something better. We can feel, in those fleeting seconds, and hear in the sounds we sing, a time and place when the boundaries are rendered more porous, more negotiable, perhaps even fade from existence: a time and place where we are all just people in the world. When we reach that place as humans, our differences do not function as markers to divide us, but function to help us understand each other more fully. How do I know this is possible? My students have told me so:

Debbie: So — do you think singing the music of other cultures that we've done at MFYC, has this influenced the way you think about other people at all?

Amber: I guess once again, for example, the South African Suite, which are freedom song — like, I didn't know about apartheid necessarily until we did those songs, and so you sort of learn about the struggles in other cultures as something that was obviously worth recording in music, and sort of part of their background or something that they are familiar with. And then you just sort of feel like you know more about the people — you can't really specify something because it is just a song, right? But it's like just something that they know and you

know. And it's like a common bridge. It's like finding something in common with someone who is completely your opposite.

Thank you, Amber, and thank you all.

Chapter Eight: Make Them Hear You—Implications of the Research

A Polyrhythmic Pastiche

I have used the analogy in this thesis of West African polyrhythms to describe how the various parts of this research combine to create a multi-layered musical complex; each chapter offers a distinct rhythm suggesting ways in which adolescents' engagement with global song in the MFYC context constitutes an emerging multicultural human subjectivity. These rhythms combine as the discourses of multiculturalism, its subtext of cosmopolitanism, and antiracism pedagogy converge within the performative context of the MFYC.

The concept of a multicultural human subject is such that no single rhythmic motif can describe it; indeed, my purpose in this study has been to point out a few of the motifs that emerged from the descriptions of musical experiences provided by participants in this study. The picture drawn of multicultural human subjectivity is of necessity incomplete, since such a continually fluid and emerging subjectivity cannot be pictured or described in precise detail. It is a “particular definition of being human without a specification of its content or guarantee of its historical possibility” (Simon, 1992, p. 66). Yet the various motifs that have emerged from the interviews indicate at least a few of the potentially hundreds of ways in which they are interconnected in that picture. As Griffiths (1995) argues, the “webs” of identity are “always made in a temporal and social context, and they get their meaning from that context” (p. 178). I believe that interviews with members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir suggest that within the MFYC context, the space for multicultural human subjectivity exists. Its emergence is contingent upon this context, though, which is continually changing. This final chapter of the thesis will discuss implications of this fragile, yet potentially emergent subjectivity for the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, and for me as a choral teacher-conductor.

Some of these implications may also speak to multicultural music education more generally.

Before discussing the implications of the study in detail, I would like to layer the various rhythms discussed in this thesis contributing to the polyrhythmic context from which a multicultural human subject may emerge. Chapter Two outlined the discursive framework for the thesis, the discourses that converge to form the habitus in which the MFYC operates. Discourses of cosmopolitanism, Canadian multiculturalism, multicultural music education discourse, and an anti-racism pedagogical strategy combine within the MFYC context to open the space within which multicultural human subjectivity may be situated. The chapter also explores the relationship between performativity, identity-subjectivity and the role of discourse as performative.

Chapter Three provided an overview of critical ethnography, the research methodology utilized in this study. The choice of critical ethnography as the methodology for this particular research is a crucial element not only in the study's overall design and implementation, but is also implicated in a potent way in the study's findings. Evidence to the catalytic validity (Lather, 1986) of the methodology is provided by AJ's realization (described in Chapter Three) that her beliefs about First Nations culture were based on lingering colonial attitudes. The study's catalytic validity is also evident in my interview with Michelle (described in Chapter Seven), which led to a new and deeper understanding of ableism for me as teacher and researcher. Such examples speak to the ways that critical ethnography is integral to this study.

Chapter Four offered ethnographic data to support my argument that although the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir is similar in structure to traditional choir models, there are some significant differences related to issues of social justice and to the repertoire we sing. The open access policy of the MFYC differs from some other children's and youth choirs whose structure and

auditioning methods function to create an elite group of singers. Anti-racism as a pedagogical strategy calls for the interrogation of power as an ongoing characteristic of MFYC's rehearsal discourse. This enables our rehearsal routine to support a performative pedagogy of possibility, a "theorized practice of performativity that makes apparent (and does not just imply) institutional critiques and multiple identities including gender, race, class, sexuality, patriarchy, and so forth" (O'Toole, 2005, p. 307).

Chapter Five looked at the discursive terrain of the MFYC through ethnographic description of the ways in which the choir may (or may not) begin to constitute multicultural human subjectivity within first-year choir members. The chapter discussed how MFYC members are constituted as the subject "chorister" through the disciplining techniques related to teaching the technical vocabularies and physical requirements of singing. Data presented in Chapter Five suggests that MFYC's global song repertoire, which introduces choir members to many languages, helps choristers recognize themselves and others, helps them feel connected to other people, fosters respect for other cultures, and to some degree helps to disrupt stereotypes about those cultures.⁵⁰ These developing positive attitudes further suggest cosmopolitanism may be a hidden agenda of multiculturalism, but within MFYC's anti-racism pedagogical context, cosmopolitanism may take on the moral and ethical viewpoint posited for the term by Beck (2002), Brennan (1997), Roudometof (2005) and others. The MFYC context not only provides social and historical background for the music and the people who created it, but interrogates power issues past and present, and enables choristers to make these connections for themselves. The song "Make Them Hear You" provided evidence of the way the music and pedagogy may create awareness of social justice issues characteristic of emerging multicultural human subjectivity.

⁵⁰ Chapter Seven investigates the residue of stereotypes that were made evident during the interviews with MFYC members.

Chapter Six investigated the connection between performativity and belonging by looking at the elements of collective identity (Ashmore, Deux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004) evident in MFYC choristers who had been choir members for more than one year. Collective identity influences an individual's sense of self and is performative to individual identity construction. Group ideology and group narratives are crucial dimensions of how individuals view themselves. Thus, MFYC's anti-racism ideology and group narrative as "a different kind of choir" is performative to choristers' construction of identity as open-minded individuals, a requisite characteristic of a multicultural human subject. Choir members' experiences of singing "Eamonn n' Chnoic," "Make Them Hear You," and "An Open Door" show that a sense of collective identity may be performative to multicultural human subjectivity, in that it constitutes for choir members a sense of belonging to a group where multicultural human subjectivity is valued and performed within the MFYC context. As Bell argues, "the performativity of belonging 'cites' the norms that constitute or make present the group as such," (Bell, 1999, p. 3). The repetition of these norms in MFYC's rehearsals and performances make possible belonging as the sort of multicultural human subjectivity described in this thesis.

In Chapter Seven, I investigated the potential for an emerging multicultural human subjectivity through chorister narratives about the Prison Fellowship International concert in August 2003. I argue that the spontaneous reaction of the audience when we sang "Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona" and its impact on the choristers involved in that concert created a moment of learning at the uncanny level (Britzman, 1998). It is at the level of the uncanny where multicultural human subjectivity may become more than just the product of discourse, and this event provides a particularly powerful example of how "antiracist pedagogy may rethink the problem of community in ways that allow community to be more than a problem of repudiating others. . . ." (Britzman, 1998, p. 102). Similarly, the profundity of this particular moment supports

Griffiths' (1995, p. 174) arguments for authentic feelings and emotions as those which construct the sense of self. "Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona" was a special moment for those of us who experienced it. It was not quite like any other concert experience I have had, with the exception of my own high school concert "rebellion" described in the early pages of this thesis. These particularly "supercharged" performative moments, when combined with a performative antiracist pedagogy that interrogates power and reiterates cosmopolitanism as a moral and ethical viewpoint, spark the flames from which a multicultural human subjectivity may emerge.

Despite the many positive indicators that emerged from this one event, other data from the interviews and my personal journal suggests that discourses of race, nationalism, official multiculturalism, and ableism rub against such moments of uncanny learning, even given antiracism pedagogical practices, thus confounding the potential for a multicultural human subject's emergence. Simon explains this as one of the frustrations inherent in working toward a pedagogy of possibility:

Thus while one may strive to develop an organization of classroom work that is for example, nonclassist, nonsexist, or nonracist, this by no means will eliminate the effects of capitalism, patriarchy, and colonialism from the classroom (Simon, 1992, p. 67).

The interviews made clear that although the potential for multicultural human subjectivity exists in the MFYC context, there remains a considerable amount of decolonization work to be done. Cultural stereotypes, misconceptions of cultures as static entities, cultural jealousy, and the myth of Canadian identity as "white" were areas identified for continuing anti-racism and decolonizing work within the choir. The research has enabled me to focus on specific areas of my own Whiteness that hamper the effectiveness of my anti-racism praxis. This includes the ways my able-bodiedness sometimes operates as a form of "body-blindness" to those who are differently-abled.

Critical Pedagogy Or Hegemonic Discourse: The Thin “White” Line

“Anti-racism work begins when the individual practitioner takes stock of his or her relative positions of power, privilege and disadvantage” (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 25). Throughout my work with the MFYC, and as a part of this particular research project, I have continually assessed and addressed my own position of power and privilege as a white educator. My commitment to anti-racism in music education requires that I acknowledge my complicity in Whiteness and hegemonic assumptions that may conflict with my goals as an anti-racism educator.

Cultural Capital

Teaching global song within the MFYC context may be viewed in some respects as re-enacting multiculturalism as a hegemonic discourse. Thirty-five years since multiculturalism became officially mandated in Canada in 1971, most parents expect their children to encounter some form of multiculturalism in educational settings, including community settings such as the MFYC. Multiculturalism as political doctrine promotes “cultural diversity as an intrinsic component of the social, political and moral order” (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 21). As such, parents may be pre-conditioned for their children’s education in Canada to be “multi-cultural.” In fact, they may view a multicultural choral music education as a way for their children to acquire a form of both linguistic and cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) deemed necessary for life under a system of global capital.

Interrogating Power

What differentiates MFYC’s pedagogy, as described earlier in this thesis, is an anti-racist approach to multiculturalism, an approach that “highlights persistent inequalities among communities, focusing on relations of domination and subordination” (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 21). Thus, within the MFYC context, global songs are not taught from a “strictly musical” perspective that focuses on

notes, rhythms, and musical phrases. Providing socio-historical context for individual songs enables me as the teacher-conductor to bring into the discussion issues of power as they relate to that context and sometimes to the song itself. Discussions regarding power that take place within MFYC rehearsals encourage students to identify and challenge the inequalities that exist in the society in which they live and in the world at large. Thus there are many times within MFYC rehearsals when I feel that we are successful in interrogating power through global song, as chorister interviews about the song “Make Them Hear You” indicate.

Conflicting goals.

There is a real tension that exists, however, for me as the MFYC’s teacher-conductor. Because MFYC is a performance group whose funding from the City of Mississauga and from other granting agencies is dependent upon our production of concert performances that conform to “high artistic standards,” the time necessary for thorough interrogation of power issues and discussion of social contexts within weekly rehearsals often comes into direct conflict with these “artistic” concerns. At such times, our discussions must be cut short so that rehearsal on other songs can proceed, as the journal entry regarding my introduction to the Telugu Song indicates:

I did not spend any time analyzing any power implications of either of the proposed explanations, thinking at the time it was enough for the kids to have at least made that basic connection. Also, I wanted to get to several more songs before the rehearsal ended. Upon reflection, I wonder if I should have pushed the discussion further – but then again, we have a concert to prepare, with only 10 rehearsals left, and a lot of music to learn. (Journal entry October 3, 2004.)

This brief journal excerpt hints at the ongoing pressure to prepare for public performances. As most music teachers will attest, there is almost never enough time to prepare for performance in the manner most of us would like. The choice to spend precious rehearsal time in discussion about power and politics is one made at the expense of other important musical learning. Although I am firm in my belief that an understanding of context and power allows the choir collectively to interpret the music in ways that create stronger performances (and that concurrently have a more meaningful performative impact on choristers' self-understanding as multicultural human subjects), I often feel at the end of a rehearsal as though something has been compromised. Perhaps this is why Patricia Campbell implies that cultural context may not be at the core of the multicultural performance curriculum:

Occasionally, just following a major performance, in between concerts, or at other times when the pressure is off to learn another program of music repertoire at a rapid pace, more thorough-going explorations of a musical culture may be designed and offered to students. . . .(Campbell, 2004, p. 21)

If by this Campbell means we should wait “until the pressure is off,” I strongly disagree; this marginalizes contextual study of the music, and actually contributes to an invisibility of the culture. Without emphasis on cultural context as part of teaching the music “proper,” there will be little if any opportunity for its inclusion in the curriculum. The avoidance of power and politics is in keeping with hegemonic discourses of multicultural music education that avoid discussions of power and politics.

Campbell's perspective on multicultural music education is liberal, not critical, in its orientation. Although she does make occasional reference to “social justice” in her most recent book (Campbell, 2004), interrogating power is not prominent in her scholarly writings about teaching multicultural and global

music.⁵¹ The issue of time constraints for interrogations of power is a crucial component that differentiates anti-racism music education as critical pedagogy from hegemonic liberal multicultural pedagogy. Despite my best efforts, I sometimes slip into the latter, allowing my desire for nearly flawless performances to take precedence over the need to address issues of power. When I am not vigilant about making and taking time for cultural contexts and the interrogation of power, the lack of time leaves dominant discourse unchallenged, and hegemony intact.

Although arguments for depth over breadth may seem to offer a ready solution to this dilemma, this is not as easy a fix as it may at first appear. Certainly, covering less musical material would allow for more time to confront issues of power and allow for greater time to study the musical culture. However, since public performances are the primary yardstick by which the choir's success is measured, the pressure to produce concerts of sufficient length to provide reasonable entertainment value for the paying public is high. In addition, these performances must also be "of high quality." As a community arts organization, MFYC must continually assert and "prove" its artistic merit in order to qualify for grants and other public funds. Our anti-racism curriculum is considered irrelevant to such funding agencies, who allocate funds based largely upon the number of concerts produced in a year, the breadth of the repertoire performed, and the "quality" of those performances.

Implications for music teacher education.

The tension described in the foregoing directly implicates the shortcomings of my own music teacher education as well as training for future music teachers. Even within Elliott's (1995) "praxial" philosophy that was the foundation of my music education philosophy courses, there was an implicit

⁵¹ Campbell makes a distinction between multicultural (as locally represented cultures) and global (those cultures not represented in the local population) music that I do not utilize in this paper, in part because of the great diversity of global cultures found in the population of Mississauga. For her rationale on the distinction in terminology, see (Campbell, 2002b).

emphasis on “artistry” and “expert musicianship” (p. 71) within an explicit emphasis on performance. The philosophy, therefore, did not disrupt the already-entrenched Western notions of music that regard only the “best” performances as indicative of worthwhile teaching and learning. Patti O’Toole (2005) writes that her work with

city kids in a youth choir have challenged my notions of race and class issues while teaching me that music education methods are not universal; they legitimize the experiences of white suburban children. Identity issues of city children are not part of our professional conversation or teacher training (p. 305).

O’Toole’s discussion of race as context within music education focuses on her experience of teaching gospel music with inner city children. Apparent in her analysis is the way that her own teacher training failed to prepare her to instruct the appropriate vocal style for singing gospel music in a way that she considered vocally healthy. In fact, when the “gospel artist” arrived to work with the choir, O’Toole describes the sound the children produced as “screaming,” a direct contrast to the gospel artist’s comment, “it was not too bad for gospel music” (p. 306). Although in the final performance, O’Toole’s attitude shifted to an acknowledgement that the children were “screaming new identities,” her language implies that the vocal production needed to perform gospel music is potentially damaging. I believe this is what she means when she states, “music education methods are not universal.” The techniques that produce the British boy-choir sound do not lend themselves well to an authentic gospel choir sound.

Vocal timbres vary dramatically between musical practices, while most North American music education departments concentrate solely on *bel canto* style singing for adults, and on flute-like “head tones” in children. Thus, teachers interested in incorporating world music into their choral programs are left to fend for themselves to try to understand how an appropriate vocal style might be accomplished in a way that is healthy for the students. Lacasse (2000) argues that music departments need to do more study in order to understand the many

types of vocal manipulations that are stylistically integral to popular music (p. 249). He recently expanded upon this argument to encourage voice teachers to learn how to teach “paralinguistic” vocalizations to promote healthy singing in students seeking careers as popular music vocalists (Lacasse, 2005). I believe his arguments are equally valid for the diversity of vocal styles encountered in practices of global song. Not only do we as teachers need to know how to produce a wide range of tone qualities utilizing healthy vocal production, we also need to know how to hear when stylistic conventions are being produced in a healthy manner, yet rarely are these understandings included as part of our choral music teacher education. Most of us are still taught according to European

culturally transmitted "traditional" practices or "methods" that were devised one, two, or more centuries ago. They were devised, then, without the benefit of knowing how bodies are actually made, how they most efficiently function to carry out purposeful, goal-directed behaviors, and how teaching "procedures" can affect, for good or ill, musical skill and expressiveness (Thurman, 2004).

As part of a music teacher education program, learning how the body can best carry out specific musical behaviours that may be distinctive to particular musical cultures would go a long way toward eliminating the groundless belief there is only one right (“white”) way to sing (Joyce, 2003).

Invisible White Culture

Another issue that arose repeatedly among interviewees was the notion that Canada has no culture other than that derived from its multi-cultures. Bannerji (2000) argues that the Canadian discourse of multiculturalism is a coping mechanism for controlling a conflicting heterogeneity interpreted as a threat to national culture (p. 37). The national culture requiring protection is implicitly white culture:

From the days of colonial capitalism to the present-day global imperialism, there has emerged an ideologically homogeneous identity dubbed Canadian whose nation and state Canada is

supposed to be. . . .So the identity of the Canadian “we” does not reside in language, religion or other aspects of culture, but rather in the European/North American physical origin — in the body and the colour of skin (Bannerji, 2000, p. 42).

The implicit “we” of Canada as an invisible entity is characteristic of Whiteness: “The state of being unmarked (and therefore ‘normal’ or ‘ordinary’) is both constitutive of, and an effect of, structural advantage and power, and the cultural authority that that power brings” (Mackey, 2002, p. 21). Although not all the adolescents who took part in this study have yet begun to think about the way the nation wields power in their daily lives, their narratives give strong evidence that the discourse of Canadian nationalism already influences their self-understandings. The commonly expressed belief that Canada has no culture “of its own” suggests that for me, as a white teacher-conductor whose students are children from multi-ethnic, multi-racial, and multi-national backgrounds, much work remains for me to bring Whiteness to consciousness, to enable my students to identify how an “invisible” Canadian culture is part of the hegemony that seeks to manage difference around a dominant structure (Mackey, 2002, p. 16).

My own presence, my own white body leading rehearsals of “other people’s music” serves to reproduce this myth whenever I fail to make mention of white as a race, or fail to call attention to my own white skin. Even in singing “Canadian” music, for example, songs of French Canada, or of Newfoundland, there is an implicit otherness resulting from relations of power that are a part of the music’s context; thus my students do not see the music of French Canada or the Celtic influences apparent in Newfoundland folk music as “Canadian.” It is other; there is no Canadian music. One of my favorite Canadian composers, who is perhaps the composer with whom the choir is most familiar, Stephen Hatfield, uses music of global cultures to create his compositions, giving the impression within the MFYC context that what may be Canadian about Hatfield’s music is its reliance

on the music of other cultures — a performative example of Canada’s national discourse? (Reflection, June 15, 2005).

Multicultural human subjectivity or Canadian identity?

Throughout my interviews with MFYC members, I was struck by the choristers’ willingness to sing in new and unfamiliar languages and to become familiar with a diverse range of musical cultures. As discussed in the previous section, Canada’s national culture is in many respects defined as multicultural. Following from my reflection above regarding the music of Canadian composer Stephen Hatfield, a different reading of MFYC’s repertoire of global song suggests that it actually serves to reinforce a national imaginary of Canada as multi-cultural.⁵²

Jocelyn Guilbault (2000) argues that certain discourses construct musical projects in racial terms (p. 436). Although her research focuses on popular musical forms in articulating the national identity “Trinidadian,” I believe an analogy can be drawn from her writing to the MFYC context, in that our repertoire choices are completely within our control, are not mandated by the City of Mississauga or any school board, and thus may be viewed as “popular” in the sense of a cultural activity intended to appeal to the general public. From this viewpoint, MFYC’s repertoire may be understood as articulating the identity “Canadian” through the discourse of multiculturalism. As Guilbault writes, “within such a perspective, musical discourses are therefore conceived not as the mere reflection of racial projects, but rather as being actively engaged in their very production” (p. 436). Although my own “racial project” is anti-racism, I must acknowledge that as an educational discourse, MFYC’s repertoire both produces and reproduces the Canadian racial project of multiculturalism. Through anti-racism pedagogical practices, I seek to disrupt boundaries created by that discourse, and in doing so to open the space for a potential multicultural

⁵² Use of the hyphenated form of the word is intended to signify the distinctiveness of the many cultures included in the Canadian imaginary, and their implied location outside of Canada.

human subjectivity. Yet I also must acknowledge that success in this effort cannot be guaranteed and at best is only partial, as Diana's comments concerning "sophisticated and primal societies" (Chapter Seven) illustrate. MFYC's musical anti-racism discourse does not invariably counteract discourses of colonialism, ableism, race, or ethnicity; instead, it inscribes and reinscribes racialized thinking associated with the diverse musical practices that are part of MYFC's curriculum.

Even so, I continue to take encouragement from Walcott's (2003) discussion related to music performed by black Canadian artists as a vehicle for performing black identities. Moving Walcott's argument into the realm of the multicultural leaves room for a non-hegemonic multicultural human subjectivity:

Music and other imaginative works best demonstrate the processes of black diasporic invention and (re)invention. I argue that these works often offer complex analyses of black performativity and therefore of black political identifications. Additionally, I suggest that these works are not merely national products, but that they occupy the space of the in-between, vacillating between national borders and diasporic desires, ambitions and disappointments. These works suggest the possibility of the new, but in many cases cannot leave various kinds of old behind (p. 26).

Following from this argument, the music of Stephen Hatfield and other composers who borrow liberally from global musical cultures occupies the space between "national borders and diasporic desires." Hatfield's compositions thought of in this light suggest the possibility for a new identity that speaks to the many cultural entanglements within Canada, as he brings the global into the local of Canadian music. Some people may dismiss what Hatfield does as appropriation, but I believe the possibility for multicultural human subjectivity may be found in his compositions, if one chooses to listen with hopeful ears or to sing with a hopeful voice.

Discursive Tensions

There is a tension here in my own discursive framework that warrants unpacking: what are the implications for me as a white middle-class, able-bodied female academic, speaking from an undeniably privileged position, when I call upon the concept “cosmopolitanism” for theoretical support? Although current sociological thinking seeks to reposition the term, cosmopolitanism has been “critically associated with those elite Western individuals who were the fullest expression of European bourgeois capitalism and colonial empires” (Beck, 2002, p. 16). As Beck argues, cosmopolitanization implies that people all over the world are reflecting on a shared collective future, while anti-racism pedagogy relies upon the collective memory of oppressed peoples as a vehicle for interrogating power. Ladson-Billings discusses how erasure of memory may occur within

the colorblind perspective, evident in the way the curriculum presents people of color, that presumes a homogenized ‘we’ in a celebration of diversity. This perspective embraces a so-called multicultural perspective by ‘mis-equating the middle passage with Ellis Island.’ Thus, students are taught erroneously that ‘we are all immigrants’ (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p.18).

Several choir members alluded to the concept “we are all immigrants” in their interviews: Amber used the exact words:

Amber: Sometimes I wish we had these strong cultural influences, because Canada is basically a mix of all these different people who immigrated, like the British and French people who were here after the natives, we're all immigrants if you think about it. . . .

This leads me to ask, to interrogate of myself — is a multicultural human subject, as a product of cosmopolitanism and dependent upon the economy of globalization, anything more than a veiled form of imperialist thinking or ongoing colonialism?

Judith Butler addresses a similar question as it relates to presumed global constructions of heterosexuality in *Gender Trouble*. Although she speaks specifically to assumptions that gender performativity operates similarly in all cultures, her statements raise for me questions about the inclusion of “Other” cultures within choral music as a colonization under the sign of the same:

The effort to *include* “Other” cultures as variegated amplifications of a global phallogocentrism constitutes an appropriative act that risks a repetition of the self-aggrandizing gesture of phallogocentrism, colonizing under the sign of the same those differences that might otherwise call that totalizing concept into question (Butler, 1990, p. 18).

Is the concept of a multicultural human subject yet another way to assuage white guilt? Although Gilroy (2000) Williams (1997), and others argue for a planetary humanity or a color-blind future, in language resonant with my notion of a multicultural human subject, the path to that color-blind future seems exceedingly elusive and in places treacherous. If my pedagogical practice seeks to tread that path within a social complex of globalization, multiculturalism, and cosmopolitanism, I must continually search for ways that anti-racism pedagogy in conjunction with a curriculum of global song can find “a voyage in” (Said, 1993) that ruptures the hegemony of multiculturalism as racial project. Only through rupture can we truly open a space for non-hegemonic multicultural human subjectivity.

The Other in Global Song

In Chapter Seven, interviews with MFYC members brought to my attention that many choir members, when performing music of other cultures, feel a sort of jealousy towards that culture. The sense that “other people’s music” is exotic and more interesting came up repeatedly in the interviews among both white and non-white MFYC members. As I reflected upon this, I asked if it is possible to teach the music of any other culture without creating an Other through the study of that music or culture. Britzman (1998), calling upon

Freud's notion of the uncanny as a form of intellectual uncertainty, poses a similar question in her discussion of antiracist pedagogy:

But acts of identity and the ambivalent workings of identification are neither simple nor conscious, and it is not until conflict occurs and is felt that a thought can exceed its own unawareness. . . . There still remains the pedagogical question of how, or even if, otherness can be engaged consciously and why thoughtfulness is always too late. . . . What would this demand mean in terms of both how the self conducts itself and of how the self imagines what the other wants? (p. 109)

Although I am confident that, when I teach, I do not describe the cultures we study as deficient or inferior, it is difficult at times to “teach about” without including a comparison to life in Canada, since young people need the familiar as a reference point for the unfamiliar (Cohen, 1985, p. 117). Attention to difference, while a constructive part of anti-racism pedagogy, can easily reduce to stereotypes and the hardening of imagined boundaries in the mind of the learner, as Chapter Seven illustrated. “Boundaries continue to provide the framework for ordering the social world, constructing identities and excluding and discriminating by creating barriers” (Tastsoglou, 2000, p. 101). Thus, as Britzman argues, if (my) pedagogical practice incorporates inclusion of cultural contexts and interrogation of power structures associated with those contexts, how do I avoid the problems inherent in consciously engaging otherness: problems of painting some as victims, as disadvantaged, as ostracized. Although boundaries are constantly changing, shifting, and being re-imagined, any act of description fixes them, sometimes permanently, in the minds of those attempting to understand the description. An example of this occurred during my interview with AJ, as she discussed one scene of a video from Ghana that MFYC watched as part of our preparation to perform “Bobobo.” In showing the video, Kathy Armstrong and I had hoped to provide a more complete context of life in the Ewe village of Dagbamete, where Kathy had studied with master drummer Kwasi Dunyo:

AJ: And then when I saw Kathy Armstrong's video, and I saw that they play with just like, used tires, and stuff like that, I was—oh, this is even better than using all these fancy drums and stuff, because they make music with what they have.

Despite efforts by Kathy and me to provide a realistic context of village life in Ghana, a context full of images of modern cars and technology alongside community drumming events that made use of traditional Ghanaian instruments (“fancy drums and stuff”), what remained with AJ was one small scene of children drumming on used tires, “making do.” Such memories feed an ongoing colonial romanticizing of life in Africa, an “othering” that may remain at the subconscious level for the remainder of her life.

The uncanny double?

Like Britzman, Ahluwalia (2002) also calls upon Freud’s concept of the uncanny in analyzing how the psychic ambivalence created by the uncanny double may have played a part in an 1992 Australian judicial decision to grant a Torres Strait Islander aboriginal group proprietary rights over their land. As Ahluwalia argues,

At the very time when Anglo-European Australia appeared to be shedding its racist past by dealing with the indigenous population, it was more interested in self-redemption and atoning for its sins. Although proclaiming the dawn of a new era characterized by the recognition of Aboriginal people, it sought simultaneously to draw the indigenous population within its own unmistakably Anglo-European liberal referents (p. 188).

Bannerji (2000) makes a similar argument with regard to Canadian official multicultural policy: that it was a means by which to control its increasingly ethnically diverse population. What do these arguments imply for me as a white music educator who has “bought into” the idea that multi-cultural education is a good thing? Is it possible that by bringing global song into the local choral music setting, I am subconsciously drawing these musics into a Western referent with which I am more comfortable? Could this be what drives

the music education discipline's (as a hegemonic discourse) interest in multiculturalism: that in music education's moment of reconciliation with world music, the structures of hegemonic discourse also were reinscribed through global song's legitimation in the curriculum? If this is so, then my concept of a multicultural human subject is relegated to assimilation into dominant subjectivity, rather than functioning as a potentially non-hegemonic subject.

Britzman (1998), though, argues for education to “become a working through, a learning from” (p. 135) by means of pedagogical work that acknowledges and is directed toward the level of the uncanny. The uncanny is a concept that many researchers have drawn upon in their attempts to understand race and racialized discourse. W.E.B. Dubois, too, made use of Freud's theory of the uncanny double in his concept of the “double consciousness” of black Americans. Ladson-Billings describes double consciousness

not as a pathetic state of marginalization and exclusion, but rather as a transcendent position allowing one to see and understand positions of inclusion and exclusion—margins and mainstreams (Ladson-Billings, 2000, p. 260).

The concept of double consciousness is most often used to describe the experiences of those in the margins, those outside the dominant paradigm, but I believe that a non-hegemonic multicultural human subject would possess this sense of double consciousness, or perhaps multi-consciousness, enabling the sort of activism that might lead to the elimination of race thinking. As Gilroy asserts, there is a “real and widespread hunger for a world that is undivided by the petty differences we retain and inflate by calling them racial” (Gilroy, 2000, p. 356). My own inquiry into the possibilities for an emerging multicultural human subject is rooted in such a hunger. My particular activism is pedagogical, working within the realm of music and the discourse of multicultural music education, where I believe an anti-racism pedagogy can make a real difference in the way our students understand both themselves as individuals and in relation

to the world. I believe an educational approach of activism is a “theorized practice of performativity that makes apparent (and does not just imply) institutional critiques and multiple identities including gender, class, race, sexuality, patriarchy, and so forth” (O’Toole, 2005, p. 307).

Anti-racism and Community Music Education

In Chapter Four I discussed the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir as a “community” choir. As such, we are an affiliate of the City of Mississauga, and our primary mandate is to offer musical education to the youth of the local area. We receive a small, but not insignificant, amount of funding from the City of Mississauga through the Mississauga Arts Council, and our affiliation provides us with necessary liability insurance coverage, allows us to rent rooms for our rehearsals at reduced rates in city facilities, and provides some publicity on our behalf generated by the Mississauga Arts Council (MAC). We are “free” to select our own repertoire and run our programs as we see fit. Nonetheless, there are some rules regarding affiliation with the city that run contrary to my notion of accessible youth programming for the community. In order to maintain city affiliate status, we must charge a “membership” fee (tuition fee) that covers most of the cost of belonging to the organization. This is a substantial, often prohibitive, sum of money for low-income families.

Although MAC grants will support operating costs and equipment purchases, the council does not support grant applications intended to fund tuition assistance. Neither does the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) fund tuition assistance as a grant project item. There is a real schismogenesis⁵³

⁵³ A pattern of progressive differentiation (action and reaction) that Bateson refers to as “viscious circles, such that A’s acts are stimuli for B’s acts, which in turn are stimuli for more intense action.” In what Bateson termed “complementary schismogenesis,” the progressive differentiation involves mutually escalating reactivities whose continuance leads to symbiotic interdependence of the parties. Increasing distortions make the mutualism destructive and progressively impervious to forms of self-correction.

(Bateson, cited in Keil & Feld, 1994, p. 265) at work here. The Ontario Trillium Foundation, whose grant coffers derive from provincial lotteries, casinos, and video gambling machines, is complicit in a system that plays upon gambling addictions that create financial need in some families. Yet when determining which charities' grant applications will be approved to tap into the very large amount of the money that is available during any one granting year, requests such as MFYC's, seeking a means to help the very families that have contributed to the Ontario Trillium Foundation's pool of funds, are denied access to those funds. Since neither the City of Mississauga nor the Ontario Trillium Foundation will fund tuition assistance, we must look to the private sector for such support. Thus, although MFYC is a community choir that must conform to particular city and provincial codes of conduct, neither government body (MAC or OTF) offers financial support for the one activity that ensures access to the choir for all who may be interested. By such standards, the concept of community music education can be construed to mean education for those who can afford it. This necessitates a strong commitment on the part of the MFYC board to keeping access to the choir open. When the private sector sources are unable to provide sufficient funds to cover tuition assistance, MFYC has little choice but to cut some activities or exclude potential members needing tuition assistance. This is just another example of how "community" may be constituted to exclude rather than include.

Troubling Antiracism "Ideology" in Choral Music Education

A recent paper looking at the writings of Theodore Adorno⁵⁴ on music education (Kertz-Welzel, 2005) has caused me to take a reflexive hard look at my own anti-racism pedagogical practice. As Kertz-Welzel articulates, Adorno was unequivocal in his stance that music education should never be put to any use other than to teach music as an intellectual and sensory experience. His stance was predicated, of course, on the ways in which music education furthered the

⁵⁴ Many of the documents have not yet been translated into English.

cause of Nazi fascism during the Third Reich. The questions this stance raises for me are troubling, since I cannot deny that my own anti-racism pedagogical practice is purpose driven: to find a way, through music, to eliminate racism, and to disrupt the hegemonic status quo and shallow understandings of people and cultures that so many mainstream multicultural music education practices appear to perpetuate. Adorno's concern, of course, derives from the horrific results of the Third Reich's racist nationalism. Music was a primary tool utilized to indoctrinate German youth to Nazism; the music of Hitler's favored composers came to represent German nationalism to an adult public beyond the reach of the blatant indoctrination occurring in the schools. There is no question for me that the uses to which the Third Reich put music provide compelling evidence of music's performative power. After all, these are the very powers I believe help to make effective my own project to disrupt racism through global song engagement. But Kerz-Welzel's read on Adorno, and his urgent call for continued self-reflection, suggest that I take stock of my praxis and ask: is my own pedagogical practice a fascistic imposition, masquerading as something that most people would accept unquestioningly as "for the common good"?

Kerz-Welzel rightly critiques the commonly heard rallying cries that music education can promote "freedom" and "democracy" as ideologies built upon unexamined vagaries, abstractions that appear to deal with people, but in reality do not. This appears to be Adorno's, and Kerz-Welzel's concern: freedom and democracy are terms with popular appeal, terms of which the Nazis made effective use in their ascent to power; terms which continued to be used effectively as justification for the murder of millions of people.

I might easily dismiss Kerz-Welzel's arguments as inapplicable to my praxis, since I do not use either "freedom" or "democracy" as terms to describe the intended outcomes of my anti-racism pedagogy in multicultural choral music. Yet as she indicates, Adorno also argues against music education being utilized as a tool to "create better people." Music education should not be used to

“engineer humanity” because the potential results of such engineering can neither be predicted nor controlled. Although I would not consider myself an engineer in that sense, I cannot deny that my praxis is based in a belief that learning the music of other cultures through an anti-racism lens will in some way influence my students to be better people through a deeper understanding of racism.

One could take Adorno’s argument against music education specifically and turn it against education in North America generally: when education declares that its purpose is directed toward the creation of particular kinds of citizens, it could be construed to be fascist, and when I think back over my own public schooling experiences, I have to admit that likely a great deal of it was more fascist than “democratic.” (I recall the many ways the schools I attended in the Southern U.S.A. sought to inculcate an overt, intense patriotism.) To avoid accusations of fascism, education often seeks to be simply a delivery system of “the facts.” However, “the facts” in such a system can never be neutral. They always are contextualized and represent the interests of some group. In public education, that group is usually the one with greater political influence or resources at its disposal. The choice to include or not particular musical genres in curricular materials makes the question “what music” always and unavoidably “whose music”? My purpose in this exploration is not to determine whether or not public education is generally fascist (although this could be a fascinating exercise for a future time). Rather, my purpose is to reflect upon the troubling implications Adorno’s essays suggest for my chosen pedagogical practice. Do I impose my agenda on my students, or does my praxis encourage critical thinking among my students even as I engage in the sort of self-reflection evidenced by this writing?

Adorno declares that music should be taught for music’s sake alone, immersed as he was in an aesthetic philosophy of music that posits music as autonomous. This is somewhat paradoxical given his association with the

Frankfurt school,⁵⁵ and that his theories were “committed to illuminating music’s social significance” (Bowman, 1998, p. 332). The philosophy of modern music that Adorno espoused held that music had an obligation to challenge false consciousness and to create “critical awareness of the problems and contradictions, the alienation and suffering inherent in modern life” (Bowman, 1998, p. 308). On these terms, one could infer that global song taught within a critical anti-racism pedagogy fulfils music’s obligation. However, Adorno was highly critical of “the culture industry” (T. Adorno, 1944), believing commodified musical forms could not confront false consciousness. Indeed, he believed that the commodity fetishism apparent in society related to music directly contributed to false consciousness. It would be hard for anyone to deny that world music in the market place today shows “equally omnipresent signs of augmented and diminished musical diversity” (Feld, 2000, p. 146); it has already been commodified and feeds an ongoing commodity fetishism for music.

For Adorno, avoiding false consciousness occurs only “when it [music] presents social problems through its own material and according to its own formal laws—problems which music contains within itself in the innermost cells of its technique” (Adorno 1978 cited in Bowman, 1998, p. 313). Again, global song might seem to meet Adorno’s criteria if considered only in this light. The difficulty that arises, however, and about which Adorno has expounded, is that the music capable of achieving its true critical function is inaccessible to the vast majority of people. Although he believed the atonal music of Arnold Schoenberg achieved music’s potential in its time, little else did in Adorno’s view. Since various world musical traditions are thought to be “accessible,” we can assume Adorno would scorn global song as unable to subvert unthinking perception. In his essay “On Jazz,” Adorno (1936; 2002) disparagingly describes the commercial success of jazz and the popularity of particular jazz performers as “merely a confusing parody of colonial imperialism” (p. 478), a comment that resonates

⁵⁵ Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, best known for the development of “critical theory”

strongly with my concerns regarding appropriation, offered earlier in this paper. Although he acknowledges jazz as a “less archaic-primitive self-expression than the music of slaves” (p. 478), in this statement, and the one immediately following, we see a clear indication that Adorno would not view current interests in world music favorably: “even in the indigenous music of the African interior, syncopation within the example of a maintained measured time seems only to belong to the lower [social] level” (p. 478). To the extent that it caters to popular tastes rather than resisting them, global song cannot fulfill the critical and transformative function Adorno articulates for music.

My point here, though, is not to make assumptions about how Adorno might have viewed current interest in world musics, but to rethink anti-racism as ideology in music education and the possibility of fascistic potential. There is no question that the abstraction *multicultural human subject* is in many respects a call to a broadened sense of community among human beings. Although including more “others” in our constructions of the group we call “us” is something many authors have advocated (Gilroy, 2000; Rorty, 1989; Williams, 1997), Adorno argues that music deliberately crafted to foster a sense of community is, like popular music and jazz, a purveyor of false consciousness. Keil writes that the “urge to merge” in musical participation “promises ever deeper and more satisfying knowledge of who we are.” While this may seem on the surface to be important for individuals, he goes on to caution that

it may become harder. . .to distinguish between participations that really revitalize, equalize, and decentralize as opposed to those that promise the equalities in the future if followers will only make sacrifices now (Keil & Feld, 1994, p. 98).

How do we make distinctions between fascistic participations and those that revitalize, equalize, and decentralize? Following this line of thought, the Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona “moment” described in Chapter Seven might be considered fascistic. The moment brought choir members and audience together

in a visceral expression of solidarity; the memory of that moment and its palpability lingers like an addict's need for the next hit. Perhaps this is why fascism is insidious: the feelings that result from being included in a collective "we" are so powerful (recall Amber's statement, "it felt very powerful"), feel so good and so unconditional, that we seek to replicate those experiences without thought to either good or evil as potential outcomes.

And yet, I resist labeling the Halleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona moment as fascistic, despite my recognition of how such moments may till the ground for fascism's seeds. I believe that global song in combination with anti-racism pedagogy provides opportunity for a truly revitalizing, and equalizing participation that can bring to awareness the false consciousness of Whiteness, making our musical engagements with global song meaningful rather than, to use Adorno's phrase, parodies of colonial imperialism. At the same time, as discourses of multiculturalism become more prominent in educational settings, and more a part of the hegemonic norm, the rhetorical promise of equality becomes increasingly hollow. Indeed, many critics have already made this accusation, spurring concerned educators toward critical pedagogies of multiculturalism and anti-racism.

In the essay on which Kerz-Welzel bases her remarks,⁵⁶ Adorno repeatedly calls for music educators to foster critical thinking. This, I believe, may provide a way to counter potential accusations of fascism for my own anti-racism project. Anti-racism is critical pedagogical practice; it aims to engage students in reflection, encouraging and enabling them to identify and interrogate power structures. On paper it all sounds "well and good," but it is admittedly difficult to enact, particularly within the hegemonic structure of a choir. As Bowman (2002) argues, when we fail to question "a system's premises and basic categorical assumptions, the parties in potentially ethical situations

⁵⁶ The essay appears in "Dissonanzen: Musik in der verwalteten Welt" (Dissonances: Music in the Administered World, 1956) under the title "Zur Musikpädagogik" ("On Music Education").

unwittingly preempt the transformative power of genuinely ethical inquiry” (p. 68). It is easy for “engaging in critical thinking” to collapse into an imposition of ideology when the teacher is passionate about the ideology in question, and particularly when the medium within which one works is a potent as musicking. Assuring myself that I practice a “good ideology” does not solve the problem: what I do easily could lapse into fascistic imposition in the classroom, even if the ideology could be justified as “serving the common good.” The Nazis, too, held that their actions were for the good of the German people, and music in the classroom served to persuade German youth to the Nazi ideology. In order to avoid lapsing into fascism, an ongoing reflexivity of my pedagogical actions is required. Such reflexivity demands interrogation even of experiences such as the Haleluya! Pelo Tsa Rona moment, so that the seductive power circulating within such moments may be brought to consciousness.

In Closing

My efforts to unearth evidence in support of the concept multicultural human subject are not intended to “create” a new category for identity or subjectivity; the concept *multicultural human subject* is an abstraction that enables a description of identity as self-understanding that may develop within individuals living in societies that are increasingly glocalized (Robertson, 1992). By approaching multicultural choral music education through a pedagogy of anti-racism, my hope is that the young members of the MFYC will begin to develop a sense of cosmopolitanism: an outward-looking, interculturally sensitive moral and ethical standpoint (Beck, 2002; Brennan, 1997; Roudometof, 2005). The term *multicultural human subject* is intended as a disruption of the fixed categories that constitute subjectivities and reinforce inequalities within discourses of race, ethnicity, gender, nationalism, and ableism.

Interviews with the choristers who took part in this study provided insight that indeed, the borders surrounding such categories are becoming a

little more porous. Multicultural human subjectivity as a processual, emerging category of practice is suggested in the feelings of connectedness to people in other places and cultures that result from experiences with global song, in open-mindedness toward new and unfamiliar cultures, and as the concern for social justice expressed by choir members. As an emerging category of practice, multicultural human subjectivity suggests that choir members recognize themselves in others, and recognize others within themselves. The disposition to acquire the cultural capital of multiple languages through performing global song is likewise indicative of an emerging multicultural human subjectivity in globalized societies. Within an anti-racism pedagogy, the desire to learn about other cultures by experiencing the music of those cultures goes beyond “cultural tourism,” suggesting instead cosmopolitanism as an ethical outlook that cares “for the souls of others” (hooks, 1994). Such cultural interests may encourage the development of real respect for the people of those cultures. The corporeal re-enactments of racialized memories (Wong, 2000) that occur when global song is performed may be read as performative acts of resistance to rigid categorizations of race, nation, ethnicity, gender, and ability that in some circumstances provide profound moments of recognition across differences. Such moments of recognition hold potential for a developing multi-consciousness characteristic of multicultural human subjects.

I know that others share my vision for multicultural human subjectivity: Rorty’s (1989) description of human solidarity, and Gilroy’s (2000, p. 356) call for a *planetary humanity* are but two examples. I believe that through an anti-racism pedagogy in choral music education, my students can begin to envision a humanity where difference is not erased, nor merely “celebrated” through contrived festivals, but acknowledged as part of who we are, both collectively and individually. My vision calls for a humanity where race thinking no longer has currency because inequalities of race and ethnicity no longer exist. This, too,

creates a discursive tension, since in such a future the term “anti-racism” will also have no currency. I share Gilroy’s sentiments:

My own desire to see the end of raciology means that I, too, have invoked the unknowable future against the unforgiving present. In doing this, I urge a fundamental change of mood upon what used to be called “antiracism.” It has been asked in an explicitly utopian spirit to terminate its ambivalent relationship to the idea of “race” in the interest of a heterocultural, postanthropological, and cosmopolitan yet-to-come (Gilroy, 2000, p. 334).

Thus, I find myself in the position of invoking a particular discursive framework as a tool to bring about the demise of that framework. Unlike Gilroy, however, I am not certain we can yet begin to “change the mood” of anti-racism as either an activist discourse or as a way of addressing present-day inequalities. This reluctance in part derives from my positioning as white and North American, for if I were to issue such a call, there is a very real possibility that the attempt would be misinterpreted as another form of the conservative argument which goes: since race has no “scientific basis,” racism does not exist. Racism has very real material consequences that cannot be changed by simply rejecting the idea of race as concept (G. S. Dei, 2000, p. 35). Gilroy’s positioning as a black scholar and cultural theorist enables him to issue such a call with credibility; as a white academic I can only reiterate his words as a way of expressing my own hope for a future where race has no materiality. My work for a race-less future must take place in a here and now where racism is an ugly reality. I believe my best approach to counteract this reality is through anti-racism work. A planetary humanity may lie in the yet unknown future; however, I believe that in this historical present there are already spaces open from which a multicultural human subjectivity might begin to emerge as one step closer to that utopian ideal. The Mississauga Festival Youth Choir is such a space, where through performances of global song we have found, as Amber so eloquently stated it, “a common bridge,” or perhaps the beginning of the footpath to a future of true equality and social justice.

Postlude

*Caminante, no hay camino. Se hace camino al andar.
(Traveler, there is no path. Paths are made by walking.)
- Antonio Machado (1875-1939)*

As I write this final section of the thesis, I am preparing to embark on a new journey, forging a new path for my life. In part as a result of the work of writing this thesis, I am now looking forward to beginning a position as Assistant Professor of Music Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This means, however, that I must leave the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir. Although I am excited about the opportunity to teach pre-service music teachers in a faculty known for its excellence in critical pedagogy and critical educational research, I am faced with the realization that the things I have valued deeply in the MFYC, and about which I have written in this thesis, are now at risk, subject to change at the discretion and vulnerabilities of the person who replaces me as MFYC Artistic Director.

Writing this thesis has brought to my attention many areas where further anti-racism and decolonizing work is needed both within me and in the MFYC. Through my writing, I have seen more of my own Whiteness, and seen traces of colonial discourses in the comments of some of my students. Discourses of race and nation, and the Canadian official multicultural discourse, also create subject positions that are sometimes in direct conflict with the sort of self-understanding that I have termed multicultural human subjectivity. Thus, I leave the MFYC with the knowledge that my work is incomplete, and that I will no longer have the power to ensure that the anti-racist work I began there will continue. Fortunately, the Board of Directors of the MFYC shares much of my vision for the choir as an accessible, safe space for young people, and appears committed to ongoing development of the choir's multicultural group narrative through continued exploration of world music repertoire as a distinguishing characteristic of the MFYC. To support this, the Board requested that I write a

“vision statement” by which potential candidates for my position could be assessed for compatibility with the principles upon which the choir was founded and has operated for the past eight years. It is a first step towards institutionalizing a set of guidelines that until recently only existed at an uncanny level as part of my own self-understanding as an emerging multicultural human subject.

I cannot expect that the search for a new Artistic Director will locate a conductor who thinks exactly as I do, nor do I really think that is in the overall best interests of the choir or its members. The injection of new thought at the Artistic Director level should be an opportunity for the choir to grow in new directions, an opportunity for the choristers to experience a different style of teaching than I have provided. Therefore, in the vision statement I tried to allow room for my successor to add his or her own signature to the choir, and to develop it in ways congruent with his or her abilities. The vision statement, which the Board unanimously adopted as the choir’s vision, can be found in Appendix G. Although I realize that prioritizing my commitment to anti-racism education makes me an anomaly among music educators, the Board’s commitment to the ongoing vision I have articulated for the MFYC gives me hope that they can locate a conductor-teacher who shares and will further the social justice agenda that I have promoted for the past eight years.

Institutionalizing Instinct?

In writing the vision statement it became clear to me how much of my own thinking about the MFYC resides at the uncanny level. Expressing it in language that my successor will understand was challenging, and it raised my anxiety level about the future of the MFYC. For example, even though a statement such as: “it is the intention not to privilege the Western canon over other forms of music” (p.1) has a particular meaning for me, another conductor may infer something quite different from the same words. Yet for me to be more

explicit in the statement causes problems. For example, if I try to establish a percentage of how much of the repertoire needs to be either within or outside of what I have termed the “Western canon,” the vision statement moves from being a general guideline to a set of rules that may ultimately be too constricting. Defining the “Western canon” is itself problematic in this situation for the same reasons. For example, does composer Stephen Hatfield write global song or music of the canon? Thus I have tried to make use of language that is open enough to allow for interpretation by the new artistic director. It is a necessary risk, I believe.

Similarly, with regard to accessibility via the audition process, I made an attempt to state that any child who passes the audition should be offered a place in the choir (p. 2), and I suggested that 50 percent was a passing score. This item is included under the heading “social justice.” Yet I recognize that what constitutes a minimum passing score is entirely subjective. I may assess a passing performance on any given musical problem that could as easily be construed as failure by another conductor. For instance, I take into account the degree of nervousness a child displays during the audition, yet I know of other conductors who only accept children who display high degrees of confidence during the audition, or use the “confidence factor” as the tie-breaker between children whose auditions are equivalent in other areas. Since this study has clearly indicated that being in the MFYC enabled students to become more confident, an entrance requirement of high confidence, or at least lack of nervousness, will exclude many children who stand to benefit greatly from choir membership.

On issues of race and ableism, my anxiety level increases again. This study has shown many areas where my own Whiteness is problematic, even though I have spent the past four years of my life in intense study where unpacking Whiteness has been a major focus. If my successor is white, but unaware of his or her own Whiteness, how much more will those problems

intensify? I look at pictures of other children's choirs: the non-white faces in those pictures stand out as the exceptional, token representatives. The conductors of those choirs do not consider themselves racist, yet it is apparent that children of colour do not join those choirs in large numbers. I fear that the MFYC could become just another predominantly white children's choir where music study is largely formal and technical, where power is unquestioningly assigned to the person on the podium, and where social issues are overlooked, considered "not part of the music."

Ironically, it is this fear that drives me to move on in my life to begin a new career in higher education. It is my hope that I can help other prospective teachers find ways to disrupt hegemony in their own teaching situations in schools and community organizations. As the MFYC's founder, I will remain as an advisor to the choir's Board of Directors, and I hope in this capacity I can be influential in future policy-making and operational decisions. However, I realize I cannot, from several hundred miles away, influence the daily, routine decisions that may be made from positions of privilege and without thought to the impact of those decisions on individual children. Still, I trust that over the past eight years the Board has also come to understand what makes MFYC "a different kind of choir," and will continue to value those differences, to keep the spaces open from which multicultural human subjects may continue to grow.

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Appendix A: Initial Informal Recruitment Letter

December 8, 2003

Dear (name of potential participant and (name of legal guardian)),

As you may be aware, I am a graduate student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. I am writing to you to see if you would be interested in participating in a research project that I will be doing with the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir during the current school year. The research will be part of the requirements for my PhD in Education.

The name of the research study is, "Global Song, Global Citizens? Multicultural Choral Music Education and the Community Youth Choir: Constituting the Multicultural Human Subject." The purpose of the research will be to gain insight into the ways adolescents' experiences with multicultural musical practices influences them in the formation of their identities as individuals in a multicultural society. This study will make an important contribution to new knowledge and understanding about the many ways young people use music to help them become who they are.

Participating in the study will involve taking part in one interview with me. The interview will last about one hour. In addition, four choir members will be selected to serve as participants in a focus group. The focus group will be interviewed both individually, and as a group, and will have an opportunity to discuss the analysis of the data gathered during the project. If you choose to participate in the study, I will ask you questions about your experiences and understandings of the various musical cultures we learn and perform in choir, and whether or not you believe these experiences are helping you to think about yourself or your self-identity in any particular way. You will also be given an opportunity to ask me questions about the research project, and to provide constructive feedback and suggestions concerning MFYC's program.

Should you choose to participate in the study, your involvement will be kept confidential. All of those who choose to participate in the study will be identified only by a pseudonym they will choose for themselves, so that their identity remains anonymous in the dissertation that will result from the study. Although the focus group members will know who the other members of the focus group are, they will not know which other members of the MFYC have chosen to participate in the study. Focus group members will also be identified only by pseudonym in any written reports. This will be done to ensure, as best as possible, the anonymity and privacy of participants.

Choir members are under no obligation to take part in this study. This research is part of my doctoral studies, and is not in any way connected to the choir's ongoing activities. If you or your child decline to participate in the study, this will in no way affect his or her choir membership or participation in the choir's activities. Likewise, taking part in the study will not result in any special privileges for those who choose to participate.

If you are interested in finding out more about the research study, please let me know and I will send you a more detailed information letter, a formal consent form, and a list of proposed interview questions.

If you then decide to participate in the study, we will arrange a time and a place that is convenient for you to have an interview. I can be reached via email at dbradley@oise.utoronto.ca or at mfyc@rogers.com, or by phone at (905) 276-5732. If you prefer, you can return a copy of this letter to me at the MFYC's rehearsal on or before January 7, 2004, or you may mail your response to me at 2014 Munden Road, Mississauga, ON L5A 2P8 by January 7. Please indicate on the letter or return email if you wish further information about the research project.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this letter and to think about participating in the project. I look forward to hearing from you.

With best regards,

Deborah Bradley
PhD Candidate, OISE/UT
Artistic Director, MFYC

Appendix B: Invitation to Participate in a Research Project

Date: _____

Dear (participant's name) and (name of legal guardian),

Thank you for considering participating in my research project. As I noted in our first contact, I am currently enrolled as a student in a Doctor of Philosophy program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). I am doing this research as part of the requirements for obtaining my PhD in Education. The purpose of this letter is to formally invite you to participate in the research study, and to provide you with information that you will need to understand what I am doing, and to decide whether or not you choose to allow your minor child to participate. Participation is completely voluntary, and, should you decide to allow your child's participation, you are free to withdraw your child from the study at any time. The study is part of my doctoral studies, and is not in any way connected to the choir's ongoing activities. Choir members are under no obligation to take part in the study. If you or your child decline to participate in the study, this will in no way affect his or her choir membership or participation in the choir's activities. Likewise, taking part in the study will not result in any special privileges for those who choose to participate.

Due to administrative and ethical issues related to research done in universities, this letter is a form letter. If you choose to participate, please sign and provide the date. Please return one signed copy to me and keep the other for your reference.

The name of this research project is: "Global Song, Global Citizens? Multicultural Choral Music Education and the Community Youth Choir: Constituting the Multicultural Human Subject."

The purpose of this research is to gather information regarding the experiences of adolescents who sing in a community youth choir. In particular, the research will focus on experiences with multicultural choral music and the way those experiences help young people form their self-identities. Although a great deal has been written in academic literature about adolescent identity formation, only a few studies have investigated the role music of any kind plays in identity construction, and I know of no other studies that have investigated how experiences in an educational setting with the music of an unfamiliar culture may influence adolescent identity formation. During the research, I will be exploring how multicultural music influences identities in adolescents who are learning and performing a variety of world musical practices. In addition, I will be exploring the impact of this music on my own identity as their teacher-conductor.

I will be conducting individual interviews with 20 current members of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir (Level II division). Four of these members will also be asked to participate in a focus group. In addition to the individual interviews, focus group members will be asked to take part in a group interview. Both the individual and the focus group interviews will last approximately one hour each. In addition to the interviews, the focus group will also have opportunities to discuss the analysis of the

data and my research findings. All interviews and/or focus group meetings will take place at a time and location convenient for you. During the interviews, I will take notes. With your consent, the interviews and focus group meetings will also be audio-taped. You (or your child) will have the right to request that the tape recorder be turned off at any point during the interview or focus group meeting. Your child does not need to respond to any questions he or she does not wish to answer. Your child may withdraw from the interview and research study at any time without negative consequences. Upon your child's withdrawal, all notes, tape-recordings and information about you related to the study will be destroyed. If you wish, a transcribed, typed copy of the interview will be sent to you or your child for confirmation and clarification. Any requested amendments, additions, and deletions to the transcript will be respected and carried out.

Several steps will be taken to ensure confidentiality and the anonymity, to the degree possible, of your child. All of the current Level II members have been invited to participate in this study, but I am the only staff person affiliated with the MFYC who will know who actually is participating in the study. The twenty MFYC participants for this study will be chosen randomly from the list of those who indicated their willingness to participate. The four members of the focus group will know only who the other three focus group members are, and will not have access to information about the sixteen participants who are not members of the focus group. All participants will be strongly encouraged not to discuss their participation in this project with anyone other than myself, and focus group participants will likewise be encouraged not to discuss the project with anyone other than myself or anywhere other than at a focus group meeting. The names and other identifying information of all participants will be altered or concealed in the transcripts, thesis and other reports and papers. All data, notes, transcripts, and audio tapes will be kept under lock and key in my residence at all times when not in use by me. With the exception of my dissertation supervisor, Dr. Tara Goldstein, and my committee members Dr. Rinaldo Walcott and Dr. Wayne Bowman, the data will not be shared with any other person without your permission. All data will be kept on file for not fewer than five years following the completion of the project, and then will be destroyed. I may publish the results of the study and give talks about the study at presentations or conferences, but will not in such publications or talks reveal identifying information about the participants.

Participants may benefit from reflecting on and discussing their experiences in MFYC and with the music we learn and perform. Participants may also benefit from having the opportunity to contribute in an anonymous manner to future improvements to the MFYC program. I do not believe there are any appreciable risks to your child as a result of participating in this study.

No compensation will be awarded as a result of participating in this study; however, if you or your child wish to receive and review a copy of your transcribed interview and a summary of the results, I will be happy to give these to you.

Attached to this letter you will find a proposed interview schedule. Please read this carefully before signing.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time via email at dbradley@oise.utoronto.ca or mfyc@rogers.com, or by telephone at (905) 276-5732.

You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. Tara Goldstein, at
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto
Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning
252 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6
Email: tgoldstein@oise.utoronto.ca

If you agree to your child's participation in this study, please complete and sign the attached consent form and return it to me at the address below. Please keep one copy for your records.

I appreciate your consideration to participate in this research, and look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

With best regards,

Deborah Bradley
PhD Candidate
Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education, OISE/UT

Address:
2014 Munden Road
Mississauga, Ontario L5A 2P8
(905) 276-5732
email: dbradley@oise.utoronto.ca

Appendix C: Consent Form

Please check the appropriate boxes, and sign and date this form if you agree to all your child's participation in the study. Please return one copy to me and keep one copy for yourself. Thank you.

I have read the above letter and attached proposed interview schedule. I understand what is being requested of my child as a participant in the study.

I hereby give permission for my child to participate in the ways described. If I am making any exemptions, they are described as follows:

I hereby give permission for my child to participate in the study. I understand my child may withdraw at my request from participating at any time without negative consequences.

I, _____ grant permission for _____
To participate in Deborah Bradley's research project entitled, "Global Song, Global Citizens: Multicultural Choral Music Education and the Community Youth Choir: Constituting the Multicultural Human Subject."

Parent or guardian's signature: _____

Printed name _____

MFYC Choir member's signature: _____

Printed name _____

Date: _____

Appendix D: Assent Form for Minor Participants

(Participants ages 11 – 17)

Title of Study: “Global Song, Global Citizens? Multicultural Choral Music Education and the Community Youth Choir: Constituting the Multicultural Human Subject

Investigator: Deborah Bradley

Why are we doing this study?

Debbie wants to find out how the music from other cultures that we sing in the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir affects you, the choir member. She wants to try to find out if singing the music of another culture affects the way you think about yourself as an individual (your identity). She also wants to see how singing the music of another culture affects the way you think about the people of other cultures.

What will happen during the study?

Debbie Bradley will interview you. At the interview, you and she will talk about the kinds of music sung in the choir, friendships you may have formed in choir, and other questions about how you think about yourself. The interviews will be audio-taped, but you are free to ask that the tape recorder be turned off at any time in the interview. After the interview, Debbie will write up the questions and your answers. Once this has been done, you will be able to see a copy of the interview (called a “transcript”). Debbie will use the information collected in the interviews to try to understand the ways that singing multicultural music helps you and other students to form your identities.

Are there good things and bad things about the study?

There are a few good things about this study. The information you give Debbie will help her to understand what part music plays in your life. This information may be important for other music teachers and students in the field of education. This information will also help Debbie to plan future choir activities that are meaningful.

The only “bad” thing about the study is that it will take about an hour of your time. The interview will be scheduled at a time that is convenient for you.

Who will know about what I did in the study?

The only people who will know what you did in the study are Debbie Bradley, her supervisor at OISE/UT, Prof. Tara Goldstein, and the two members of her dissertation committee, Prof. Rinaldo Walcott at OISE/UT, and Prof. Wayne Bowman at Brandon University, Manitoba. Your name will not be used in any of

the written records or reports. To help with this, you will choose a name for Debbie to use in the written reports.

Also, to make sure that other choir members do not know if you are taking part in the study, you are asked not to talk about the study or your interview while at choir or with other choir members outside of choir. This way, Debbie can do her best to make sure your identity is kept confidential. This will also make it easier for you to answer the questions as honestly as you can.

Can I decide if I want to be in the study?

Yes, the final decision about taking part in the study belongs to you. You are free to say no at any time. You may decide not to answer some of the questions, or that you do not want to be interviewed at all. This study is not connected to our activities in choir in any way. If you choose not to take part in the study, there are no negative consequences for you as a choir member. You may decide to drop out of the study at any time with no negative consequences.

Assent:

I was present when _____ read this form and gave his/her verbal assent.

Name of person who obtained assent: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E: Interview Guideline

Proposed Questions:

GENERAL

Please tell me some things about yourself in terms of:

- Your name and age
- Your family: parents, brothers and sisters, etc.
- Where you were born
- Where have you lived since you were born
- Where you go to school
- What grade you are in now
- Is there a music program in your school?
- Do you participate in the music program at school? Why or why not?
- Do you listen to music at home or when by yourself?
- What are your favourite kinds of music to listen to?

MISSISSAUGA FESTIVAL YOUTH CHOIR

- How long have you been a member of the MFYC?
- Why did you first want to sing with MFYC?
- (For returning choir members): why do you continue to sing with MFYC? (Try to think of reasons beyond just “liking to sing”).
- Have you made friends in the choir since joining MFYC? Who are they?
- What do you think about the music we have been learning so far this year?
- What kinds of music (musical practices, cultures) have we learned so far this year that you had not experienced before?
- How did singing music from those practices make you feel 1) about yourself? 2) About people from that culture or musical practice?
- In MFYC, when learning a new piece we sometimes use printed music and sometimes we do not. Can you describe what is different for you about learning from printed music or learning aurally?
- (For returning members only): what other musical practices have you experienced at MFYC? How did singing that music make you feel 1) about yourself, and 2) about people from that culture (musical practice)?

QUESTIONS RELATED TO IDENTITY

- Do you speak any languages other than English? What are they?
- Where did you learn to speak _____?

- What language(s) do you and your family use to communicate with each other at home?
- How would you describe yourself in terms of citizenship? (To give an example, I am both a Canadian and an American, and I hold passports from both countries.)
- How do your parents identify themselves in terms of citizenship?
- How would you describe yourself in terms of your ethnic background or identity (give examples if necessary)?
- How do your parents identify themselves in terms of ethnic background or identity?
- Do you believe it is important to identify yourself as _____? Why or why not?
- Do you ever think of yourself other than as _____? Please describe those times.
- Have you made friends here at MFYC? Who are they?
- If you have made friends here at MFYC, do you ever meet with them outside of choir? What do you like to do on those occasions?

QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO PERFORMATIVITY AND MUSIC

- Earlier you told me that you particularly liked _____ music? How might this music influence your behaviour (the way you dress, talk, etc.)?
- Does this music influence the way you act or think about other people in any way? How?
- Think about one of the types of music (musical practices) you have studied since joining MFYC. Has this music influenced the way you think about yourself in any way? How?
- Has this music influenced the way you behave (dress, talk, act) in any way? In what ways?
- Has this music influenced the way you think about other people in any way? Please describe.
- When you sing the music from another culture, how do you feel about being _____ (use student's self-identifying terminology)?
- Has singing this music changed the way you think about being _____?
- Has singing this music changed any opinions or beliefs about the particular people or culture that you might have had before you studied the music? Please give examples.
- Does the music we study at MFYC in any way make you think of yourself as other than _____? Please describe.
- Can you describe how the differences you mentioned earlier between learning from printed music and learning aurally influence in any way the way you think about the particular musical practice?

- Have you had any experiences with MFYC that are particularly meaningful to you? What are they?

OTHER

- Is there anything else you would like to say about your experience with MFYC or the music we learn (perform)?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Appendix F: An Open Door (Lyrics)

Lyrics: Arthur Brown

I stretch my hand but
no hand answers,
Make a fist, I grab a stone.
I'm crippled in a world of dancers--
I'm alone.

I speak my heart but
no heart hears me,
Cry for love, with tears unknown,
I scream until somebody fears me,
So alone.

How did I get here, and where am I bound?
I hear the sound of the world's heart beating.
Magic is everywhere, Love's all around,
It may be profound, and it's worth repeating.

Once was a loner, but now we are one,
It wasn't much fun--empty way of living,
Stuck in my problems, my heart weighed a ton,
Floating on air from the joy of giving.

I stretch my hand and
find another,
Heart to heart we learn to care.
Every man is now my brother,
I see friendship everywhere.

I share my heart, I've
learned to listen.
I give the love I sought before,
I've found the freedom I'd been missin'.
Welcome! I'm An Open Door.

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September 7, 2005

Mr. Arthur Brown
 815 East 14th Street, 5H
 Brooklyn, New York 11230
 U.S.A.

Dear Arthur,

I am completing a doctoral thesis at the University of Toronto entitled *Global Song, Global Citizens? Multicultural Choral Music Education and the Community Youth Choir: Constituting the Multicultural Human Subject*. I would like permission to allow inclusion of the following material in the thesis and permission for the National Library to make use of the thesis (i.e., to reproduce, loan, distribute, or sell copies of the thesis by any means and in any form or format.)

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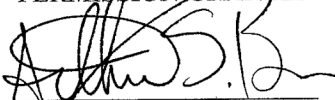
The materials to be reprinted are: Lyrics for the song, "An Open Door."

If these arrangements meet with your approval, please sign this letter where indicated below and return it to me in the enclosed return envelope. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Deborah Bradley
 PhD Candidate
 Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

PERMISSION GRANTED FOR THE USE REQUESTED ABOVE:

	Arthur S. Brown	9/15/05
Signature	Print Name	Date

Appendix G: Vision and Artistic Objectives

Mississauga Festival Youth Choir

Deborah Bradley

May 7, 2005

From its inception, the vision for the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir has been as a community music education opportunity for all interested young people, regardless of race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, gender, nationality, or financial means. The foundational philosophy for the MFYC was, and remains, a belief that all children have innate musicality that can be developed, and that all children have a right to a musical education.

Musical Vision

Our geographic location in Mississauga, Ontario, one of Canada's most ethnically diverse populations, fuels a personal interest in world musics that has become over the past eight years one of the MFYC's distinguishing characteristics. In this regard, MFYC has diverged somewhat from "traditional" children's and youth choir repertoire, in that our focus is predominantly on alternative musical practices to those of the Western classical canon (although Western classical traditions are included in our overall repertoire as music that is appropriate for young people to study. My intention has been not to privilege the Western canon over other forms of music.) These alternative practices include North American jazz, gospel, music theatre, and music of North America's First Nations. We have also concentrated on learning music from the many peoples and places in Africa, from European folk traditions, and Asian and South Asian classical and folk musics. We sing in original languages whenever possible. Other than our experiences with Ghanaian drumming and dance, however, or folk songs learned on the recent tour to Cuba, most of the repertoire of the MFYC is available through publishing houses.

It has been a concern of mine that the world music performed by the MFYC has been published ethically, meaning that the musical materials used in the arrangement (or composition) have not been appropriated. Thus, the original creators of the music, not just the publishing company, have benefited financially or in other tangible ways from the publication of their music.

Musical Standards

It is the mandate of the MFYC to perform music that is challenging to its choir members, and to perform it well. We are a performance ensemble; thus, what we have learned is demonstrated through our performances. Although I refrain

from terminology commonly used in other children's choirs that allude to "high standards," it is always our intention to communicate well with our audience and with each other through the medium of performance; it is my expectation, and the expectation of most choir members and their families, that we present performances reflective of our best efforts and that push us towards greater challenges and development.

Issues of Social Justice

One of the primary concerns for the MFYC is that interested children be enabled to join the choir when their family's economic circumstances make paying tuition fees a hardship. Although many children over the past 8 years have received tuition assistance, I believe we are not yet pro-active enough in making this available to potential choir members. Because of the stigma perceived by many people in asking for financial aid, I believe we must return to providing in writing with the audition package the means by which prospective choir families can request tuition assistance (a simple request form). The current process of requiring them to write a letter requesting such assistance is, I fear, both demeaning and disadvantages anyone who does not feel comfortable writing in English.

I believe it is important that the MFYC promotes itself as a community music education opportunity in such a way that we continue to attract members from among recent immigrants to Canada, and that our recruiting continues to strive for a membership reflective of Mississauga's diverse population. For the time being, this may mean continued use of the language of multiculturalism as a code to signal our desire to be inclusive.

Inclusivity extends beyond racial and ethnic pluralism to include those who are differently abled physically. Acceptance of children with physical challenges is a must if we are to be a truly inclusive group. These challenges need to be viewed as opportunities for us all to learn from each other about the many ways of being in the world.

Inclusivity in the MFYC also extends to our audition process. As a community organization, I believe it is our responsibility to offer a place in the choir to all who are interested. There are many reasons why a child may audition poorly, most of which have little to do with the child's ability to learn to sing. Yes, some children have stronger musical gifts than others, and this is usually apparent in an audition process; however, I strongly believe that any child who can manage to achieve a 50% success rate on the audition ear tests can learn to match pitch and sing competently within the choir situation. Those who score below 50% may still be offered a spot in the choir if the child and the family seem very keen on singing. This is another area where MFYC diverges greatly from the status quo

of children's and youth choirs, which tend to be highly selective in their audition process, creating both an attitude of elitism within the organization, and a visibly homogenous population that is not reflective of Mississauga's or Canada's diversity. In my opinion, the needs of the child always outweigh the presumed need to produce a "perfect" musical product.

Repertoire and Social Justice

It should be stated that I have always refuted so-called "aesthetic" philosophies of music that create a disconnect between the song and its cultural context. I believe that in order to understand a culture or a society's music, it is important to have some background information, thus I have always used the repertoire of the MFYC as a starting point for bringing to consciousness among MFYC members the history and cultural context of the music selected for the season. For example, when we sing South African freedom songs, we do so within a context that has discussed the history of South Africa, including apartheid and its fall. We try to relate the historical context to any known current issues of a similar nature (i.e., the treatment of Canada's First Nations people as a form of apartheid). Thus, in my philosophy, it is the making (doing) of music as a group activity that takes precedence over the end product. Although my expectation is that the end product will be excellent, the choir is structured to be process rather than product-oriented.