Music and the materialisation of identities[1]

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Abstract

This paper addresses the question: how does music materialise identities? It argues, with reference to ethnographic and historical material, that music is instructive in conceptualising the materialisation of identity because it opens up new perspectives with regard to theories of materiality, of mediation, and of affect. It is suggested, moreover, that these perspectives are intimately related to music's multiple socialities, which themselves necessitate a novel social analytics – one that responds to current interests in re-theorising the social. Music, it is proposed, demands an analytics that encompasses four planes of social mediation; moreover these socialities, together with other forms of music's mediation, amount to a constellation of mediations or an assemblage. All four planes of social mediation enter into the musical assemblage; all four are irreducible to one another, while being articulated in contingent and non-linear ways through relations of synergy, affordance, conditioning or causality. The first two planes amount to socialities engendered by musical practice and experience; whereas the last two amount to social and institutional conditions that themselves afford certain kinds of musical practice – although they too are refracted by music, entering into the nature of musical experience. By adopting the topological metaphor of the plane to stand for distinctive forms of sociality mediated by music, the intention is to highlight both their autonomy and their mutual interference or interrelations, while combating any reading of them in terms of scale or level. However the metaphor has limitations: it fails to register their fleshy, demotic nature, as well as their dynamic and temporal qualities – issues that develop later in the paper with reference to genre theory, particularly as inflected in research on music. It is suggested that, rather than any assured linkage between music and social identity formations, it is by analysing genre as entailing a mutual mediation between two self-organising historical entities – musical formations (on the one hand), and social identity formations (on the other) - both in the process of becoming, both reliant on the collective production of memory as well as the anticipation of futures – in other words, genre as a radically contingent and material process that is, however, *oriented to the production of teleology and thus the erasure of its own contingency* - that we can grasp the way that wider social identity formations are refracted in music, and that musical genres entangle themselves in evolving social formations. Finally, with reference to music's capacity to create aggregations of the affected, the paper considers the current efflorescence of theories of the contagion of affect, including Brennan's theory of the transmission of affect and the neo-Tardeian sociology of associations espoused by Latour and others. It is proposed that while these theories contribute to an analysis of the generative nature of the mutual mediation of musical formations and social formations, they are not sufficient. For they fail to bring into the calculus an awareness of the several distinctive planes of sociality mobilised and mediated by musical assemblages, and the significance of both their autonomy and their contingent interrelations for understanding how music materialises identities.

In this primarily conceptual paper I offer some answers to the question: how does music materialise identities? I'll argue that music is instructive in relation to conceptualising the materialisation of identity because it opens up new perspectives with regard to theories both of materiality and of affect; and moreover, that these perspectives are intimately related to music's copious socialities, which themselves necessitate a novel social analytics – one that responds to current interests in re-theorising the social. I will suggest that together these developments offer a framework for understanding the generative nature of the imbrication of musical formations and social formations.[2]

I open with four observations that situate music as a distinctive medium in relation to common thematics in the anthropology of material culture and art. First, beyond the visual- and artefact-centrism that characterises theories of art and material culture, music indicates that there need not be a physical artefact or a visual object or symbol at the centre of the analysis of materiality, mediation and semiosis. Indeed music has its own particular material and semiotic properties. Musical sound is non-representational, non-artefactual and alogogenic. In most human cultures, in the absence of a denotative or literal level of meaning, musical sound engenders a profusion of extra-musical connotations of various kinds - visual, sensual, emotional and intellectual. These connotations are naturalised and projected into the musical sound object, yet they tend to be experienced as deriving from it. Ethnomusicologists, in the face of such a profusion of signification, have analysed the universal existence of linguistic metaphors for music (Feld 1984; Feld and Fox 1994). In my own ethnographies I have extended this approach through a focus on how metaphors for music combine and cohere into wider discursive formations, raising questions of power – the differential power to define, circulate and institutionalise the meanings attributed to music (Born 1995).

A second observation is that if the linguistic mediation of music is pervasive, music's mediation cannot be reduced simply to language. Music has no material essence but a plural and distributed materiality. Its multiple simultaneous forms of existence – as sonic trace, discursive exegesis, notated score, technological prosthesis, social and embodied performance - indicate the necessity of conceiving of the musical object as a constellation of mediations. Music requires and stimulates associations between a diverse range of subjects and objects - between musician and instrument, composer and score, listener and sound system, music programmer and digital code. Compared with the visual and literary arts, which we associate with a specific object, text or representation, music may therefore appear to be an extraordinarily diffuse kind of cultural object: an aggregation of sonic, social, corporeal, discursive, visual, technological and temporal mediations - a musical assemblage, where this is understood as a characteristic constellation of such heterogeneous mediations. In Deleuzian thought an assemblage is defined as a multiplicity made up of heterogeneous components, each having a certain autonomy, a multiplicity 'which establishes liaisons [or] relations between them…. [T]he assemblage's only unity is that of a co-functioning' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 69), while the interactions between components are non-linear and mutually catalysing, 'only contingently obligatory' (DeLanda 2006: 12; Deleuze 1988).

A third point, following on, is that a number of writers – from Adorno onwards – have pointed to music's mediation of subject-object relations. Such an approach is central to the recent sociology of music. Antoine Hennion stresses the intimate mediation between music lover and musical sound in the co-production of taste, where taste is grasped as a mutually transformative relation cultivated through a range of practices and techniques. As he proposes, 'Bodies, spaces, durations, gestures, regular practice, technical devices' (Hennion 2003: 90) – all point to taste as an accomplishment. Music therefore 'transforms those who take possession of it', resulting in 'the co-formation of a music and of those who make it and listen to it' (Hennion 2001: 3). Tia DeNora takes a similar stance, arguing that 'Music is active within social life: just as music's meanings may be constructed in relation to things outside it, so, too, things outside music may be constructed in

relation to music' (DeNora 2000: 40). Such analyses make palpable the bidirectional nature both of music's mediation and of human and non-human agency: music generating and conditioning human subjectivities and socialities, while music is constituted in discourse and practice, as well as through its manifold socialities and socio-technical arrangements.

My fourth opening observation, however, is that the kind of microsociology favoured by DeNora and Hennion, which finds its anthropological equivalent in Alfred Gell's adoption of a biographical 'depth of focus' in his analysis of art's social mediation in *Art and Agency* (Gell 1998), is insufficient when accounting for music's complex social mediation. Indeed music necessitates an expansion of the conceptual framework of social mediation. In this sense it compounds the challenge to reconceptualise the social issued by Marilyn Strathern when she called for a concern with the 'constant movement… from one type of sociality to another', socialities constituted either by processes of 'de-pluralization' (Strathern 1988: 14, 13) or by the elaboration of heterogeneity, as well as by Bruno Latour in his manifesto for a 'sociology of associations' that traces the 'many… contradictory cartographies of the social' (Latour 2005: 34). For if music generates myriad social forms, it requires a social analytics that encompasses four planes of social mediation. In the first plane, music produces its own diverse social relations – in the intimate socialities of musical performance and practice, in musical ensembles, and in the musical division of labour. In the second, music conjures up and animates imagined communities, aggregating its listeners into virtual collectivities and publics based on musical and other identifications. In the third plane, music is traversed by wider social identity formations, from the most concrete and intimate to the most abstract of collectivities – music's refraction of the hierarchical and stratified relations of class and age, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality. In the fourth, music is bound up in the social and institutional forms that provide the grounds for its production, reproduction and transformation, whether elite or religious patronage, market or non-market exchange, the arena of public and subsidized cultural institutions, or late capitalism's cultural economy. All four planes of social mediation enter into the musical assemblage. All four are irreducible to one another, while being articulated in contingent and non-linear ways through relations of synergy, affordance, conditioning or causality. The first two planes amount to socialities engendered by musical practice and experience; whereas the last two amount to social and institutional conditions that themselves afford certain kinds of musical practice – although they enter into the nature of musical experience, permeating music's intimate socialities and imagined communities. By adopting the topological metaphor of the plane to stand for distinctive forms of sociality mediated by music, I intend to highlight both their autonomy and their mutual interference or interrelations, while combating any reading of them in terms of scale or level.[3] The metaphor, of course, has limitations: it fails to register their fleshy, demotic nature as well as their dynamic and temporal qualities – issues that develop later in the paper.

In this light the socialities of musical performance and practice, suffused as these may be by wider social relations, as well as by the social imaginaries afforded by music: all of these vectors of social mediation can enter into aesthetic experience for participants and listeners. Moreover, if this relay of socialities – from wider social conditions, to the virtual collectivities assembled by particular musical genres, to performance socialities – can be homologous, this is not invariably the case. Indeed, in their autonomy, the socialities of performance and practice may be contrary to, and can become crucibles of transformation of or experimentation with, prevailing social relations. Rather than the four planes of social mediation being isomorphic, ethnographies of music show that subtle and surprising relations can exist between them. Illustrating the utility of this framework through an analysis that traces dynamic interrelations between the four planes of sociality is Aditi Deo's study of a series of changes to *Khyal*, a genre of North Indian improvised classical music, over the 20th century (Deo 2011). Deo draws out the synergistic shifts that have occurred between the third and second planes – social identity formation and musically imagined community: a transition from hereditary Muslim practitioners to middle- and upper-class Hindus, which was

accompanied by *Khyal's* classicisation and canonisation, such that it has become emblematic of a Hindu nationalism linked to the re-imagination of India as a modern nation state with an ancient Brahminical past. In parallel, Deo points to tensions between transformations on the fourth and first plane, between institutional form and performance sociality. Where formerly *Khyal* relied on feudal patronage and master-disciple transmission of musical knowledge, in the first decades of the 20th century *Khyal* pedagogy was partly relocated to new, secular pedagogical institutions; at the same time, knowledge of *Khyal* was notated and standardised, abstracted from formerly embodied and performative techniques. But *Khyal* resists any simplistic account of these changes. Training in its aesthetic principles has remained entangled in master-disciple lineages, which also continue to structure musicians' social networks; subtleties of musical gesture and their social embeddedness therefore resist Khyal's rationalisation. Yet institutional processes mediate even those musical and social practices still rooted in master-discipline relations. If public debate often reduces the two modes of *Khyal* sociality to an opposition, Deo argues that practitioners experience them as juxtaposed. It seems that as an assemblage, *Khyal* is self-contradictory.

On the basis of this approach to music's social and material mediation, in the remainder of the paper I develop three additional arguments concerning music's capacities to mediate and mobilise identity formations. To do this I draw on theories both of genre and of affect, which further illuminate the mutual entanglement of musical and social formations – in particular through music's powers to create aggregations of the affected.

My first argument concerns the benefits of analysing cross-scalar relations between the first and third planes: how the socialities engendered by musical performance are traversed by broader social relations. Salient here are studies that demonstrate the mutual modulation between performance socialities and formations of race and class, such as Charles Keil's *Urban Blues* (Keil 1970), Ingrid Monson's *Saying Something* (Monson 1996), and Louise Meintjes's *Sound of Africa!* (Meintjes 2003). Keil's account of the socialities manifest in the interactions between the Chicago blues singer Bobby Bland, his band and their club audiences in the 1960s shows how social solidarities and collective catharsis were generated in performance through the use of voice, gesture, humour and ambiguous sexual and spiritual innuendo, all of them enlivened by the 'stylistic common denominators' (ibid: 143) that crossed between blues performance and preaching in the lives of black Chicagoans. Other studies show how musical performance is not only entangled in wider social identity formations, but has the capacity to reconfigure or catalyse those formations. In her research on live soca performance in Trinidad, Jocelyne Guilbault stresses its transformative capacities as it produces 'public intimacies'. With this term she refers to the socialities and spatial proximities of performance as they unfold between musicians on stage, between musicians and audience, and between audience members. Guilbault argues that these embodied and performative social interactions 'reiterate identities', while also enabling 'new points of connection [to be] developed (for example among artists and audience members of different ethnicities, nationalities and generations, and across musical genres)' (Guilbault 2010: 17). The socialities created between artists and crowd at a soca gig range from the affirmation of a common sense of national belonging to the establishment of '"affective alliances" through the sharing of feelings – exuberance, joy, and exhaustion' (ibid: 21). If soca artists on stage 'enjoy crossing entrenched divides of ethnicity, race, and nation' (ibid: 27), they also reinforce 'heteronormative relations' and exclude homosexual expression (ibid: 19). Performance socialities, she contends, can therefore work either to reinforce or to reconfigure social norms and social antagonisms.

An expansion of this perspective comes from research pointing to cross-scalar relations between the four planes of sociality as formative of the political in music. Louise Meintjes (Meintjes 2003), in her study of recording in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa, shows how the recording studio amounts to a microcosm that incubates its own social relations, while it also refracts wider

social relations. The politics of recording occur on two intersecting planes: first, in the socialities of the studio – manifest in who is able to exercise power and control, whose musical imagination determines how things will sound; and second, in how these socialities are crossed by broader formations of race and class, given that black musicians work in a 'white-controlled industry' personified in white sound engineers who are largely ignorant about black musical styles. Meintjes shows the struggles manifest in aesthetic judgements in the mediation by white engineers of Zulu styles for world music markets. Minute shifts in intonation or timbre determine whether a track is deemed to merit international distribution; moreover, aesthetic imperatives issued by producers serving international markets can tempt black musicians to proffer Zulu stereotypes, pandering to essentialist and primitivist imaginaries. The racialised dynamics of the studio thus mediate the very sounds that circulate globally as 'authentic' Zulu music. Recording practices are therefore the site of struggles over musical inflections and sound qualities, struggles in which black musicians engage covertly in attempts to wrest back musical control.

A different example is Robert Adlington's (Adlington 2007) analysis of the emergence among a younger generation of composers in the Netherlands in the 1970s of the leftist 'Movement for the renewal of musical practice' or BEVEM. In his account we glimpse how important for the politics of Western art music since the 1960s has been a reflexive engagement with the social in music, and specifically with the articulation between the socialities of musical practice and broader forms of social power. Adlington portrays BEVEM's attempts to foment a revolution in musical practice stemming from a rejection of the bourgeois complacency of orchestral life centred on the Concertgebouw and its ritual functions for the ruling Dutch elite. Their demands rested on parallels drawn between the alienated conditions of orchestral labour and socialist critiques of workers' alienation. The movement called for the end of 'authoritarian management structures' (ibid: 554) and envisaged as an alternative the democratisation of musical life through a multi-level program of musicians' self-organisation, including the creation of egalitarian performing ensembles and mass musical education schemes. Adlington draws out the contradictions of BEVEM's activities, and the difficulties involved in pursuing their experiments both within and beyond the musical sphere. Yet central to their political vision was the idea of musical practice as a locus for incubating challenges to larger structures of social power.[4]

In sum, evidence from both historical and anthropological research suggests that it is the autonomy of the socialities of musical performance and practice that renders them potential vehicles for social experimentation or for the exercise of a musico-political imagination, in the sense that they may enact alternatives to or inversions of, and can be in contradiction with, wider forms of hierarchical and stratified social relations. These are performed contradictions that can contribute powerfully to the nature of socio-musical experience by offering a compensatory or utopian social space - one that fashions experience differently, even as it may fail to overturn or counter broader social hierarchies and inequalities (although such an outcome is not foreclosed). Not only these cases but many forms of the political in music require a social analytics that addresses music's multiple socialities and their complex and contingent interrelations.

My next observation concerns the second plane of music's social mediation: music's capacity to animate imagined communities, aggregating its adherents into virtual collectivities and publics based on musical and other identifications. These are musically-imagined communities that, as I have shown elsewhere, may reproduce or memorialize extant identity formations, generate purely fantasised identifications, or prefigure emergent identity formations by forging novel social alliances (Born 2000). Here in turn I offer two comments. First, music seems to be ever-more significant in its powers to generate imagined or virtual communities. Whether manifest in music's central contributions in internet-based social networks to the personalisation of online identity constructions, or in peer-to-peer filesharing and ramifying music-exchange networks, music has become a medium both of identity formation and of social aggregation (Baym 2007; Baym and

Ledbetter 2009), aggregations that may be irreducible to other dimensions of socio-cultural identity. This property of music was first theorised by Will Straw in his concept of musical 'scene' (Straw 1991). Straw develops the concept through comparative analysis of two genres - alternative rock and electronic dance musics – insisting that the social universes produced by them cannot be reduced to any pre-given social ontology. Instead, he argues, scene points to music's capacity to construct 'affective alliances' (Straw 1991: 374), propagating musically-imagined communities that are irreducible to prior categories of social identity. Scene points to the significance and the autonomy of the first two planes: the socialities of musical performance, which Straw portrays through the engrossing corporeality of the dance floor, and the imagined communities summoned into being by musical tastes and experiences, which he addresses through the 'coalitions' of dance music audiences created in the late 1980s between 'black teenagers, young girls listening to Top 40 radio, and urban club-goers' (ibid: 384-5). But the idea of scene recognises also their mutual mediation: how the socialities of performance catalyse music's imagined communities, just as those imagined communities imbue the socialities of performance with collective ritual and emotion. Straw connects these two planes in turn to the social relations of class, race and gender, proposing that the politics of popular music stem from music's capacity to create affective coalitions that reconfigure the boundaries between pervasive social categories. He then introduces a further plane of social mediation: the institutions – such as radio, dance clubs and record stores – which provide 'the conditions of possibility of [those affective] alliances' (ibid: 384). Straw's concept of scene thus invokes all four planes of sociality, as well as pointing to the contingency of their interrelations. The notion of scene is important as an attempt to move beyond the idea that music (and culture) articulate only pre-existing identity formations. Rather, it is clear that music can become a primary vehicle of collective identification - even if this is crossed by other vectors of identity (race, class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality). This remains an invaluable insight and bears out a co-constitutive theory of social mediation: music both producing its own affective and aggregative identity effects, its own modes of 'imitation' or contagion (Tarde 1969; Tarde 2001), while also responding to and transforming pre-existing social formations.

A second comment on musically-imagined community concerns the now-dominant way of conceiving of the public-making qualities of culture and music. This is in the terms of Michael Warner's (Warner 2005) Althusserian formulation of the public interpellated through practices of cultural production - a public that, as he puts it, 'exists by virtue of being addressed' (ibid: 67). In Warner's approach the public aggregated by cultural production is equated with virtual or stranger publics *tout court*; the very fact of the production and circulation of textuality is taken to conjure up and attach a community of interest. But the assumption here of a sturdily *achieved* public is surely questionable. My research on widely varying spheres of cultural production suggests both that they have quite different projections of audience-hood, which influence the kinds of audience that can result, and that in practice these expectations are often frustrated, indicating a split between anticipated and achieved public.[5] Similar arguments are made for anthropology by Karin Barber (Barber 2007), and for cultural history by Roger Chartier (Chartier 1995); they are also made by Jacques Rancière when, questioning any *a priori* assumption about the political efficacy of critical art practices, he notes that 'they cannot avoid the aesthetic cut that separates consequences from intentions' (Rancière 2010: 151). Genre theory, to which I come shortly, offers a better way of conceiving of the mutual articulation of cultural production and publics. But we can also augment Warner by recognising another type of publicness animated by cultural production, one illuminated by music's privileged relation with performance. This entails holding the textual-interpellation model up against an alternative conception of the co-present public that is potentialised by performance events. Such a co-present public cannot be guaranteed; it *may* be constituted by the socialities of musical performance – socialities that should not be idealised,[6] just as their public-making qualities cannot be adjudged in advance (cf. Born and Barry 2010: 112-6).[7]

My final argument turns on another relation between distinctive planes of music's socialities, the one most commonly drawn in existing literatures. It is the interaction between the third and second planes: between wider social relations and systems of musical genre, where genre is taken to be the primary mechanism for the mutual articulation of musically imagined communities and social identities – communities that are often taken to derive from those social identities. Already obvious here is how genre theory luxuriates in teleology – a tendency apparent in the temptation to elide mimetic and mediation accounts of music's articulation of social identities. In Eric Drott's succinct take, extracted from a rich discussion of genre and mediation, 'Genres… both constitute social groups and are constituted by them' (Drott 2011: 7) - an expansion of the mutual mediation of musical object and subject on to the plane of the historical co-production of musical genres and social formations. Drott takes his lead from Keith Negus's notion of genre cultures (Negus 1999); Negus, in turn, adopts Steven Neale's processual definition of genre as 'systems of orientations, expectations and conventions that circulate between industry, text and subject' (Neale 1980). Negus emphasises the contingency of this process, how 'the genre boundaries associated with commercial markets, radio or media formats and wider cultural formations do not coincide in any straightforward way' (Negus 1999: 29). Yet at other points he abandons contingency, highlighting 'how genres operate as social categories; how rap cannot be separated from the politics of blackness, nor salsa from Latinness, nor country from whiteness and the enigma of the "South"' (ibid). In this way Negus risks collapsing conceptually what must strenuously be held apart: the mutual mediation between musical formations (on the one hand) and social identity formations (on the other).

Here David Brackett's stress, in his research on black American popular musics, on the 'paradoxes (and tautologies) of genre' (Brackett 2005: 82) is salutary. Brackett brings out both the processual instability and the generativity of genre. In his words, 'the notion of genre speaks to transitory divisions in the musical field that correspond in discontinuous and complex ways to a temporally defined social space' (ibid: 75). Moreover, Brackett contends, 'a linkage between social identity and a practice of music making (as in "black music") need not depend on the reproduction of a negative stereotype but may function as a positive marker, a chiastic turn' (ibid: 87). Brackett shows how historically labile have been the apparently established links between black musical genres and African American social formations; yet he cautions against over-arbitrary accounts of genre categories as mere 'social constructions' (ibid: 75). He demonstrates how this perspective requires a dual focus on both the temporalities and the *real attempted teleologies* of genre. That is to say: genre works by projecting temporally, into the unruly, ongoing cauldron of alternative socio-cultural formations, potential moves and reconfigurations of those formations coded materially as aesthetic moves and transformations that are proffered as analogous to the social. When the teleology works, then music may effect a redirection or a new affective coalition of the identity formations that it set itself to mediate. For Brackett, Bakhtin's (1986: 95) concept of addressivity illuminates how, through aesthetic gestures in any genre, musicians attempt to attract and attach an envisaged audience to the musical object; his example is Isaac Hayes's 1969 cross-over soul version of Jimmy Webb's 1967 MOR ballad, 'By the time I get to Phoenix'. Given the instabilities and contingencies of genre, Hayes's aesthetic gestures reveal 'how intersubjective awareness of the audience – addressivity - is in play on both musical and verbal levels' (ibid: 86).

In sum, my discussion of genre as an assumed point of convergence or translation between aesthetic figure, musically-imagined community and wider identity formation is intended to destabilise what is too often taken as smoothly conjoined. Rather than any assured linkage between music and wider social formations, it is by analysing genre as entailing a mutual mediation between two self-organising historical entities – musical formations (on the one hand), and social identity formations (on the other) - *both* in the process of becoming, *both* reliant on the collective production of memory as well as the anticipation of futures – in other words, genre as a radically contingent and material process that is, however, *oriented to the production of teleology*

and thus the erasure of its own contingency - that we can grasp the way that wider social identity formations are refracted in music, and that musical genres entangle themselves in evolving social formations.

In theorising, with reference to notions of affective alliances, the uncertain imbrication in genre of the dynamics of both musical and social identification, it may be that Gabriel Tarde's relational sociology is apposite, with its vision of the contagion of affect as constitutive of the social. Recently rediscovered in anthropology and social theory (Barry and Thrift 2007; Candea 2010), Tarde's dictum that 'invention and imitation are the elementary social acts' (Tarde 2001: 203, my translation) is predicated on a rejection of the foundational dualism of individual and social, and of the separation of psychology from sociology. Instead Tarde advocates an 'inter-psychology' attentive to the way 'that subjects [are] open to affecting and being affected' (Blackman 2007: 576), positing imitation and suggestion as twin motors of the diffusion of affect, desire and habit through a population. It is perhaps no surprise, then, that music – given its hyper-connotative, hyper-affective propensities – promotes the formation of social bonds in the guise of what I have called aggregations of the affected. Moreover rhythm, dance, bodily proximity and corporeal experience – all linked to music and performance – are considered by writers in this area to promote the intensification of affect and the creation of affective associations (Thrift 2008: ch. 6; Brennan 2004). More acutely, it is striking that the notion of entrainment appears to provide a conceptual bridge between music and affect. It is central to Teresa Brennan's (ibid: ch. 3) attempts to extend the ideas of crowd theorists and group psychoanalysts to the transmission of affect. Brennan aims to overcome another foundational dualism – that of the social and the biological – by hypothesising the existence of physiological mechanisms that underlie affective contagion, which she locates in transmissible hormonal changes triggered by particular 'atmospheres' and social environments. In Brennan's persuasive anti-neo-Darwinian account, 'certain biological and physical phenomena themselves require a social explanation. While its wellsprings are social, the transmission of affect is deeply physical in its effects' (ibid: 23). But entrainment is also invoked in present ethnomusicological attempts to link physiological and social processes in the analysis of musical performance (Clayton, Sager, and Will 2004).[8] Once again rhythm, movement and embodied experience, along with synchronicity, are given privileged place in this discussion; questions raised include: 'Since certain degrees of entrainment between individuals seem to be associated with positive affect, is it the case that particular patterns, periodicities, hierarchies or intensities of entrainment afford particular affects? Could positive affect be associated with a greater degree of self-synchrony as well as closer synchrony with a social group?' (ibid: 21).[9]

Bringing together the consideration of theories of genre and of affect, what we have is a potent conceptual cluster: genre as a point of contingent convergence between musical formations and social formations; entrainment in turn as a putative link between affect, music, the biological and social. Yet against the backdrop of the arc of arguments in this paper, the perspectives provided by Tarde, Brennan and others - while they add insight into how affective dimensions of musical experience may fuel social aggregation - provide only part of the answer to theorising music's mediation of social identities. For when detached from the analysis of larger social formations and enduring musical, cultural and historical processes, they are reductive in the literal sense of the evasion of ineluctable complexity. We might ask: can we account for the social - in the guise, for example, of the enduring but evolving armatures of class relations in Britain today as they continue to mediate and be mediated by music (Bennett et al. 2009: ch. 5) – solely through the transmission of affect (with Brennan) or a sociology of associations (with Latour and the neo-Tardeians)? These perspectives may contribute to an analysis of the mutual mediation of musical and social identity formations, but they are not sufficient. For they fail to bring into the calculus an awareness of the several distinctive planes of sociality mobilised and mediated by musical assemblages. It is the novel analytics of the mutual modulation of four planes of social mediation proposed in this article, working resiliently against the reification of both musical and social

formations, and attuned to the significance of the autonomy and the contingent interrelations between the four planes for analysing socio-musical complexity, that enables us to understand how music materialises identities.

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Notes

[1] This paper is dedicated, with affection, to Mike Rowlands, from whom I learned much and gained such genial and engaged support. It forms part of a group of papers in which I develop these ideas.
[2] I use the term 'musical formations' to indicate the specificity of long-term musical systems which exhibit both a certain unity and continuity and an evolving heterogeneity. This is the approach advocated by David Brackett, a leading theorist of genre and scholar of 20th century black American popular musics, when he writes of 'black popular music as part of a long-range historical discourse and as part of an ever-changing genre system' (Brackett 2005: 80).
[3] The Deleuzian concept of assemblage is again apposite, now encompassing music's social mediation, evoking as it does a heterogeneous unity composed of elements that have a certain autonomy while being brought into relation and fuelling emergence; the assemblage is therefore a 'whole [that] may be both analysable into separate parts and at the same time have irreducible properties, properties that emerge from the *interactions* between parts' (DeLanda 2006: 10). Despite his cogent exposition of assemblage theory, DeLanda's (2006) application of it to social theory is unconvincing, centred as it is on linear and nested social forms of increasing scale: persons and networks, organisations and governments, cities and nations.
[4] The developments described by Adlington were paralleled elsewhere, for example in Cornelius Cardew's Scratch Orchestra (Nyman 1974: 112-8), and in my own experience of an avant-garde Brechtian rock group in the 1970s, in which not only our musical practices but our professional life and networks were conceived as political experiments in collectivism (Born 2008).
[5] My research on cultural production has encompassed ethnographies of the musical avant-garde (Born 1995), of the production of popular television and radio at the BBC (Born 2005), and of the experimental field of art-science (Born and Barry 2010) and other interdisciplinary knowledge practices (Barry, Born, and Weszkalnys 2008).
[6] For idealizing accounts of the socialities of musical performance, see Schutz 1971 and Small 1998.
[7] Elsewhere (Born Forthcoming) I develop the idea of the co-present public afforded by musical performance with reference to Dana Villa's (Villa 1996) interpretation of Hannah Arendt's thought. Villa pursues the implications of Arendt's adoption of the performing arts as her preferred idiom for the renewal of the public realm. By using a performance model for the analysis of political action and its constitution of the public realm, Arendt understood such action as autonomous and artificial, non-teleological and non-instrumental. Its essence was nothing less than continuous, direct participation, while such participation was always embedded in the "already existing web of human relationships" (Arendt 1989: 184; cited in Villa 1996: 84). Dueck (Forthcoming) illustrates the fertility of this approach to musical publics in his ethnography of Aboriginal communities in Manitoba, exploring the potent interrelations between the intimate publics of performance and the virtual public afforded by Aboriginal music radio.
[8] The ethnomusicological discourse on entrainment sees itself as building on earlier models of the connection between rhythm, movement and musical socialities in the work of John Blacking, Alan Lomax, Charles Keil and Steven Feld (Clayton, Sager and Will 2004: 19-20).
[9] The concern in this discussion with the interplay between musical aesthetics and affect in mobilising social identity formations echoes the current interest in the same dynamic as it animates nationhood; see Mookherjee and Pinney 2011.