

8-8-2007

## Gendered Representations of Jazz Vocal Artists: A Critical Discourse Analysis of CD and Performance Reviews, and Interviews

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Gendered Representations of Jazz Vocal Artists:  
A Critical Discourse Analysis of CD and Performance Reviews,  
and Interviews

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts  
in  
English

by  
Mirka Jichova  
B.A. Masaryk University of Brno, Czech Republic, 2002  
August 2007

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the co-chair of my thesis committee, Dr. Abigail Konopasky, for the invaluable encouragement, guidance and support in the drafting stages of my thesis and throughout my time at UNO as well as for the countless hours spent on the phone and the Internet to discuss my projects and provide feedback in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. I am grateful to her for introducing critical discourse analysis (CDA) to me and for sharing her experience and knowledge of the field so readily and enthusiastically. I would like to thank Dr. Georgette Ioup, another co-chair of my thesis committee, for the support and advice that she gave me in the final weeks before the defense and for encouraging me to make revisions to make my thesis more reader-friendly and accessible to non-CDA scholars. I would also like to thank Dr. Doreen Piano for her suggestion to incorporate more cultural theory into my study and for providing useful feedback and advice in the final stages. Last (but not least), I would like to thank the chair of the English department, Dr. Peter Schock, who admitted me into the academic program as a Graduate Coordinator four years ago and gave me support throughout my studies at UNO. I am especially thankful that I was allowed to finish my thesis project despite the elimination of the Linguistics track in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

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## Abstract

This study of contemporary jazz discourse and gender applies the techniques of critical discourse analysis, inspired by M.A.K. Halliday's systemic functional linguistics and Norman Fairclough's qualitative critical discourse analysis, to explicate the unequal distribution of power in society as represented by the institutions of jazz and mass media, in discourse about jazz vocal artists. Specifically, the study focuses on the way the genres of jazz CD review, jazz performance review, and interviews with jazz artists – disseminated via the institutions *JazzTimes* and *Live New Orleans* – represent the artists' identities, roles, achievements and skills. Following Norman Fairclough and the feminist scholar Mary Talbot, the study assumes that institutions of mass media not only discursively construct the gender of jazz vocal artists, but also represent the performers' achievement and skills from a hegemonic standpoint, reflecting the commonsense assumptions about women and men and their roles in patriarchal society.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, qualitative analysis, social power, unequal distribution of power, power in Western society, empowerment, disempowerment, gender, gender studies, feminist studies, jazz studies, jazz, vocal jazz, jazz performance review, jazz CD review, interview, discourse of achievement, discourse of competence, discourse of incompetence, social representation, mass media discourse, mass media representations, mass media institutions, jazz vocalists, jazz artists, media production, media distribution, media consumption, Norman Fairclough, M.A.K. Halliday, naming analysis.

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

As someone who has studied jazz singing and performed jazz and various other types of music for the past five years, I cannot help but notice that professional, or even semi-professional, female jazz musicians are very often not given the respect that their male counterparts receive. Women are often talked about and talked to as if their skills and professionalism do not match those of men, and if their accomplishments are praised, then it is very often in relation to the way they look, the clothes they wear (on stage and in promotional pictures), or to the way they interact with audience. This is especially true of female jazz vocalists, whose singing is often downplayed by the more “serious” male players.

There has been a widespread belief among musicians and perhaps society at large that whereas the study of an instrument may be a worthy endeavor, the study of vocal techniques, almost as a passing fancy, does not require much effort or talent. While jazz players, predominantly men, are often praised for their technique and skill, female jazz vocalists are sometimes looked at as fancy additions to the institution of jazz, endured and tolerated more for the air of novelty and feminine appeal that they bring to the historically male arena than for their genuine skills and accomplishments as musicians. While it is true that the institution of jazz is and has been historically a male domain, the first popular jazz singers were women. Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, and Carmen McRae – the first a prostitute, the third nicknamed Sassy – have helped to create a picture of vocal jazz as a predominantly female space within the patriarchal institution of jazz, and a prototype of a jazz singer who is a woman. And though music critics have praised the four vocalists above for their vocal techniques and significance in helping to define the jazz idiom, there has been a curious division between vocal jazz and instrumental artists in terms of the level of ‘inherent’ musical or intellectual merit that their performance can bring to the development of jazz performance and its status as an academic discipline. This division may simply be due to the belief that while theoretically anyone can sing (meaning open the mouth and make sounds), not everyone is able to sit at the piano or clasp a

guitar to make harmonious sounds; playing *looks* much harder than singing. However, since jazz players are predominantly male and jazz singers are predominantly female (or at least the ‘romantic’ vision of a jazz singer is), the belief that ‘singing’ is inferior to ‘playing’ may have less to do with inherent characteristics of musical instruments and vocal chords, and rather be directly tied to the unequal distribution of power between women and men in contemporary American society.

My thesis is primarily concerned with explicating the unequal distribution of power between women and men, perpetuated within social institutions and naturalized in discourses (see discussion in chapter two), of which the unequal distribution of power between female and male jazz vocal artists is but one demonstration. However, it is important to note that apart from gender, ethnicity and class also play into the empowerment or disempowerment of a specific person or a group of people in contemporary Western society. Due to space constraints, I will not address in detail the intersections of gender and ethnicity (or gender and class), but a reader may refer to *Representation*, edited by Stuart Hall, for more information about mass media representations of ethnicity. My choice of topic was guided by the knowledge that while ethnicity and its representation in mass media and Western society in general have been studied in quite a detail (see Hall or Gates), the representation of unequal distribution of power between women and men in mass media institutions has not been given much notice up till now. Specifically, the arena of jazz performance as one of the sources and demonstrations of unequal distribution of power between women and men had not been studied in depth before, so I am entering an uncharted territory with this project.

Though it may seem obvious to many people, it is important to note that *representations* of unequal distribution of power serve to maintain the status quo and validate the position of the dominant, those who already hold power. Studies of representations are concerned with both texts and images of social actors and events with the aim of explicating how texts and images perpetuate unequal distribution of power. My study will focus in great detail on textual and discursive representations of jazz vocal artists and the way their competence/incompetence as jazz performers is constructed via texts (any meaningful cultural forms) and discourses (social practices and ways of representing).



Written texts about jazz performers disseminated by institutions of mass media – especially those specializing in depictions of jazz performance, CD reviews, interviews with and feature articles about jazz performers, and jazz in general – and general ‘talk’ about jazz artists among jazz musicians or music fans play a great part in the representation and construction of gender and maintenance of the discourse of competence/incompetence. As scholars of language have noted, language is a powerful tool in helping to construct the picture of ‘reality’ as we know it (see discussion in chapter two). The words we use to refer to and describe social phenomena not only reflect the way we perceive these phenomena, but also significantly influence and to a certain extent construct the social conditions and relations in our society. In other words, our understanding and perception of the social world is inextricably linked to the language that we and others use to describe and represent this social world. If social conditions are to a certain extent constructed by discourse, then our subject positions, effects of these conditions, are also socially and discursively constructed. And if our subject positions are determined in part by our gender, then the language of our society also constructs our gendered roles and identities.

Feminist scholars have noted this particular character of discourse when speaking about the social construction of gender. While most people would probably readily equate the notion of gender with the notion of sex, the important difference between the two is that while sex of a person is (to a certain extent) acquired at birth and biologically founded, the gender of a person is determined by pressures that a society places on women and men to ‘display’ their sex-affiliation by enacting a socially-determined set of practices and their willingness to comply with society’s norms and ‘perform’ their gender. The critic Talbot points out that “unlike sex, gender is not binary. We can talk about one man being more masculine (or feminine) than another” – but not about one man being \*maler or \*malest (7). The society at large determines a person’s gender by prescribing gender-specific attire, behavior and interaction, and the impact of this prescription on the lives and behavior of women and men lies largely in the way the social notion of gender is disseminated and preserved via discursive representations of gender.

While regular, everyday conversation may influence the way we perceive our (gendered) subject positions, our world, and our place in it, it can be argued that textual representations of our

social conditions and interactions in institutions of mass media have an even greater impact on our understanding of our identities and roles. Various scholars have pointed out that the impact of institutions of mass media lies in their access to technical and economic capital, which in turn enables them to disseminate textual representations of ‘reality’ to a large number of people and potential consumers (see discussion in chapter two). Because of their ability to create multiple copies of textual representations, institutions of mass media, such as radio, television, newspapers, magazines, or the Internet, have the power to affect the opinions of a large number of people, influencing their understanding of themselves, their relation to the social world and events in it.

More specifically, institutions of mass media specializing in jazz and writing for an audience of jazz critics and fans have the means needed to circulate discursive representations of jazz musicians that may determine how readers will experience and understand a particular performer’s identity or role, and his or her recording or performance. The subject position of an individual performer is obviously determined not only by her gender, but also by her other roles and identities, as a player, a singer, a professional performer, and by the roles she is expected to perform as a member of the institution of the family – jazz performers may also be mothers, fathers, daughters or sons (the list of the roles that each of us is expected to perform in contemporary society is endless). However, it is significant that the gendered identities of a jazz musician are perhaps more on display on stage than any other of her identities (and as noticeable as her racial or ethnic identity). And just as we are expected to perform our gender in everyday lives, jazz performers are pressured to perform, even exaggerate their gender performance on stage, as part of the musical performance, and as a way of selling the performance to the public and mass media.

While there is no research on discursive representations of jazz performers (to the best of my knowledge), feminist research offers evidence that contemporary mass media representations of women and men tend to maximize gender difference, using exaggerated gender markers that commodify the sex of the person depicted, offering it to readers for their consumption (Talbot 171-174, 193-199). The sex of a person is “used to sell another commodity: the magazine itself” (Talbot 174). If maximization of gender difference sells, as Talbot and others have shown, then the arena of jazz performance provides mass media institutions with a rich source of material for the augmentation

of their market value, precisely because the gender of jazz performers is on display, readily accessible and easily exploited. Mass media images and accounts of jazz artists thus may exaggerate the gender of a particular performer as a way of selling the performer and the media institution as a valuable commodity. This can be done through images and pictures of the performer, which emphasize one specific aspect or dimension of the performer, but also discursively, through a set of discursive practices. As readers, we need to be aware that mass media representations of gender may affect the way we perceive the women and men depicted. Without critical understanding of the way language functions as the lens through which we view real people, the real performers, we may not be aware of the narrative character of discursive accounts of jazz performers, their recordings and their skills, and may form a gender-specific understanding of their roles and identities as performers, as well as similar gender-specific expectations of what these performers can or cannot do – their status in other institutional arenas as well as their skills as musicians.

In the subsequent chapters, I want to answer the following questions: How are jazz performers discursively depicted as performing mainstream gender roles on stage? How do texts written about jazz performers and performances – music reviews and interviews – highlight and emphasize gender difference in an effort to make the best of the commodity that jazz has become at the beginning of the twenty first century? What specific set of discursive practices do institutions of mass media use to represent jazz musicians?<sup>1</sup> Are these practices stable and determined by the performers' gender? How do these practices construct the performers' gender and why are they different for female and male vocal artists? My goal is to find out how social institutions of mass media disseminate gendered depictions of jazz musicians and construct the discourse of competence/incompetence in a gendered way. In order to do this, I will focus specifically on representations of jazz vocal artists, to counter the possibility that the discourse of competence/incompetence is tied exclusively to the instrument (including voice) of a particular performer. I will analyze the language that media use in interviews with female and male jazz vocalists and reviews of their performance and work, and explicate how the set of practices that media use to report on a specific performer's achievement and skill and to

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<sup>1</sup> I use Mary Talbot's definition of *discursive practices*; the critic maintains that "discursive practices involve both texts and the processes by which people produce and interpret them" (155).

represent her or him textually to the public is informed by the performer's gender. I will argue that through language, media create not only the gender of specific jazz performers but also generalized gendered representation of vocal jazz. Using a combination of linguistic analysis and rhetorical strategies, I will show that the gender of jazz vocalists is socially constructed through discursive representations of their identities, roles, skills, and achievement. I will look at three different mass media genres—CD reviews, performance reviews and interviews – and show in what ways the language of these genres contributes to the construction of womanhood as decorative, sexual, objectified, and sometimes passive and incompetent. For comparison, I will analyze reviews of and interviews with both female and male performers, showing in what ways representations of female performers are different from representations of male performers.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

The theories and research that inspired my study of contemporary jazz discourse and gender and the analytical techniques that I will use are grounded mainly in the following four disciplines: critical discourse analysis, cultural studies, post-modern theory, and feminist theory.

#### 1. Critical Approach to Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis is different from earlier general linguistics analyses in that it does not aim to analyze discourse with the goal of showing inherent properties of language systems or the differences and similarities between languages. Rather, as a relatively new field of linguistic analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) aims to analyze and de-naturalize discourses to point out inadequacies in the distribution of social power as represented through language. Its main goal is to uncover the ideologies which are encoded in language, and which make the unequal distribution of social power seem natural and given, and make them unnatural – or ‘denaturalize’ them, so that people can see and – if they want to – reject them.<sup>2</sup>

Norman Fairclough, a prominent CDA scholar, defines language as a “form of social practice” (*Language* 22) and the relationship between language structures and social structures as inherently dialectical:

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<sup>2</sup> Fairclough uses the following two definitions of power offered by Giddens in *New Rules of Sociological Method*: (1) “power in its most general sense of the ‘transformative capacity of human action’, the capacity to ‘intervene in a series of events so as to alter their course’”; (2) and “power in the ‘relational’ sense of the capability to secure outcomes where the realization of these outcomes depends upon the agency of others.” Both depend on “‘resources or facilities’ which are differentially available to social actors” (*Analysing* 41). In addition, Thompson defines power as “the ability to act in pursuit of one’s aims and interests, the ability to intervene in the course of events and to affect their outcome” (13). When I talk about power in my study, I use these definitions interchangeably.

There is not an external relationship ‘between’ language and society, but an internal and dialectical relationship. Language is a part of society; linguistic phenomena *are* social phenomena of a special sort, and social phenomena *are* (in part) linguistic phenomena.

(Fairclough , *Language* 23)

Because of this complex relationship between language and social structures, the analysis of discourse can reveal not only how sociolinguistic conventions distribute power unequally but also how they *reproduce* “relations of power and struggles for power” [emphasis mine] (1). The dialectical relation between language and social structures also enables language to become one of the primary means of social control and the instrument for the exercise of power by consent.<sup>3</sup> The social and political aim of CDA is thus to show the “significance of language in the production, maintenance, and change of social relations of power” and to “help increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others” (Fairclough, *Language* 1).

As a field, CDA draws on a variety of approaches to discourse analysis, but the main point of reference is Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the linguistic theory and analytical methods generated by M.A.K. Halliday (Fairclough, *Analyzing* 5). Unlike general linguistics in the tradition of

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<sup>3</sup> In contrast to ‘coercive power,’ which involves the exercise of physical force, ‘power by consent’ is an ability to compel someone to do something without the application of physical force. Mumby and Clair point out that “the most effective use of power” occurs when power is exercised “subtly and routinely,” not through coercion, but through consent (184). The most effective way of exercising power is “when those with power are able to get those who have less power to interpret the world from the former’s point of view” (184). One of the first critics who pointed out that language is a powerful means of social control and an important source of power was the French philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault, who noticed that ‘power’ in social sciences has to do with “who does the speaking, the positions and viewpoints from which they speak, the institutions which prompt people to speak... and which store and distribute the things that are said” (11). Those who have the means to exercise power by consent are usually those who have also access to dominant institutional discourses and the power to “impose and enforce constraints on [other people’s] access” to these discourses (Fairclough, *Language* 62).

Ferdinand DeSaussure or Noam Chomsky (Bloor 241), Halliday was concerned with the analysis of real texts as “artefacts” of social interaction (Halliday 4). Because of the social character of Halliday’s approach to linguistic analysis, his SFL offers a set of methods and analytical techniques that can be used by CDA practitioners to show the relationship between language and power structures in contemporary western societies. As a tool for social research, CDA draws on a range of methodologies and findings from various other disciplines, including general linguistics, socio-linguistic, pragmatics, social criticism, philosophy, political science, sociology, and psychology. (I will not trace all of these disciplinary relations here; but the reader may refer to Norman Fairclough’s *Language and Power* and his introduction to *Analysing Discourse* for a more complete history of the field.)

CDA is grounded in post-modernism, in that its assumptions are postmodernist assumptions. Like postmodernism, CDA seeks to critique the grand meta-narratives of the past, which have been founded on Enlightenment reason and rationality. Like postmodernism, CDA realizes the plurality of “truths,” realities and subject positions and seeks to empower the historically marginalized “other.” Like Postmodernism, CDA realizes that there is no place outside culture or language from which to view or understand culture and texts, but it offers linguistic and rhetorical tools and methodology that can help to expose the limitations of social and political institutions and structures in contemporary Western societies. (Pat Waugh gives a nice overview of the goals and concerns of postmodernism in an introduction to *Postmodernism: A Reader*).

## **2. Texts, Discourses and the Social Construction of Meaning**

Norman Fairclough states that CDA ‘oscillates’ between a focus on specific texts and a focus on specific discourses (*Analysing* 3). The definition of a ‘text’ in post-modernism is very broad, encompassing Halliday’s definition of a text as “any instance of language, in any medium, that makes sense to someone who knows the language” (3), as well as the postmodernist definition of a text as any “meaningful cultural form, from films and TV programmes to billboard ads and subway graffiti” (Thompson 37). Fairclough sees all texts as parts of social events and distinguishes between texts that are highly textual in nature in which most of the action is linguistic, such as the genre of news report,

and texts in which most of the action is non-linguistic—such as the genre of jazz performance, for example (*Analysing* 21).<sup>4</sup> While texts are viewed as particular “product[s] of the process of text production” (Fairclough, *Language* 24), produced in a specific location and at a specific time, discourses reflect whole “process[es] of social interaction” (24). Discourses are “ways of representing aspects of the world” (Fairclough, *Analysing* 215) and forms of “social practice” that contribute to the social construction of knowledge (Talbot 156-160). Discourses reflect and help to sustain stable socio-linguistic practices associated with a particular sphere of social life and are “determined by social structures,” “sets of conventions associated with social institutions” and “ideologically shaped by power relations in social institutions and in society as a whole” (Fairclough, *Language* 17; Fairlough, *Analysing* 3).<sup>5</sup> While texts, as social acts, can contribute to social change (Fairclough, *Analysing* 8), discourses contribute to the perpetuation of common-sense assumptions.

The meaning of texts and discourses is socially constructed and determined by a background set of “‘common-sense’ assumptions” (Fairclough, *Language* 2) that each of us brings to bear on our interpretation of a piece of text or a message that we seek to understand. According to the critic Thompson, these assumptions and expectations “constitute a kind of explicit background knowledge ... which provides [individuals] with a framework for the interpretation and assimilation of what is new” (41). For example, one common assumption, which has its origin in patriarchal institutions of Western society, is that a woman’s proper place is in her family and home, taking care of her husband and children, and her proper attitude is obedience to her husband. Fairclough points out that this common-sense knowledge includes people’s “knowledge of language, representations of the natural and social worlds [that they] inhabit, values, [and] beliefs” (*Language* 24), and that people use these resources not only to interpret the meanings of texts but also to produce new texts. These assumptions, as representations of that which people already know, thus help to perpetuate the existing social relations and differences of power through their frequent reoccurrence in social life,

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<sup>4</sup> Fairclough defines a genre as a “way of (inter) acting discursively” [*Analysing* 26]. His definition is inspired by genre studies, which define genres as “dynamic discursive formations in which ideology is naturalized and realized in specific social actions, relations, and subjectivities” (Bawarshi 7-8).

<sup>5</sup> Fairclough distinguishes between “a discourse” and “orders of discourse” (*Language* 18). For simplification, I have avoided making that distinction.



and undermine the possibility of social change (Fairclough, *Language 2*). These assumptions are the implicit property of discourses, as the socio-linguistic “conventions according to which people interact linguistically” inside institutions (*Language 2*)

### **3. Social Institutions**

While our common-sense knowledge, which determines our interpretation and understanding of texts, is realized in texts and perpetuated in discourses, discourses are validated and perpetuated as socio-linguistic practices inside social institutions. Institutions, according to Timothy Cook, are “social patterns of behavior identifiable across the organizations that are generally seen within a society to preside over a particular social sphere” (70). In addition, these social patterns of behavior are “taken for granted,” are “valued in and of themselves,” and “extend over space and endure over time” (84). For instance, mass media institutions such as *JazzTimes* and *Live New Orleans* participate in the production and dissemination of texts about jazz performers, performances, and other discursive artifacts related to the production, consumption and performance of jazz. These social practices and patterns of behavior enable them to “preside over” the particular sphere of social life that is concerned with the discursive representation of jazz, apart from other mass media institutions that also specialize in discursive representations of jazz. The patterns of production and dissemination are “taken for granted” in that consumers normally do not question the authority of mass media institutions to participate in the production and dissemination of discursive representations, and they are “valued in and of themselves” in that consumers value discourse production and dissemination that enables them to receive valuable information about musicians or vocal artists (e.g. apart from valuing a jazz performance experienced in real time); but the patterns also “extend over space” because anyone with adequate technological, financial or symbolic means can theoretically access the product (whether as a print copy or online), and they “endure over time” since the texts and reproductions are fixed and can theoretically be accessed centuries from now. Because discourse is inextricably tied to these patterns of social behavior, the socio-linguistic practices of the institutions of *JazzTimes* and *Live New Orleans* are similarly “taken for granted,” “valued in and of themselves,” and “extend over space and

endure over time.” The discourse of institutions such as *JazzTimes* and *Live New Orleans* is also identifiable across other similar institutions that preside over the same sector of social life.

Though unique institutions, *JazzTimes*, *Live New Orleans*, and other mass media institutions specializing in discursive representations of jazz share and jointly create the discursive patterns and practices associated with the representations of jazz in contemporary society. The fact that institutions which preside over the same sector of the social sphere share the same discursive practices becomes extremely important for critical discourse analysis. Since CDA is mainly concerned with qualitative analysis (for the results which careful qualitative analysis can yield usually cannot be obtained by any other means), it is important to note that while one is analyzing the discursive practices of one institution, the results of the analysis can be assumed to represent the discursive practices of other institutions which preside over the same sector.

#### **4. Institutional Power: Action at a Distance**

The power of institutions of mass media stems from their ability to disseminate their discursive practices to a large number of people and to make these practices seem natural and universal. The critic Thompson defines power as “the ability to act in pursuit of one’s aims and interests, the ability to intervene in the course of events and to affect their outcome” (13). Institutions such as *JazzTimes* (a print publication that is also accessible online) and *Live New Orleans* (a local New Orleans online publication and database of performers) manage to acquire this kind of power in two ways: (1) They have access to symbolic and economic capital or resources, which enable them to fix in time, reproduce and disseminate their discursive practices to a large number of people, (2) and they have the ability to create discursive representations of reality that are “mediated” and representative of reality only so far as they only represent reality.

Institutions of mass media gain their symbolic and economic power by engaging in “large-scale production and generalized diffusion of symbolic forms in space and time” (Thompson 17). Cultural or symbolic power stems from one’s ability to produce, fix, and transmit symbolic content (such as information or any type of intellectual, cultural or artistic activity) and disseminate it to others; the symbolic resources to which institutions commonly have access range from “skills,

competence and forms of knowledge” and “accumulated prestige, recognition and respect” to the command of “technical means of fixation and transmission” (16) and of “material and financial resources” (17). For example, *JazzTimes* has the ability to produce, fix in time and space, and disseminate a written and printed CD review or an interview with an artist to a large amount of readers worldwide, encourage those readers to feel a certain way about the CD, performance or performer and potentially persuade them to buy the CD. In a print or online medium, the source of the symbolic power and the means of action are mostly printed words and sometimes images. Economic power, on the other hand, rests on one’s ability to create material and financial resources, in most cases with the aim of augmenting one’s economic power. An institution augments its economic resources by reproducing symbolic forms in multiple copies for consumption by an indefinite number of readers. (Thompson’s definition of institutions of mass communication presupposes that their “products are available in principle [though not necessarily in actuality] to a plurality of recipients” [24].) An institution’s economic power is determined by the economic or market value of its products. Through reproduction, symbolic forms are commodified, or turned into objects that can be sold and bought in a market. The greater the number of multiple copies of an issue that a print medium can produce and sell, the greater is its economic and symbolic power. The greater the economic valorization of a symbolic form that an institution disseminates, the greater is the institution’s prestige.

The power of institutions to intervene in the course of events stems also from their ability to reconstruct reality discursively, disseminating the representations to a great number of people and presenting them as real. Thomson points out that institutions of mass media create, through social patterns of behavior, a new kind of social interaction – mediated quasi- interaction (82 – 84). While face-to-face interaction (such as actual face-to-face conversation between two or more people) takes place in the “context of co-presence” (Thompson, 83) and a “mediated interaction” involves participants who are spatially and/or temporally removed (such as communication over the phone or via mail), both of these types of interaction are dialogical in nature and involve a “two way flow of information and communication” (Thompson 82-83). However, technologies and institutions of mass communication (books, newspaper, magazines, radio, television, etc.) have made possible and thrive

on action and interaction at a distance that is monological in that the flow of information is primarily one-sided – Thompson calls this “mediated quasi-interaction” (84 [see also Fairclough, *Language* 49 and *Analysing*, 30-31 and 219]). Mediated quasi-interaction creates essentially unequal power relations between the parties involved – producers on the one hand and receivers/consumers on the other (Fairclough, *Language* 49).<sup>6</sup> Fairclough points out that:

Producers exercise power over consumers in that they have the sole producing rights and can therefore determine what is included and excluded, how events are represented, and ... even the subject positions of their audience”

(*Language* 50).

A good illustration of the impact of the institutions of mass media on our society is the genre of news report. The genre of news report is an “interpretive and constructive process,” even a “form of social regulation.” It is inherently selective in that it includes some voices and texts, excludes others, and “reduces complex series of events whose relationship may not be terribly clear to stories, imposing narrative order upon them” (Fairclough, *Analysing* 84-85). The power that mass media like news reports have over consumers is realized in the portrayal of social events and texts that are primarily non-linguistic, such as jazz performance (and a multitude of other social events). A jazz performance can produce a wide variety of texts, even though the discursive activity during one particular performance may have an ancillary role. Texts that create a jazz performance can include any type of verbal or non-verbal communication that is part of the performance, as well as the music itself and visual images. The genre of review of such a performance structures the texts that were

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<sup>6</sup> Though the flow of information is primarily one-way (from producers to the audience), the audience or readers are not simply passive recipients of mediated discourses. On the contrary, readers actively and consciously participate in the reception of mediated messages by interpreting the messages and making conscious choices with regard to the consumption of mediated discourse. For example, they can refuse to buy a particular magazine or refuse to watch a specific TV program. Thompson notes that reception must be seen as an “activity,” a kind of “practice in which individuals take hold of and work over the symbolic materials they receive” (39). In addition, individuals can also actively influence the processes of production of symbolic materials, for example, by writing letters to the editor or phoning specific TV or radio shows (Thompson 25). However, though not entirely one-way, the communication between mass media producers and mass media recipients is still largely asymmetrical, in that mass media producers have access to and the ability to disseminate dominant institutional discourses and recipients have the limited choice of buying or not buying the materials and of interpreting them.

produced during the course of one particular performance, interprets them, evaluates them, and re-structures them so as to produce a new kind of text and genre, the review, whose text is primarily linguistic. The impact of a review of a jazz performance stems from its power to represent in a digested and linear form a complex social event.

When Fairclough talks about this phenomenon, he uses the term “genre chains” and points out that the primary text (in this case, the performance per se) is being “filtered” as it moves along the different genres that also claim to realize it discursively (34). One particular social event (e.g. jazz performance) can be discursively realized in a variety of different ways through a variety of different genres: It can not only become a music review published in a magazine (news report), but also a linguistic text in the mouths of music goers (chat). Whereas the primary social event (the music performance) can include a variety of voices that structured the real jazz performance, the reported text (chat, talk or a review) can suppress some of these voices. The voices and discourses that do not “make” it through and are not represented in the reported text are said to be filtered.

Our understanding of social events derives in large part from media representations. In the age of mass media and globalization, most people in the Western hemisphere have access to events from remote locations, which means that they can learn about a specific performer, politician, or a brand new car model by reading the news and watching the television. We do not have to be physically present, as in face to face conversations, in the same space-time as a product or event advertised to decide whether we would like to spend our money on it and see it in real time. For music critics and music fans, media provide an important source of information as to the whereabouts of a particular performer, her recordings and performances. For jazz performers (or any public figures, really), television and radio airtime, and magazine and newspaper coverage provide important means of survival. Through media coverage, jazz performers can build their careers, fan base and revenue, reaching out to people they would not have been able to reach only a century ago. However, it is also important to note that in many cases, we as fans have to rely on mediated representation of events and people to form our understanding of them. For instance, when we read a review of a jazz performance, our understanding of the event and performer is mediated by the review; we do not have

the immediate, physical experience of the event to help us determine whether the event unfolded exactly as described in the review.

Critical discourse analysis, which assumes that socio-linguistic conventions both reflect and help to perpetuate unequal distribution of power, finds media discourse especially well suited for analysis because of the way media genres not only reflect but also restructure social events. Mass media discourses, like other discourses, contribute to the maintenance of socio-linguistic conventions, but because of their wide accessibility, they are more powerful in retaining the current conventions. Because of their wide appeal and seemingly “objective” representations of reality – which stem from the status that institutions of mass media hold in our society, their prestige and symbolic power – mass media discourses function as perpetuators of unequal relations of power, which may seem natural when represented in mass media with regularity.

### **5. Postmodernist Representation: Reality or a Simulacrum?**

Since one of the goals of mass media institutions is to “mediate” reality to the public by representing vignettes of social events, it may be helpful to attempt to define reality. Barry Brummett gives us a reader-friendly definition of reality, differentiating it from representation and simulation:

Reality is what happens when I stub my toe on a stone; it is immediate, material experience. Representation is my telling you about my stubbing my toe; the telling of it is not the same as stubbing my toe; it is the re-presenting of it to you in signs and symbols. Simulation is my stubbing a toe on a stone in the seventh dungeon level of the latest Academics of Doom video game; it is a self-contained fantasy..., not real or a representation of the real but an experience within a world apart from the world.

(1)

In this sense, media genres are only able to disseminate representations of the real. As Thompson points out, mediated quasi-interaction helps to construct a new kind of reality – mediated reality, or hyperreality. The critic claims that media have “altered our sense of the past [and] of the world which

lies beyond the sphere of our personal experience” (34). Our understanding of events, people, and things that lie beyond the world of our immediate experience is always solely mediated, and therefore only a representation of the real. But since we have access to and therefore an understanding of some events only through mediated representations, then those representations become reality for us: we experience them as though they were reality. This mediated reality – images and discursive representations of events, people, and objects – can be reproduced infinitely through technical reproduction, and finally eclipse the real. Jean Baudrillard notes: “At the limit of this process of reproductibility, the real is not only what can be reproduced, but that which is always already reproduced. The hyperreal” (186). Baudrillard uses the term “simulacrum” to refer to the mediated and reproduced event recognized as real (186). In the arena of jazz performance, the simulacrum can be either a televised performance which is accessed as real by those who have access to the reproduction, or a textually reconstructed representation of the performance (a review or a news report).

Moreover, our lived experience, according to Thompson, is “preceded by a set of preconceptions derived, at least to some extent, from the words and images conveyed by the media” (35) – and so our understanding of our place within this world is, to a certain extent, formed by simulacra. For instance, if our own community is represented through a medium of mass communication, we will derive at least a portion of our understanding of this community from media representations of this community. If we happen to be a member of the community of jazz singers, then our understanding of ourselves as singers will stem in part from media representations of other jazz singers. The reproduced image of the community of jazz singers becomes the real community so that we have a “mediated” understanding of ourselves.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Baudrillard might argue that our understanding and experience of the world is also a “simulation” (in Brummett’s sense of the word) since we have no way of checking whether the mediated representations of events, people, and objects objectively exist in this world or whether they are only simulations. E.g., the main plot of the 1997 film *Wag the Dog* directed by Barry Levinson was largely based on the premise and possibility of manufactured (and therefore also simulated) reality.

## **6. The Language of Experts: Promotional Genres, Conversationalization of Genres, and Technologization of Discourse**

The selective reconstruction of texts and events for large audiences in news media is guided by a certain set of principles and linguistic choices, designed to enhance the economic desirability and value of commodities, whether that commodity is an audio recording, a music event, a jazz performer, a politician, a restaurant service, or a pair of jeans. In “Global Capitalism and Critical Awareness of Language,” Norman Fairclough uses the term “technologisation of discourse” (par 18) to refer to this careful structuring of discourse with the aim to increase (or sometimes decrease) the value of a commodity. He points out that discourse in the postmodern era has been commodified in that language is increasingly becoming the one aspect of goods or services that ‘sells.’ As an example, he talks about a restaurant service, a commodity that no longer consists only of the kind of food or drink served, but includes also the “appearance, behavior and talk of the staff” (par 17). The look of the place where the food is being served, the appearance of the staff, as well as the language that the staff use to interact with customers are all part of the commodity and help to determine its economic value. In a similar way, jazz performance as a commodity does not consist only of the actual music delivered, but includes the appearance of the performer and her interaction with her audience on stage, as well as all visual and textual representations of jazz performance on websites, television, radio, or on CD and magazine covers.

Mass media genres such as the jazz performance review or interview rely even more heavily on language to promote performers, music recordings, or music venues where jazz is normally being heard with the aim of making them more desirable. The interview and review genres are promotional and “purpose-driven” genres in that their purpose is to sell “commodities, brands, organizations, or individuals” (Fairclough, *Analysing* 71 and 33), and in the postmodern age, the language that they use largely determines whether or not they succeed in achieving this goal. Because language is so vitally important, it “comes to be designed for success on markets” (Fairclough, “Global” par 17) and commodified much like the commodities it purports to sell.



Fairclough's notions about discourse, its technologization and commodification, were importantly influenced by Jurgen Habermas's idea that discourse, which primarily serves the purpose of communication, has been subject to practices of instrumental rationality, practices whose main aim is arriving at a goal, as opposed to establishing bonds through communication. Habermas claims that "spheres of communicative action, centered on the reproduction and transmission of values and norms, [have been] penetrated by a form of modernization guided by standards of economic and administrative rationality" (164). As a result, the "life-world," the aspect of human interaction realized as ordinary everyday communicative practices, has become the domain of "specialists," who parcel out the life-world into segments, each subject to the dictates of specialized knowledge and expertise. Consequently, there has been a growing alienation between the culture of the larger public and that of "experts" (165). This distance of the specialists from the larger public and their expertise in their field has also led to the unquestioned acceptance among the public of their status as authorities in the field of their expertise. Thus, for example, news reporters' representations of events may be accepted as facts by the larger public simply because reporters are assumed to be experts in their field (their authority stems from their status as reporters). These reporters will use what Fairclough calls "commodified" or "technologised" discourse as a way of solidifying their status as "experts," but also to enhance their value as commodities and the value of their products (reports, reviews, etc.)

However, promotional and purpose-driven genres also frequently employ another discursive strategy as a way of enhancing their market value, which runs counter to the tendency of technologization. Genres such as radio talks, broadcast news, or commercials often "take on certain features of the conversational language within the (anticipated) contexts in which they are listened to or watched (typically at home)" (Fairclough, *Analysing* 35). Fairclough speaks of "synthetic personalization" (*Language* 62) and "conversationalization of genres" (*Analysing* 35) to express the idea that certain genres that are purpose driven (and expressive of the instrumental rationality that characterizes the world of "experts" – to use Habermas's term) achieve their goals by purposefully utilizing the "personal" language and discourses that characterize the "life-world." Other scholars have noted that "synthetic personalization" helps producers build rapport and intimacy with consumers. For example, Mary Talbot shows that this strategy has three components: "an impression

of two-way interaction, an informal style that is closely linked to positive politeness and the establishment of common ground” (185). The discursive pattern is characterized by frequent use of the terms of address “you” or “we,” which gives the impression that the writers (producers, reporters) and readers (audience) form one group of people with shared values, norms, and shared common-sense notions (185-186). Direct address to “you” also helps to build the illusion of two-way interaction, which characterizes face-to-face conversations. Conversationalized genres sometimes invoke positive politeness strategies, such as compliments, as a way of making consumers feel “interesting” and “valued” (92).

## **7. Feminist Theory: Social Construction of Gendered Identities**

Various postmodernist scholars point out that the alienation between the larger public and the detached world of “experts” (Habermas) has brought about a split between the subject and the object of knowledge, which generate a corresponding “series of dualisms”: body/mind, matter/spirit, emotion/reason, femininity/masculinity (Waugh 2). While the feminine came to be equated with the body, the matter, the emotion, and that which can be observed and manipulated for its own end, the masculine came to represent the mind, the spirit, the reason and that which does the observing and manipulating, the voice of the rational. In addition, to counter their fear of all that threatens masculinity, the modern and postmodern eras and discourses have identified women with all that cannot be rationally controlled or subdued: mortality, desire, emotionality, nature (Waugh 203). These representations are largely discursive in character and naturalized through repetition within various discourses.

Mary Talbot points out that our “masculine and feminine identities” are socially constructed as “effects of discursive practices” (Talbot 191). From the time we are born, various institutional and societal practices create discursive spaces for us within which we are obliged to perform our gendered roles and identities (Talbot 156). Images and concepts of masculinity and femininity are ingrained in our institutions and discourses, determine who we are, what we think of ourselves, and perpetuate assumptions regarding the proper performance of gender. Because discursive institutional practices seem inevitable and natural through frequent reoccurrence, the performance of our gendered identities

and roles seems inevitable and natural as well. Discursive practices that construct our gender also perpetuate social and power relations between genders and validate gender difference.

However, we – the ordinary women and men who occupy Habermas’s “life-word” – also actively participate in the performance of our gendered identities and enact our gender by the way we speak, dress, or interact, among other things. By agreeing to perform our masculine and feminine roles and identities, as represented through discourse and institutionalized, we actively participate in the social construction of our gender, or—as Talbot says—we “perform” our gendered identities (157).

### **8. A Paradigmatic Woman, A Paradigmatic Man: Men’s Fantasy**

Writing in 1977, Julia Stanley explores the way women’s sexuality is represented and reconstructed metaphorically through language in a male-dominated world and claims that the terms which men have created to refer to women show the patriarchal assumption and fantasy that a “woman’s only means of identification lies in her relationship to a man (or men)” (305). One of Stanley’s main arguments is that women are able to capitalize on the “culturally favored stereotypes of women, like passivity, instability, shrewishness, and pliancy” by fulfilling “the male expectations embodied in these stereotypes” and exploiting men’s “fantasies of women projected by these expectations” (306). Women who are willing or able to do this can achieve financial success. Stanley focuses on the prostitute as a representative of women who willingly lend their bodies in service to men in return for financial rewards while capitalizing on men’s fantasies: “The prostitute personifies for the male the dual aspects of the female that he seems to cherish: he can look down on the prostitute as being inferior to him in social status; at the same time she creates for him a fantasy world in which woman harkens to his every beck and call” (307). This dual aspect of the prostitute is what makes her desirable in the eyes of men and a valuable commodity. By the same token, it can be argued that any contemporary woman who is able or willing to fulfill this male fantasy and become passive and inferior (or at least pose as such) is cherished by men and looked upon as a valuable commodity. In the arena of jazz, where success depends on the approval of an audience, women are frequently forced or choose to perform their gendered roles as a way of increasing their desirability and appeal. The assumption is that a woman who willingly performs her gender will be considered more desirable and

therefore also a more highly-valued commodity than one who does not succumb to the dictates of the patriarchal rationality.

The critic MacKinnon points out that the patriarchal discourse creates a prototype of a spectator, a “theorized” or ideal male, in order to counter its fear of the “feminization” of the male (127). This theorized male is characterized by a set of attributes that are denied to women, which construct him as overtly masculine. Though the prototypical spectator was first noted in narrative cinema, which objectified the female as an object of “erotic gazing” (128), this notion can be applied to all social contexts which allow for the creation of the subject positions of a “spectator” (audience) that interprets and evaluates and a “spectacle” (music performer or actor) that can be evaluated. The male spectator constructs the female spectacle not only as an object to be looked at, in a possessive and evaluative way, but also as an “object of [erotic] gaze” and sexual desire. The objectification of the female is made possible through her sexualization. The critic emphasizes the fact that even though the ideal male is a pure theoretical construct, the social assumption constructed by the dominant patriarchal discourse is that he exists.

A female jazz musician on stage functions within this discourse of “idealized manhood” which constructs her femininity as an antipode to “idealized” masculine characteristics, within a patriarchal discourse that defines her as an object of male gaze, desire and control. Her femininity is socially constructed and “idealized” (read: idealized in the “theoretical” male’s eyes, objectified and sexualized) to the same extent that the man’s maleness is idealized.

Moreover, institutions of mass media contribute to the dissemination of these representations of idealized masculinity and femininity. Mass media articles and TV shows assume that to be desirable, or even simply to be a legitimate member of the female sex, a woman has to become an object, commodified and beautified for the pleasure of men (Talbot 170-171). The representations of womanhood in mass media show women’s bodies “fragmented and itemized” for the pursuit of beauty. (186). The assumption is that representations which highlight a woman’s gender and sexuality will be considered more valuable and desirable than those that do not. Since in the absence of face-to-face interactions media institutions must produce discourse with some interpreters in mind, they have to address an “*ideal subject*,” a viewer, a listener, or a reader (Fairclough, *Language* 49). If the

prototype of a spectator has been constructed by the patriarchal discourse as an idealized male, it is plausible that institutions of mass media produce language and images with this socially constructed ideal male spectator in mind. This specific practice in turn serves to commodify women, their bodies, and gender, as that which is offered to men for consumption. By circulating the notions of femininity inherent in patriarchal discourse, institutions of mass media help to sustain the inadequacies in the distribution of social power.

### **9. Interdiscursivity and Intertextuality: Discourse as a Social Practice**

Norman Fairclough defines interdiscursivity as the mixing of genres. Much like discourse, genres are “important in sustaining the institutional structure of contemporary society” (*Analysing* 32). The mixing of genres occurs when a genre that is normally associated with a specific institution draws on discourses that are associated with other institutions (34 – 35). In the post-modern era, this happens quite often, as genres often incorporate technologized discourses and mass media genres in particular are regularly conversationalized (see the discussion above). For example, the genres of the jazz performance review and the jazz interview frequently use not only specialized vocabulary associated with jazz, such as “horns” for brass instruments, but also make use of the term of address “you.” In addition, they can also incorporate discourse types that seemingly have nothing to do with jazz at all. Reviews of female performers, for instance, frequently incorporate references to the discourses of motherhood or sexuality, as I will show in my analysis, and reviews of both female and male performers incorporate the discourse of patriarchy.

Intertextuality, on the other hand, is the inclusion or exclusion of particular voices and points of view in a specific text or a genre (Fairclough, *Analysing* 41). All texts and genres are characterized by varying degrees of intertextuality or dialogization (42), depending on the number and kinds of voices that they include or exclude. Their level of intertextuality also determines their orientation to difference and hegemony. Whereas “undialogized language is authoritative and absolute,” (42) language that leaves room for dialogue will include a wide variety of voices or texts that created the primary social event, i.e. a jazz performance. While the primary social event may be characterized by a high level of intertextuality, a reported text (chat or review) may reduce the intertextuality of the

primary text drastically. But even media genres vary in their orientation to dialogue. E.g., a review may incorporate a variety of voices that structured the primary social event and be open to difference and public dialogue, or it may suppress some of the voices that structured the social event and represent it discursively in a hegemonic way, as the creation of one person (the music reviewer). A text or a genre can advocate one particular representation or interpretation of an event or a person by minimizing dialogue and representing only the voices and texts that favor the particular interpretation that the text aims to purport.

A very useful CDA tool is thus to analyze the orientation to dialogue as well as interdiscursivity of a particular text or a genre. The analysis of “significant absences” developed by Fairclough (*Analysing* 47) is based on the assumption that in any given genre or text, there are voices and discourses that can be both included and excluded.

The concepts and theories that I have covered in this chapter are important for understanding the assumptions and goals of CDA. The tools that CDA uses, mostly aimed at detailed qualitative analysis of texts and discourses, help to expose the underlying ideologies and assumptions of our society, implicated in language and contributing to unequal distribution of power. In the next chapter, I will explain in detail those CDA tools that I will use in my analysis of discursive representations of jazz performance.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Research Questions and Analytical Techniques

My goal in this study is to use the tools of CDA to explicate an area of unequal distribution of power in society as represented by the institutions of jazz and mass media, in discourse about jazz vocal artists. Specifically, I will focus on the way the genres of jazz CD review, jazz performance review, and interviews with jazz artists represent the artists' identities, roles, achievements and skills as musicians. I will analyze these three genres as represented by the institutions of *JazzTimes* and *Live New Orleans*, the first a widely-known print media publication, also accessible online (in full as a subscription), the second a local New Orleans publication and database of musicians. My assumption, following Norman Fairclough and other CDA scholars, is that the achievement and skills of jazz vocal artists will be represented from a hegemonic standpoint, reflecting the commonsense assumptions about men and women and their roles in patriarchal society. Because of these covert assumptions and the belief that the maximization of gender difference sells (Talbot 1998:199), the discursive representations of female and male performers will emphasize their gendered roles and identities.

While the analytical approaches that CDA draws on are varied, the analytical techniques that inform my analysis are inspired mainly by M.A.K. Halliday's functional analysis of discourse (otherwise known as Systemic Functional Linguistics or SFL), especially his analysis of the clause as representation; Norman Fairclough's postmodern approach to discourse analysis, namely his analysis of presuppositions, significant absences, interdiscursivity and intertextuality; and also by naming analysis, which has been used by various feminist scholars, but is also related to M.A. K. Halliday's analysis of lexical connotation (Halliday 2004:40).<sup>8</sup> I have chosen these tools because they illuminate particularly well speakers' and writers' assumptions, which are implicit in texts and discourses, and make them explicit. These tools are also well suited for an analysis whose goal is to show how unequal distribution of power is encoded in language.

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<sup>8</sup> One of the first scholars who performed naming analysis was Julia Stanley, whose study was discussed in chapter two. Kate Clark also devoted a portion of her study "The Linguistics of Blame: Representations of Women in The *Sun*'s Reporting of Crimes or Sexual Violence" to naming analysis.

## 1. Systemic Functional Linguistics

The functional approach to the analysis of discourse, developed by M.A. K. Halliday, provides a concrete and extensive set of methods and tools that can be used to show how mass media genres reconstruct complex social events and texts in a narrative way and how institutional power and societal assumptions are encoded in, represented and expressed through discourse.

In his chapter, “Clause as Representation,” Halliday shows how the “grammar of the clause” (170) structures our experience: “The clause is ... a mode of reflection, of imposing order on the endless variation and flow of events.” Halliday explains that the transitivity system of the English clause “construes the world of [our] experience into a manageable set of PROCESS TYPES, each process type provid[ing] its own model or schema for construing a particular domain of experience” (170). As each process type is capable of construing one particular experience in a unique way, writers can and do make choices (often unconsciously) with regard to process types when referring to a particular social event or action. Though Halliday differentiates between six process types, depending on the type of action or activity which the verb represents, I will refer to only four process types in my analysis. The following charts include short descriptions and examples of different process types, with the verbs representing the process highlighted and underlined:

*Table 1*

(1) **Material process types** refer to the physical processes of the “external world,” and are used to depict actions and events (“doings” and “happenings” [180]), including abstract or metaphorical processes:

The lion **sprang**

Emily **caught** a trout

I **hit** Peter

The company **has succeeded**

The disappointing forecast **dampened** the enthusiasm

(180, 196)



Table 2

(2) **Mental process types** refer to the inner experience of our states of being, our reflection on or reaction to our “outer experience” (170) and are used to express people’s emotion, perception, or cognition (198 – 199):

I **hate** cockroaches

**Do** you **want** lasagna?

I **feel** something on my foot

I **respect** them both

I **find** him interesting

This **reminds** me of Tamara

Neighbors **noticed** him return home later that day

(197, 199, 203 – 204)

Table 3

(3) **Relational process types** are used to classify, characterize, or identify people, objects or concepts (210), usually with the help of the verbs “to be” or “to have” (or an equivalent) (214), to express possession, and to ascribe the circumstance of time, place, manner, cause, accompaniment, role, matter or angle (240). Relational clauses set up a “relationship of being” between two entities: “something is said to ‘be’ something else;” (213) or something ‘possesses’ something else.

There are important differences among the first three types: while material clauses construct experience solely as having an impetus in the external world, mental clauses construct experience solely as unfolding from within; relational clauses can construe both inner and outer experience:

The bottle **is** empty

Sarah **is** wise

Peter **is** a genius

Your story **sounds** complete nonsense

The one in the backrow **must be** you

Table 3, cont.

Mr. Garrick <b>played</b> Hamlet
Peter <b>has</b> a piano
The meeting <b>is</b> on Friday
One quarter of the entire population of African <b>is</b> in Nigeria
(211 – 212, 216, 219, 227, 239)

Table 4

<p>(4) <b>Verbal process types</b> are used to attribute speech acts to people or abstract entities and in general to express any kind of “symbolic exchange of meaning” (253). They help to introduce what is meant or said as direct speech or to attribute information to a particular source and frame it as indirect speech:</p> <p>I <b>replied</b>, “Look, it’s three minutes to three.”</p> <p>Emily <b>said</b> that she had trout for dinner</p> <p>My watch <b>says</b> it’s half past ten.</p> <p>(252-253)</p>
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Process types construct our experience as a “flow of events” unfolding through time (179), and the amount of change that is said to happen – or the “quantum of change in the flow of events” (179) – depends on the process type used. For instance, the material clause “Emily caught a trout” represents a greater amount of change than the verbal clause “Emily said that she had trout for dinner.” While the material clause represents Emily’s action as that which brought about transformation in the world, the verbal clause, though representing Emily’s action as that which was *registered* by the speaker, does not represent her action as something that has an impact on the flow of events in the world in a physical or material way. However, both the material clause and verbal clause represent a greater amount of change than the mental clause “I hate cockroaches,” which only

attributes the ability to express emotion or sensation to the speaker, or the relational clause “Sarah is wise,” which only attributes certain qualities or characteristics to Sarah.

The distinction between the four process types becomes important when we recall our definitions of power (see chapter two, footnote two): In CDA, a definition of power assumes that a “powerful” person will be able to act (or compel others to act on one’s behalf) in the pursuit of one’s interests and/or to intervene in a series of events to affect their outcome. Thus, it can be argued that a person who is represented by the grammar of the clause as being able to affect transformation in a flow of events will be also represented as having a great amount of power or agency to ‘make things happen.’

The grammar of the clause ascribes varying degrees of agency or power to people, objects and concepts, depending on their place in the structure of the clause and the process type used. The roles of *participants* are attributed to people, objects or concepts that are “involved in” (Halliday 175) and often affected by the unfolding of the events. The first participant, called a “logical subject” in traditional grammar, is the “doer of the action” (Halliday 56) – though he may not be capable of actually performing any physical action. For example, *Sarah* in “Sarah is wise” from above has a prominent position in the sentence as a logical subject, despite being involved only in a mental process. In addition, depending on the process type, there is sometimes a second participant (affected by the unfolding of the events). This participant often occurs as the object of the verb, as in the material clause “Emily caught a trout” from above, where “trout” (the object of the verb “caught”) is affected by Emily’s action. *Circumstances* are also part of the clause, but they do not directly participate in the process. Instead, they are optional and are only “associated with” the unfolding of events (Halliday 175). Because circumstances represent people or objects that may be omitted in the representation, they are seen as less crucial than participants, as I will show in my analysis.

### **1.1 Material Clauses**

In material clauses, the role of the first participant, or Actor, is assigned to the person or object capable of performing some action and bringing about change in the unfolding of events through “some input of energy” (Halliday 179). In a transitive material clause (which represents “doings”), the

outcome of the Actor’s actions is registered on a second participant, called the Goal. The Actor is constructed as either in control of the outcome of the action (intransitive), or as having power to influence the actions or states of others (transitive).

*Table 5*

<b>Actor</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Transitivity</b>
The lion	sprang			intransitive/happenings
Jhelisa	vibed off of	her backing trio		intransitive/happenings
Emily	caught	a trout		transitive/doings
I	hit	Peter		transitive/doings

People (animals or objects) who are construed as Actors appear to possess more influence and power to make things happen than those who are textually realized as Goals on whom the outcome of the Actors’ competence is simply registered. However, Actors in transitive clauses are assumed to possess more power to perform actions that influence others than Actors in intransitive clauses, who are simply capable of “doing” something.

For instance, the singer Jhelisa in the following intransitive clause is the Actor who has the power to perform an act on stage: “Jhelisa vibed off of her backing trio.” However, Jhelisa only has control over her own body and actions and is not construed as being able to affect other people via her actions. On the other hand, the following transitive clause construes the singer, Partin, as an Actor who has control over and is able to influence the outcome of someone else’s actions and doings: “Partin has shoehorned all those horns into a studio to shape a debut disc.” The clause introduces a Goal (“all those horns”), over which Partin has control and on which the outcome of his action is registered. Since Partin is depicted as having control over “those horns” (the plural “horns” stands for musicians – horn players), he is construed as having power to affect other people’s actions. The singer Partin is also textually represented as having more power to affect the unfolding of events than the musicians (horn players) whom he “shoehorned” into a studio.

## 1.2 Verbal Clauses

The verbal clause presents only one participant, a Sayer who is capable of speaking or uttering a piece of information (Halliday 252-253). The verbal clause may also introduce a circumstance, a Verbiage, which represents everything which the Sayer uttered. (My analysis of the verbal clause is not extensive, so I was able to avoid using the term Verbiage.)<sup>9</sup> The Sayer's ability to perform acts that lead to change in the flow of events is questionable.

Table 6

<b>Sayer</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Verbiage</b>
Emily	said	that she had trout for dinner
My watch	says	it's half past ten
I	replied,	"Look, it's three minutes to three"
Lucia	warned	the crowd

For example, claiming that the singer Lucia "warned the crowd of the depressing nature of Elvis Costello's" song, does not assert the singer's ability to bring about any material change in the world. The sentence construes the singer as having the power to express herself verbally and voice her opinion regarding a piece of her repertoire, but it does not construct a picture of Lucia as someone capable of causing change in the flow of events through her speech act.

## 1.3 Mental Clauses

The mental clause assigns the role of the Senser to a person who is capable of knowing, feeling, or sensing and the role of the Phenomenon to that which is perceived, sensed, or 'known' by the Senser.

Table 7

<b>Senser</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Phenomenon</b>
I	hate	cockroaches
I	feel	something on my foot
I	respect	them both
I	find	him interesting

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<sup>9</sup> I have slightly revised Halliday's terminology with reference to the verbal clause, for simplification.

Table 7, cont.

Though the Senser can also come last in a clause and the Phenomenon first:

Phenomenon	Process	Senser
The conversation	frustrated	him
The meeting	annoyed	her

The Senser is constructed by the grammar of the clause as not being capable of performing any action, lacking the kind of power the Actor has to affect the course of events. Moreover, the mental clause can be used to represent a person's perception and awareness of or reaction to other people's actions as more important than the actions themselves. For example, the sentence "I respect them both," clearly mentions some indefinite other "them" as being found worthy of "respect" by the Senser. However, the actions that "they" performed, which may have bought about the Senser's esteem, are not mentioned. In the mental clause, the focus is on the Senser and what he or she thinks or feels. Because of the propensity of mental clauses to construct a person's opinion or perception of others as more important than the actions themselves, mental clauses are frequently used in mass media genres as a way of establishing a reporter's or journalist's knowledge or perception as more significant than the people, events, or things which the genre seeks to portray.

#### 1.4 Relational Clauses

The relational clause has two "inherent participants" (Halliday 211), which are construed as "one element in a relationship of being" (213) with the help of the auxiliary verbs "to be," "to have," or an equivalent. The first participant, a Carrier, is said to 'be' (or 'possess') the second participant, an Attribute.<sup>10</sup> The relational clause thus models our experience of the unfolding of events as "being" rather than "doing" (material clause) or "sensing" (mental clause) (Halliday 211). For this reason, it is an effective strategy for assigning roles, identities, or class-membership to people and objects (214) and a "central grammatical strategy for assessing" and evaluating (219). Sometimes, the verb which

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<sup>10</sup> Though Halliday distinguishes three different kinds of second participants in relational clauses, depending on the sub-type of the clause, I avoided making further distinctions for the sake of clarity and simplification (Halliday 219, 227, 245).

assigns an evaluative Attribute to the Carrier can be left out of the clause, and the relationship between the Carrier and its Attribute then becomes implicit (see chapter four, section eleven; and chapter five, section four).<sup>11</sup>

Table 8

**CarrierProcessAttribute**

The bottle is empty

Sarah is wise

Peter is a genius

Your story sounds complete nonsense

The one in the backrow must be you

Unlike the mental clause, which explicitly realizes the Senser as the one who does the perceiving or sensing, the relational clause elides (or leaves out) the one who does the role-assignment, so that qualities or possession ascribed to people, objects or entities via the relational clause seem intrinsic. Unlike the material clause, which construes the Actor as the source of the energy that brings about change in the world, the relational clause construes events or change as “unfolding ‘inertly’, without an input of energy” (211). The Carrier – a person, a thing, or an object – is thus literally the entity that “carries” or embodies someone else’s evaluation, classification, or characterization of her. Because this evaluation is implicit, the roles or identities that are assigned to the Carrier seem given, static, unchangeable and natural. The relational clause does not construe a participant capable of performing actions to bring about change in the world, but rather a participant that passively carries the identities and roles assigned by others. For this reason, in the mass media genres that I examined, the relational clause is a central means by which those with the power of

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<sup>11</sup> Though Halliday’s definition of participants discussed in section one in this chapter does not allow for the classification of the Attribute as a distinct participant (e.g., the adjective “wise” in “Sarah is wise” is not, strictly speaking, “involved” in the process of being), the classification of the Carrier and its Attribute as *two* inherent participants in a *relationship* of being is nevertheless useful for explicating how social stereotypes and bias are implicated in the linguistic structure of the sentence and maintained via traditional terminology (which maintains that the two participants are inherently one). When the Carrier and its Attribute are classified as two separate entities, the relationship between them and the role-assignment via the relational clause (which seem natural and given) become open to criticism and dispute.

representation in our society (i.e., journalists and media producers) define and evaluate those whose career partly depends on these representations – i.e., performers.

What is significant about the way the grammar of the clause constructs our experience (or the unfolding of events through time) is that people, objects, and even concepts or notions can be ascribed various amounts of agency, awareness, influence, command, or power depending on the process type used and on the way they are realized as participants or circumstances in the grammar of the clause. The speaker or writer can also determine, by virtue of process types, whether more agency is assigned to the person who does the talking or the person who is being talked about. The analysis of process types is thus an extremely useful tool in explicating textual representations of unequal distribution of power.

## 2. Parataxis, Hypotaxis: Expansion

M.A.K. Halliday uses the term “taxis” to refer to the degree of interdependency between clauses, distinguishing between “parataxis,” which characterizes the relationship between two or more clauses of equal status, and “hypotaxis,” which characterizes the relationship between clauses of unequal status (374). While each clause in a paratactic mode – or “nexus” (375) – is potentially independent, as it could stand on its own (such as in coordinate sentences), a clause which is “qualified hypotactically” is an “expansion” of the main clause (398). It is “brought in to support its main clause” (375), and for this reason has a “‘lower’ status” than the main clause (375).<sup>12</sup> Here are several examples of parataxis and hypotaxis, with the hypotactic modification highlighted and underlined.

*Table 9*

### **Parataxis**

This song ended the first set, and it was powerful.  
She picked spots to show her range, but her real range extended past an amount of octaves.  
I knew I shouldn't have tried to do that," he said.

<sup>12</sup> Halliday differentiates three types of expansion: elaboration, extension, and enhancement (395).



Table 10

**Hypotaxis**

Check it out (main) before it's over (hyp. mod.).

He shined on "That's My Desire," (main) popularized by Louis Armstrong (hyp. mod.).

You need to have more than a great voice (main) to be a wonderful vocalist (hyp. mod.).

I think (main) Manuel made the right decision (hyp. mod.).

Apart from process types and participants, it is important to pay attention to hypotactic modifications, as some may actually diminish the participant's agency. For example, in the last example above, the Actor Manuel is represented as having made the "right decision," but because this action is conveyed via a subordinate modifying clause, Manuel and his action are represented as having a lower status than the main mental clause. The grammar of this particular clause realizes the Senser's mental process (thinking) as having a higher status than the Actor's material process (making a decision).

**3. Presuppositions**

Presuppositions refer to "something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance" (Yule 25) and signal the speaker's "commitment to the existence of the entities named" (Yule 27).

The important defining property of semantic presupposition is that it is constant under negation. For example, on hearing the following sentence:

Table 11

Diana's sister visited the museum.

the following three presuppositions can be said to be encoded in the utterance by the speaker: (1) a person called Diana exists, (2) Diana has a sister, (3) and the museum exists. Because these three facts hold true even when the statement is negated (i.e., "Diana's sister did *not* visit the museum), they are

the presuppositions of a sentence. Presuppositions thus refer to what holds in both positive and negative versions of an utterance (see Yule 25-26; and Brown and Yule 28-31). The sentence in Table 11 also demonstrates that there are three types of definite noun phrases in English that can be the source of presuppositions: (1) phrases introduced by the definite article (e.g. “the museum”), (2) phrases introduced by possessive pronouns or nouns (e.g. “Diana’s [her] sister”), (3) and proper names (e.g. “Diana”).

CDA calls for a pragmatic notion of presupposition, which encompasses not only the semantic definition of presupposition (a proposition that holds true under negation), but takes into account also the “relationship between the speaker and the utterance, on the particular occasion of use” (Brown and Yule 27) and the “assumptions the speaker makes about what the hearer is likely to accept without challenge” (Givón 50, qtd. in Brown and Yule, 29). Analysis of presuppositions is important in CDA because it can reveal not only the assumptions and beliefs that readers might bring to bear on their interpretations and understanding of texts, but more importantly also the writers’ and speakers’ implicit assumptions, which influence the linguistic choices that they make while producing texts. According to Norman Fairclough (who uses the terms “presupposition” and “assumption” more or less interchangeably), presuppositions are the speaker’s beliefs about what exists, how people interact and how entities behave, as well as about what is desirable or undesirable. (Fairclough, *Analysing* 212-213).

Though Fairclough asserts that people’s presuppositions are “not properties of texts,” he shows that they are nevertheless “cued” in texts (*Language* 152) and “triggered” (*Analysing* 56) by formal linguistic features of texts. For example, the adjective “colorful” in the phrase “the colorful crowds gathered,” triggers the presupposition that the crowds that gathered were “colorful” (Fairclough, *Language* 153). This particular presupposition is “triggered” by the definite noun phrase (“the colorful crowds”), since it is true even when the statement is negated (i.e., “the colorful crowds did *not* gather”).

Presuppositions are an especially effective means of manipulating mass media audiences. Since producers of mass media genres have to address “ideal” readers without knowing who the actual readers are, they are often forced to assume some common ground or shared notions, which

may or may not be shared by the audience in actuality. For this reason, mass media genres can attribute to the audience's experience "things which they want them to accept." For example, the aforementioned clause attributes to the audience's experience the notion that crowds can be colorful. And because the propositions concerned are not explicitly stated, it is sometimes difficult for the listener or reader to identify them and, if they wish to, to reject them. The ability to trigger and determine textual presuppositions on a large scale is an important source of power by consent (Fairclough, *Language* 153-154).

I will limit my analysis of presuppositions to those presuppositions that are cued in (or can be inferred from) texts by means of definite noun phrases and reveal the writer's and reader's commonsense notions and shared assumptions. Most of the presuppositions that I will analyze below are triggered by possessive noun phrases such as "her caramel-flavored voice." In this instance, the presuppositions that a writer makes are cued by means of the adjective "caramel-flavored," in the possessive phrase "her caramel-flavored voice," which encourage the reader to believe (1) that a voice can have the flavor of caramel (2) and that the performer's voice has this flavor. Because the relation between the property attributed ("caramel-flavored voice") and the person is not expressed as a statement, the readers or audience are left to consult their commonsense notions about the way people and entities behave or appear to make sense of the message.

#### **4. Interdiscursivity**

Norman Fairclough defines interdiscursivity as the mixing of genres. A genre that appears to "mix" discourses may take on discourses shaped by institutions with which it is not usually associated. I have defined the word "discourse" in the previous chapter as social practice, a set of socio-linguistic conventions associated with social institutions. Here I will make a list of some discourses that seem to be prevalent in Western culture, and which play a key role in my analysis of the discourse of jazz, making note of some of the institutions which seem to determine and shape them.

Table 12

Discourse of jazz performance – shaped by institutions such as music clubs, mass media, jazz, music schools, or music stores and catalogues
Discourse of mass media reviews and interviews – shaped by institutions such as mass media, corporate business, music business, music stores and bookstores, or music clubs
Discourse of achievement – shaped by institutions such as sports, schools, music industry, film industry, corporate business, or politics.
Discourse of motherhood – shaped by institutions such as the family, medical care, or women’s magazines
Discourse of sports – shaped by institutions such as schools, state government, mass media, or the family.
Discourse of fashion – shaped by institutions such as mass media, beauty salons, clothing stores, or the family
Discourse of the “spiritual/intangible” – shaped by institutions such as the church, eastern religions, mythology, astrology, arts, inspirational literature, New Age, meditation, and the healing music industry
Discourse of sexuality – shaped by institutions such as medical care, clothing stores, beauty salons, pornographic media, or family
Discourse of patriarchy – shaped by institutions such as the family, the church, corporate business, schools, politics, or medical care.

Though the institutions of *JazzTimes* and *Live New Orleans* in their depictions of jazz performers usually draw on the discourse of mass media reviews, interviews or the discourse of jazz, at times various other discourses are incorporated, as I will show in the analysis below. An analysis of the incorporation of these “other” discourses can reveal important commonsense assumptions of speakers and writers.

## 5. Naming Analysis

Naming analysis is another useful tool that helps to uncover implicit beliefs and assumptions of the speaker and make them explicit. Speakers and writers can use names to refer to people or objects to assign specific identities and roles to these people or objects. Though the role-assignment may be

unconscious, the names used reveal the speakers' and writers' attitudes and beliefs about others. Kate Clark points out that "different names for an object represent different ways of perceiving it" (184), so naming is entirely subjective: A person who uses aggression to achieve political aims could be assigned the names or identities of a terrorist or a freedom fighter, depending on the subject position, viewpoint and inclination of the speaker (Clark 184).

In the mass media genres that I analyze below, such role-assignment or labeling is used to emphasize one or several aspects of jazz performers' identities, often constructing the performers in a narrow fashion. For example, the naming analysis of textual representations of jazz vocalists in the mass media publication *JazzTimes* that will be discussed in chapter six revealed that female singers are often referred to by narrow labels such as "a green-eyed beauty" or "the gal at the center of the party" apart from being referred to as singers.

In the following three chapters, I will use these CDA tools to analyze mass media discourse about jazz vocal artists, focusing on textual representations of gendered identities and achievement.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### **An Analysis of CD Reviews in *Jazz Times***

In this chapter, I will attempt to denaturalize the discourse of CD reviews, as represented by the mass media institution *Jazz Times*, to show how the language of the reviews constructs the performer's gender and his or her agency and power. I will use the following tools to analyze the discourse of these reviews: Hallidayan functional analysis of process types and participants, the analysis of textual presupposition, and the analysis of interdiscursivity. I have decided to use these three tools because they cover many of the nuances of gender representation in CD reviews. I will focus closely on all sentences in the reviews that represent the performers as participants, in both paratactic and hypotactic structures. I will analyze sentences built on the material model, to demonstrate in what ways the agency and power of jazz vocal performers are structured and represented through language – syntax patterns and word choice. This analysis will enable me to show the level and kind of agency that a performer is ascribed through discourse as well as the amount of power he or she has to affect the actions of others and the unfolding of events. I will analyze relational clauses to point out what specific identities and roles jazz vocal artists are claimed to represent and perform in the discourse of the CD reviews. I will also look at embedded presuppositions, evaluative statements and interdiscursivity to trace some common themes and concepts that the discourses of jazz and mass media have borrowed from discourses of other patriarchal institutions.

#### **1. The institution of *Jazz Times*: My Sample of CD reviews**

*JazzTimes* is a monthly magazine about jazz and jazz musicians published ten times a year. It provides profiles of jazz musicians, news coverage of the jazz industry, as well as CD, book and video reviews. Voted the “Best Jazz Periodical” by the Jazz Journalists Association for five years in a row, the magazine is among the world's leading publications on jazz, with a circulation of close to 112,000 copies world-wide, including about 7,500 in Canada and 10,000 in Europe. The magazine has an online version accessible to the general public, which includes texts of CD and concert reviews, as

well as excerpts from featured articles. Because of its distribution range and general accessibility, *Jazz Times* is instrumental in forming public opinion about the experience, customs, and lives of jazz musicians, as well as common practices in jazz and among jazz musicians. The publication also helps to create and sustain the image or prototype of a variety of jazz musicians, from jazz stars of the old era, such as Billie Holliday, to new and budding artists of the modern age.

Judging by the journal's title, *Jazz Times* tries to represent itself as a respectable and objective publication, as other news media publications that use the word "Times" in their titles (e.g. *The New York Times*). However, a close reading of several vocal jazz CD reviews reveals that the gender of the performer and gender-based assumptions inform the discourse about jazz vocal performance and performers in *JazzTimes*. (I will come back to *Jazz Times* in chapter six, where I will analyze the language used in interviews with jazz vocalists.)

Because I was interested in the most recent depiction of vocal jazz, I have chosen to analyze CD reviews in the last issue of *JazzTimes* published before I began work on my analysis. The CD reviews that I analyze were all published in the April 2007 issue of the magazine. To get a representative sample, I have looked at all CD reviews under the section "Reviews Vox" (which is a vocal section) that reviewed female and male vocalists and at the only other vocal CD review that appeared under a different section. I have gathered a total of nine reviews, six of which represented vocal performance recorded by female artists and three of which represented performance recorded by male artists.

Though all reviews were written by the same person, Christopher Loudon, who has been reviewing vocal jazz recordings and interviewing jazz vocalists for *Jazz Times* for several years, the discourse of the reviews is representative of the discourse of the institution of *JazzTimes*, and also to a certain extent of the discourse of jazz as represented by other media institutions and the everyday talk of regular people. Because of the reviewer's long association with *JazzTimes*, it can be argued that Mr. London's language has in part come to define the journalistic style and discourse of the publication. Moreover, Mr. London's journalistic style, like the language of other jazz journalists, is to a certain extent shaped by the social patterns of behavior inside institutions such as *JazzTimes*, other mass media institutions, and the institution of jazz, which determine the discourse of the genres

with which they are associated. In addition, much like *JazzTimes* readers, Mr. London is also to a certain extent influenced by other socio-linguistic practices in the society at large

I will show in the following two chapters that even though the *JazzTimes* CD reviews are the work of one man, the discursive practices that characterize them are detectable in work by other journalists, across other mass media genres that specialize in discursive representations of jazz performance and jazz performers, as well as in other mass media publications.

## **2. The Discursive “Disappearing” of the (Female) Artist**

The genre of a jazz CD review seems to favor a representation of jazz that effectively “disappears” the performers in order to focus on the reviewer, audience, qualities or assessment of the recording and its parts, and the performer’s individual attributes.<sup>13</sup> Whereas the performers are undoubtedly the agents who recorded and in some instances produced the recording or wrote the compositions on the album, rehearsed the musicians, and made other important artistic choices, their agency and even presence are greatly diminished in an effort to evaluate the recording and present it as a commodity.

The genre of CD review, as noted in chapter two, is a purpose-driven genre (Fairclough), in that its main goal is to describe, classify and evaluate the product—the music performance captured on the medium, the recording, and by extension the performer. Most people who are likely to read a CD review want to learn more about the artist, her style of music and vocal delivery to make an educated decision whether or not to buy the recording or possibly see the artist perform live. For this reason, the reviewer shares his impression of the recording in the review and gives advice to the audience, based on which the audience can determine the value of the product. As an “expert” in his field (Habermas), the reviewer also imparts other pertinent information about the artist, including the specific style of jazz that the audience is likely to hear on the recording.

Because the review genre is constrained by social practices of media institutions and the expectations of the public, the language of the review is very often technologized (Fairclough) and commodified, but also draws on the “warmth” of conversationalized genres (Fairclough), in order to

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<sup>13</sup> The verb “disappear” in a transitive sense – “to disappear a person” – was used by Joyce K. Fletcher in her book *Disappearing Acts* to refer to people with relational skills or “emotional intelligence” (like women), who tend to get “disappeared” from the organizational screen (2-3).



establish a common ground between the reviewer and the public. One of the textual representations of these practices is that performers often do not appear in participant positions in the grammar of the clause (Halliday). Rather, it is very often the CD itself, one particular song or the delivery of a particular song that becomes the participant, but also the indefinite pronoun “I” (representing the reviewer) or the term of direct address “you” (representing the audience) are represented as participants. What is perhaps more interesting is that the socio-linguistic conventions and constraints of the genre of jazz review construe the male performers as participants more often than the female performers. Since the roles of participants are assigned to people, objects or notions that are said to be directly responsible for the unfolding of events (Halliday), it can be argued that the discourse of the genre of CD review denies agency to female performers more often than to men.

### **3. Some Numbers**

Both the female and male performers are realized as clause participants a total of eight times in all nine reviews. However, since the April 2007 issue of *JazzTimes* features six reviews of female artists and only three of male artists, there is on average only about 1.3 clause in each review of a female vocalist that realizes the vocalist as a participant, but 2.6 clauses in each of the reviews of male vocalists that do the same. This detail, though it may seem insignificant, brings to mind the following question: If the female performer is not discursively realized as much as the male performer (regardless of her status as a participant), then what is the focus of the review of her recording?

The reviewer is sometimes the participant in mental clauses in reviews of female artists, but other entities, especially the CD itself (“it”) or the reviewer’s description of the CD and songs on the record (“seven-track magic carpet ride”) and the term of address “you” (sometimes implied) as well as other presupposed characteristics of the female singers (“Jane’s intimate jazz-meets-cabaret vibe”) or their careers (“the gap since her last foray into the great American songbook”) are also construed as participants in the reviews of recordings by women. The following is a list of all participants from one of the reviews of female performers:

Table 13

<b>Participant</b>
[You] (implied -- imperative)
Such
[You] (implied – imperative)
Her previous discs
This seven-track magic ride
It (referring to the disc)
It (referring to the disc)
It (referring to the disc)
It (referring to the disc)
It (referring to the disc)
It (referring to the disc)

In this specific case, the performer is not realized in the grammar of the clause at all and is effectively “disappeared” and turned into a commodity – the CD medium that is being evaluated and can be consumed by the audience. Her agency and presence on the recording are realized either as “it,” which recognizes the existence of the material disc (though not so much the existence of the singer), or as the evaluative phrase “this seven-track magic ride,” which represents the singer and her performance as a pleasurable experience or “trip” that can be bought for money, simulating the exotic world of Scheherazade and her one hundred thousand tales. Though not all female performers are discursively disappeared in this way, of the six reviews, three do not include the performer in participant positions at all.

For comparison, of the fifteen participant positions in the three reviews of male vocalists, eight represent the vocalists directly by name (in one case with the label “the Louisiana native”) or with a third person pronoun “he” while only two are filled by the term of address “you” and three by other referents. Also, two positions are filled by possessive noun phrases that refer to the male vocalists’ performance or skill that is directly related to their roles as professional musicians: “DeSare’s jaunty ‘They Can’t Take That Away From Me’” and “DeSare’s songwriting.”

#### 4. The Mental Clause

Reviewers – as those performing the description, classification and evaluation of the product – are textually construed as participants in mental clauses while evaluating female artists’ performance, but not while evaluating male artists’ performance. Statements such as, “I respect them both” (83) and “I suspect it’s a technique she learned by studying June Christy so carefully,” structure the reviewer (“I”) as the main participant, focusing on what he thinks or feels rather than on the singer’s actions.

Table 14

Senser	Process	Phenomenon
I	suspect	it’s a technique she learned by studying June Christy so carefully
I	respect	them both

The mental clauses construe the reporter as the Senser “I,” while the singers and their actions, which are either worthy of “respect” and admiration (in the second instance) or which convey important information about the singer’s talent (in the first case), are relegated to the status of the Phenomenon, that which is being “sensed” by the reporter. The performers are thus construed as being affected by the Senser’s (reviewer’s) actions and their skills and agency as objects of his evaluation and assessment. Because of this discursive construction, the assessment of their skills becomes more important than the skills themselves, and the reviewer’s actions more important than the singers’. By being framed by the reviewer’s evaluation, the female vocalists’ agency is compromised in both instances. Though the small number of reviews in one issue prevents me from making any broad generalizations, it is interesting to note that no evaluative statements of this sort appeared in the reviews of the male performers’ recordings.

It is not my aim to list and analyze the various entities that do appear in participant positions – since, as I have noted above, the CD review genre is a purpose-driven genre, so some commodification is to be expected. However, it is important to note that in the absence of the performer, the reviewer of the product becomes the agent in control of the textual representation and

construction of the performer and her mass media identity. By avoiding representing the performer textually as the participant, the reviewer constructs himself as having more agency than the performers, who are being commodified and evaluated by the genre. And the female performers, by *not* being realized as participants as often as men, also seem to be commodified, itemized, or “disappeared” twice as often as men.

### 5. Analysis of Process Types: The Power of the Participant

I will now focus on the sixteen sentences in which the performers do figure as participants. Here is the full list, with sentences numbered and divided into two groups -- Group A represent the full list of sentences from reviews of female performers (in which women figure a participants) and Group B represents the full list of sentences from reviews of male performers (in which men figure as participants). I have highlighted all clauses in paratactic modes as well as the main clauses in each hypotactic mode because the information represented in a main clause is usually considered more significant than the information represented as an expansion of the main clause (Halliday). I have also marked the process types in all clauses.

*Table 15*

<p><i>Group A (Female Performers as Participants):</i></p> <p>(1) <b>She looks like<sub>relational</sub> a suburban soccer mom and has<sub>relational</sub> a wide-open, sun-burnished voice to match.</b></p> <p>(2) <b>Kelly instead does<sub>material</sub> something marvelously clever</b>, intensifying<sub>material</sub> the ache by playing<sub>material</sub> it lighter, filling<sub>material</sub> her skies with clouds that are just starting to gray.</p> <p>(3) Three years ago, <b>the resourceful McKinley set about<sub>material</sub> to self-release<sub>material</sub> a Gaye tribute</b>, picking<sub>material</sub> from the cream of Massachusetts players to assemble<sub>material</sub> a sextet and laying<sub>material</sub> down 10 tracks either written by the Motown legend or strongly associated with him.</p> <p>(4) Wisely, given her warm, caramel-flavored voice <sub>relational</sub> – rather like Carol King via Nancy Wilson, with a layer of Aretha Franklin icing<sub>relational</sub> – <b>McKinley never attempts<sub>material</sub> to get down<sub>material</sub> to Gaye’s inimitable nitty-gritty.</b></p> <p>(5) Instead, <b>she cleverly inverts<sub>material</sub> the essence of each tune</b>, rechanneling<sub>material</sub> them from a distinctly female perspective.</p>
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Table 15, cont.

(6) **The suggestion of careful study of both Day and McRae is** relational **evident throughout,** and **the small-voiced Parker uses** material **whatever lesson she’s learned to full advantage,** melding material the soft curves of Day’s impeccable phrasing with McRae’s harsher edges.

(7) Yet, despite such formidable mentors, **rarely does Parker rise** material **above merely pleasant innocuousness.**

(8) **She comes across** relational **like a solid, dependable saloon chanteuse,** the sort that can be relational in pretty much any plush lounge, providing relational pretty, non-disruptive backing throughout the cocktail hour and sounding relational a wee bit better after a second martini.

Table 16

*Group B (Male Performers as Participants):*

(9) As his sophomore outing ably demonstrates material, **New Yorker Tony DeSare has earned** material **his place within the post-millennial crooner renaissance,** settling material into a comfortable berth between the pop hipsterism of Michael Buble and the more refined cool of Peter Cincotti.

(10) **[DeSare] also takes** material **an interesting approach to Carole King’s “I Feel the Earth Move,”** reinterpreting material it as a dreamy ballad with the gentlest hint of a bossa nova undercurrent.

(11) With his pleasant Mel Torme-meets-Paul Anka sound relational and his brassy big band relational, **the Louisiana native has been** relational **a favorite on the high society party circuit for just over half a decade,** with a resume that boasts six Presidential Inaugural Balls in D.C. (Dubya must really love this guy) relational, and Grand Carnival Ball in Memphis and a lot of big corporate gigs relational.

(12) **“Now, Partin has shoehorned** material **all those horns into a studio** to shape material a debut disc that makes relational 10 predictable stops along the Nat Cole/Bobby Darin/Sinatra highway.”

(13) **“Despite overwhelming arrangements, obviously modeled on classic Nelson Riddle and Billy May charts that leave him drowning in brass** relational, **Partin seems** relational **a nicely tailored polyester blend** of the sort you’re happy to settle for when genuine sharkskin isn’t available.”

(14) **“Poretz sounds** relational **so similar to the mid-1960s Lawrence** that even Eydie Gorme would likely find it tough to tell them apart in a blindfold test.”

(15) **“Actually, though, Poretz swings** material **harder than the by-the-book Lawrence ever attempted.”**

Table 16, cont.

(16) “In what amounts to a solid assortment of safely appealing standards<sub>relational</sub>, highlighted by pleasurable blending of Frank Loesser’s “My Time of Day” and “I’ve Never Been in Love Before” from *Guys and Dolls*, **Poretz proves<sub>material</sub> himself a fine belter and balladeer.**”

Focusing first on the thrust of each sentence, the main clause, it is apparent even before we get into an analysis of process types that there is a subtle difference in focus between the sentences in Group A and those in Group B. Whereas the majority of sentences in Group B (five out of eight) highlight the performer’s ability to prove his skill or mastery ([9] earn, [15] swing, [16] prove), his ability and power to command others and affect a change on the course of events ([12] shoehorn) or popularity and social status ([11] a favorite on the high society party circuit), the sentences in Group A highlight the performer’s appearances or roles ([1] a suburban soccer mom, [8] a solid, dependable chanteuse), voice quality ([1] a wide-open, sun-burnished voice, [6] small-voiced), and her lack of ability or will to perform ([4] never attempts to get down, [7] rarely does rise above). And while several sentences in Group A claim that the artist performed an act ([2] “did something clever,” [3] “set about to self-release,” [5] “invert[ed] the essence”), they nevertheless represent the artist’s action so as to undermine its significance (as I will show below).

## 6. Relational Clauses: Female Vocalists’ Roles and Identities

Many of the sentences in Group A discursively define the singer by construing her as a Carrier of qualities in a relational process ([1], [7], [8]). For example, in sentence (1) from above (“She **looks like** a suburban soccer mom and **has** a wide-open, sun-burnished voice to match”), the reviewer uses this grammatical strategy to construe the performer’s identity as a “suburban soccer mom” and as someone who has a “wide-open, sun-burnished voice to match” the identity of the soccer mom. In sentences (7) and (8), he uses the same strategy to textually construct the performer (Carrier) as “a solid, dependable saloon chanteuse” who is “rarely more than merely pleasant[ly] innocuous.” Because relational process types represent these qualities or identities as static, the identities are

difficult to dispute. For example, there is no mention of how exactly the singer from example (1) became a “soccer mom” (who or what made her a soccer mom?) or how the singer from example (7) became pleasantly innocuous. The grammar of the relational clause does not acknowledge any external energy or actions that may have brought the singer’s identities into being. The identities (assigned by the reviewer) are simply claimed to be true. For this reason, the relational clause constructs the reviewer’s subjective opinion of the singer as a fact—a fact that is not explained or justified, but simply stated. When the reviewer’s evaluative statements are construed via relational clauses, such as in the examples above, the performers become their identities and qualities as represented by the discourse of the clause—passive “carriers” of their looks, qualities, and identities constructed by others (the reviewer in this case).

What is significant about these characterizations is that they construct the artists’ identity in a gendered way. For example, what is significant about the fact that a jazz singer may or may not look like a suburban soccer mom? Even if the performer does look like a soccer mom (by the way, who defines what a suburban mom should look like?), her physical looks and appearance do not affect the quality of her singing or performance as captured on the audio medium. Her looks do not contribute (or subtract from) her skill or ability to record an album of jazz songs. The same is true of the singer from examples (6), (7) and (8). (Note: sentences [6-8] appear consecutively in the same review of the same vocalist.) In this case, the singer’s inability to deliver a noteworthy performance and her small voice (represented as a static quality—an adjective modifying the singer)—both negative evaluative statements – are framed by a reference to the singer’s appearance and look. Her identity as a singer is constructed by reference to the static and “non-disruptive” background that she has become, one that looks “pretty” when surrounded by other “pretty” and aesthetically-pleasing objects (such as those that one would expect to find in a “plush lounge”) and one that can provide an agreeable experience only if consumed with “a second martini.” The performer becomes a decorative object that fits in nicely with the surrounding objects, a feast for the eyes, but also a consumable item – objectified and capable of being exploited as such. Her ability as an artist to deliver a pleasing musical performance (a feast for the ears), is thus inextricably tied to her willingness to perform her feminine role and put on her feminine identity as this consumable, decorative and pliant object.

It is interesting to note that the construction of gender in this specific review is achieved, among other things, by cross-referencing the discourse of institutions that have traditionally provided men with a social space for the exploitation of women—such as men’s bars or pleasure houses. The first example also draws on the discourse of the family, motherhood, or sports (by constructing the performer as a soccer mom). All these discourses sanction the power and right of men to dominate women and to defer women to subordinate roles. Because of this, they are instrumental in upholding the stereotypes of women that contribute to our understanding of them as passive, motherly, and capable of looking good, but incapable of any meaningful or powerful action that could have any sort of impact on the world. The presence of these discourses in reviews of jazz vocal recordings shows that women in jazz are not immune to gendered evaluation and assessment of their performance.

### **7. Discourse of Achievement and Male Vocalists’ Roles**

By contrast, male performers are also getting gendered evaluations, but of a different kind. The assigning of qualities and identity building in the male artists’ case is (in two cases out of three) represented as a process, set in motion by the artist’s energy, which means that the relational clauses (the chief instruments for expressing evaluation and assessment, as I’ll emphasize in the next chapter) in which men figure do not simply relegate men to the status of handsome objects or consumable items. On the contrary, they construct the performers as being able to take care of business, showcasing their mastery or social status.

For instance, in example (16), Poretz is not simply a carrier of the identity of a “fine belter and balladeer” (even though that is the meaning implied in the relational clause – since that is how the reviewer characterizes him). The choice of words (especially the verb “to prove”) implies that the artist consciously and actively builds this identity by showcasing it (with an “assortment of standards” and an enjoyable “blending” of them) on the recording, “proving it” to the world, and thereby convincing others of his skill and talent. The male artist is thus ascribed far more agency than the female singers in the examples above. The same is true of New Yorker Tony DeSare from example (9), who does not simply *occupy* a static place within the “post-millennial crooner renaissance,” but has rather “earned” it—by his own effort and hard work (“earn”), activity (“settling”), and skill



(“ably”), as the discourse of the sentence implies. The singer is not simply a passive carrier of his identity as an able performer, but is rather able to “demonstrate” his talent to the world, as the material verb “demonstrate” (which frames the main clause) implies – and “ably” so. In these examples, the evaluative statements of the reviewer are modeled on the material process type, ascribing power and agency to the male performers. Example (11), though not modeled on the material type, nevertheless highlights the performer’s social status and achievement. The performer is claimed to be a “favorite on the high society party circuit,” with a “lot of corporate gigs,” an impressive “resume” and a “brassy big band” (I think that it is the alliteration in the last phrase – the three b’s – that makes the “brassy big band” sound so impressive).

In addition, material verbs and other lexical choices in the examples from Group B help to construe the male performers as successful individuals. The material verbs “swing” (example [15]) and “shoehorn” (example [12]) emphasize the performers’ ability to act with the aim of achieving something specific. Example (15) describes the singer Poretz as having a better sense of timing and rhythm (or swing) than Lawrence and as being able to swing with conviction. The material verb “to swing” represents the performer’s skill as an action, constructing him as someone who is able to apply some level of energy to transform himself with mastery into someone successful (one who “swings harder than” others).

The material clause from example (12) (“Now, Partin has **shoehorned** all those horns into a studio to shape a debut disc that makes 10 predictable stops along the Nat Cole/Bobby Darin/Sinatra highway”) emphasizes the male performer’s agency by making it the main focus of the sentence, construing the singer as having the ability to affect other people and their actions via *his* actions. The main clause depicts the singer as having the power to control (“shoehorn”) others (the metaphorical “horns,” which stands for musicians—horn players in his “brassy big band” [11]) and as the main input that brings about the change in the flow of events. The emphasis here is on Partin’s control over his musicians (“shoehorned” musicians “into a studio”) and over his music and record production (“shape[d] the debut disc”). In addition, he is shown as having control not just over one or two people, but over a crowd of them (“all those horns”). Partin is represented as having a large amount of control over the actions of others and as doing this skillfully. His agency is emphasized (by virtue of being

depicted in the main clause) and unmistakable (by virtue of being represented textually unambiguously). Also, the word “now” at the beginning of the clause functions as an attention getter – it’s almost as if the reviewer tried to say, “Look what Partin can do!”

These and other examples from Group B construct male singers as having the power to achieve something significant and tangible also by invoking the discourses of competition (swings harder than), success and achievement (shoehorn, demonstrate, prove), politics (a favorite on a high society party circuit), corporate business (corporate gigs) and money-making and trade (earn, shape), based within the patriarchal institutions of the family, state, and business – institutions which endow the male with ample access to social and economic power. By calling upon these various discourses that construe the male as successful, the reviewer constructs a discursive link between the performer’s skill as a musician and his ability to perform his gender role. While the female performers from above (i.e., the “saloon chanteuse” and the “soccer mom”) cannot be successful musicians unless they willingly perform their gender roles, the male performers cannot be successful if they do not live up to the representations of hegemonic masculinity constructed by the institutions of the family, state, business and politics – institutions which emphasize the man’s gender role as a bread-winner, money-maker, and someone capable of action on behalf of himself, his family, or business.

Obviously, the men who do not succeed or achieve the desired level of mastery are evaluated accordingly—much like the singer from example (13) who is claimed to be “a nicely-tailored polyester blend.” However, lack of success is not the same thing as lack of *means* to achieve success. While the female singers from above who become their bodies and voice qualities are objectified under the male gaze, Partin from example (13) is at least given some level of control over his music. Partin is the master of his own success, with “overwhelming arrangements” at his disposal—even if he does not handle these arrangements in a way that would prove his mastery (on the recording, they leave him “drowning in brass”).

## **8. The Grammar of the Material Clause: The Female Singer and Her Achievement**

As I pointed out in the chapter three, the way the grammar of the clause most efficiently and convincingly construes a person as having some level of control over the course of events that happen

in the world or over others is if the person is construed as the central participant (Actor) in a material process clause. The material clause represents the Actor as affecting a real physical change in the world, either bringing about the transformation of something, or acting upon other agents to effect change. However, the grammar or lexicon of the material clause can also limit the Actors' agency in various ways. While male vocal performers in *JazzTimes* CD reviews are construed as powerful individuals, capable of exerting control over their actions or the actions of others, the female performers' agency and skills and the significance of their actions are sometimes compromised by the grammar of the material clause.

Two material clauses in Group A ([4] and [7]) construct the female performers as failing at what they set out to do (“**Rarely does Parker rise above** merely pleasant innocuousness”), even commending them for *not* attempting to perform an action (“**Wisely, ... McKinley never attempts to get down** to Gaye’s inimitable nitty-gritty”). In addition, the impact of the female performers’ actions is sometimes diminished when their actions are realized as expansions of the main clause or when they are directed towards Goals that are not actually present in the physical world.

In contrast to example (12) above, which represents the male singer’s skill to affect the actions of others *via* his actions in the main clause, the one sentence from Group A that has the same focus as example (12) above (“Three years ago, the resourceful McKinley **set about** to self-release a Gaye tribute, picking from the cream of Massachusetts players to assemble a sextet and laying down 10 tracks either written by the Motown legend or strongly associated with him”) actually qualifies the female performer’s agency. Though the sentence is constructed on the material model and some level of the vocalist’s agency is expressed in the main clause (“set about”), the rest is delegated to a modifying clause.

The level of agency expressed via the main clause is compromised by the insertion of the phrase “set about” between the Actor (McKinley) and the action that she performed (“self-released” an album), which frames her as a reluctant agent: the meaning of “set about” being roughly “started” or “began.” While the reviewer could have written a straightforward material clause with McKinley as the Actor (e.g., “McKinley released an album”), he chose to qualify her action. The insertion of “set about” has the effect of de-emphasizing the impact and importance of the performer’s action and

skill. The following section of the hypotactic qualifying clause (“picking from the cream of Massachusetts players”) also represents the vocalist as performing a conscious action, but the force of the action is diminished because the Goal that the singer is able to affect via her action is metaphorical (“cream”). Instead of framing the singer as having the power to choose the best players and have them work for her, the sentence thus simply concedes that the singer “picked” from the “cream” – a rather intangible Goal. The one phrase that does not textually compromise the singer’s competence and power to control the actions of others (“assemble a sextet”) – similar to “shoehorn the horns” (example [12]) is delegated to the second half of the sentence and tagged onto the end, realized as an infinitive clause within a hypotactic mode, which also serves to undermine the significance of the action.

Thus, even though these clauses do show McKinley as capable of exerting a certain level of control over her music, record production and other people, her level of mastery is de-emphasized by the reviewer’s lexical and syntactic choices.

Moreover, two other material clauses realize the female performers as Actors, whose actions impinge on Goals that are either spiritual and metaphorical in kind (“essence” [5]) or highly intangible (“something clever” [2]). When the Goals of the female performers’ actions are metaphorical and do not physically exist in the world, the singers are constructed as having a lesser amount of power to affect the unfolding of social events and actions of people who physically exist in the world – in comparison to the male singers (who “earn” their place” [9] or “shoehorn” hornplayers [12]).

### **9. Discourse of the ‘Spiritual and Intangible’ (The ‘Essence’ of a Goal)**

I have briefly mentioned above, when analyzing relational material clauses, that the discourse of the reviews incorporates discourses associated with various patriarchal institutions – e.g., the discourse of motherhood and family, which was detectable in reviews of female performers, and the discourse of achievement, competition, politics and business or trade, which was detectable in reviews of male performers. From the small sample that I have analyzed so far, it seems apparent that the various discourses that are being incorporated into the reviews help to construct the artists’ contributions, skills and agency in a gendered way.

By looking at the Goals that female performers are said to affect, an additional discourse emerges: the discourse of the ‘spiritual or intangible.’ For example, the sentence from example (5) construes a female performer who is “clever” because she “inverts the essence of each tune.” Even though this material clause constructs the singer as an Actor performing a distinct action (“inverts”) and affecting a distinct Goal (“the essence of each tune”), the Goal is from the realm of the metaphorical and intangible, as some of its meanings are “spirit” or “fundamental nature.” So even though the performer is an Actor, she does not have control over anything that exists in this world.

The focus on the spiritual world – rather than the physical – in reviews of female vocalists is apparent also in the sentence from example (2). While the material process clause “**does** something marvelously clever” represents the singer as *performing* (or “doing”) her identity as someone “marvelously clever” – a rather positive evaluation, it does not specify what exactly *makes* the singer “clever” – the singer simply does “*something*.” The use of “something” to represent the Goal and of the auxiliary verb “do” to represent process thus leaves the reader to infer that the “thing” which the singer “does” is realized as the following hypotactic modification: “intensifying the ache by playing it lighter, filling her skies with clouds that are just starting to gray.” The hypotactic modification constructs the singer as being able to perform two distinct kinds of action (she intensifies the ache and fills the skies), but because it is delegated to a subordinate hypotactic mode, the action is de-emphasized. Moreover, the Goals that the performer is able to affect (“ache” and “skies”) are of an emotional and figurative, rather than physical, kind and therefore do not construct the singer as having the ability to influence the course of social events in the physical world.

The framing of the sentence seems to construct the singer as a rather esoteric being, concerned with emotion and with creating a different world with an almost dream-like quality. And while some might argue that the singer actually has *power* because she can create a new *world*, her power is elusive: It is a house-of-cards power that dissipates as soon as the song ends. It is very difficult to say with certainty what exactly the reviewer claims that the singer does (How does one fill one’s skies with clouds that are just starting to grey?), but because of the claim’s metaphorical appeal, the singer’s activity is viewed in this metaphorical (or ethereal) light.

Material process types thus seem to construe the performer's action and amount of impact on social events and other people in a similarly gendered way as relational process types construing the qualities and identities of performers – to the disadvantage of female performers. While male singers are constructed as having power and control over real people and Goals that are material (“shoehorn players”, “earn place”) female singers are discursively only granted control and power over the realm of emotions and metaphors (“invert essence,” “intensify ache,” “fill skies,” “pick from the cream”). While the female singers are discursively realized in material clauses with distinct Goals more often than men (six times), their agency is minimized by the nature of the Goals.

Also, by defining the female performers in relation to the emotional and metaphorical, the discourse of the reviews questions their relation to the physical and by extension their ability or will to perform any physical action. And since the ability to perform a physical/social action defines a person as a powerful individual who can effect change in the world or have an impact on the actions of others, discourse which construes the female performers as unable or reluctant to perform a physical action and bring about an outcome that registers on people or objects in this world also represents them as comparatively passive and weak.

### **10. A Paradigmatic Woman?**

Though the female performers are not defined in terms of physical action, they are nevertheless defined in terms of their physical and “sexualized” selves as well as the “essence” of femininity that they are claimed to embody.

The reviewer offers a very “nice” definition of what a man might mean by “distinctly female” in example (5) where he claims that the singer is “clever” because she is “rechanneling” tunes from a “distinctly female perspective.” He maintains that the singer brings in “more sass,” “a softly yearning starriness” and a “teasing foreplay” (London 83). The qualities that the singer allegedly brings to bear on her interpretation of the musical material, and which allegedly stem from her identity and identification as a “female,” are presupposed in the sense that they are assumed to exist and to describe individuals who are “female.” From the reviewer's point of view, there exists a “perspective” which is “distinctly” female, and which is characterized by the three qualities above.

The qualities are inextricably linked to one's identity as a woman and expressive of one aspect of "femininity." In addition, the reporter obliquely asserts that the woman who performs this distinctly female identity is "clever," perhaps trying to suggest that a woman who willingly poses as a "distinct" female will be considered a more valuable commodity in a patriarchal world.

This "essentialization" of femininity supports and further develops the definition and identity of female artists as represented in the *Jazz Times* CD reviews. The "softly earning starriness" defines women as emotional beings, while "teasing foreplay" and "more sass" defines them as "distinctly" sexual and playful (foreplay) or as assuming roles that the corporate world of patriarchal institutions does not want them to assume (sassy). In addition, the last two characteristics also define women in relation to men.

On one level, the identities differentiate women from men who are represented as occupying and affecting the "serious" and "mature" world and matters of politics, business or state. The worlds of feelings, sexuality and appearance (which are presupposed to be "distinctly female") – apart from the label "sassy" – also seem to imply physical weakness, and limited agency, power or ability to control people, things and events.

### 11. Presupposed Identities

In addition, the essentialization of femininity discussed above seems to be echoed in possessive noun phrases that contain presuppositions. One review in particular is full of possessive phrases that presuppose women's identity as sexual, decorative and consumable items. Apart from (4'), all examples appeared in consecutive order in this review, and I have highlighted all phrases that contain the relevant presuppositions:

*Table 17*

(4') Wisely, given <b>her warm, caramel-flavored voice– rather like Carol King via Nancy Wilson, with a layer of Aretha Franklin icing</b> – McKinley never attempts to get down to Gaye's inimitable nitty-gritty.
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Table 17, cont.

(17) “Nearly three years have passed since Taking a Chance on Love, **Jane Monheit’s charming salute to tunes** from MGM musicals of the 1930s, ‘40s and ‘50s, but the gap since **her last foray into the Great American Songbook** has done nothing to diminish **the beauty of her buttercream voice.**”

(18) **Jane’s rather retro essence, a quality build around both a look (sort of Peggy Lee meets Ann-Margaret) and sound** (chamois soft an eiderdown dreamy) that seems to demand a gleaming grand piano, a drop-dead evening gown, candlelight and shadowed tables for two...” (London 73).

(19) **Jane’s intimate jazz-meets-cabaret vibe** remains fully intact...”.

The grammar of the clause presupposes the highlighted definitions, identities and qualities of the female performer because it structures them as modifiers of noun phrases and therefore presents them as facts. For example, the phrase “her buttercream voice” structures the singer’s voice – and by extension the singer herself – in relation to something that is rich, tasty, soft and pliant and can be consumed by others. The whole phrase “the beauty of her buttercream voice” presumes that (1) a voice can be like buttercream (2) and that a voice that is like buttercream is beautiful, (3) but also that the female performer possesses a voice that is like buttercream. None of these claims are stated outright, but are rather buried inside the noun phrase. Nouns are normally considered to be static entities (in that they receive their reference from predicates), and so the qualities attached to them become static by extension and seem to exist as facts. Since these claims are implicit and presented as facts, it is very difficult to argue against them. (How does one argue against a claim that is not apparently a claim?) Using presupposed and buried statements, the reviewer is able to implicitly structure and define the female singer’s gendered identities and roles as facts that objectively exist. His definitions are effective precisely because they are implied rather than stated. Moreover, had he stated his claim outright, he would have risked offending many readers. Saying “Monheit’s voice is like buttercream” would make the definition of women as consumable items explicit and would probably represent the reviewer as someone obsessed with women for the pleasure that they can provide.



The reviewer also uses presupposition elsewhere in the reviews to call upon the discourse of food preparation to claim that a female singer's "previous discs" were "merely an appetizer" (London 84), and also in example (4) ("her warm, caramel-flavored voice," "with a layer of Aretha Franklin icing,"). All these statements itemize the singers' bodies to represent them in relation to delicacies that can be consumed for pleasure.

Through a series of presuppositions, the reviewer builds the female artists' identities in a gendered way. The artists also embody other stereotypes associated with women. Examples (17) and (18) presuppose that a "**charming salute** to tunes" or a "rather **retro essence**, a quality built around both a look ... and sound (**chamois soft** and **eiderdown dreamy**)" exists and that the singer has or can offer it. These presuppositions highlight the vocalist's intangible quality ("essence") and sexualize it. She is sexualized as pretty or seductive ("charming), reduced to her appearance ("look") and "sound," which is defined in relation to material objects, clothing items and fabrics ("chamois" and "eiderdown"), which underline her essence as someone pliant, delicate, "soft," and "dreamy," all considered to be desirable qualities in a woman. The singer is further sexualized in the phrase "her intimate jazz-meets-cabaret vibe" (19), which construes her intimacy with and closeness to the audience as a desirable fact.

These representations commodify the singer, offering the "essence" of femininity to readers for consumption as goods. Her ability to embody feminine qualities and the essence of femininity is represented as that which makes her a desirable and highly valued commodity. She becomes her "sound" that radiates her essence as delicate, "soft," "dreamy," and sexualized and a piece of clothing that construes her as feminine. It can be argued that by structuring the female performer's identity as sexual, consumable and objectified, the discourse of the reviews also defines her in relation to someone else—to the person or people who can "consume" her, her body, and appearance as an object for pleasure or fun. This analysis seems to be supported also in the following sentence:

Table 18

(20) “**That Costa**, who celebrated her 61<sup>st</sup> birthday last September, **still sounds as young and vibrant** as she did when she caused a sensation with her eponymous solo debut in 1969, **is simply as exquisite bonus.**”

Here the whole extended clause is a presupposition that constructs the singer’s youth and vibrancy as an “exquisite bonus.” For her vibrancy and youth to be viewed as a bonus, there must be someone who could appreciate, buy and consume this exquisite bonus, so the performer’s gendered identity as a highly-valued commodity is defined by those who might spend money on it.

Even though the themes of youth, sexuality, pliancy, delicacy, attractiveness, or seduction might seem random, they run relatively consistently throughout the reviews, and more importantly, they do not appear in the reviews of male singers. The reviews of the male singers’ recordings seem to bring in different discourses, discourses that structure their identities in terms of their achievement. Thus, for example, one review represents as facts a male singer’s “laid-back ease and authority,” his “stunning [and] heartfelt honesty” (discourse of chivalry) and his “singing” and “songwriting” “maturing at a rapid pace” (Vox 82). Another review presupposes that a singer is “here to fill that void” (Vox 84). It is apparent that men’s authority, maturity, and masterful actions are construed as facts and as desirable commodities. By contrast, women’s appearance, fragile look, focus on the spiritual (as opposed to the physical) and sometimes lack of maturity are construed as desirable and highly valued.

## 12. Conclusion

By analyzing nine *JazzTimes* CD reviews, I hope that I have been able to show that the discourse of the reviews structures achievement and desirability in a gendered way. The discourse construes female vocalists as lacking the kind of agency that the male vocalists are granted and implies that they can be successful only if they perform their gender roles, representing the intangible world of emotions and metaphors or the physical but static world of sexual, consumable objects and

appearance. The outcome of many of the actions that they are claimed to have performed is registered on metaphorical goals, which weakens the performers' ability to influence the course of social events and perform actions that could register on real, physical objects and people.

By contrast, the grammar of the clause represents the male vocalists as successful at showing mastery and control over their music, record production and other musicians. Male vocalists are either depicted as Actors affecting people and objects that are physically present in the world, or the reviewer's evaluation of their music is modeled as a material clause, which grants the artists some level of control over their representation. This discursive realization of female and male agency perpetuates the female/male stereotypes which represent women as not only passive and incapable of asserting control over their actions and the actions of others, but also as objectified and subject to other people's actions. The same stereotypes depict men as in control of their own and other people's actions.

Presuppositions in the reviews of female vocalists structure their gendered identities as facts and their gendered depiction as natural, objective. These presuppositions structure the female vocalists' desirability and value as commodities in terms of their gendered, objectified and consumable bodies—sold and desirable for their sex appeal, physical softness, appearance and fragile looks or for the promise of sexual and other pleasure. In addition, their success as musicians cannot be achieved apart from their performance of their gender. A well-executed performance of their gendered identities increases their value and desirability, and by extension brings success on the music market. By contrast, the presuppositions in the reviews of male vocalists emphasize the vocalists' maturity and skill and their ability to perform significant deeds. As in the case of the female singers, the male singers become valuable commodities if they are able to perform their gender. However, unlike the female artists whose gender confines them to the status of static and consumable entities without any social power to affect others via physical activity, the performance of gender in men leads to their achievement of power and control over others. The gendered discourses of power and achievement are solidified by references to various discourses based within patriarchal institutions which traditionally represent men as more powerful than women, such as the state, business or the family.

It should be pointed out that unlike the prostitute who consciously exploits the male fantasy of and desire for pliant, subordinate and sexually appealing women for profit (Stanley 1970), the female singer whose work is being reviewed in *JazzTimes* CD reviews is at the mercy of the reviewer and the language he decides to use to evaluate her contribution to jazz. Since the CD is being reviewed for what it is – a manufactured and packaged commodity, the real performers often disappear, and emphasis is placed on that which mass media and music industry specialists consider desirable about them – their ability to perform their gender. The patriarchal institution of mass media gives the reviewer power to emphasize (or de-emphasize) the performers' gender discursively, with the goal of increasing the value of the performers and their CDs as commodities. This in turn enables the reviewer to discursively construct the female singers as embodying the male fantasy – to limit their agency and define what female performers should look like if they want to succeed in their field.

Though the reviews that I have analyzed comprise but a small selection in the vast sea of media discourse about jazz, hopefully I have been able to show that the grammar of the clause (in the CD reviews) structures male and female identities in a predictable way and that this structuring is informed by the performer's gender. Because of the reoccurrence of common themes and discursive practices, I would like to conclude that there is a stable way of representing singers in a gendered way and that these representations are not at all flattering for or empowering the woman. It is likely that similar results could be obtained by critically analyzing CD reviews from any other issue of *JazzTimes*.

In the following two chapters, I will develop my analysis and show additional support for my conclusion by analyzing the genres of performance review and interview, examining the discourse of one additional mass media institution.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **Analysis of Performance Reviews In *Live New Orleans***

In this section, I will analyze four jazz vocal performance reviews that were published online in *Live New Orleans*. While *JazzTimes* is a national publication, *Live New Orleans* currently focuses more on covering local New Orleans musicians and bands. (I will describe the institution of *Live New Orleans* below, because it is significantly different from *JazzTimes* and offers an important perspective.) The *Live New Orleans* reviews that I will analyze were all written by one person, Jason Songe, the webmaster, editor, main contact person and main reviewer in one. (Note again, as in the *JazzTimes* reviews, that we see a man write women's bodies.)<sup>14</sup> To present a slightly different look at the discourse and institution of jazz and the genre of the jazz review, I have chosen to analyze reviews of four local New Orleans jazz vocal artists: Jhelisa, Ingrid Lucia, Philip Manuel and John Boutte. Using a Hallidayan analysis of process types, participants and circumstances, I will try to show how the singers' competence in musical performance and their ability to demonstrate their musical talent and skill are structured by the discourse of the reviews. I will also show how their self-presentation on stage is structured in a gendered way by analyzing representations of their interaction with the audience and the manner in which they act on stage to promote themselves and their music.

#### **1. *Live New Orleans***

*Live New Orleans* is a local New Orleans music website, whose goal is to present local music, musicians and venues to both locals and the rest of the world. Their advertising page claims that

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<sup>14</sup> Recently, I had the opportunity to browse through the June issue of *Jazz Times* and came upon a section entitled “JazzTimes Critics’ Picks 2006,” which featured a selection of some of the best CD’s and recordings released in 2006, selected by the critics who write for the publication. Of the 35 names, at least 32 were undisputedly men (with names such as John, Steve, or Christopher); the other three names were a bit indeterminate (Gene, Chris, Duck). I researched other issues of *Jazz Times*, unable to find a picture of the latter three, so I cannot say with certainty whether they are men or women. However, even if these three people are women, the renowned magazine still features an overwhelming number of 32 male critics—versus the small number of women.

The range of music covered is vast, encompassing the whole music spectrum from folk, rock, pop, country, R&B, rap, hip-hop, reggae and ambient/electronic music to funk, blues, traditional, latin and modern jazz and brass band music. The site was started in 1991 when the first music performance reviews appeared. The focus was then overwhelmingly on nationally-famous out-of-town rock bands, but it slowly shifted to local music, so that by 2003 most of the performance reviews were of local bands and musicians performing in New Orleans.

While the advertising page claims that the website is trying to reach all “visitors, locals, music lovers, musicians, events planners and frequent music goers,” it’s important to note that those who visit the site are “predominately professional men who reside in New Orleans with a mixture of self-employed entrepreneurs, musicians, and service industry people.” “90% of visitors are between the ages of 20 and 40” while “the average age is 36.” Other groups who are also most likely to visit the site are “out-of-towners who return to Jazzfest every year” and “intelligent, independent-minded, night owls who care about the local music scene and how it is perceived and supported.” *Live New Orleans* is an electronic publication and database that might need to cater (whether by choice or not) predominantly to men in their twenties and thirties, out-of towners who return to New Orleans for such tourist attractions as Jazz Fest or Mardi Gras and local bohemians. Though the demographic information is the only explicit clue that the site may be targeted at male audience, the language of the performance reviews, as I will show below, seems to support this conclusion.

The performance reviews on *Live New Orleans* are claimed to be presented “through the eyes of everyday fans.” In general, the site’s (male) visitors react in a positive way to the site’s every-day representation of jazz music, claiming that the reviews are “open-minded,” “well-written,” “honest,” “relaxed,” and “unpretentious.” The tone of the reviews certainly makes one feel that the reviewers enjoy reviewing local music simply for the pleasure of it. Whether professional journalists or not, reviewers try to use language to build rapport with potential readers and to represent themselves as “ordinary music fans” – in order to promote the site as a desirable commodity and gain more visitors. Since the site claims that the reviews are presented through the eyes of everyday people, the relaxed

language of the reviews should be representative of the language that people in contemporary society use to talk about jazz and jazz performers in general.

Perhaps to help create an illusion that it does not really matter who wrote the reviews – since technically anyone in the United States could have said the things written in the reviews – most of the reviews are unsigned. It seems that the website is trying to create an impression of a generalized review, emphasizing views about and assessment of performers that anyone could relate to and share. In my research, I have found a total of three names signed under *Live New Orleans* performance reviews—seemingly staff journalists, who write for the site regularly. However, the four reviews that I will analyze were all written by Jason Songe (and I was able to find out who penned them only after e-mailing Mr. Songe in person).

More importantly, because *Live New Orleans* is an online institution, its textual representation of the local jazz singer and music scene can be disseminated on a national, even international level. The opinion and view of the reviewer, as represented through *Live New Orleans*, has a potential to reach outside the local music scene, transcend the local space and inform the opinions of thousands of people world-wide. Needless to say, the power of *Live New Orleans* to influence the public opinion of jazz vocalists will be strongest with respect to local, New Orleans musicians. Whereas an average music fan will have plenty of opportunity to acquire information about national music “stars” from other publications, he or she will be more likely to accept a depiction of a local jazz performer from a local newspaper, especially if the person has had no prior experience with the performer’s music. Because of the site’s targeted audience and the hegemony of a handful of reviewers, Mr. Songe and his writers’ representation of vocal jazz becomes dangerous when disseminated on a national, even international level.

## **2. The Focus of My Analysis**

In contrast to *JazzTimes* CD reviews that evaluate artists and their recordings (record media and packaged commodities), performance reviews in *Live New Orleans* focus closely on the performers and their interpretation and performance of the music. Perhaps for this reason, the artists in all four reviews figure as participants in almost every clause. Because it would have been impractical and

nearly impossible to analyze all sentences closely in which the singers are represented as participants, I had to direct my analysis more narrowly. As in the previous chapter, I decided to focus on relational process types because they are the most effective grammatical strategy for assessing someone or something by assigning qualities and identities to the person or thing. By analyzing relational clauses, I hope to highlight what type or kind of quality and identity the reviewer assigns to the singers that he reviews. It may be recalled from chapter three that relational process clauses construe participants who are being assessed as static and rather passive Carriers of the assigned Attributes. I will also look at presuppositions embedded in noun phrases, whose purpose in the grammar of the clause is similar to that of relational clauses. By analyzing these presuppositions, I will reveal how specifically an oblique assignment of qualities to a person can look like an objective fact (Fairclough). I will also analyze material process types to draw attention to the types of verbs used to describe action and to the difference in the type of activity represented in the reviews of female and male singers. And lastly, I will focus on verbal process types and dialogue to show in what ways the reviews gender the artists' voices.

I chose to keep the analysis as singer-centered and performance-centered as possible and therefore ignored all sentences that were not directly connected to the singer's performance on stage or the singer herself. In a performance review, there is much space to talk about the quality of the band playing or the merit of individual songs performed. So for the sake of performing a singer-centered critical analysis, I left out all sections that addressed exclusively the skill or character of the band members, unless the sentences focused on the singer as well. I have included evaluative statements only if they were directly connected to the singer, her abilities, skill or performance. I ignored all sentences that offered a straightforward description of the singer's action (such as her coming to the venue or receiving a phone call from the manager). I also ignored all sentences that talked about the songs that the singers performed as such (e.g. the fact that a particular song was a ballad or that it was written by someone specific). My main focus was on the sentences that contained the reporter's evaluation of the singer, of her voice or her performance, and sentences that reported anything about the singer which an ordinary music fan might find essential to the performance. To analyze the impact of evaluative statements on readers most accurately, I have focused more on main



clauses in hypotactic modes, since the dominant clause in a hypotactic mode carries the focus of the sentence. However, I did analyze some hypotactic modifications, especially if they were brought in to support an evaluative statement in a dominant (main) clause.

### 3. Relational Clauses with Singers, Their Voices or Presupposed Qualities as Participants

I will first focus on relational process clauses, in which either the singers and their parts (voices) or the qualities ascribed to them figure as participants. Here is a list of all relational clauses that meet my requirements above, which represent the singers, their voices or qualities as Carriers, with the relational clauses highlighted:

Table 19

*Group A (Female Performers as Participants):*

Ingrid Lucia:

(1) **Lucia's voice had a Billie Holiday shine**, but she was not afraid (parataxis) **to leave tradition behind** (hyp. mod.).

(2) **She wasn't wrong** (indep.).

(3) I forgot to mention (dom.) **she was dressed in a stunning strapless red dress** (hyp. mod.).

(4) I have no problem (dom.) with **appearance being important for female jazz vocalists** (hyp. mod.).

Jhelisa:

(5) **Jhelisa was gregarious as all hell** (indep.).

(6) **She sported a sexy smile and approach** (main) that brought joy to Singleton's face (hyp. mod.) when she approached him (hyp. mod.).

(7) **Her possession of many different tones was her main talent** (indep.).

(8) **She was playful, sexy, freewheeling, passionate, serious, and tender** (indep.).

(9) **She had so much control over her vocals** (indep.).

Table 20

*Group B (Male Performers as Participants):*

John Boutte:

(10) **Boutte was a mellow bug** (main) as he and a guitarist, drummer and bassist moseyed through swingin' vocal jazz, soul and gospel numbers Wednesday night at d.b.a. (hyp. mod.)

(11) **Boutte was an extraordinary singer**, but he didn't hit me over the head with his talent (parataxis).

(12) Instead, he picked his moments and exhibited a diverse array of emotions (parataxis) that **made his exceptional craft difficult to recognize** (hyp. mod.).

(13) **He and his band were tight** (main), and though the first three or four songs were generic but enjoyable romantic numbers (hyp. mod.), the next two were gospel songs (main).

Table 20, cont.

- (14) Boutte proved last night (dom.) **he's a New Orleans vocal treasure** (hyp. mod.).  
Philip Manuel:  
(15) **Manuel is easily one of the best male vocalists in the city** (check out John Boutte, as well). (parataxis)  
(16) **You need to have more than a great voice** (dom.) to be a wonderful vocalist (hyp. mod.).  
(17) **You need charisma and confidence** (parataxis).  
(18) **Manuel was chock full of that Sunday** (indep.).

It seems apparent at first glance that the way the singers are represented textually (at least in relational clauses) in *Live New Orleans* is very similar to their representation in the *Jazz Times* CD reviews. Whereas women are often construed as Carriers of qualities that structure their identity in terms of their appearances, bodies, sexuality, and perhaps their “outgoing” attitude (in five of the nine sentences in Group A), men are more often construed as Carriers of qualities that structure their identity in terms of mastery or achievement (in eight cases out of nine).

In contrast to the *Jazz Times* reviews, on *Live New Orleans* there is an *overt* focus on the necessity for women to mind their appearance and “put on” their femininity for the sake of an audience that is physically present at the show. There is also more focus on women’s ability to convey their emotional, internal qualities as well as physical presence to the audience and *express* their femininity outwardly. In other words, the singer’s performance of her femininity seems to construct a discursive physical bond between the singer and the audience. The woman’s appearance, sexuality, and ability to perform her femininity become essential parts of the musical performance and the main criteria for the assessment of her achievement as a musician. The sentences, “She was dressed in a stunning strapless red dress,” “Appearance [is] important for female jazz vocalists,” and “She sported a sexy smile and approach that brought joy to Singleton's face when she approached him,” all imply that the singer is performing her femininity for the pleasure of the audience (or her band), putting on an eye-catching dress that turns the singer into a spectacle (an object to be looked at), but also wearing a sexy smile or approach as if it was a piece of clothing, for the musician’s and audience’s pleasure. While the verb “sported” is essentially empty of meaning, as it is simply a metaphorical way of saying

that the singer “had” a sexy smile, it nevertheless discursively constructs the smile as something that can be worn for show much like the “stunning strapless dress.”

Example (4) is just another way of saying, “It does not bother me that appearance is important for female jazz singers.” The sentence structures the reviewer’s claim (“that appearance is important for female jazz singers”), which itself is a relational clause, as a Phenomenon in a mental clause.

*Table 21*

<p><b>SenserProcessPhenomenon</b></p> <p>I have no problem with appearance being important for female jazz vocalists</p>
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Though the reviewer as Senser is explicitly realized, the claim is nevertheless presented as a fact because we are not told who believes that “appearance is important for female jazz singers.” Do the singers believe this, or does the public? The language of the review simply assumes (and structures as a fact) the subjective claim that appearance is important for all female jazz singers. The reviewer at least must believe that it is, otherwise he would not have mentioned what dress the singer had on, which he almost “forgot” to mention (example [3]).

In the relational clauses, the female singer’s interaction with the public and her musicians is described in intimate, bodily, and sexual terms. In example [6], the singer and those around her connect though the singer’s “sexy smile and attitude,” her physical closeness (“approach”), and her musician’s [Singleton’s] willingness to show appreciation for the singer’s display by showing “joy” on his “face.” In example (5), “Jhelisa was gregarious as all hell,” the word “gregarious” brings to mind such terms as “outgoing” or “sociable,” but in combination with the qualifying adverbial phrase “as hell,” the picture of Jhelisa as someone or something tempting and forbidden comes to mind. Preceded by a sentence in which the singer is described as “eliciting applause from the audience,” and followed by example (6) (“sexy smile and attitude”), the singer’s “gregarious” attitude can only be

interpreted in relation to her interaction with the audience and the band. Also elsewhere in the Jhelisa review, the reviewer calls attention to the “intimate” interaction of Jhelisa with her audience:

(19) Jhelisa sang as she walked through the bar’s filled tables and sat down at the corner of a booth as the spirit moved her.

While Jhelisa has some agency here (“she walked”, “she sat down”), she is also represented as being physically close, or physically moving *closer* to the people in the audience when moved by “the spirit.” It’s difficult to say what exactly the reviewer believes makes Jhelisa move closer to the audience, but in the reviewer’s language, it is something from within the singer, something which she singer has no control over. In biblical terminology, the spirit *moves* people at will; those filled by the spirit have no choice but to be *moved* by it. So in addition to construing Jhelisa as someone spiritually oriented, or at least prone to the world of the spiritual and to expressing her spiritual qualities, example [19] also represents the singer as someone whose spiritual attribute enables her to physically move closer to the audience. Her intimate, physical and sexual nature is constructed by a series of discursive strategies that represent her as someone tempting in her expressive sexuality, yet spiritual in the way she achieves her physical bond. And in her spirituality, she is also interacting intuitively with the audience, rather than intellectually.

In contrast to *Jazz Times*, *Live New Orleans* does not try to conceal its assessment of female singers in purely gendered terms.<sup>15</sup> While the *Jazz Times* reviews at least made some attempt to cover up their construction of the female singer as embodying many stereotypes assigned to women in Western society, *Live New Orleans* reviews are very open about the reviewer’s ideas of what a female jazz singer should be (perhaps to fulfill readers’ expectations and to establish rapport by using language that most people in contemporary society would use to talk about female artists?)

Examples (5), (6), and (8) in this section of the review turn the singer into a Carrier of gendered characteristics, or Attributes, that become attached to her much like evaluative adjectives

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<sup>15</sup> Though *JazzTimes* used such strategies as embedded presuppositions and metaphorical goals in material clauses in reviews of female artists, the publication did not explicitly construct the female performers’ gendered identities via relational clauses.

become attached to inanimate objects. Example (8), a case in point, reduces Jhelisa's identity to the adjectives "playful," "sexy," "freewheeling," "passionate," "serious," and "tender." While many of these characteristics develop the "essentialization" of femininity discussed in the previous chapter (sexy, playful, tender), the grammar of the clause also reduces Jhelisa's agency and her influence on the social world – she simply *is* something but does not *do* anything. And the things that she *is* construct her in a gendered way, as an object of the audience's gaze and a performer of her feminine attributes and forms. Interestingly, though the preceding sentence seems to exalt her talent as a singer ("Her possession of many different tones was her main talent"), the fact that we are not told anything specific about her "many different tones" forces the connection between these many tones and her many identities as expressed in the relational clause in example (8). Since example (8) is incorporated into a paragraph that deals with Jhelisa's style of singing and approach to her music, it constructs Jhelisa's identity as "playful," "sexy," "freewheeling," "passionate," "serious," and "tender" as essential to her skill and success as a performer.

Though the rest of the examples in Group A praise the female singers' skill, comparing one singer to the Jazz icon Billie Holiday, and construing the other in command of her voice, example (1) actually treats the singer's Billie Holiday's "shine" and her maybe a bit *traditional* vocal quality as something of a disadvantage: The language rather commends her willingness to "leave tradition behind," which means that her similarity to Holiday is not viewed as something positive. In example (9), the reviewer constructs the singer as *surprisingly* in control of her vocals ("she had *so* much control" [emphasis mine]!) by inserting the qualifier "so" between the relational process ("had") and the Attribute ("control"). This shows that his expectation of the singer's ability to "control" her "vocals" must not have been high to start with. Example (2) is the reviewer's reaction to the singer's choice to warn the "crowd of the depressing nature of Elvis Costello's 'Almost Blue' before ... launch[ing] into it." So the evaluative statement says nothing more than that the reviewer agreed with the singer's description of the song.

Male singers' contributions to jazz performance as represented in *Live New Orleans* are similar to the *Jazz Times* representations, but the performance reviews seem to be a bit more overt in their positive evaluation of the singers' attributes and talents. Contrary to the relational clauses that

depict female singers, those depicting male singers do not convey much about their interaction with the audience. It seems that *Live New Orleans* reserves the relational clause, which construes the reviewer's subjective assessments as facts, to solidify the men's reputations as exceptional performers and singers, and to underline their magnetic personalities and material worth.

Most of the nine examples are evaluative statements of the artists' skills as musicians, solidifying the prototypical male singer's identity as "a New Orleans vocal treasure," "an extraordinary singer," as someone who is "easily one of the best male vocalists in the city," and whose music is "tight." The first description construes the singer's identity in relation to something of monetary value, structuring the singer as an embodiment of the success and money-making strategies that he only represented in the *Jazz Times* reviews. Much like the female singers in the performance reviews, the male singer here is constructed in more overtly physical terms (some might even argue that he is objectified as a "treasure" owned by the "city"), but unlike the female singers, he is the material embodiment of his value and significance. And moreover, much like the male singers in *Jazz Times*, John Boutte is the energy that brings about his embodiment of his significance, since he "proves" that he is this "treasure."

Examples (15) through (18) extend the metaphor of a male singer as a material vessel that can be filled with positive qualities and evaluations of his talent and music craft. The rhetorical strategy constructs Philip Manuel's identity as someone who is "chock full" of (or filled to the brim with) "charisma and confidence" – and also with a "great voice." Though not the singer, but the second singular pronoun "you" is the Carrier in two cases, the artist's identity as an exceptional singer is actually constructed more strongly with the help of "you." The generic "you" rhetorically constructs "a wonderful vocalist" (example [16]) as an entity that is objectively out in the world, and all Philip Manuel has to do is live up to the expectations. A "wonderful vocalist" will not only have "a great voice" (which Manuel is claimed to have in example [15]), but he also needs "charisma and confidence." (example [17]). And since Manuel is "chock full" of both, he does more than live up to the ideal – he outshines the "wonderful vocalist."

Thus, the relational clauses in the four *Live New Orleans* reviews help to sexualize the female performers' professional identities by emphasizing their attire as if it was an essential part of their

performance, and focusing on their physical attributes and emotional or ‘evocative’ behavior. The clauses maximize and commodify the performer’s “gender difference” (Talbot), putting it on display for the audience to consume and gaze at. On the other hand, the clauses highlight the male performers’ identities as exceptionally gifted artists, or they represent the performers as physical embodiments of their success and significance.

#### **4. Embedded Presuppositions: Relational Processes Represented as a Noun Phrase**

In this section, I will focus solely on possessive noun phrases that assign evaluative attributes to the singer or her voice covertly, by structuring the reviewer’s claim about the singer as an inherent and objectively present feature of the singer. While assessment and evaluation can be explicitly represented as a relational process, with the help of the verbs “to have,” “to be,” or equivalents such as “sound,” “possess,” or “show,” evaluation represented as a possessive noun phrase leaves out the verb that makes the assigning of an evaluative attribute to a Carrier explicit. Without the verb that assigns an identity to the Carrier, the demarcation line between that which is being evaluated (the Carrier) and the quality that is being assigned is lost, and the Carrier becomes inseparable from its Attribute (Halliday 2004). This identification is even stronger in noun phrases than in relational process types, because in a noun phrase, the Carrier and her Attribute literally act as one participant. This discursive representation can result in the confounding of the changing and dynamic characteristics that are being assigned to the Carriers with the objectively present, static and unchanging (though sometimes abstract) entities (Carriers). This representation of evaluation via a noun phrase thus constructs the reviewer’s subjective evaluation of changing qualities as a fact, objectifying his assessment of the singer.

I talked about this phenomenon as “presupposition” in chapter three, where I explained that the phrase “the beauty of [the singer’s] buttercream voice” assumes the two following statements: (1) the singer has a buttercream voice, and (2) her buttercream voice is beautiful. A way of looking at presupposition from M.A.K. Halliday’s perspective would be to see this sentence as a relational process type – or a series of relational process types – realized via a noun phrase.

I decided to come back to presupposition in this chapter because, unlike the *JazzTimes* reviews, which construed mainly the female singers' identities as embedded presuppositions, the *Live New Orleans* reviews covertly evaluate both women and men via presupposition. Analysis of embedded presupposition on *Live New Orleans* will thus enable me to compare the discursive representations of women and men. Here is a list of all embedded presuppositions as they appeared in the performance reviews<sup>16</sup>:

Table 22

*Group C (Female Performers as Participants):*

Ingrid Lucia

(20) She dropped out of **her voice's trance-inducing beauty** (main) to find a lower register (hyp. mod.) where she could add splashes of personality and humor (hyp. mod.).

(21) It was refreshing to hear **a woman's beautiful voice** tackle a blues structure (main) instead of an old man who pushed out yelps and scraggly whines (hyp.mod.).

Jhelisa:

(7') **Her possession of many different tones** was her main talent (indep.).

(22) Its political nature and **Jhelisa's delicacy and decision to lovingly and dramatically extend the song** left the crowd waiting to applaud (indep.)

Table 23

*Group D (Male Performers as Participants):*

John Boutte

(24) **Boutte's charisma and sense of humor** made the night fun and made me feel comfortable (parataxis).

(25) His **fist clenching motions and contorted faces** complemented **his subtle vocal delivery** very well (prataxis).

(12') Instead, he picked his moments and exhibited a diverse array of emotions (parataxis) that made **his exceptional craft** difficult to recognize (hyp. mod.).

It is apparent at first glance that whereas female performers are claimed to possess voices “of many different tones,” and of “trance-inducing beauty,” or an ability to “delicat[ely] and “lovingly” deliver a musical material, male performers’ classification and identities are a bit more varied. John Boutte is claimed to possess “charisma and sense of humor” as well as “exceptional craft,” but he is

<sup>16</sup> The numbering of some of these sentences may seem a bit out of order, but that is because I have already quoted some them above.



also characterized by his “fist clenching motions and contorted faces,” and “subtle vocal delivery.” While the women in the performance reviews own or have control only over their voices and those gendered inner qualities which are claimed to influence their vocal delivery (delicacy, love, beauty), John Boutte not only has control over his “vocal delivery,” but also uses other tools and talents to promote his music and performance (such as his “exceptional craft,” “charisma and sense of humor,” and “fist clenching motions and contorted faces,” which represent him as someone lost deeply in his craft—great jazz players and singers frequently show facial expressions and hand movement when intently focused on and absorbed in the delivery of a song).

Since possessive noun phrases construct singers and their attributes as one, a critical analysis of a noun phrase shows that the male singer and his craft, charisma, sense of humor, and motions (which represent him as seriously involved in his craft) are one participant. The analysis also shows that female singers and their trance-inducing beautiful voices and delicate inner qualities are one participant. In other words, the female singers are claimed to be that which they already factually own (their voices), but they also embody their feminine traits (as in the *JazzTimes* reviews). This depiction constructs the female singer in a rather one-dimensional way, which becomes apparent by comparison to John Boutte, who is funny, serious and charismatic by turns.

In addition, the possessive noun phrases in reviews of male vocalists feature nouns (and one adjective) that have become static qualities by morphological formation from transitive verbs (motion from move, delivery from deliver, contorted from contort) and one noun that is related to a transitive verb (craft). So even though the male performers’ agency is not on display here, but is rather covert, the phrases actually *covertly* construct the male performers as Actors capable of exerting control (contort, clench, deliver) over other entities in a physical way (face, fist, song).

## **5. Evaluation via Material Process Types**

In this section, I will focus on clauses that represent the performers’ physical action and activity on stage to show how their interaction with others, the audience or the band, is represented textually. I have also included in my analysis other material clauses which construct the singers as the dominant energy (participant) executing any abstract action, with the exception of “doing” something to music,

a song, or its part. I have paid special attention to material process types that represent the reviewer's evaluation of the performer or her vocal delivery, but with important exceptions.

Since the language of performance reviews is characterized by many sentences structured as material process types – in which the reviewer tells the readers which songs the performers performed on the set and in what order, or in what way they approached a certain song or a part of a song, focusing on all these sentences would make the analysis of material process types impractical. For this reason, I ignored all material clauses in which the performer's activity is represented via the verbs “to perform,” “to play,” “to sing,” “to run through” and the second participant is a song or a group of songs, expressed by words such as “covers,” a kind of song (such as a ballad or the traditional), or the title of a specific song. Also, these forms are so common in the vocabulary of jazz musicians and reviewers that they do not carry much metaphorical force any longer. However, I did include clauses with these verbs if they contained an evaluative statement. So for example, while “she performed a ballad” is not part of this section, “she performed with an ease” is.

In the examples below, I have highlighted the verbs (process types) and participants (and also circumstances if there was no second participant) that are said to be affected by the central participants' (logical subjects') actions to show what kinds of entities the singers are claimed to affect.

Table 24

*Group E (Female Performers as Participants):*

Ingrid Lucia

(26) She **did well** (main) when she **gave her voice a cha-cha swagger** on her Latin-tinged numbers (hyp.mod.).

(27) She **brought with her guitarist Bert Cotton**, drummer/vocalists Gerald French, and bassist Jesse Boyd. (independent)

(28) Lucia also **tackled upbeat, up-tempo swingers** (main)

(29) Lucia **took a break** (parataxis)

(30) She **launched into [a song]** (hyp. mod.).

Jhelisa

(31) She **performed with a freedom** (parataxis).

(32) She **picked spots to show her range**, but her real range **extended past an amount of octaves** (parataxis).

(33) She **performed with an ease** (main).

(34) She **walked through the bar's filled tables** (hyp. mod.) and **sat down at the corner of a booth** (main).

(35) She **got into the music** (indep.).

Table 24, cont.

(36) She <b>crouched down and shook her knees</b> (parataxis).
(37) Jhelisa <b>vibed off of her backing trio</b> (hyp. mod.).
(38) She <b>approached him</b> (hyp. mod.).
(39) Jhelisa <b>took advantage of the space between the band's</b> soulful and sometimes funky <b>jazz</b> (indep.).
(40) She <b>sang and breathily hummed in a non-linear but somehow rhythmic manner</b> (indep.).
(41) She rarely <b>repeated a phrase</b> in the same manner (indep.).
(42) She <b>extended a word</b> or <b>sped through it</b> three different ways (main).

Table 25

<i>Group F (Male Performers as Participants):</i>
John Boutte
(43) Boutte's charisma and sense of humor <b>made the night fun and made me feel comfortable</b> (parataxis)
(44) His fist clenching motions and contorted faces <b>complemented his subtle vocal delivery very well</b> (parataxis).
(45) He <b>shined on "That's My Desire,"</b> (main)
(46) He didn't <b>hit me over the head with his talent</b> (parataxis).
(47) He <b>picked his moments</b> and <b>exhibited a diverse array of emotions</b> (parataxis)
(48) He <b>made singing look easy</b> (indep.).
(49) Boutte <b>sat in the audience</b> (main)
(50) Before he <b>sat down</b> (hyp. mod.)
(51) He <b>moved his body and arms</b> through every syllable (main)
(52) Boutte <b>finished the first set</b> with "Unchained Melody," (main)
(53) He <b>broke down the bridge</b> (parataxis)
(54) Boutte and his band <b>took their time between songs</b> (parataxis)
Philip Manuel
(55) He <b>pulled out some dramatic gestures</b> (parataxis).
(56) He <b>owned the songs</b> he sung (main) because he <b>took chances with them</b> (hyp. mod.).
(57) Manuel <b>created a positive vibe</b> (hyp. mod.)
(58) He <b>made the right decision</b> (hyp. mod.).
(59) Manuel, his voice and his band <b>put on a great show</b> Sunday (indep.).
(60) Crooner Philip Manuel <b>obliged with "What a Wonderful World,"</b> but he <b>had to improvise</b> (parataxis).
(61) Manuel <b>didn't have a trumpeter</b> in his band, so instead he <b>used a technique</b> (parataxis) he learned from his father (hyp. mod.).
(62) He <b>cupped his hands together</b> around the mic and <b>mimicked the sound</b> of a trumpet (parataxis).
(63) Manuel <b>abandoned the experiment</b> halfway through (parataxis).
(64) But he <b>tried</b> (main)
(65) He smiled and <b>strutted from one side of the stage to the other</b> many times (indep.).
(66) He <b>changed the pace</b> or <b>arrangement</b> of a song (main)
(67) He <b>didn't rehearse the band</b> last week (hyp. mod.)
(68) They <b>worked hard</b> , too (indep.).
(69) He <b>left the stage</b> (hyp. mod.).

As expected in a performance review whose aim is to assess artists' performances to represent their musicianship and skills to the public, evaluative statements are not uncommon in *Live New Orleans* reviews. Importantly, since material clauses represent participants as the source of the energy that brings about some transformation in the world – or as the source of the energy responsible for a certain action, a representation (including classification and assessment) that is construed on the material model will ascribe a certain level of agency to the participant who is being classified. For example, the male singers' actions, which are evaluated by the reviewer in the examples above, are often represented as a process, sometimes with a Goal, acted upon by the singer himself; and this construction represents the singers as Actors, bringing about the positive evaluations voiced by the reviewer (i.e., “he shined,” “he made singing look easy,” “he created a positive vibe”).

Female performers as Actors are often the subject of the reviewer's evaluation, and if they are shown to affect a specific Goal, it is most often their own vocal chords, songs, parts of songs or the words of songs that they have ‘power’ to control. In addition, they are also represented as carrying out physical, sexually appealing actions, or affecting others via these actions. The material processes referring to their onstage activity are split evenly between these two types of action: there are about 10-12 examples that refer to the singers' vocal activity and about 4-5 examples that refer to their physically evocative actions, sometimes depicting the singers as exerting control over their body parts; some of these are ambiguous and can be interpreted in either way (i.e. “she got into the music”). There are two important exceptions, (27) and (29), which do not carry any evocative force:

In several examples, female singers are affecting musical material or their own vocal skills, represented as Goals, via their actions: “She rarely repeated a phrase” (41), “she extended a word” [42], “Lucia...tackled upbeat, up-tempo swingers” (28), “she picked spots to show her range” (32), or “she gave her voice a cha-cha swagger” (26). These examples represent the singers as being in control of their own vocals, parts of songs or words—though the last example may be more properly interpreted as a relational clause, “her voice had a cha-cha swagger.” Several other examples simply represent the singers as being able to deliver music on stage or they evaluate their ability to do so, including the phrases “she launched into a song (30), “Jhelisa took advantage of the space between the band's soulful and sometimes funky jazz” (39), and “she sang and breathily hummed in a non-linear

but somehow rhythmic manner” (40), the last one of which also emphasizes the singer’s ability to sing in a ‘sexy’ way, breathily humming. In addition, several examples overtly emphasize the reporter’s evaluation of the singers’ performance, diverting attention away from the singer’s agency: “She performed with an ease” (33) “She performed with a freedom (31), or “she did well” (26) Nowhere in these examples can we find the discourse of achievement or Goals that actually exist in the physical world, which would represent the female artists as being able to effect change in the flow of social events. Female singers are not textually represented as doing anything specific to showcase their skills or to present themselves to the audience as able musicians. Even example (20) from the previous section (“She dropped out of her voice's trance-inducing beauty to find a lower register where she could add splashes of personality and humor”), which textually represents the singer as consciously performing a series of acts, gives the singer the authority to do something only with or to her voice, while adding “splashes of personality” to her voice in the closed and limiting realm of her “lower register.” In other words, she does not use these splashes of personality to reach out to the audience, and promote her craft by calling attention to her voice or humor. As I have shown in one of the previous sections, female singers are textually represented as reaching out to the audience by offering their appearance and bodies, but also their voices on display as a way of promoting their acts and shows.

The remaining four or five clauses (incidentally from the same review) structure the female artist as an Actor exerting control either over her body (functioning as a Goal) or simply behaving in a sexually evocative way. Moreover, it seems that the discourse of the review may be incorporating the metaphor of space (since it was used in example (39), where it referred to the singer’s act of delivering music in the *musical* space provided by the band) to highlight Jhelisa’s expressively physical interaction with the audience and to construe a physical space for her on stage, which extends into the audience. Even before the review gets to this point, the language seems to be creating a physically-sexual space for Jhelisa, within which she can move, perform and interact with the audience and band members. While the singer is first claimed to “walk through the bar's filled tables and [sit] down at the corner of a booth as the spirit moved her“ (34), she is then pictured as “get[ting] into the music” (35) and “crouch[ing] down and sh[aking] her knees” (36). Next, the reviewer offers,

“Jhelisa vibed off of her backing trio” (37), which brought “joy” to the “face” of one of the musicians as she “approached him” (38). All these phrases could be read on a more literal level, representing a singer who is simply ‘lost’ in music and in the delivery of her performance. However, since these material clauses are also framed in reference to relational clauses in the discourse of the review, which construct the singer as a temptress and sexual, a reading in purely musical terms does not seem to be possible. In addition, the description of Jhelisa consciously performing the action of “crouching down and shaking her knees” calls attention to her physical body, representing her as in control of it, but also as willing sharing this body with the audience. The literal description brings to mind the image of a wild animal (crouching down) or someone (sexually – or at least physically) excited (shaking her knees). Since she is sharing this act with the audience (she sat “at the corner of a booth as the spirit moved her”), she consciously appropriates her body and expressively physical movements to make them available as part of her performance – the part that will sell her performance to the audience.

In contrast, male performers are very often represented as Actors, affecting other people’s assessment of them via their talents or positive attributes, showcasing their talents; their ability to do this constructs them as able entertainers and performers. The male performers’ actions are often represented via such transitive material verbs that we normally think of as representing “happenings” – “make,” “hit,” “pick,” “pull,” “take,” “create,” and “put,” and they affect other people’s opinion of them either directly, or simply by creating some entity that can affect the audience’s evaluation indirectly. Male singers “ma[ke] the night fun and ma[ke the reviewer] feel comfortable,” hit or don’t “hit [the reviewer] over the head with [their] talents,” “put on a great show,” “create a positive vibe that radiate[s] into the audience,” or they “pull out some dramatic gestures,” and “ma[ke] singing look easy.” In addition to having the power to influence the reviewer’s and audience’s evaluation of them, male singers also have the power to control other people’s *actions*, which does not happen in the reviews of female performers (“he didn’t rehearse the band” [67]). The last assertion also establishes Manuel as someone who does not do that which everyone in the audience expects performers must do before performing in public, that is, rehearses, and thereby also represents the singer as so overtly sure of his skills that he does not have to practice.

The majority of these clauses represent the male vocalists in such a powerful way because they represent processes that we normally think of as intransitive as transitive. So instead of claiming that Manuel gestured (or had dramatic gestures), both relational, the reviewer claims that the singer “pulled out” gestures – performing an abstract “physical” action to do something with his gestures. Instead of saying that Manuel’s band did not have a rehearsal, which would be the unmarked version among jazz musicians, the reviewer asserts a Goal for Manuel – his musicians. Instead of saying that he had a positive vibe about him, the reviewer claims that Manuel “created a positive vibe.” The text of the review actually claims that the singer had the ability to create “a positive vibe that radiated into the audience,” constructing him as having the ability to create a positive energy (almost as if he were a sun), which then “radiates” and affects others.

The review of the female singer Jhelisa also uses this word, “vibe,” claiming that Jhelisa “vibed off her backing trio,” but Jhelisa is not ascribed the power as an Actor to create something that affects others. Rather, Jhelisa’s “vibing off” her musicians is framed in reference to her sexuality, followed by a paragraph in which she is described as “gregarious as hell.” Jhelisa’s identity construed by the series of phrases is of someone who does something with and through her body to please the audience, but she does not have the power to change or create anything through the application of her energy, power or skill. By contrast, the depiction of Manuel’s interaction with his audience is devoid of any kind of physicality on the singer’s part, since he touches others only indirectly, *via* the vibe that he creates. His body does not exist, only his stage persona, skill and influence.

There are a small number of phrases that ascribe a similar kind of agency to the male singers as those which characterize the female singers – control over their vocal delivery (“he broke down the bridge” [53]) and their bodies (“he moved his body and arms [51]), but the reviews do not seem to be so narrowly centered on the singers’ vocal abilities or physical appeal as the reviewers of female singers. Male singers do not simply *affect* songs with their actions, they “own” them and “take chances with them” [56]; the verbs “own” and “take chances” signify a level of mastery, perhaps risk-taking, and safe containment of the songs by the singers.

In addition, the Goals that the male vocalists are said to affect or the processes which they are claimed to perform seem to be taken from a variety of discourses, signifying the singers’ achievement

and significance. Thus, not only is Manuel claimed to “radiate” a “vibe” as though he were able to create metaphysical energy, but so is John Boutte claimed to resemble the sun in “he shined” [45]; the phrases establish both singers as on par with planets or galactic objects that are capable of “radiating” energy.

The reviews also depict and help to establish male performers as ‘men of work,’ ‘men of action,’ or ‘men of profession,’ by drawing on the discourses of empirical science and experimental art. Manuel is said to have abandoned an “**experiment**” (63), to have used a “**technique**” (61), and to “**mimic**” the sound of a trumpet (62). But the reviews also draw on the discourse of jazz theory (“mimic the **sound**” [62], “change the ... **arrangement** of a song”), or pure physical labor (“they **worked hard**” [68]). The phrase “he cupped his hands together” (62), framed in reference to the singer’s mimicking the sound of a trumpet, can also be read in a similar way, as professional achievement.

While male performers are discursively construed as being in control of the interaction between themselves and the audience, and having power over the way their skill and their performance will be viewed by the audience, female performers are actually more often than men depicted in control of songs or various parts of songs, and also in control over the words of songs. This is interesting because it suggests that the reviewer realizes the singers’ musical skills, yet is reluctant to ascribe to the performer a level of control over other people. In the language of the reviews, female singers perform actions *on* their musical material, and act to create a kind of physical space to connect with their audience, while men perform actions *on* other people to show off their skill and intellect, and through these actions connect with their audience.

## **6. Verbal Processes and Dialogue**

In this section, I will focus closely on verbal clauses to show how the discourse of a performance review constructs the performers’ verbal interaction with others and their ability or power to compel others to do and feel something using words. In comparison with the material clause that constructs Actors as the agents of change or happenings in the world, the verbal clause constructs the participants (Sayers) as simply having the power to say something. It is important to make note of the



verbs which represent the verbal processes (warn, encourage) – because they reveal the reviewer’s assessment of what the Sayers had said or how they said it, but it is equally important to focus on the framing of the verbal processes in the structure of the clause (whether the verbal action is represented in the main clause or as a hypotactic expansion). In addition, it is also important to notice how much space and significance the Sayer’s words are granted in the discourse of the review. A discursive analysis of verbal processes will enable me to show how the genre of the performance review structures the performers’ verbal actions. (I have bolded all verbal processes and second participants to whom the verbal actions are directed, as well as all cited statements projected via the verbal clause.)

Table 26

<p><i>Group I (Female Performers as Participants):</i></p> <p>Ingrid Lucia  (70) Lucia <b>warned the crowd</b> of the depressing nature of Elvis Costello's "Almost Blue"  (main)  (71) Lucia <b>engaged the audience</b> well (main) with her small talk in between songs  (hyp.mod).  Jhelisa  (72)Local vocalist Jhelisa <b>didn't start any Simone-like verbal fights</b> (main) with club owners or audience members Tuesday night at The Hookah Café (hyp. mod.)  (73)It was great how <b>Jhelisa spoke out</b> (main) when someone in the band pleased her (hyp. mod.).  (74) Jhelisa <b>introduced the band member and elicited applause from the audience</b> for him (parataxis).</p>
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Table 27

<p><i>Group J (Female Performers as Participants):</i></p> <p>John Boutte  (75) Boutte <b>joked and said, "I'm gonna see if I still wanna play with you guys."</b>  (parataxis)  Philip Manuel  (76) <b>"I knew I shouldn't have tried to do that," he said</b> (parataxis).  (77) He <b>encouraged the crowd to sing</b> (main)  (78) In fact, Manuel <b>took a moment at the beginning of the show</b> (main) <b>to mention</b> (hyp. mod.) he didn't rehearse the band last week (hyp. mod.)  (79) Manuel <b>asked for an amen from the audience</b> (main).  (80) <b>"Can you believe what that woman just told me...she's out of her mind. She knows I've got the mic."</b> (all parataxis—direct speech)</p>
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It seems that both women and men are discursively represented as having about the same amount of power to compel others to do things via the words that they speak on stage. While two of the verbal clauses in the reviews of male performers are constructed on the causative or material model, the one clause in the reviews of female performers constructed on the same model has a higher reality phase.

The causative construction represents a participant who is able to create an entity or apply some level of force to compel other participants (people or things) to do something. The verbal causatives in examples [74], [77], and [79] represent the female and male performers as being able to cause some type of reaction among the audience by applying a level of “verbal” energy:

*Table 28*

<b>Verbal Causatives</b>
(74) Jhelisa <b>elicited</b> applause from the audience [for a band member] OR: Jhelisa caused the audience to applaud by applying a level of (verbal) energy.
(77) He <b>encouraged</b> the crowd to sing OR: He caused the audience to sing by applying a level of (verbal) energy.
(79) Manuel <b>asked for</b> an amen from the audience. OR: He caused (compelled) the audience to say amen by applying a level of (verbal) energy.

There are different levels of the causative, depending on the amount of force or certainty with which the participants are claimed to have executed their speech acts. When M.A.K. Halliday speaks of a reality phase, he shows that while such verbs as “seem” or “consider” indicate a relatively low level of probability that something has happened, other verbs, such as “turn out” or “prove,” indicate a relatively high level of probability that something has happened (511). In other words, if someone “proves” to have performed an act, then the probability that this person had actually performed the act is high. On the other hand, if someone “seems” to have performed an act, then it is not certain at all that this person had performed the act in actuality. In the examples above, the verb “elicit” is characterized by a high level of probability, since it constructs the audience as having already performed the act which the singer asks them to perform – she “elicited” applause from the audience.

However, the verbs “ask for” and “encourage” are characterized by a relatively low level of probability: claiming that the singer “asked for” an act and “encouraged” the crowd to perform an act does not mean that the audience actually performed the act. So the Jhelisa example represents the singer as having a greater amount of power than Manuel to compel the audience to do something. By contrast, Manuel has power only as far as he can “encourage” or “ask” the audience to do something, but he is also depicted as eliciting this type of power twice during the course of the performance.

Nevertheless, since the female vocalist’s verbal action is realized via a higher reality phase, it seems that verbal agency might be part of the female performers’ appeal and a required component of the “essentialization” of femininity, which is either desired or at least expected among male audience. The “essentialization” of femininity, discussed in the previous chapter, includes the singers’ sassiness and seems to be developed in the *Live New Orleans* reviews, where example [72] asserts that Jhelisa was not quite as sassy as Simone (whom she was trying to emulate) since she did *not* “start any Simone-like verbal fights with club owners or audience members.”

By contrast, verbal agency in male singers is viewed as a way of asserting control over the audience and of showcasing their bravery and ability to affect others through their actions. Example [78], a verbal process modeled on the material model (“Manuel **took a moment** at the beginning of the show **to mention** he didn't rehearse the band last week”) discursively represents Manuel as being able to apply energy to something – another participant (a moment) to perform a verbal action via it. The process clause is not a strict causative, in that it does not allow Manuel to “compel” the moment to perform the action for him, but the verbal structure emphasizes both the act of speaking and the content of what Manuel said. The impact of his speech act (“he did not rehearse the band”), projected through the verbal-turned-material clause, would have been much weaker had the reporter simply said “Manuel mentioned.” While “mention” implies a by-the-way approach to speaking, “take a moment to mention” implies a resolute decision to speak with the aim of making others listen. In other words, because of the way his verbal action is structured discursively, Manuel is represented as assuming and seizing his right and the floor to speak. In addition, the statement which is thus emphasized (“he did not rehearse the band”) represents the singer as a self-confident risk-taker.

On the other hand, female singers' verbal actions are most often simply asserted ("Jhelisa **introduced** the band member" [74]), and in two cases, the action becomes the object of the reporter's evaluation. The sentence "Lucia engaged the audience well with her small talk in between songs" (example 71) evaluates the singer's manner of speaking covertly, since it only tags the evaluative adverb "well" onto the end of the verbal process. However, the following clause, "It was great how Jhelisa spoke out when someone in the band pleased her" (example 73) minimizes the singer's agency by making the empty subject ("it") the participant in a relational clause that evaluates the singer's manner of speaking. So the singer herself or her action is not even a participant in this clause. The structure thus represents the reporter's evaluation of the singer's verbal action in the main clause, as the centerpiece of the clause, diverting attention from the verbal action as such and diminishing its significance.

In addition, it is perhaps apparent at first glance that while there is no direct speech in the female performer's reviews, there are five distinct clauses in the male performers' reviews that cite word for word (as a direct speech) some of the statements that the singers uttered on stage. Norman Fairclough reminds us that when we read a text, we have to ask ourselves the following questions about the text's orientation to dialogue and difference: "Which texts and voices are included? Which are excluded? And what significant absences are there?" (*Analysing* 47). Direct speech, in any text, functions as a way of reminding the reader that there are other people, other voices, who are also important in the construction of the text (and whose words become part of the text via direct quotation). If there are no direct quotations in a text in which voices of other people are clearly present (we know that they are present because they are paraphrased or reported in a narrative fashion), then the lack of direct speech constructs the writer of the text as someone who does not find the voices or words of other people significant enough to be included.

In the Jhelisa and Lucia reviews, though the singers are represented as being physically present on stage, uttering words or engaging in a verbal interaction with the audience, all we get in the text of the review is a narrative report of the singers' speech acts. Fairclough shows that texts which include other voices only so far as they construe a "narrative report" of speech acts (49) support hegemony because they only represent one person's hegemonic view, suppressing dialogue and

difference by silencing other voices. In the reviews of the female performers, the performers' voices are silenced, which enables the reporter to construct a hegemonic view of them. On the other hand, the reviews of the male performers include "direct reporting" of the singer's speech acts (49), indicated by the incorporation of quotation marks and (in some instances) a reporting clause. The direct reporting of speech acts, according to Fairclough, is the best tool for supporting dialogue and difference in a piece of text.

While the reporter makes sure that the language he uses in the reviews incorporates the male performer's voices, letting them speak for "themselves" and contribute to the construction of their identities textually, he effectively excludes the voices of women. There are a total of five clauses in the Jhelisa and Lucia reviews that report the singers' speech acts, constructing the content of their speech in the process of reporting on it (i.e., "Lucia warned the crowd," "Lucia engaged the audience with her small talk")." The reporter's rewriting of the speech acts thus denies the singers' the right to the representation and acknowledgement of their own voices.

The reporting clauses turn the singers into entities that may not even have been present at their performance because all that the readers hear is the reporter's voice. The omission of direct speech in the Jhelisa and Lucia reviews helps to structure the singers only in relation to that which is immediately visible about them, their bodies and appearance, as reviewable commodities that they have become in the text of the reviews. Conversely, the incorporation of direct speech in the Manuel and Boute reviews helps the reviewer to represent the singers in a multi-dimensional manner, as real people, with real voices, who may have a real stock in the way they are textually represented and evaluated in the text of the review.

## **7. The Jhelisa and Manuel reviews**

I want to spend a few moments on the Jhelisa and Manuel reviews, specifically the opening sections where the reviewer compares the singers' abilities to pay tribute to famous jazz figures of the past—Nina Simone and Louis Armstrong respectively, because these passages illustrate particularly well the differences and similarities in representation of female and male vocalists. To preface the overview, I have to point out that both the Jhelisa and Manuel reviews are positive about the singers' skills,

recommending, towards the end, that readers “check out” Jhelisa’s Tuesday night tribute to Nina Simone “before it’s over,” and claiming that “Manuel, his voice and band put on a great show.” However, what is significant is that the picture of an able performer is constructed in quite a different manner in each case. Even the concluding words of the reviewer should make readers aware that while Manuel is claimed to be the source of the energy that *caused* (“put on”) a “great show,” Jhelisa discursively *becomes* the show, a spectacle that the readers are recommended to “check out” (glance at and evaluate) while it is still available. The text of the review gives the reader power over the female singers—the power to stare, assess and commodify.

The passages in which the reviewer constructs a comparison between Jhelisa and Simone on the one hand and Manuel and Armstrong on the other also call attention to the discrepancy in the way a performer’s skill is represented discursively in a gendered way. While Manuel is claimed to have “mimicked” the sound of a trumpet – “cup[ping] hands” together and “us[ing] a “technique” – and constructing himself as in control of his performance, showcasing his musical skills and intellectual capacities, impersonating the master and re-creating Armstrong’s sound, Jhelisa is depicted as *not* being able to engage in the only piece of activity for which, we are told, Simone was known: “verbal fights” (72). The statement discredits Nina Simone’s contribution to jazz in that it constructs the singer’s identity as someone with propensity to quarrel – omitting to mention that Simone was a superb singer and pianist. But the claim also discredits Jhelisa’s skills as a performer and singer because it structures her tribute to the legend not as a musical tribute, but as an approximation of verbal/physical and physiological behavior of Simone (her verbal fighting and her radiating of freedom). Contrary to the Manuel review, which grants power and agency to the singer throughout, the short passage in the Jhelisa review actually shifts attention from the singer to what the reviewer *imagined* Simone was like – not as a singer, but as a physical presence and entity – we are told that like Simone, Jhelisa “radiated” “freedom.” Jhelisa’s tribute to Simone is determined by this definition of Simone, as we are told that she performed with the same kind of freedom. In the context of a review which represents Jhelisa as gregarious, sexy and tempting, the word “freedom” once again calls up pictures of Jhelisa as the temptress, her only appeal and significance lying in the ability to put her ‘sociable’ attitude and physical charms on display for all to share. Her very skill as a musician and

ability to “mimic” Simone is defined as the absence of energy and willingness to place herself on display as a physically available entity. By contrast, the discourse of the Manuel review commands the performer for his bravery and constructs the singer as someone who has achieved mastery through risk-taking and skillful execution.

## **8. Conclusion**

By analyzing performance reviews of four local New Orleans vocalists, two female and two male, I have shown that the way a performer’s skill as a musician and an artist is structured depends on the performer’s gender. The depiction of the performer’s interaction with audience and the way the performer’s stage persona is defined or structured also depends on the performer’s gender.

The language of the reviews of the female performers creates a picture of an artist whose power and appeal lie in her ability and willingness to be admired for her physical or sexual appeal and in her ability to create a sort of social and physical space within which the audience can enjoy her physical closeness and her singing voice. The female performer is discursively allowed to be vocal, yet the review does not acknowledge her voice; rather her voice is represented through the agency of the reviewer who narratively structures the artist’s verbal agency and her speech acts. Overall, there are far more evaluative statements in the reviews of female performers, which divert attention from the singer’s skill and structure the reviewer’s opinion of the performer as more important. Though there are a few sentences in the reviews that construe the female performer in an agentive way, as an Actor in material process clauses, these clauses either represent the singer’s physical movements in a rather animalistic fashion or they grant the singer some agency only over her voice and the delivery of musical material. The rest of the discourse emphasizes the singer’s physical beauty, the beauty of her voice or her sexual and emotional appeal.

Because the female performer is depicted as lacking agency, but nevertheless presenting herself as available to the audience, the discourse of the review structures the performer as less powerful than both the audience and the reviewer (both having the power to evaluate the singer, whose agency is limited). The discursive depictions of women as lacking agency or power, depictions which overtly emphasize their sexual appeal and availability, also help to underline and retain gender

stereotyping of women. Moreover, since both reviews represent the female singers as highly valued commodities through positive evaluation of their performance, the language of the reviews construes a discursive link in the female performer between her achievement and success as a singer and performer on the one hand and her ability and her willingness to please the audience with her performance of femininity on the other. The female performer's competence as a musician and her ability to show her skills and talent are undermined by the focus of the review on the singer's performance of femininity.

In contrast, the language of the reviews of the male performers constructs a picture of a performer who exhibits a level of control and power over the audience and reviewer and the ability to actively influence the audience's and the reviewer's opinion of him as an artist and musician. A great majority of clauses represent the singers as Actors in material processes, showing them in control of the showcasing of their musical skills, talents and achievements, and affecting other people via their actions. The majority of relational clauses, the clauses that are used to evaluate and assess, are also explicit about the singers' significance as musicians and their talents. On the other hand, the majority of relational clauses in the reviews of female performers are overtly explicit about the singers' physical attributes. Because of the overabundance of clauses that structure the male vocalists in an overtly agentive way, the performers are never reduced simply to a sort of passive physical presence (as is the case with female performers), that can be packaged, commodified and assessed by the audience for the pleasurable experience that it provides. Because the male performers take control over the way their performance and actions on stage will be perceived by the audience, they show a level of control and power over the audience and the reviewer, quite the converse of the powerlessness of the female performers. The discourse of the reviews of the male performers acknowledges the actual voices of the singers, which makes it impossible to reduce them to a commodity to a large extent. By discursively emphasizing the performers' power and agency, the discourse of the review grants or at least emphasizes the singers' achievements in the field of jazz.

The focus of the male and female performers' reviews thus serves to undermine the female performers' skill as musicians while emphasizing the talent of male performers. In the next and final



body chapter, I will focus on the analysis of the themes that are both present and *absent* in textual representations of jazz vocalists.

## CHAPTER SIX

### **An Analysis of Excerpts from *JazzTimes* Interviews and Feature Articles**

I will now analyze the language of interviews and articles about jazz vocal artists that appeared in *Jazz Times* over the period of almost three years, between July/August 2004 and May 2007. I have limited the scope of my analysis somewhat because I wanted to analyze only the texts that are likely going to have the greatest impact on the audience. For this reason, I have focused only on the articles/interviews that were featured in the table of contents with a short narrative description (a total of nine). Likewise, I have examined only the first three to four opening paragraphs of the featured articles, the title page caption and the short narrative description of the articles from the table of contents of the printed version (which also appears on the home page of the electronic issue).

The featured articles are likely to attract the attention of both bookstore goers and internet surfers because they are featured in both media in a prominent place. In the online version of *JazzTimes*, they are featured on the home page of that particular issue; in the print copy, they are featured in the table of contents, and a picture of an artist interviewed in one of these articles usually appears on the magazine's cover page. These articles are the magazine's drawing power – items that may (or may not) convince random bookstore visitors (or internet surfers) to spend money on a copy. In addition, random bookstore goers may not read any further than the first few paragraphs of an article, and internet surfers will only be able to access excerpts from the articles on the magazine's home page. It is likely that many people will be first acquainted with *JazzTimes* in this way (I myself first learned about the publication when searching for articles and interviews with jazz artists on the Internet). And since the publication presents itself as a reputable medium (with professional-looking internet pages, typography and graphics), it is likely that people who are searching for reputable electronic sources of information will be attracted to it. Bookstore goers who only browse through the magazine copy will likely read the narrative descriptions in the table of contents (to learn what articles they can find in a specific issue), the opening lines (often bolded and enlarged) of the featured articles, and be attracted to the bold and large print of the title page caption and article title. (The title page

caption usually appears next to a page- or two pages-wide picture of an artist, though this caption does not appear in the electronic version.)

Also, an article title, title page, title-page caption and the opening lines represent an important introduction to an artist and her work for those who are learning about the artist for the first time. For this reason, magazine editors are usually trying to introduce the artists and their main identities and roles in the span of the first few paragraphs, so an analysis of the first few paragraphs should uncover most of the vocalist's roles or identities represented in the interviews.

In the sections below, I will analyze the textual representations of female and male singers, focusing also on the *potential* representations that have not been chosen by the reporters and editors of *JazzTimes*. My analysis is in part inspired by Norman Fairclough's analysis of significant absences, who maintains that the voices and discourses which do not surface in a genre or a text significantly limit the text's orientation to difference and dialogue (*Analysing*). First, I will perform a naming analysis to show what identities have been assigned to the singers explicitly, and then I will analyze possessive noun phrases to show what identities have been assigned implicitly. Finally, I will explicate the metaphorical nature of some of the Attributes assigned to the artists via relational clauses. Throughout, I will focus on analyzing word associations and connotations suggested and introduced by the names and identities assigned to singers.

### **1. Naming Analysis**

To introduce the various identities and roles that the discourse of *JazzTimes* explicitly creates for its jazz singers, I will first perform a naming analysis. From a strictly utilitarian point of view, a naming analysis rests on the propensity of human beings to form paradigmatic relations among "content words" of the vocabulary (Halliday 37) and on the nature of the English clausal structure, which allows for the replacement of one member of a particular word class by another member of the same class. Typically, paradigmatic lexical "sets" – to use Halliday's word (40) – are linked by the semantic features that they share (or don't share – as is the case with antonyms). The similarity in meaning can be realized as synonymy (words that are similar in meaning – such as friend/companion/buddy), hyponymy (words that are "sub-types of the same type" – such as

palm/birch/oak... as kinds of trees), or meronymy (words that are “parts of the same whole” – such as branch/trunk/root.... as part of tree, or ear/eye/nose...as parts of face).

While people will in general find these paradigmatic lexical relations useful to talk about actions, events, emotions, objects, plants, trees, and members of the animal kingdom, similar semantic links can be made between names that we use to refer to other people. Thus, someone we know can be any of the following, depending on our relationship to this person and context: Loretta, lawyer, astronaut, friend, daughter, writer, choir conductor, or she. But this same person can also acquire various other identities, many times against her will and without her consent, based on the words that others use to refer to her and the qualities or attributes that they assign to her. Thus, this same person can also become any of the following: the young charmer, the legend, the veteran vocalist, the giant of crossover jazz, the former hit-maker, the American original, the gal at the center, the smoky-voiced chanteuse, the lady, the green-eyed beauty, the vocal diva, the diminutive wunderkind, or the tender-aged moon child. These “names” don’t simply refer to our hypothetical person whose name is Loretta; they *become* Loretta representationally because they take the place of the given name in the grammar of the clause and replace it with lexical units that represent the real person only partially. Calling a grown-up woman “the gal at the center of the party” is similar in one sense to calling a tree “a branch.”

From the point of view of naming analysis, these names serve to assign particular roles and aspects of identities by emphasizing certain qualities and de-emphasizing others. The names either emphasize only one aspect of the full-fledged person (as in “the green-eyed beauty,” which calls attention only to the singer’s green eyes and her “beauty”) or they create generalizations, as in “the lady,” which represents the singer as one member of the class of people who share a class of common semantic attributes (+ female, – male), narrowly focusing only on the singer’s gender. The analysis of the “names” that jazz vocalists are assigned in the discourse of the interview/narrative report can reveal the reporter’s attitude toward the particular singer and show the various identities and roles that jazz vocalists are expected to bear and perform. But the naming analysis does not only represent the singer to the public. It also “creates” and constructs the singer discursively because people who read the interviews and reports will expect the singer to embody the characteristics

represented by a particular name, even in the absence of other cues for that identity. The names that singers are called in the reports function as narrow barriers, limiting the singers' agency and narrowing the scope of roles and identities that they are able to assume, carry out, and attain. I have found the following names and discursive replacements for singers in the discourse of the interview. Some obviously do not convey anything interesting about the vocalists' roles or identities, apart from their age, the city they are from, or the instrument that they play ("the 24-year-old Englishman Jamie Cullum," "the Chicagoan singer-pianist"), and I have decided not to focus on them in my analysis. The list below includes only the names that convey more than the singer's demographic or professional status<sup>17</sup>:

Table 29

*Group A (Naming Analysis of the Representations Female Performers):*

*Wilson*

(1) the legendary 67-year-old (Sayer)

*Rene Marie*

(2) This jazz-vocal diva (Verbiage, adjective phrase)

(3) The gal at the center of this party (Carrier)

*Madeleine Peyroux*

(4) This smoky-voiced chanteuse (Carrier)

*Patti Austin*

(5) Soul and jazz diva Austin (Receiver of a verbal process)

(6) Veteran vocalist Patti Austin (part of Carrier)

(7) The lady (Carrier)

(8) The green-eyed beauty (Carrier)

Table 30

*Group B (Naming Analysis of the Representations of Male Performers):*

*Cullum*

(9) the diminutive wunderkind

(10) The young charmer

*Cincotti*

(11) the wunderkind vocalist/pianist

(12) the tender-aged moon child

*Al Jarreau and George Benson*

(13) These two giants of crossover jazz

<sup>17</sup> I have also ignored in my analysis a name that points to the number of performers – a "pair." Al Jarreau and George Benson released a CD of duets, so the interview with them includes several references to a pair of people.

Table 30, cont.

(14) The former Warner Bros. labelmates and hit-makers <i>Tony Bennett</i> (15) This American original
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I will first look at the phrases that emphasize the singers' 'quality' as jazz performers, using hyperbole, and then at the phrases that project certain roles and discursive space onto the singers' bodies. There are two names in Group A and one name in Group B that are roughly similar in meaning: the adjective "legendary" (1), and the noun phrases "veteran vocalist" (6) (referring to two female vocalists) and the phrase "American original" (15) (referring to a male vocalist). All three names signify 'quality' and construct the performers as belonging to a class of people who have been celebrated (or at least been around) for a long time and accomplished something significant. All three signify varying levels of expertise and renown and construct the singers in a somewhat larger-than-life way, using hyperbole: The names draw on the discourses of old chronicles and history (original), warfare (veteran) and mythology (legendary), calling up connotations of bygone golden eras in the history of the human race. Bennett, "the American original," is claimed to be the first and only of his kind on the American continent, the quintessential American – a somewhat subjective claim, since its validity depends on perspective. The worth of Austin, the war "veteran" or Wilson, the history "legend," also does not seem to be understated.

On the other end of the classification spectrum are the labels that reduce the singers to only one or a few of their attributes. These names emphasize either one part of the vocalists' bodies or one aspect of their identity, often stereotyping jazz performers based on their gender. The names that refer to female singers emphasize the singers' looks, bodies, voice qualities and diva self-presentation, but also undermine the professional status of jazz vocal performance and create the impression that to become a female jazz vocalist, one does not need a lot of talent or hard work. For instance, the labels "jazz-vocal diva" (2) and "soul and jazz diva" (5), though used often nowadays to refer to any popular female singer, still imply the world of baroque or end-of-the-nineteenth-century grand opera, when opera singers were celebrated, revered, and pampered more for their grand status as stars than for their

actual musicianship. The word “diva” (a prima donna or any celebrated woman operatic singer) helps to establish the picture of a jazz diva as someone spoiled and indulged in her popularity. A “vocal diva” is not to be taken seriously by really serious musicians because she cares more about her popularity and starry status than about practicing her craft and making valuable contributions to jazz.

The name “the gal at the center of this party” (3) (referring to Rene Marie who is also called a “jazz-vocal diva”) helps to underscore the image of female jazz singers as not professional enough. The singer is said to be at the center of a “party,” which calls to mind the image of someone lightheartedly and carelessly performing for a group of people (merry and drunk) who could hardly appreciate any sort of serious performance. The professionalism of vocal jazz is undermined, as is the singer’s ability to deliver a mature and professional performance. The label constructs an audience for her, an audience that is allowed to evaluate her skill and talent, though not being worthy of her performance.

Also, she is labeled the “gal” (a very derogative name for a 49-year-old woman) and construed narrowly as a member of a class of people who are characterized by “immature” femininity, only in relation to her sex or gender. Since she is at the center of the party, the focus of the audience’s (or the idealized male spectator’s) gaze, she is also seemingly inviting others to share in and consume her (immature) femininity. Another discursive label, “the lady” (7) constructs the female singer in a similarly narrow manner, calling attention only to her identity and role as a woman, condensing and suppressing the variety of her other roles and identities. By emphasizing the female singer’s sex and gender affiliation, the labels construct a picture of a female singer who is on display on stage, desirable and appealing, not only for the music that she provides, but also for her ‘essence’ of femininity. The designation “the green-eyed beauty” (8) in one sense functions similarly, in that it not only limits the singer’s identity to someone who has green eyes and who is a “beauty,” but it also emphasizes her femininity – since most people would not probably refer to a man as a “green-eyed beauty,” and if they did, it would be to indicate the man’s lack of masculinity. And like the two labels above, the “green-eyed beauty,” being a female, is also offered to the audience’s gaze.

The phrase “this smoky-voiced chanteuse” (4) further develops the characterization or image of female jazz singers as both sexually appealing and available and not necessarily overtly good at

their craft. Though it may seem natural to use the word “chanteuse” in this particular case because the singer is French, the possibility of a bilingual symbolic space allows the interviewer to call up connotations of chants (“chanteuse”), simple songs that can be sung with the least amount of application, but also representations of the Parisian social life, within whose confines the singer becomes sexually available. The adjective “smoky-voiced” also has this double connotation: It implies a voice quality that can be characterized as both “sexy” and “unkept.” The adjective conveys the discourse of smoked-filled bars, within whose space the singer can be consumed for the sexual pleasures that she provides – at least within the discourse of jazz that had long ago constructed Billie Holiday (who was also a prostitute) as the prototypical “bar” singer. (Of note is the fact that Peyroux is likened to Holiday in the text of the interview.) The “smoky-voiced chanteuse” is also sexual on another level, as a “smoky” or “husky” voice (often kept up by smoking cigarettes) is labeled as sexy. But also much like Holiday, whose voice deteriorated by the end of her life from too much abuse, the label constructs the singer as someone who does not apply herself to her craft or care about sounding professionally. The “smoky-voiced chanteuse” label thus not only reduces the singer’s identity to that which is considered sexy about her – her voice, but it also constructs her lack of training or application to her craft.

In the midst of the labels that narrowly focus on the singers’ identities as women/gals, beauties, or bar singers/sexually available, their other identities – those of a professional singer, a musician, an artist, an intellectual – are suppressed. This kind of labeling thus serves also to undermine the importance of their musical careers.

The names referencing male singers are perhaps not as varied, but most of the labels actually emphasize the singers’ achievement and highlight their successful careers. The obvious labels are “these two giants of crossover jazz” (13) and “the former Warner Bros. labelmates and hit-makers” (14), which grossly exaggerate the singers’ ability to produce successful recordings (“hit-makers”) and construct them as massively significant in the field of jazz (“giants of crossover jazz”).

There is only one label that might have mildly “sexual” or at least physical connotations, “the young charmer” (10), but the reading of this label is ambiguous. While on one level, the name stirs up pictures of someone physically appealing or attractive, someone with purely physical or sexual



personal magnetism, on another level, the name begs to be interpreted on a more literal level. The name calls up the picture of a conjurer, who has been given otherworldly powers to lure audience to his craft. This non-sexual reading of “charmer” as someone performing magic tricks, able to mesmerize and hypnotize, makes more sense in the context of the text, which assigns also the label “the diminutive wunderkind” (9) to the artist.

The German word “wunderkind” (used twice in the interviews with male artists, in (10) and (11), to refer to two different performers) is used to refer to a person who can perform wonders or miracles (literally a “miracle child” in German). Though obviously the artist is not able to perform miracles the way a deity is said to perform them, the label stirs up connotations of someone who is so vastly gifted at his craft that he inspires amazement, incredulity and awe, someone who is so marvelous that his performance begs comparison with a miracle. The German word “Kind” (child) and the label “diminutive” call to mind the connotations of someone very young and very small, which supports the non-sexual understanding of “charmer” (since we do not normally see little boys as sexually appealing), but it also increases the wonder that this artist inspires – the picture of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart immediately comes to mind.

Another set of labels referring to another male performer, “the wunderkind vocalist/pianist” and “the tender-aged moon child” (12) (the artist was born in July), functions in a similar way. Of note is the fact that these performers are grown-up men, albeit young, so the labels also construct them as vulnerable and perhaps a bit helpless, much like the female vocalists from the *JazzTimes* CD reviews (who were constructed as delicate and soft) discussed in chapter four. However, the important difference is that while the female vocalists’ delicacy and softness was read as sexual, the male performers’ tenderness is nonsexual – it is a baby’s tenderness, indicating that these particular singers have not been professional jazz musicians for a very long time and are therefore unspoiled by the world of music business. Though the labels emphasizes the young age of the male artists, they also underscore the singers’ talent and success by constructing them as those who have achieved the kind of success that people normally achieve at a much later age.

It should now become clear what designations or labels are missing from the texts. While female musicians are called various names, all narrowly emphasizing either their identities as women and

decorative/sexually available entities or undermining their professionalism and work in jazz, there are no labels that *overemphasize* their success, talents, or significance, as in the male musicians' case. There are no "wunderkinds" "giants" or "hit-makers" among female musicians (discursively). Conversely, there are no labels in texts about male singers that narrowly focus on parts of the singers' bodies, on their voice-qualities or physical appeal, or labels that underscore only the singers' young age without emphasizing their talents. In other words, there are no "green-eyed hunks," no "smoky-voiced chanters," and no "boys" among men (though there are "wunderkinds).

What does the narrow focus and omission of certain labels in texts about female and male musicians mean? People tend to understand words in the context of the other words that appear in any given text (see Halliday 2004:40), and we create the meaning of a passage by understanding the connotations of the words that appear in the passage. When told that the "smoky-voiced chanteuse" can swing, we will understand the action that she is claimed to have performed differently than if the same action is claimed to have been performed by a "wunderkind vocalist/pianist." The connotations associated with the label "wunderkind vocalist" will make us see the claim "can swing" as praise of the musician's achievement and exceptional ability to play with a good sense of timing, and we will not even think of other possible connotations of the word "swing." However, because of the connotations associated in our culture with the label "smoky-voiced chanteuse" we may underrate the singer's achievement and her ability to "swing," assuming that the quality of her voice is more important than her talent to perform with a good sense of timing. Moreover, we might understand the act of "swinging" in more physical terms (since performed by someone whose voice sounds sexy).

When female vocalists are called names that emphasize their sexiness, physical appeal and beauty (not to mention the labels that actually underplay their professional demeanor and achievement in music), readers will understand the singer's other actions and achievement in relation to these labels. Eventually, readers may assume that the female artists' ability to look "beautiful" and appear "sexy" is more important than their musical talent, especially if they are never reminded of the singers' exceptional musical achievement and professional status by such labels as appear to be associated with male performers. On the contrary, if male performers are never called names that

emphasize the importance of their appearance or purely physical appeal, then their achievement will always be understood only in relation to their other achievements in the field of jazz.

## 2. Relation/Possession Embedded in a Noun Phrase

As I pointed out in the previous chapters, when relation is construed as a noun phrase, the fact that an artist or a part of her/his body is being described by other people is obscured. The quality or feature that would have been realized as an Attribute in a relational clause becomes embedded in a possessive phrase, which constructs the singer as the possessor of her qualities and features. The possessive noun phrase, by presupposing these features and constructing them as intrinsic to the singer, represents her as already embodying the qualities. These qualities are therefore understood as facts by readers, rather than features that some person assigned to the singer. In *JazzTimes*, all seven interviews with female artists that I have investigated contain possessive noun phrases that construct the singers' features as facts, while only two reviews of male singers (out of the four that I have looked at) contain possessive phrases. There are a total of 33 possessive phrases in the texts about female vocalists, but only six in the texts about male vocalists. The numbers average out to about 4.7 per female singer and about 1.5 per male vocalist, so the difference is overwhelming. In addition, as with naming, certain classifications are taboo for female vocalists, while others seem to be taboo for male vocalists. The themes and discourses that are *not* in the texts are as important as those that are.

Below is a list of all possessive phrases that describe the vocalists in the texts of the interviews. In Group C (the interviews with female singers), a great many phrases (a total of 16) convey the discourse of fashion, underline the significance of the singers' appearance or personal appeal, or construct the singers' voice qualities or vocal styles as facts. There are only 2 phrases of this sort in Group D (the interviews with male singers), one of them ambiguous:

*Table 31*

*Group C: (Female vocalists in embedded phrases)*

*Wilson (Nancy)*

(16) Wilson's unique blend of diamondlike clarity, flawless enunciation and whispered smokiness

Table 31, cont.

- (17) Her innate elegance
  - (18) [Her] stunning combination of sophistication and natural beauty
  - (19) Her tremendously high standards
  - (20) [Her] remarkable dexterity
  - (21) Her exquisite taste in arrangers and musical partners
  - (22) The allure of Nancy Wilson
  - (23) Her charm and her curse
  - (24) Her exceptionality
- Marie*
- (25) Her light coat
  - (26) Her subtly flashy yellow dress
  - (27) Her composed manner
  - (28) Her vaguely punk-rock appearance
  - (29) Rene Marie's new album
- Wilson (Cassandra)*
- (30) Cassandra Wilson's sultry contralto
  - (31) Her work
  - (32) Wilson's excellence as a vocalist
  - (33) Her deep-earth contralto
  - (34) Her example
- Allyson*
- (35) Vocalist Karrin Allyson's repertoire
  - (36) [Her uncompromising individualism] (realized as "it")
  - (37) Allyson's escalating intrepidity
- Barber*
- (38) Her beguiling vocal style
  - (39) [Her] esoteric repertoire
- Peyroux*
- (40) Her first record
  - (41) Her straight-to-the-bar rhythm guitar
  - (42) [Her] simple but mysterious voice
- Austin (reviewer: a woman)*
- (43) Her sense of humor is outsized
  - (44) Her personal presence [is] powerful
  - (45) Her frequent laughter [is] infectious
  - (46) Her opinions [are] unshakable
  - (47) Her musical beginnings
  - (48) Austin's musical abilities
  - (49) Her powerful yet velvety warm pipes
  - (50) Austin's spirit, humor and commitment to the jazz canon

Table 32

*Group D (Male Vocalists in Embedded Phrases):*

*Cincotti*

- (51) Cincotti's professionalism
- (52) [Cincotti's] gentlemanly politeness
- (53) [Cincotti's] seeming invincibility
- (54) His enthusiasm for Eminem
- (55) His velvet-smooth voice

*Table 32, cont.*

<p><i>Bennet</i> (56) Bennet's multigenerational appeal</p>
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First of all, many of the possessives in Group C construct female singers' interest in clothing and fashion as facts, while none of the phrases in Group D represent fashion as important for men. Examples (25-28) presuppose that the singer had a "light coat" and a "subtly flashy yellow dress," and that she had an "appearance" – a "vaguely punk-rock appearance." While readers probably assume that the female singer had something on while being interviewed, they may not think much about how the singer looked unless they are reminded that appearance is part of the package called 'a female vocalist.' In other words, the possessive clauses that assume the singer's "flashy dress" and "punk-rock" appearance construct a prototype or an image of a female vocalist who has to be concerned about the way she looks. The vocalist's appearance then "travels" with the readers as they read more about her music or projects she is working on, so that her performance of her look and appearance becomes part of her role as a professional musician. In the interviews with male musicians, on the other hand, we are never told (and the reporters never assume) that clothes are relevant, and so readers are able to approach the magazine's account of the singers' skill and achievement without the connotations called up by possessive phrases like those in texts about female singers.

In addition, there are clear references to the discourse of fashion in Group C that are missing from Group D: Female singers are claimed to possess "elegance" that is "innate" (17), "sophistication" that is "stunning" (18), and "taste in arrangers" that is "exquisite" (21). While not directly referring to clothing items that the singers wear, these statements assume the singer's closeness and familiarity with the world of fashion and domestic work by constructing her attributes in terms of words taken from the discourse of fashion and modeling, or even food and cooking ("taste"). Though one might argue that there is nothing "unnatural" about women being familiar with the discourse of fashion and domestic work, the words used in the possessive clauses help to retain the stereotypes associated in our culture with women and promote an image of female singers as concerned more about external

appearance and the superficial “taste” of things that are on the surface than about making serious music.

There are four phrases in texts about female performers (and none in texts about male singers) that narrowly structure the singers in terms of their personal and physical appeal, or charm, often used in combination with phrases highlighting their familiarity with the world of fashion. Thus, the phrases “the allure of Nancy Wilson” (22), “her charm” (23) and “her personal presence” (44) presuppose that personal attraction is part of being a female vocal artist. The possessive phrase “natural beauty” (18) presupposes that female beauty is “natural” and that it is “natural” for female singers to be and look beautiful—or perform their “beauty” as part of their on-stage performance. The combination of these two discourses (fashion and beauty) helps to construct the female singers’ significance in terms of physical or external charm. E.g., the phrase “innate elegance” suggests that the singer is “naturally” stylish or chic, while “stunning sophistication” in combination with “natural beauty” suggests that the singer’s sophistication is external (just as her “natural beauty”).

In contrast, the absence of this discourse in texts about male singers constructs these singers’ significance in terms of their “inner” talent and other musical activities that we are told about, untainted by references to the singers’ external appearance, all of which allows the readers to see the singers as somewhat more “genuine” musicians. Moreover, when the more general term “appeal” is used to refer to Tony Bennet, it is qualified, so that the singer is claimed to possess “multigenerational appeal” (56). In this case, the phrase does not focus on the singer’s physical charms, but rather the appeal or interest that he can generate for a multigenerational audience.

Also, as I have found with different methodologies and texts in previous chapters, there is an overwhelming focus in reviews of women on the description of their voice qualities and vocal techniques that is not as pronounced in texts about male musicians. Of the seven texts about female singers, five make reference to the singer’s vocal style or repertoire, and there are a total of eight phrases that assume that the female singer’s voice has a certain quality (add to this number example [4] from the previous section); there is only one reference to a male vocalist’s voice quality. Moreover, female musicians’ voices are assumed to have qualities associated with precious items that can be used and exploited, with natural elements, described as something strangely enticing and

alluring in their strangeness (recall Jhelisa's depiction as the temptress), and bidding intimacy with the singer. (Add to this list the description of female voices in terms of consumable items from chapter four).

The female singers' voices frame the singers as forbidden and unknowable, unless one is willing to put oneself under the vocalists' spell. The description of Peyroux's voice as "simple but mysterious" (42) implies that it is desirable for a female singer to have a mysterious voice – though it may be "simple." The assumption is that puzzling and strange qualities are appealing with the promise of forbidden rewards: that which cannot be known is considered exotic and enticing. The representation of the singer's voice as 'strange' and 'unknowable' develops the characterization of female singers as "spiritual" or "otherworldly." The phrase "beguiling vocal style," used to describe Barber (38), calls to mind a picture of the mythical Sirens (from Homer's *Odyssey*), luring sailors by their sweet, enchanting singing to the destruction of the whole ship and the crew, which also helps to develop the essentialization of femininity as 'otherworldly.' In addition, since this act is coming from female mythical creatures and is directed toward a group of people who are predominantly male (sailors), it also suggests the notion of the "femme fatale."<sup>18</sup> The singer's power to ensnare lies in her 'eroticization' by the male audience and the men's desire to consume her. The description of Barber's repertoire as "esoteric" (39) and her singing as "beguiling" thus helps to construct and perpetuate the picture of a sexualized female singer or temptress, ensnaring men with her enticing and captivating voice, making an interpretation of Barber's voice and skills in purely musical terms (as in the case of the "wunderkind" male singers) impossible.

The description of female singers' vocal qualities also calls to mind pictures of physical closeness. Nancy Wilson's "whispered smokiness" (16) and connotations of the act of whispering represent the singer's voice as requiring the listener's physical closeness and the singer as desiring this closeness. Like Peyroux's "smoky" voice (example [4]), Wilson's "smokiness" is hot and sexy, with connotations of other "smoky" elements, such as fire. Cassandra Wilson's alto is described as

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<sup>18</sup> Homer's Sirens represent one of the first occurrences of the "femme fatale" in Western literature, having a predecessor in the biblical Salome. The notion of the femme fatale, an "erotic and dangerous woman" was popularized by Oscar Wilde in his one-act play *Salome* and subsequently developed by Johannes Strauss in his opera *Salome*, in which Salome was portrayed as a "seductress of her stepfather and a murderer of a saint" (Lee par. 3).

“sultry” (30) and “deep-earth” (33), while Austin’s voice is claimed to be “velvety warm” (49). The adjectives “sultry” and “warm” stir up connotations of an element (like weather), that is humid, hot and enveloping, even stifling, simulating the physical closeness and heat of the singers’ “warm” bodies. The adjective “deep-earth” suggests a similar environment as “sultry” and “warm” – since one may feel oppressively hot close to Earth’s center and enveloped by the surrounding elements.

In addition, the description of female performers’ vocal qualities calls to mind pictures of that which can be discovered and exploited. Nancy Wilson’s vocals are claimed to have “diamondlike clarity” (16), representing the singer’s voice as a natural resource (or treasure) that can be dug up and exploited as other precious metals or stones found in earth. The singer’s vocal quality thus also resembles a maiden’s virginity, which is liable to be exploited for its precious nature. The label “deep-earth” functions in a similar fashion, since many precious metals are found lying in deep earth, subject to exploitation.

To be fair, the vocals of one of the male singers are also described as having the quality of a precious item – a precious cloth, velvet (“his velvet-smooth voice” [55]), but this is only one of two descriptions of a male singer’s voice that I have found in mass media texts, and not just in the *JazzTimes* interviews. Moreover, velvet is a precious fabric that needs to be created (possibly by the singer himself). So male singers’ voices, though claimed to possess qualities of something precious, are never constructed as lying in deep earth, waiting to be uncovered, or as having the ability to simulate the physical closeness of the singer.

Also, the language of the interviews presupposes that it is desirable for a woman to have a “warm” voice, but it questions the woman’s ability to have both “powerful” and “warm” voice. The claim that Austin has “powerful yet velvety warm pipes” (49), structures the singer as being able to show masculine “prowess” yet remain feminine and “warm.” The wording thus suggests the reporter’s surprise at the singer’s ability to retain warmth and intimacy while also exhibiting strength and power.

Finally, though there are only a few possessive phrases in the interviews with male vocalists, those that are there help to solidify and establish as facts the male singers’ “professionalism” (51) and seemingly supernatural ability to stand strong against all odds (“invincibility” [53]). Moreover, as I



have already pointed out, male singers' professional or "gentlemanly" (52) demeanor and "invincibility" are never compromised by phrases that emphasize their physical appearance and attractiveness or by a comparison of their voices to that which can simulate physical closeness.

### 3. Identification and Classification Realized as Relation: Metaphors

There are a total of about seventy relational clauses in the interview excerpts, so I will not perform a close analysis of them all. As in the previous two sections, I want to focus on major themes, both those which are present and those which are absent. You can see the whole list of relational clauses in the Appendix; here I have copied only those phrases from the interviews with female singers which convey identities that are not emphasized in male singers and phrases which convey male vocalists' identities which are not emphasized in female vocalists:

Table 33

*Group E (Female Performers' Attributes):*

- (57) My hands-down favorite
- (58) A pleasant lightweight
- (59) Sassy and swinging
- (60) Spikes of hair jutting out from her otherwise close-cut 'do
- (61) A rather good-looking pineapple
- (62) Much younger than her 49 years
- (63) The pert, sunshiny patina of fellow Midwestern Doris Day
- (64) A fiery Dona Quixote
- (65) In great shape

Table 34

*Group F (Male Performers' Attributes):*

- (66) The boy wonder of jazz
- (67) Well-established as the Next Big Thing
- (68) Three albums under his slender-belt
- (69) A master of adorable subversion
- (70) Good looks and natural talent
- (71) Wall-to-wall gigs
- (72) A second hit album
- (73) Escalating international acclaim
- (74) A star in the making
- (75) The reigning kings of pop-jazz cool

Table 34, cont.

(76) Elastic-voiced (77) Unshakable charisma
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Significantly, women (and not men) are identified with reference to their appearance (with “spikes of hair jutting out from her otherwise close-cut ‘do” [60]), as exhibiting or acting out their pertness or physical attractiveness (“sassy and swinging” [59], “the pert, shiny patina of fellow Midwestern Doris Day” [63]) or shallowness (“a pleasant lightweight” [58]), and emitting body heat (“a fiery Dona Quixote” [64]), but also as other people’s objects—or at least objectified (“my hands-down favorite” [57]) and edible items (“a rather good-looking pineapple” [61]). Women’s (and not men’s) bodies can be molded and shaped (“in great shape” [65]) and their youth is assumed to be a high commodity (“much younger than her 49 years” [62]). Also recall from the previous section that female vocalists’ vocal qualities are claimed to be precious items that can be dug up and owned or exploited (“diamondlike” and “deep-earth).

By contrast, men (and not women) are claimed to be gifted with unlikely – if taken literally – abilities and expertise (“elastic-voiced” [76]), improbable and questionable amounts of power (“a master of adorable subversion” [69]), possession of mythical or supernatural status (“the reigning kings of pop-jazz cool” [75], “the boy wonder of jazz” [66]), and significance of galactic proportions (“a star in the making” [74], “well-established as the Next Big Thing” [67]). Furthermore, their achievement is claimed in metaphorical terms as either capable of filling up a whole room (“wall-to-wall gigs” [71]) or being safely contained by the singer (“three albums under his slender-belt” [68]). Men’s (and not women’s) positive qualities and achievement as assigned by the reporter are also presented as lasting and immovable (“unshakable charisma” [77]), as war-like in their importance and seriousness (“escalating international acclaim” [73]), and their success is claimed to have the resonance and effect of a sharp strike or punch (“a second hit album” [72]).

Let us turn again to what is not present in the text. While men are often represented as possessing large-than life status and significance of mythical proportions, women’s achievement is not

emphasized. On the contrary, articles about female vocalists claim that the singers' identities consist of their appearance, sexual drive and commodified voices. Perhaps a case-in-point discrepancy in representation will be the following comparison: The Attribute "good looks and natural talent" (70) has been assigned to one of the male singers while the possessive phrase "combination of sophistication and natural beauty" (18) is claimed to characterize one of the female performers. Though the reporter does point out that the male singer "looks" good, he does not assume that looks are something that male singers have to acquire (or perform) because looks are "natural" components of their identities – as he does in the female performer's case (see the analysis above). On the contrary, the reporter here presupposes that the "natural" part of male singers' identities is their "talent."

The purpose of this section was not to show all the different identities that are assigned to female and male singers via relational clauses. Rather, I have analyzed themes which did not appear in texts about male singers and did appear in texts about female singers and conversely – themes which did not appear in interviews with female singers but did in interviews with male singers, showing which identities are emphasized and explicitly stated, or omitted.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have focused on the textual representations of singers and their identities that are both emphasized and not stated in *JazzTimes* interviews and articles. This analysis (in part inspired by Norman Fairclough's analysis of significant absences), allowed me to show that texts about male performers not only include references to the performers' expertise in jazz that allows them to succeed as musicians, but they also emphasize this achievement in various ways. On the other hand, texts about female performers not only do *not* emphasize the performers' expertise and achievement in figurative ways, but they also presuppose that their status as consumable, fiery and beautiful objects is natural. By accentuating the female performers' physical attractiveness and constructing it as an essential part of their identity, and by highlighting their identities as temptresses, who use their "smoky" and "mysterious" voices to bring about men's destruction, the discourse of *JazzTimes* creates a prototype of a female jazz singer who does not have to be talented and skillful in order to be

talked and written about, and ultimately successful. By putting an emphasis on the female singers' appearance while making no effort to accordingly emphasize their achievement in jazz, *JazzTimes* encourages its readers to see their activity and accomplishments, those that do get mentioned, framed by references to their sexuality and physicality. Because the identities of women as "stars in making," "giants," "reigning queens," "professionals," "masters" and "elastic-voiced" are absent, the identities as "rather good-looking pineapples," "fiery Donnas Quixote," "gals at the center of the party," and "sultry"-voiced take over in the readers' minds. The picture of female singers that *Jazz Times* creates is therefore as much formed by the identities and descriptions that are suppressed and not voiced as by those that are represented.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Conclusion

At the beginning of my study, I set out to answer the following questions: What stable set of discursive practices do institutions of mass media use to represent jazz musicians? How exactly do the discursive practices construct the performers' gender? And specifically, how do the depictions of jazz musicians disseminated by mass media construct the performers' skills and achievements in a gendered way? In other words, what is the generalized depiction of vocal jazz performers – women and men – and their performance? My goal was to use the tools of CDA to explicate how the unequal distribution of power in society is represented by the institutions of jazz and mass media, in discourse about jazz vocal artists. At this point, I can conclude that there indeed exists a stable set of discursive practices, detectable across mass media institutions and genres, which construct the achievement and skills of jazz vocal artists from a hegemonic standpoint, maximizing the performers' gender and emphasizing their gendered roles and identities. Because of this stable way of representing jazz vocal artists, female performers cannot be successful within the patriarchal discourse unless they willingly perform the “essentialization” of femininity, naturalized by frequent reoccurrence in the discourses of mass media genres.

I have reached this conclusion by analyzing the discursive practices of two mass media institutions that specialize in representations of jazz performers: *JazzTimes*, a widely-known print media publication, distributed on an international level and therefore also widely influential; and *Live New Orleans*, a local New Orleans publication and database of musicians (which is likely most influential in forming people's understanding of local artists). I have examined the discourse of three mass media genres instrumental in shaping the discourse of vocal jazz: a jazz CD review, a jazz performance review, and an interview with jazz artists, focusing on the representations of aspects of the vocalists' identities and their achievements as musicians.

I have used various CDA techniques to show that the representations of jazz vocalists are indeed naturalized and deeply ingrained in the discourse of mass media genres. I have analyzed

presuppositions embedded in noun phrases, relational clauses, and labeling to elucidate which aspects of the artists' identities and roles are emphasized or suppressed. I have analyzed the material clause, focusing on the types of verbs representing action (or process) and on the goals affected by the performers' actions, to show what types of action the singers are most often represented as having performed and how much social power the discourse of the clause grants them—this included the power to affect the actions of other people physically present in the world via their actions (most often the case with male artists) and the power to affect other entities, symbolic or metaphorical, not actually present in the physical world (most often the case with female artists). I have also analyzed verbal clauses to expose to what extent the discourse of mass media genres allows jazz performers to partake in the shaping of their mass media identities via the words that they have spoken on stage and to what extent the artists' words are considered significant within the discourse of mass media genres.

I have found that while male performers are granted the power to affect other people (audience and the reviewer) via their actions, female performers are only granted power over their own physical selves, the songs they perform or highly intangible goals such as “essence,” which are nevertheless also associated with their musical material. In addition, the discourse of jazz, as represented by the institutions of *JazzTimes* and *Live New Orleans*, structures the achievements of vocal artists in a gendered way.

The achievement of female vocal artists is most often represented in relation to their ability to perform and embody an “essentialization” of femininity, which is a composite of various stereotypes associated with women in Western society. This “essentialization” of femininity, which female performers are expected to perform on stage, along with their musical material, and which the audience considers a valued commodity in women, commodifies the performers by dividing them into many parts, each capable of being consumed separately. Thus, female vocalists become their bodies or parts of their bodies – voices, eyes, or hair – delicacies (such as icing or caramel) and other precious items that can be exploited, and are consumed by the (predominantly male) audience as whole or in parts. They are also claimed to embody their feminine qualities, or essence of femininity – softness, delicacy, charm, body heat, sassiness, pliancy or sexuality – which can also be consumed as whole or in parts, as can their attractive appearance.

The following table includes the various identities of female and male performers, as represented in the discourse of the three genres and two mass media institutions that I have analyzed:

Table 35

<b>Female Vocal Artists</b>	<b>Male Vocal Artists</b>
The family (motherhood, fashion, food preparation)	The workplace (resume, craft, technique, money-making)
Otherworldly, spiritual and emotional quality	Social status, politics
External appearance (clothing items, fashion, beauty)	Internal 'substance' (significance, skills, mastery, achievement)
Sexualized physical appeal	Physical prowess and action
Forbidden sassyness	Unquestioned assumption of the floor and the right to speak
Approach that lacks seriousness (gal at the center of the party, smoky-voiced)	Professionalism
Objects of audience's gaze	In control of the musical production
Delicate, pliant and consumable items (buttercream, caramel, good-looking pine-apple)	Agents in control of other people
Precious items waiting to be picked or uncovered (diamond)	Precious items that must be created through application (velvet)
'Sensual' and malleable body parts (hair, eyes, voices)	Body parts expressive of masculinity and strength (fists)
Age sexualized	Age highlights mastery
Sexuality presents danger for men (femme fatale)	Sexuality not mentioned
Achievement not emphasized	Achievement emphasized and construed hyperbolically

The discourse of the reviews and interviews that I have analyzed draws on other discourses, which in western patriarchal societies are associated with women, such as the discourse of fashion, motherhood, food preparation, sexuality, or the “discourse of the spiritual/intangible”(or feelings), to construct the female singer as occupying her ‘proper’ place in the patriarchal world – emotional, pliant, subordinate and sexually available. And as long as her ‘proper place’ as a professional performer is where she can be objectified and consumed for the aesthetic or sexual pleasures that she can provide, her professional identity is inseparable from her identity as a woman, a mother, or a decorative, sexual and consumable object.

For comparison, the prominent discourse that is being weaved into the reviews of and interviews with male performers is the discourse of achievement, virtually absent from texts about female vocalists. All of the genres that I analyzed have made references to (often massively exaggerating) the male vocalists’ ability to earn their place in the jazz world (in one form or another) and their exceptional talents and significance, while none of the texts about female vocalists have emphasized this aspect of their identities. Moreover, various other discourses in texts about male performers emphasized their association with the world of politics, state, business, or money-making, structures that endow the man with power to dominate women. The generalized depiction of vocal jazz is thus much in line with other generalized depictions of women and men in Western society.

It can be concluded not only that texts about jazz performers highlight and emphasize gender difference, but also that jazz performers’ skills and achievements are constructed in a hegemonic way, de-emphasized in representations of female vocalists and highlighted in representations of male vocalists. In addition, especially women may have no choice but to perform mainstream gender roles (and possibly also their discursively constructed ‘lack of competence’) on stage. Since patriarchal bias informs the discourse of jazz and jazz performance, female vocalists – if they want to achieve success – to a certain extent have to play by the rules of the patriarchal world.

Female vocalists represent a minority in the jazz world. Since both jazz vocalists and female performers form minorities in jazz, female vocalists are a double-minority, at the very bottom of the social ladder. They have to resort to techniques that the patriarchal culture allows them to use, techniques that will bring some sort of profit to the male-dominated world, and these are frequently



the techniques that establish the woman as that which can be gazed at and consumed – for her physical and sexual charms and her pliant attitude.

Like all institutions of mass media, *JazzTimes* and *Live New Orleans* have to write with an ‘ideal’ reader in mind (Fairclough), and it seems apparent that the ideal reader they write for is the ‘idealized male spectator,’ who was first noted in narrative cinema, a spectator who partakes in and desires the objectification and sexualization of the female singer. While Hollywood’s idealized spectator is male, he may not be simply a social construct in jazz. In an arena dominated by male players, it is perhaps no wonder that the readership of both institutions that I have examined is predominantly male. Unlike in Hollywood films, in the jazz arena, it may well be that the actual spectator is male. And mass media institutions and discourse about jazz performers may simply reflect the audience’s desire for a language that sexualizes the female singer, keeping her in ‘her place.’

The female musician may have no choice. If she wants to work, she may need to play by the man’s rules. However, this also means that she can exploit the “essentialization” of femininity for her profit and build a successful career on it – much like the prostitute. If she can give the men what they want of her, and if the men want the ‘goods’ that she can offer, she will work. The problem is that it is difficult for her to succeed in any other way.

How can jazz vocalists like me find a remedy? CDA offers the tools that can help to uncover the unequal distribution of social power in the jazz world, perpetuated and naturalized in the discursive patterns of mass media genres, and expose the inequalities and their social nature, making people aware of them. However, it is up to the jazz vocalists (both female and male) to change the rules of the game and up to the producers and journalists to change the patterns of textual representations.

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## Appendix

### **JazzTimes Interviews (list of relational clauses):**

#### *Interviews with Female Performers:*

##### *Wilson (Nancy):*

Successful at jazz, R&B, pop, television and radio

The new R.S.V.P album on the shelves

One of the all-time singers

##### **My hands-down favorite**

A pleasant lightweight

##### *Rene Marie*

##### **Sassy and swinging**

Too busy

**Spikes of hair jutting out from her otherwise close-cut ‘do**

**A rather good-looking pineapple**

**Much younger than her 49 years**

##### *Wilson (Cassandra):*

The quintessential jazz singer

The ultimate jazz singer

Maybe the best singer in the world

America’s best singer

A jazz artist

One of our own

One of the greatest of all time

##### *Allyson*

One of the most dynamically inventive jazz singers of her generation

An incorruptible professional ethic

An intense creative inquisitiveness and a refreshing disinterest in celebrity’s shallow end

True not just to their art but also to their personal vision

The pert, sunshiny patina of fellow Midwestern Doris Day

##### **A fiery Dona Quixote**

##### *Barber*

Too strange for the mainstream and too straight for the avant-garde

##### **In the musical space between Starbucks and Soho**

A plain-speaking Chicagoan

Nine albums

Critical praise

Better-than-average financial rewards

An outsider

Disenfranchised, disconnected and misunderstood

The Sisyphus of jazz

##### *Payroux*

Even greater sales and acclaim

The opposite of most peoples’ conception of the female jazz vocalist

##### *Austin*

##### **In great shape**

##### **Voluble a talker**

Talented in singing

The daughter of a trombonist and a singer

Healthier

#### *Interviews with Male Performers:*

##### *Cullum*

**The boy wonder of jazz**  
**All the skills and charm**  
**Well-established as the Next Big Thing**  
**Three albums under his slender-belt**  
'Sinatra in sneakers' and 'David Beckham of jazz'  
**A master of adorable subversion**

*Cincotti*

A new album

**A role in Kevin Spacey's new film**

**Good looks and natural talent**

**Wall-to-wall gigs**

**A second hit album**

**Escalating international acclaim**

Exhausted but ebullient

**A star in the making**

A cold

The bespoke hipster

The heir apparent to Sinatra, Darin and his one-time mentor Harry Connick Jr.

Ray Romano's significantly better-looking kid brother

*Jarreau and Benson*

**The reigning kings of pop-jazz cool**

**Elastic-voiced**

*Bennet*

**Unshakable charisma**

## Vita

Mirka Jichova was born in the Czech Republic and received her B.A. in English Language and Literature from the Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic. She had studied classical piano for fifteen years and has been writing and performing music since the age of six (first classical music and later popular music, gospel and jazz). She is currently pursuing a second master's degree in Jazz Studies at the University of New Orleans, with emphasis in vocal jazz performance. You can hear Ms. Jichova perform in the Czech Republic twice a year, where she often visits with her family and band, but also at various social events at the University in New Orleans and occasionally in the city of New Orleans.