

explore the ways in which urban/city spaces, performance theory, corporeal body identities, and memory intersect in order to create live social spaces. She is currently a teaching assistant in the department of Fine Arts and Cultural Studies and working on her own mixed media art.

## JUDITH BUTLER: FROM NORMS TO POLITICS

Moya Lloyd  
Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007

### REVIEWED BY KRISTINE KLEMENT

In this book-length study and summary of the work of Judith Butler, Moya Lloyd sets out three goals: to explicate and evaluate Butler's work, both theoretically and in light of its political potential, and to engage with its feminist reception. She succeeds in these aims with admirable clarity and depth. Lloyd takes us from Butler's early philosophical roots in Hegel, through her theories of gender and sexuality, to her most recent work on ethics and politics post-September 11. Lloyd does a good job of situating all of Butler's theoretical turns within the contexts of feminist theory, philosophy, and politics. She begins by locating Butler's feminist theory as growing out of *différance* or deconstruction feminism as well as the poststructuralist turn in philosophy. Lloyd also situates Butler's early work on gender and sexuality in relationship to the identity politics of the gay and lesbian rights movement and the transformation she helped to solidify into a "queer" politics and theory.

Lloyd moves both chronologically and thematically through Butler's *oeuvre*, drawing her numerous texts together in interesting ways, noting continuities and breaks in her thought. For example, Lloyd's

explication of Butler's rereading of Freud's Oedipus complex draws from both *Gender Trouble* and *The Psychic Life of Power*. In addition, she situates Butler's engagement with psychoanalysis with respect to her interest in the incest taboo and kinship that Lloyd notes was a current in Butler's thought from her first book, *Subjects of Desire*, to its more thorough elaboration in *Antigone's Claim*. In another section, Lloyd elaborates Butler's arguments on hate speech and resignation from *Excitable Speech* together with her work on the signifier "queer" from *Bodies that Matter*.

Lloyd draws both on Butler's books as well as lesser known articles to give a thorough elaboration of the sources and reasoning of Butler's thought. Lloyd takes us through gender performativity and the radical rethinking of the materiality of the sexed body that theory made possible. From there Lloyd elaborates Butler's politics of subversion, and the place of drag and parodic repetition as possibilities for denaturalizing heteronormativity. Lloyd elaborates Butler's debt to both Freud and Foucault in her theory of subjectivation and passionate attachment, the psychical dimension of the theory of performativity. Lloyd takes us through Butler's work on the citationality of language, and her intervention in the U.S. debates over legislating against hate speech. She ends the book with a discussion of Butler's most recent work on ethics, violence, and radical democracy.

Lloyd examines various controversies and debates provoked by Butler's theories. One such debate has been over the agency of the subject and the accusations of both volunteerism and determinism that have been levelled at Butler. Butler's critics have also accused her of idealism and ignoring the materiality of the body. Lloyd responds to these criticisms in defence of Butler, using Butler's own theories to add complexity to the terms of the debate and demonstrate how Butler reworks these terms. To those critics who argue that Butler's

work is too opaque and therefore intended for too narrow an audience, Lloyd argues along with Butler that this difficult language is necessary to engage with difficult ideas and the difficult thinkers whose work she seeks to redeploy.

Lloyd has written a reliable summary and explication of Butler's *oeuvre*. The real strength of this book is that Lloyd manages to clarify Butler's difficult texts and often obscure theoretical writing without giving up any critical depth. A bibliography of Butler's works is included. I would recommend this book to anyone as a thorough introduction to any and all of Butler's theoretical interventions. More experienced readers of Butler may find this book useful as a resource for contextualizing Butler's ideas in relationship to one another, to their foundational texts and political milieu, and to their critical reception.

*Kristine Klement has a Master degree in Women's Studies. Currently she is a Ph.D. candidate in the Social and Political Thought Programme at York University. Her dissertation is titled "What Does a Feminist Want? Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and Hysteria."*

## STONE SIGHTINGS

Madeline Sonik  
Toronto: Inanna Publications and Education, Inc., 2008

### REVIEWED BY RUTH PANOFSKY

Madeline Sonik's poetry is not for the faint hearted. Sonik's world is dark and dangerous; in fact, she claims darkness as her joy and courts Uriel, the Angel of Death, whose ominous presence looms over her debut collection. The poet is not at peace and her discomfort resonates with readers who feel lacerated by