

AFFECTIVE RESISTANCE: OBJECTS OF KOREAN POPULAR MUSIC

*Timothy Gitzen*¹

University of Minnesota, USA

email: gitze011@umn.edu

"Slave, I before reasoned with you, but you have proved yourself unworthy of my condescension. Remember that I have power; you believe yourself miserable, but I can make you so wretched that the light of day will be hateful to you. You are my creator, but I am your master; obey!"

– Mary W. Shelley (1869:131)

ABSTRACT

In September 2009, the leader of the South Korean boy band 2PM, Park Jaebeom (a Korean American from Seattle), ceremoniously "left" Korea after the discovery of a controversial posting on his Myspace account from before he debuted as a singer. Fans were outraged about the extent to which Jaebum was "disciplined" for his past comments and wasted no time in displaying this outrage in the form of protests, sit-ins and performances. These fans were resisting Jaebeom's dismissal, and by effect the over-reaching power his company, JYP Entertainment, seemed to be extracting. In this paper, I

¹ Timothy Gitzen is a doctoral student of anthropology at the University of Minnesota, Twin-Cities. His research focuses on constructions of homosexuality in South Korea and the entanglements with discourses and experiences of kinship, gender, sexuality and nation. His project first began with an ethnographic study of the interrelationship between experiences and discourses of gayness and kinship among self-identified gay college students in a particular Seoul university's gay club. Identities are multivalent and always in-motion assemblages that incorporate other forms of entanglement without necessitating the destruction of other relationships. His dissertation research furthers this approach by moving from the first entanglement of sexuality and kinship to other entanglements of sexuality and the state, sexuality and gender, and sexuality and other (perhaps transnational) forms of sexuality. As such, he is interested in how self-identified gay college students in South Korea embody and inscribe (or are inscribed upon) discourses and experiences of gender, sexuality and nation. In addition, he examines the ways in which popular culture and literature can act as informants for ethnography, incorporating characters from film and television dramas into ethnographic writing. He is the author of *(Un) Conventional Investments: The Partnership of Avex and SM Entertainment* (PEAR 2009) and an upcoming book chapter entitled *Mothers and Affect: Encounters with Gay Sons in South Korea*.

deconstruct the notion of resistance as a "diagnostic of power," as Abu-Lughod (1990: 42) terms it, where resistance is not a romanticised notion of overthrowing dictatorial regimes or causing wide-spread change, but rather in opposition to hegemonic moments as its own moment in time. I argue that these moments of resistance illustrate not only that consumers are stakeholders in what is produced and how it is produced, but also that these forms of resistance are instances of affective relationships built on intimacy. In other words, these protests serve a dual purpose of recovering the fans' lost idol (in this case 2PM's Jay Park) and building intimate networks of friendships predicated not only on shared consumption but also shared resistance. This paper will therefore make some preliminary notes on Korean popular music, delineate theories of resistance as momentary and cathartic, and then introduce the case of 2PM and their fans to illustrate that communities of fans are bound together through their affective resistance.

Keywords: popular culture, resistance in South Korea, affect, fan culture

Circa 2005. Internet forums in South Korea for the boy band Dong Bang Shin Ki (DBSK) were bombarded with a basic equation: $5-1=0$. The arithmetic may seem inaccurate, but the rhetoric is clear enough: if you have five members and you take one away, there is no DBSK. This "catch-phrase" arose after rumours surfaced online that DBSK was going to start rotating out members and rotate in new ones. Needless to say, fans saw no logic in this approach. They had built a relationship with the then current members and to replace them, in their minds, would be akin to replacing one's older brother or sister. The resistance to such an idea was monumental, surprising many in Korea at the time. The result, though, was liberating for the fans: none of the members were rotated out, even if the group did break up five years later. A similar incident had occurred three to four years prior with more tangible, and some may say economically drastic, effects. In 2001, the highest-selling album in Korea sold roughly 1.7 million copies, a commendable feat. However, the following year the highest-selling album sold only around 647,000 copies, and in 2007, 191,000 copies (Gitzen 2009). Consumers were not buying albums anymore, and the question everyone seemed to gloss over was why. I have argued elsewhere that the intersection of lax intellectual property rights in Korea with the influx of new and improved information technologies provided the opportunity for consumers to consume music in

different, more efficient and effective ways that bypassed the traditional form of distribution: the record (Ibid). Yet consumers were also dissatisfied with the music industry because around this time, a special prosecutor was investigating some of the larger musical production companies and television producers for corruption. In addition, the average celebrity in Korea earned only USD 22,600 in 2009 while the average office worker earned USD 23,000 (VITALSIGN 2011), even though one of the largest musical production companies, SM Entertainment, garnered over USD 34 million in 2008 alone (Ibid). It is then not difficult to discern the reason as to why consumers refuse to buy albums of their favourite singers even if some of their fan clubs are 500,000 plus members strong.

Both instances illustrate that consumers, or fans, have a certain degree of power that they can actively wield, such as in the form of resistance. I am not arguing that consumers consciously resist large social institutions or even desire social change, as in both cases consumers wanted only an immediate outcome: do not rotate members and give singers more money. They were not demanding a complete overhaul of the institutions of the music industry or even the production of music, but resisting hegemonic *moments* where consumers were dissatisfied with certain expressions of power. As anthropologists, or even social scientists, we can perhaps discern larger processes at work, for in understanding the social and institutional discourses that construct the music industry and the manner in which they produce music (and singers), we can see that rotating members, for instance, is more than fiscally sound but also an institutional concept that could potentially jump-start several other singers' careers. In other words, these "moments" that consumers resist are not isolated events but well-placed and deeply embedded occurrences that fit within a larger schematic. However, consumers in Korea may not necessarily be aware of, or even care, about these processes or schematics. Immediacy is of concern, and resistance for them only challenges that moment.

While there has been a burgeoning of research regarding *hallyu*, or the "Korean Wave"—*hallyu* implying the outward spread of Korean popular culture into surrounding countries (most notably Japan, Taiwan, China and even parts of Southeast Asia)—much of this work focuses on pan-Asian identities (Siriyuvasak and Shin 2007), transnational flows of products and meanings (Cho 2005; Shim 2007), and cultural hybridity and linguistic analysis (Shim 2006; Lee 2004, 2005, 2006). Yet little research exists that attempts to situate Korean popular culture (especially popular music) within its own capitalist and contextual paradigms and frameworks (see also the edited volume edited by Keith Howard [2006]). Elsewhere I discuss the

production, distribution and consumption of Korean popular music, a study I use throughout this article not as the precursor to this article but as a foundation to the interconnection and functionality of the Korean popular culture industry (Gitzen 2009). Yet still, virtually no research exists focusing on fan culture of Korean pop idols (c.f., Shin 2009), let alone literature addressing resistance of fans in Korea.

In this article, I will draw upon another instance of resistance to a hegemonic moment. In September 2009, the leader of the Korean boy band 2PM, Park Jaebeom (a Korean American from Seattle, later to be referred to as Jay Park), ceremoniously "left" Korea after a controversial posting on his Myspace account from before he debuted as a singer. Fans were outraged at the severity of Jaebeom's "discipline" for his past comments and wasted no time in displaying this outrage. These fans were resisting Jaebeom's dismissal, and by effect the over-reaching power his company, JYP Entertainment, seemed to be extracting. As with the examples mentioned above, immediate and urgent action was to be taken to return Jaebeom to his rightful place as leader of 2PM.

There has been much discussion of resistance in anthropological literature since the late 1980s (c.f., Mankekar 1999; Abelman 2003), yet Sherry Ortner (1995) criticises the weakness of this literature due to what she terms ethnographic refusal, or the lack of an ethnographic perspective in studies of resistance. Lila Abu-Lughod (1997) agrees with Ortner's assessment and attributes this refusal to theoretical sophistication coupled with "thin" ethnography. In an earlier essay, however, Abu-Lughod (1990: 42) lays out a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of resistance as she aims to escape the metanarrative of what she calls the "tendency to romanticise resistance" in perceiving all forms of resistance as movements of independence towards a freedom *from* something *to* something else, thus accenting the "resilience and creativity of the human spirit in its refusal to be dominated." She offers an alternative to this form of analysis, stating that resistance can be used as "a *diagnostic* of power." She delineates this understanding from Michel Foucault's (1990) assertion that both "where there is power, there is resistance" and "where there is resistance, there is power" (Abu-Lughod 1990: 42). Abu-Lughod posits that we should not ask "about the status of resistance itself but about what the forms of resistance indicate about the forms of power that they are up against" (47). In addition, she illustrates that there is unevenness to power as she views these moments of resistance as "sites of struggle" (47). Resistance then becomes a form of agency, as Judith Butler (1990) conceptualises it, as agency is not inherent in the actor, or *doer*,

but in the act of doing; agency thus exists within the act of resisting forms of power.

However, the "diagnostic of power" that Abu-Lughod (1990) posits does not fully encompass the range of emotions and affects encountered during the 2PM scandal and protests. Fans were fighting for a particular outcome—the return of Jaebeom to 2PM—but this outcome had immense significance as the group had monumental affective value. Yet crucial to each instance of resistance mentioned above, particularly the 2PM protests, was that these moments were contingent on other fans present as those fans were what imbued the pop idol groups with affective value. In a sense, this relates to Ann Cvetkovich's (2003) discussion of trauma and protests held by ACT UP, an organisation that aimed to grow awareness of HIV/AIDS in the 1980s and 1990s while demanding action by the government. In talking with former members and protestors of ACT UP, Cvetkovich (2003) notes that those protesting had a stake in this fight because they had lost someone they loved to AIDS, but the protests as social movements were predicated on not one but thousands of protestors with similar stories and in similar situations—the affects that circulated through these movements and its participants were contingent on both the movement and participants. Resistance in these cases was much larger and was demanding macro changes—attention to HIV/AIDS by the FDA and White House—but individuals were fighting for their memories and experiences (Cvetkovich 2003: 41).²

When brought together, Abu-Lughod's (1990) resistance as a diagnostic of power and Cvetkovich's (2003) contingency of resistance elucidate a different perspective of resistance that I term *affective resistance*. Affect allows us to move beyond claims of power and theorise the way resistance is about people and selves—*affective resistance* is a diagnostic of relationships.³ I argue that in Korea affective resistance implies a fear that objects with great affective value, such as the seven-member 2PM, will either disappear or be taken away. Fans resist as a way to either prevent that from happening—as

² While it may perturb some that I have compared resistance of fans to resistance of those who have lost friends and family to AIDS, much of the rhetoric and actions of fans, as I shall elucidate throughout this article, almost mirrors that of a tremendous loss or even death. I should also note that as an anthropologist I am compelled to empathise with the intense emotional and affective trauma fans have experienced, and though for some readers it may not compare to physical death—nor should it be read as a belittlement of the events Cvetkovich (2003) describes—I invite readers to at least see the value of the framework.

³ My use of affect follows Brian Massumi's (2002) use of the term as intensity in the body and between bodies—to be affected there must be at least two bodies; "human bodies, discursive bodies, bodies of thought, bodies of water" (Stewart 2007: 128). It is important to note that I use affect not to invoke "emotions," though emotionality is no doubt involved. As Massumi (2002: 28) argues, "An emotion is a subjective content, the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal. Emotion is qualified intensity."

with the case with DBSK member rotation—or recuperate their seemingly lost objects of affection—as with Jaebeom's dismissal. Yet the contingency of their resistance is based on both the affective value of the idol group and also the value of the fan club—they are resisting *together*. I will therefore use the 2PM scandal and protests as affective resistance to discuss the relationality between fans and idols and also fans and other fans. Crucial to any understanding of affective resistance is an exploration of the creation of idols in Korea and the affective relationship between idols, fans, and the companies responsible for their creation.

FRANKENSTEIN AND HIS MONSTER(S)

I had just moved to Seoul in August 2007, and a few months later I was sitting in one of the Seoul Olympic Stadiums waiting for a DBSK concert to begin. The only visible colour in the darkness of the stadium was red, the official colour of DBSK, and a continuous chant for DBSK to take to the stage. When all the lights finally did go off, save the red glow sticks held onto by the sea of fans, a siren began to sound. Having just moved to Seoul and this being my first concert in Korea, I was a bit frightened as to the siren—was this part of the concert or a signal that we were under attack? However, my fears were quelled when the screen on stage lit up to show bombs being dropped from airplanes onto the earth below. Gun fire, grenades, soldiers, dead bodies—these were the images shown, leaving very little to the imagination. The fans were ecstatic, as if they knew what was coming. And soon, in the middle of the killing, death and intense orchestral music, a bizarre female voice began to sing as everything stopped and bodies—imagined as celestial beings—began to descend from the sky. We eventually realised that those descending were the five members of DBSK, and as each face came into focus the fans' screams only increased. Once they landed, they began to touch the dilapidated buildings, the rotted grounds and the scenes of death, and the destruction either disappeared or regenerated. To combat the harbingers of death come the princes of light: Dong Bang Shin Ki, literally rising gods of the east. And I, the American boy (perhaps the only one in the sea of Korean girls), was also caught up in the collective effervescence (à la Durkheim) along with all the fans—my pulse raced, the hair on my arms stood up, and the excitement increased with each moment. I felt what I assumed everyone else felt, as we seemed to feel it together.

These feelings we felt, the camaraderie that penetrated our bodies to elicit affective responses, were not precultural manifestations but intensely

cultural and situated feelings. This was DBSK's second concert tour in Korea, many of the fans in attendance most likely at their first concert tour, but concerts in Korea come only after a significant amount of exposure and a strong enough relationship with fans. The nature of this relationship, though, is of concern here, for DBSK was not simply put together haphazardly nor were they thrown together overnight—they were specially crafted to be *idols*, "designed to contribute to the industry's establishment in the market by virtue of their abilities to attract people and perform as lifestyle role models" (Aoyagi 2006: 3).⁴ All idols in Korea follow this basic premise, that they are constructed in a way to bridge the gap between those that produce them (musical production companies) and those that consume them (fans). Years of "training" go into creating and becoming an idol, as young men and women either audition or are recruited by musical production companies—the big three being SM Entertainment, YG Entertainment and JYP Entertainment—and enlisted into the companies' training academies (Gitzen 2009).⁵

The particulars of the training regimen are rather broad. Idols-in-waiting/training are given vocal and dance lessons, anticipating that idols never *just* sing on stage. However, they are also given modelling and acting lessons, illustrating that idols are never *just* idols, but entertainers and talents (Ibid). Musical production companies are responsible for creating people, crafting selves in a very intense fashion (c.f., Kondo 1990). This is especially salient once trainees are moved into idol groups—boy groups and girl groups (very few groups include both boys and girls)—and given a position in the group. Image becomes quintessential in producing idols insofar as idols have multiple layers to their image, including their physical and social images. Musical production companies use a form of *kata* to shape idols in particular ways in order to capitalise on the idols' physical appearance and mannerisms. *Kata* refers "collectively to technologies of gender, including form, posture, sign, code, gesture and choreography," as a way to mold people into situated and positioned idols (Robertson 1998: 12).⁶ Therefore, of a group of five idols, each individual idol represents a different image while contributing to the overall image of the group, whatever that may be. Individual images can range from the "mysterious type" and "strong leader type" to the "sexy type"

⁴ When Japan exported much of their popular culture, including their "Japanese production know-how" (Iwabuchi 2002: 97), into many Asian countries, Korea incorporated the Japanese idol system (or *aidoru* in Japanese) into their own entertainment industry (Gitzen 2007).

⁵ I should note that while there may be some overlap between the creation of idols in Korea (and perhaps East Asia) and other countries, the creation of Korean idols and Korean popular music is unique and has garnered considerable discussion in the past five years or so (see Gitzen 2009).

⁶ Jennifer Robertson (1998) originally uses the word *kata* to refer to Japan's Takarazuka Revue, an all-female singing and dancing troupe. I borrow the word to draw attention to the constructedness of idols in Korea (see Gitzen 2007).

and "cute and adorable type," each predicated on both physical features—slim physique, long hair, muscular arms, deep voice—and constructed *kata*—gait, hand motions, posture and speech style (Gitzen 2007; Park 2011).

Such images and types of idols are extremely important in attracting fans: there is something for everyone. Yet idols must be circulated in a very particular way to attract fans. Elsewhere I delineate a five-point system—based on a particular interview with a media informant—that musical production companies follow in order for their idols to be popular (Gitzen 2009: 40). This system, above all, indicates that the most important thing an idol/idol group must do is create a relationship with fans through interviews, concerts, appearances on variety programs and social media. Idols are circulated like objects to garner affective value—there is no inherent emotionality or value in the idols—through television shows, advertisements, commercials, concerts, music and other endeavours (see Lukács 2010). Sara Ahmed (2004: 45) argues that objects of affect, ranging from photos and people to ideas and concepts, circulate in a similar fashion to Marx's commodity; like Marx, there is never an end to circulation—wealth will forever be invested back into the system to produce more capital which will in turn produce more wealth to invest—and so the goal is never to obtain an ultimate state of happiness but rather to circulate the affect to accumulate more. "Happy objects," as Ahmed (2010) terms them, are contingent on the objects' circulation and accumulated reputation as "good," for their goodness and happiness are contingent on their circulation history.

Idols are then happy objects, for as Ahmed (2004, 2010) also argues, affective value is relationally defined, meaning the object must have a subject that constructs and perceives its goodness and happiness. Idols' happiness and goodness are defined and perceived by fans—musical production companies can market and circulate idols in particular ways, portraying them as good and happiness-causing, but fans ultimately must imbue idols as objects with images of goodness and happiness depending on their interpretation of the idols and the importance the idols have in their lives.⁷ Companies then construct idols as not just musical artists but as brands, intangible commodities that embody a lifestyle, a way of living in the world, and a set of relationships and intimacies that fans not only consume but also live (see Aoyagi 2006; Lukács 2010). The lines between production and consumption,

⁷ In other words, if fans find idols to be relevant in their lives—if they think the idols represent or exemplify something they are attracted to (not necessarily sexually)—then fans will deem the idol to have importance and affective value. In contrast, fans could deem particular idols in the opposite manner and imbue negative affective value. Though outside the purview of this article, such fans that deem idols as bad and unhappiness causing with intensely negative affective value can be called "anti-fans," a rather common phrase (in English) in South Korea.

companies and fans, blurs with idol circulation: "because of their affective capacity, brands are capable of bringing emotion into a relationship between corporations and their customers...the connection starts to feel more akin to something like friendship or even a love affair" (Lukács 2010: 204). However, where Gabriella Lukács (2010) posits this "love affair" as one between consumers and producers (i.e., companies), I argue that the love affair is between fans and their idols. The circulation of idols as happy objects illustrates that "the ability of affect to produce an economic effect more swiftly and surely than economics itself means that affect is a real condition, an intrinsic variable of the late capitalist system, as infrastructural as a factory" (Massumi 2002: 45). As Analiese Richard and Daromir Rudnycky (2009: 59) argue, the sustainability of the connection between the state, family, and the self is predicated on affect. Yet the musical production companies can co-opt affect as a technology of power, a mechanism of herding people (fans) together as loyal consumers of particular commodities (see Lukács 2010; Massumi 2002; Foster 2007). Herein lies the almost insidious nature of affect and resistance in this context, for the Gramscian would no doubt note that affect may be predicated on a relationship between (at least) two bodies (Stewart 2007), but production companies are reinforcing the cultural hegemony of the fan clubs through affect, and even through these forms of resistance.

The circulation of idols therefore leads to the establishment of groups of individuals who deem the idol (as an object) good and happy, consume the idol, and enjoy being part of a group that consumes the idol. In other words, the circulation of idols creates fan clubs. As Ahmed (2010: 38) argues, "we tend to like those who like the things we like... if the same objects make us happy—or if we invest in the same objects as if they make us happy—then we would be directed or oriented in the same way." Fans are collectively mass consuming in that they are not only simultaneously consuming en masse, but there is an ephemeral collectivity, a *cultural intimacy*, that is present. Michael Herzfeld (1997: 3) defines cultural intimacy as "the recognition of those aspects of cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but which nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality."

The "cultural identity" Herzfeld mentions is embedded within the circulation of idols—the circulation denoting the idols' exposure and the culture of the idols—and the culture of the fan clubs (c.f., Goy-Yamamoto 2004; Jung 2006; Lee 2006). In appropriating cultural intimacy, Andrew Shryock (2004: 11) poignantly asks, "why not extend the concept to moments of self-recognition that trigger a feeling of pride or superiority" as opposed to

embarrassment? For fans of idols and idol groups, one could make the argument for either embarrassment or pride, yet I focus on the "moments of self-recognition" that trigger collective affect, be that pride, embarrassment or superiority. This echoes Ahmed's (2010: 38) discussion of "belonging to an affective community," where the "shared orientation" of fans for particular idols or idol groups holds fans together: "the social bond is binding insofar as feelings are deposited in the same object." Fan clubs are thus about belonging—belonging to a group of individuals with shared orientation, shared love, shared feelings and shared affect (see Massumi 2002). Yet fan clubs are not free from the authoritative companies that oversaw their creation. In a sense, musical production companies are akin to Frankenstein creating his monster, but where Frankenstein creates only one monster, the musical production companies create two: idols and their respective fan clubs. Robert Foster (2007) argues that consumers will often have brand loyalty to certain brands and even companies for the products they consume. This brand loyalty, however, is more than obligation but an emotional force that he terms "lovemarks," which underpin the consumer's capability to create value. However, Foster (2007) also indicates that producers and companies will take advantage of this love, of the value consumers create, in order to reinforce the product's ability to keep the consumer buying and even venture into other products by the same company. As Brian Massumi (2002: 88) states, "capitalism is the global usurpation of belonging," implying that companies, and in our case the musical production companies, capitalise on the belonging of fans.⁸

The precarious line that musical production companies, idols and even fans walk is seemingly unavoidable—companies are capitalistic, fans are searching for meaning, and the idols exist somewhere in between. Yet the rhetoric of capitalism, of the circulation of objects to garner *wealth*, is exchanged for rhetoric of belonging, friendship and love. Foster (2007) notes that the consumption of one brand may lead to the consumption of other brands produced by the same company. In Korea, something similar takes place where the accumulation of idols and idol groups of one musical production company along with the fan clubs of those different idols and idol groups create a community, a family that exchanges the company as a capitalist institution for one of love and belonging (see Lukács 2010). 2PM, for instance, is employed by JYP Entertainment, but the group is also a

⁸ I am certainly not discounting the fact that fans are fans because they may also enjoy the music produced by idols, or the idols themselves. But I contend that in Korea the notion of a "fan" is primarily predicated on belonging to a community of fans, and though those fans may enjoy the idols and their music, it is intimately linked to the community.

member of JYP Nation, the community of idols and idol groups that are employed by JYP Entertainment.⁹ Belonging therefore includes not only fans in a fan club and idols in an idol group, but a conglomeration of fans and idols across different fan clubs and idol groups, all contingent on the connection back to the company, back to Frankenstein.

During the DBSK concert in the fall of 2007, I watched as at least four fans were carried from the stadium floor for having fainted—the news the next day reported that more than ten fans fainted after seeing the members of DBSK. The intensity of the concert—the screaming, singing, dancing and *feeling*—permeated my own body quite unexpectedly. Teresa Brennan (2004: 1) begins her exploration into theories of the transmission of affect by asking, "Is there anyone who has not, at least once, walked into a room and 'felt the atmosphere'?" From the moment I arrived with my friend to the stadium, seeing the sea of fans organising in groups, visiting the different sponsor booths, and simply waiting to fill the stadium, I could feel *something*. Yes, I was an outsider looking in, for even though I was a fan of DBSK's music since 2004, this was the first time I congregated with other fans—my first time at their concert—and things were certainly different. Instantaneously I felt like a fish out of water, but once the concert began I felt part of the sea of fans, part of this celebration of affective belonging and the momentary relationship we, as fans, shared with each other and with the members of DBSK. Affect is contingent on multiple bodies (Stewart 2007; Gregg and Seigworth 2010), and so though I had been a fan for years prior to the concert, being in a space where I was surrounded by an affective community of consumers manifested my own affective responses, my own belonging to this group. While there are no doubt affective responses that manifest in the privacy of one's own home, I am more concerned with the affective responses that emerge between people and musical groups. There were still moments when I felt out of place—for instance, during certain songs fans had particular cheers they would do and it felt as if everyone, except me, knew the cheers and the proper time and place to do them. Yet this affective connection far surpassed my own expectations—I knew that fans were dedicated and loved their idols, but I was surprised at my own connection during the concert. Having been to several other idol group concerts in Korea (and two in Japan), this should have seemed normal, or at the very least expected. And each time, though the fish was most definitely out of water, I learned to breathe and immerse myself in those intensities and feelings with everyone else in attendance.

⁹ Most of the larger musical production companies in Korea have similar communities that represent the collection of idols and idol groups—SM Town, YG Family and JYP Nation (for SM Entertainment, YG Entertainment, and JYP Entertainment, respectively) are the three largest.

1:59PM

I remember walking downtown in Seoul in late September 2009, on my way to meet a friend for coffee by the stream that ran through the city centre. I was running late and did not check the news or Internet before I left my house, and so when I literally stumbled upon what was initially a normal scene in front of a building with people just hanging out that turned into a synchronised choreography to music at exactly 2pm, I could do nothing else but watch. These thirty or so individuals, mostly young girls, were engaged in what is known as a flash mob in which groups of people who do not necessarily know each other will organise a time and place to break into dance, usually in protest or in commemoration. When Michael Jackson died, flash mobs arose in several cities around the world to celebrate his life. This particular flash mob in Korea was to protest the departure of the leader of the Korean boy band 2PM, Park Jaebeom. There was no indication to me that all of these different people would start dancing at exactly 2pm, to music of course, and once the song was over the participants dispersed as if nothing had happened.¹⁰

In the early part of September 2009, following the release of 2PM's second single "Again and Again," netizens in South Korea had uncovered comments that Jaebeom had left on a friend's Myspace page in 2005, before he had even debuted as a member of 2PM while he was still a trainee.¹¹ He had said that he hated Korea, that Korea was gay, and that he wished he could just go home (Han 2009a). These words spread so quickly online that by the next day netizens were demanding not only an apology from the leader, but that the leader should quit the band and even just leave Korea because he is obviously not Korean but Korean American.¹² The more radical comments wished death upon the Korean American, cursing him as not fully Korean and having no right to talk about Korea with such negativity. Jaebeom immediately

¹⁰ Flash mobs no doubt hold different meanings cross-culturally, and even in Korea what one may consider a "flash mob" differs. My use of the term implies synchronised singing and dancing, a liminal state of community only to be dissolved once the song/dance ends. Yet the intention and meaning behind the flash mob is what varies.

¹¹ By this time, 2PM had a large fan club—known as the Hottests (as 2pm is the hottest time of day)—and their second single "Again and Again" was quite popular. Prior to 2PM's debut in 2008, the members of 2PM and the group 2AM were featured in the reality television program *Hot Blooded Men*, chronicling the training of all members that were to be part of the larger group One Day (2PM plus 2AM). When 2PM debuted, consumers were already intimately familiar with the members, having seen them in the television show.

¹² Jaebeom identifies as a third generation Korean American (Han 2009b).

apologised for the comments, stating that he was younger and immature when he made those comments but that he is no longer the person he once was (Han 2009a). Fans felt betrayed at his comments, some also demanding rather uncompromising solutions to what they believed was a breach of national pride. Each day the controversy grew out of control until Jaebeom announced that he was taking some time away from the group and Korea and that he was leaving for Seattle. He left only a few days after the controversy initially started.

I had followed the developments each day, finding the comments netizens were making about the comments he made a bit scary considering some of the things I had said about Korea during my own moments of frustration. Yet when Jaebeom announced he was leaving the country, the rhetoric began to change. No longer was the nation against him but rather they were remorseful at the extent to which netizens had pushed their demands and "hatred." Social media was no doubt helpful in promulgating their agenda, but it was also how I stayed informed.¹³ The day he left I was sitting at work, following Twitter as 2PM's official international fan club would update every few minutes the details of his arrival at the airport, pictures of the hundreds of fans surrounding him and crying at his departure, and then finally one of the most famous pictures from this entire controversy: Jaebeom bowing a complete 90 degrees to the crowd before passing through security. I frequented numerous Internet forums dedicated to 2PM from the moment he passed through security for a few weeks to observe the response, and all had expressed intense emotional responses to his departure because for them it meant he was leaving for good. The rhetoric floating around Korea was easily discerned, especially coupled with the photo of Jaebeom bowing at the airport: Jaebeom had been kicked out of Korea.

This was not the first time a Korean American singer had been ceremoniously thrown out of Korea. Steve Seungjun Yoo was born in Seoul but moved to California in middle school, moving back to Korea after debuting as a singer. He had stated several times that he would forgo any American citizenship in order to enlist in the Korean military, a requirement for all South Korean men. In 2002, before he was to be drafted into the Korean military, he "gave up his Korean nationality for American citizenship" (Seo 2011). The Korean government subsequently deported him and banned him from ever returning to Korea. The image still lingers with the case of Jaebeom, because both are presented as sacrificing their "Korean nationality," something seemingly inherent and natural, for a constructed American

¹³ In 2005, nearly 97 percent of Koreans between the ages of 6 and 29 used the Internet daily (Lee 2006: 126). I suspect that the number has not decreased.

citizenship. Several Korean scholars have discussed the power and even pleasure of Korean nationalism, representing at times a primordialist claim to ethnicity and nationality (c.f., Em 1999; Lee 2006; Lee 2007; Kim 2007; Shin 2006)—the word *minjok* simultaneously implies ethnicity, nation and race (Shin 2006). Herzfeld's (1997) notion of cultural intimacy is quite apt in these situations, especially with Jaebeom: only Koreans can draw attention to their follies and blunders, and all others will be met with unimaginable anger and rage.

For the months that followed the Jaebeom controversy, there was intense gossip and debate among Korean fans and international fans as to the "real" reason he left and if it was really his choice or one forced upon him by his company, JYP Entertainment. The vast majority of fans believed that he was forced to leave by JYP Entertainment, primarily because the company had been silent for most of the controversy besides expressing remorse that he had made such comments at all. It was the silence, however, that drove fans all over the world to react. JYP Entertainment cancelled all activities and projects of the remaining members, only adding to the silence and speculation that it was the fault of the company and not Jaebeom for his departure. Flash mobs arose not only domestically in Korea, but also in places like Malaysia and even France. Petitions circulated online to bring Jaebeom back, as his return to 2PM was their ultimate goal. Fans would protest in front of the JYP Entertainment headquarters, stage sit ins in front of the building, cover the face of the building with post-it notes that contained messages to Jaebeom pleading for his return, and boycotted any future projects by the group until Jaebeom had returned. The boycott was taken to such extreme lengths that thousands of fans gathered together the latest album of 2PM that Jaebeom had participated in, "Again and Again," and put them in boxes in front of the JYP Entertainment office building as if to return them to the company. The slogan that promulgated these activities was "1:59PM," as if to say it will never be 2PM until Jaebeom returns (K Bites 2009).

JYP Entertainment and the remaining members of 2PM also anticipated Jaebeom's return. When they released their first full-length album in October 2009, the group decided to leave Jaebeom's vocals intact on the first single off the album, "Heartbeat." The album, ironically enough, was also called "1:59PM," providing fans further hope (and some might say fuel) that Jaebeom's return was inevitable. During the 2009 Mnet Asian Music Awards, 2PM paid tribute to their absent leader while performing "Again and Again," leaving his spot in the choreography open—represented only by a single spotlight—and leaving his solos in the song untouched. Jaebeom was supposed to come back, return to Korea, to 2PM, and to his fans—his leave

was only meant to be temporary, to let the scandal subside and his reputation recuperate.

Jaebeom never returned to 2PM. In February 2010, JYP Entertainment announced that Jaebeom's contract had been terminated due to misconduct that had occurred early in 2009 that Jaebeom only admitted to in December of 2009 (KoreaPrecious 2010). The company said that this mistake was significantly worse than the comments he made in 2005 and could have larger consequences, but they never disclosed what they were. JYP Entertainment then held a press conference a few days later with the remaining members and representatives of the major fan cafes (online fan clubs) to discuss the controversy in its entirety.¹⁴ While this eventual truth and reconciliation council appeased some, many were still dissatisfied with JYP Entertainment and their management of this conflict. The remaining members had released albums since November 2009 without Jaebeom and their popularity grew, but the cloud from the Jaebeom incident remained for quite some time, especially when Jaebeom, now Jay Park, returned to Korea in the summer of 2010 to begin filming a Hollywood movie and promote new music and his dancing crew from Seattle. Since 2010, Jay Park has released singles, albums, acted in Korean films, appeared on Korean variety programs, and has done modelling in Korea. Netizens seem to have forgotten the scandal as he rises in popularity, earning the top spot in various weekly music charts (Kingpolo 2012) and apparently being extremely "well-mannered" (mintpepsi 2012). There was never a public reconciliation between fans, JYP Entertainment, 2PM and Jaebeom, but as I illustrate in the sections that follow, the moments of resistance had perhaps facilitated the catharsis fans had needed.

THE MONSTER GAINS CONSCIOUSNESS

When Victor Frankenstein finally meets his creation in the mountains, he notices how intelligent and articulate the monster has become. The monster tells of his encounters with different people, including his observations of the De Lacey family which led to his education and self-awareness—watching people made him humanistic. Fan clubs are akin to Frankenstein's monster primarily because though Frankenstein creates the monster, much in the same way musical production companies create fan clubs—the vast majority of official fan clubs are set up by the idols'/idol groups' companies and are given

¹⁴ Note that this is one of the first times that any Korean idol has held a press conference with fans. Idols will often hold fan meet and greet events, but those events run more like a mini-concert than a press conference.

names (Hottests for 2PM and Cassiopeia for DBSK, for instance)—fan-consciousness, together-ness, or belonging is not innate or even created by the companies. Rather, the monster gains consciousness through observation; fans gain consciousness by observing, even partaking in other fan clubs.

How one learns to be a fan is intimately tied to how one learns to resist—the monster's consciousness led to his misanthropic demeanour and ultimately his violence. The history of the idol industry in Korea is also a history of contemporary fan culture, and so young fans today have a rich history and context to work within to mold their own fan cultures—fans build on past fan cultures, and so current fan clubs mirror past fan clubs from the late 1990s. Even as new idol groups debut, the fan clubs of these new groups, much like the idols themselves, are not ignorant of the industry and fan club cultures. And this history, these situated contexts, provide fans today with a very important and meaningful claim: a claim to power.

I began this article with two rather drastic examples of resistance in the entertainment industry: DBSK's supposed rotating members' fiasco and the rapid decline of album sales in South Korea. Later in 2009 and into 2010, DBSK eventually did break up—three members filing a lawsuit against their company, SM Entertainment, while the remaining two members stayed in the group and part of SM Entertainment.¹⁵ This controversy escalated far beyond the 2PM scandal, pitting fan against fan, member against member, and though the three members (now known as JYJ) won each lawsuit, they have also been blocked by numerous radio and television programs from performing. JYJ is extremely popular in Korea, despite their limited television and radio appearances, as the members are active as television actors, movie actors and musical stars, in addition to making music. The remaining two members still perform under the name DBSK and are also quite popular in Korea and Japan. Yet animosity still exists between members and fans. Early in the controversy, fans of the yet-to-be-formed JYJ, in protest of SM Entertainment, lined the intersection near the SM Entertainment building—in downtown Gangnam, one of the busiest intersections in Korea—and laid down on the road to block traffic from passing. Most noticeably, all the fans were wearing school uniforms.

¹⁵ DBSK has become famous, or rather infamous, all across Asia, the group's official Korean fan club holding the world record for the largest fan club with over 500,000 members (Gitzen 2009). The split, according to the three members who left, was caused by primarily two areas of concern, both contract-related: the long-term (13 years) exclusivity of the contract and the compensation for all activities (rukiddenmeh?! 2009). The details regarding the particular aspects of the contract would require more space than I am able to provide, but all disputes with their current contract accumulated into a lawsuit against SM Entertainment in opposition to their contract, only to be countered by a lawsuit brought against them by SM Entertainment. The rhetoric of this moment thus became the need to oppose and abolish all "slave contracts" in the entertainment industry.

Why do fans think that lying in the way of oncoming traffic is an effective means of protest? What makes them think that protesting at all will change anything? Because in the past it has. With the rumours of DBSK rotating members in 2005, fans protested to the extent that the rumours disappeared—SM Entertainment listened. Consumers stopped buying CDs partly because they realised very little of the money went into the hands of the actual artists as companies retained the vast majority of the profits (Macintyer 2002; Gitzen 2009). Consumers, and fans especially, were appalled with the amount of corruption in the music industry, the in-your-face payola that proved musical production companies and television companies were making all the decisions as to who would be popular and who would not—airtime was given to the idols with the larger, more profitable companies as they could afford to pay the producers with under the table wages (Gitzen 2009). The music industry changed following the 2002 corruption scandal of the entertainment industry—SM Entertainment was one of the musical production companies investigated (Macintyer 2002).

Even though DBSK did eventually breakup, the response to the controversy and the protests of fans was monumental. In March 2010, SM Entertainment was investigated for unfair contracts (sweetrevenge 2010), only to be directed by the Fair Trade Commission in December of 2010 to revise all unfair contracts of their artists (VITALSIGN 2010). Other companies also voluntarily revised their contracts with artists that were thought to be unfair, and even members of the Korean government and broadcasting industry met to discuss "slave contracts" and the rights of idols (sarahsusiepak 2011). This sudden attention to the rights of the idol, however, have failed to mention any discussion of the contractual problems with past idol groups, the prosecution of music and television producers, or the decline in album sales, while I would argue that these moments of hegemonic discontent act as precursors to the current dissonance. There have been other cases since the breakup of DBSK that further called into question contractual relationships between musical production companies and artists, but none garnering more attention than DBSK.

Historically, these moments of resistance, the 2PM controversy included, follow what Sook-Jong Lee (2006: 125) refers to as "assertive nationalism," where "the cultural dynamism of today's Korean youth, as well as their political demands for recognition and equality, has facilitated this assertiveness." South Korea has a rich history of what we could term protest culture, dominated especially by students during the late 1970s and into the 1980s. Protest culture arose during these decades in response to the Korean military dictatorships and the students' desire for democracy (Lee 2007). The

role of civil society in the forms of protests has been heralded as the leading cause of democratic reform in South Korea (Kim 2007), and the student groups that formed a very public "counterpublic sphere," or *undongkwŏn*, were chief among these movements (Lee 2007). Universities had transformed into central command for student clubs and groups aiming to protest against the militaristic South Korean government, finally falling to a democratic regime in 1992.¹⁶ Protests since 1992 have flooded the streets of Seoul when Korean citizens, students especially, have found conditions unacceptable. Yet as Lee (2006: 126) notes, Korean youth today are "event-driven" and focus more on "selective issues" as opposed to grandiose injustices and so the same forms of protest and ideologies of protests have shifted in recent years to include the every day issues that affect individuals.¹⁷

Elsewhere I argued that this type of assertive youth nationalism is apparent in the production and consumption of Korean popular music (Gitzen 2007). I began that analysis with the singer SeoTaiji and his consistent push against Korean censorship laws with music that criticised, among other things, the education system¹⁸—the song "Classroom Ideology" proclaiming, "from elementary school to middle school, then to high school, to present us in nice wrapping paper, they send us to the wrapping store, they wrap us in wrapping paper called 'college'" (Taiji 1994).¹⁹ The popularity of SeoTaiji is greatly due to a rather simple, yet incredibly salient, fact: he sang about issues facing Korean youth. Difficulty with parents, the absurdity of school, running away from home—each represent a serious problem for Korean youth and each was a topic of a popular SeoTaiji song.

The transition of Korean popular music following SeoTaiji led more into pop idol production, as I described earlier. However superficial these idols may seem, the influence of SeoTaiji's music and message was no doubt clear in these early idol groups. One of the first Korean boy bands H.O.T. was

¹⁶ I choose to claim 1992 as the transition to democracy even though Korea's first free election was in 1987 because the president elected in 1987 was still a military general, where 1992 marks the first time a civilian was elected president of South Korea.

¹⁷ Lee (2006: 126) qualifies this claim by noting that in late 2002 to early 2003 there were several candlelight vigils held for the death of two schoolgirls as a result of a U.S. military mine-clearing vehicle exercise. Korean youth, Lee notes, had a noticeable presence during these candlelight vigils because "they perceived the poor handling of the incident by both the U.S. and Korean authorities as unjust and unfair." In addition, as I will illustrate below, I am not suggesting that these contemporary forms of protests—especially the 2PM protests—are replicas, or even relics, of the 1970s and 1980s, but rather that this cultural form is still recognised within cultural memories and archives.

¹⁸ For most of the 1990s, Korea had a rather strict censorship law in place for television and radio. SeoTaiji's music, though immensely popular with Korean students, was often banned from television and radio—he still managed to sell millions of copies of his albums (Gitzen 2007).

¹⁹ SeoTaiji explained that "when I wrote 'Classroom Ideology,' I wanted to express myself as strongly as possible, because I had been so deeply hurt and unsatisfied about school. I particularly hated the way that so many people wasted their lives just in order to enter university" (quoted in Yi 1999: 175).

known for songs about school bullying and violence, declaring in one of their songs, "Why are you hitting me... once we were friends, you ruined me... because of you my life is bad... you became my enemy and I gave up" (Yoo 1996). Yet H.O.T. also spoke of Korean youth as a community, a generation that should band together to fight injustices as one of their song proclaims, "Within me, a new world is squirming to grow, and now I will grow it and develop it on my own, we are the future" (Yoo 1997). DBSK, which debuted years after H.O.T. disbanded, were also known for songs that channelled the nation, but rather than speak specifically about problems or issues Korean youth faced, some of their songs spoke of greater, more abstract thoughts of the Korean nation and global crises. One of their songs, "*O-Jung-Ban-Hap*" (translated as "O-Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis" or "O-Justice-Opposition-Harmony"), states, "what I am looking for is only effort for unity, with hands like mine, one cry, you who desire for the dream to become reality, beside you is the appearance of justice's courage... the efforts of justice, opposition and harmony, someday in this land the dream will be unfolded" (Yoo 2006).²⁰ I should note that the DBSK concert I described followed this precise theme, as the concert led up to this song with scenes of violence, gunfire, death, destruction and ultimately resurrection—at the hands of DBSK, of course—cascading the screens and stage.

Let me be clear: I am not arguing that all Korean popular music during this time can be characterised or even exemplified by this type of politics, though each musician or idol group mentioned was not only hugely popular but considered groundbreaking in their music and fan culture. In elucidating these transitions and providing examples of national consciousness of youth-oriented music, I am not trying to fit the music 2PM makes into this genealogy as much as I am presenting a genealogy, an archive, to which fans of 2PM have access. Cvetkovich (2003: 9–10) ponders what exactly can be included in an archive by asking "what counts as an archive"—cultural archives both form and inform public culture: "Cultural artifacts become the archive of something more ephemeral: culture as a 'way of life.'"²¹ Archives are thus tools we use to analyse public cultures while they are also tools that public cultures use to

²⁰ DBSK wrote none of these songs, nor the lyrics, and it is uncommon for idols to write either lyrics or music for their albums, though this is slowly changing. It is difficult to discern exactly how fans intercept and interpret these lyrics given the lack of ethnographic material, but given the bombardment of parallel images surrounding these lyrics (i.e., music videos, performances, concerts, etc.) fans would be hard-pressed to view the song and its lyrics as simply another pop song. H.O.T., on the other hand, wrote many of their songs, especially later in their career, and though we can assume that their producers either approved or disapproved the songs they wrote, their fans have always received H.O.T.'s music as *their* music, not a company's music.

²¹ Included in an archive are not only experiences but also discourses relationships, and material objects, all classified as "cultural artifacts" (Cvetkovich 2003).

craft their cultures and meanings. As Ahmed (2010: 19) declares, "my archive is also my world, my life-world, my past as well as present, where the word *happiness* has echoed so powerfully." And so, "these archives take shape through the circulation of cultural objects" as either happy or unhappy, depending on the archive (Ahmed 2010: 18). I may not fit 2PM into this specific genealogy, but fans might as their specific happy or unhappy archives are predicated on their own appropriation of the boy band and the controversy as part of their own cultural milieu where what came before—both discursively through the genealogy and history of Korean popular music and experientially through their own participation in past resistance—informs where they are and possibly where they are going.

There are two questions I have: why did Koreans sensationalise Jaebeom's words, leading to his departure? As discussed earlier, Jaebeom was compared to Steven Seunjun Yoo and the controversy surrounding Yoo's dodge of his mandatory military service—his Korean American heritage was blamed, much in the same manner Jaebeom's Korean American heritage was blamed for his harsh words about Korea. But why did fans think that their protesting would bring Jaebeom back? It has worked in the past, yes, but the contours and tensions that present during moments of resistance are understood only in these archives as they include past incarnations of similar moments of resistance from which they draw. Archives as toolboxes for fans—or for any Korean, really—thus present moments of resistance as current instantiations of democratic movements, candlelight vigils for dead schoolgirls, 2002 and 2006 World Cup celebrations, protests against DBSK member rotation, and any other event or situation included in their affective archive. In other words, the discourses and forms of resistance were not necessarily meant to be nationalistic but by virtue of their archival use of past instances of movements and protests—not to mention their belief that they *should* protest, are *allowed* to protest, and that protesting will produce effective results—they carry with them the affectivity Cvetkovich (2003) claims that archives have.

THE MONSTER UNLEASHED

The monster's reference to Frankenstein as his "slave" adduces the precarious line between Frankenstein as creator and his monster as master. This same precarious line can be drawn connecting musical production companies and fans, for though the companies via the idols create fan clubs—without the idols there would be no dedicated fan club—the fans also have immense

power over the companies. The image of the sea of fans during the DBSK concert screaming amidst the sound of sirens and then the pictures of war is compelling, but imagine that same army of fans—500,000 strong—taking up proverbial arms against the injustices levied against them by the production companies. Musical production companies create the ultimate monster, or army, for it will stay loyal when they are treated properly but will never hesitate to rebel, to defy the creator and claim mastery, if conditions are deemed inappropriate. In other words, musical production companies create a social contract with fans, where the idols and the company will provide fans with music and all other activities idols engage in while the fans in exchange provide love and support for the idols (and arguably the company). When there is no love or support from fans/ consumers, the idols disappear. Yet the same is true for when the idols and company do not provide fans with what they were promised (i.e., a group of seven, not six). The result of a broken social contract, as I have illustrated above, is resistance.

Fans of 2PM no doubt felt a certain emotional attachment to the group and its members. The discourse often exchanged between members and fans is simply "I love you" (*saranghae*). I have argued above that musical production companies can present themselves as brands by highlighting the community of idols—JYP Nation in lieu of JYP Entertainment. Similarly, the idols themselves, in this case 2PM, are also considered a brand as they have their own systems of personalities and attributes. Fans are loyal, as Aoyagi (2006) illustrates in Japan, and the same is most definitely true in Korea as their loyalty lies with the product as a whole and not a drastically altered product (i.e., six members instead of the original seven). Exploitation of this loyalty, though, runs rampant within music production companies (c.f., Foster 2007). Yet when fans discern that they are being exploited, however that may be assessed by fans—in the 2PM case it was the breaking of a scandal—they retaliate. With the 2PM and Jaebeom controversy, not only did fans refuse to consume the group, boycotting the group and the company and even returning bought albums to the company, the fans also protested against the "mistreatment" of Jaebeom. But is it possible that fans were also protesting their own mistreatment as their social contract was breached? Though their goals, or demands, were never met, perhaps the act itself is powerful enough to demonstrate the possibility of change, the existence of power in the relationship of these fans, as Foucault (1983) would suggest.

It is this relationship among fans, and between fans and the idols, that contextualises resistance. The acts of resistance aim to bring back unity to a disjointed idol group—7-1=0. On the surface, resistance to Jaebeom's departure is a complaint against JYP Entertainment's handling of the entire

situation. Blame is placed on the company and never on Jaebeom or even those that called for Jaebeom's departure, as many fans were likely part of that barrage of voices calling for discipline. Resistance has a goal, namely the return of Jaebeom to 2PM. Analytically though, dissatisfaction stems from JYP Entertainment's inability to keep the happy object, 2PM, safe and whole—they were unable to keep the family together. As the circulation of idols as happy objects accumulates affective value, what happens when that object is bastardised, ripped apart and violently morphed into something else? Does it still retain its affective value? Ahmed (2010) might argue that the amended object would need to recirculate to garner new affective value. Yet what took place during these moments of 2PM resistance were a simultaneous denial of any modified version of the object—6 members instead of 7—and a demand for their original object to be returned. If the 7-member 2PM constituted a particular happy object with significant affective value—recall the affective value of DBSK, leading fans to faint just at the sight of the members during their concert—then resistance attempts to save the object, salvage it, and perpetuate it. Fear of a dismantled object spurs action.

In this situation, resistance is an emotional feat, for it involves one's own love, desire and dedication to an object of immense affective value and to the shared orientation. In September 2009, I had seen on the news that 2PM fans were protesting in front of the JYP Entertainment building and I decided to go witness for myself the extent of these protests. The media had deemed them silent protests, and when I arrived one afternoon I soon realised why. The streets leading up to the JYP Entertainment building were lined with fans, sectioned off against the buildings as if not to block traffic. The closer I walked to the actual JYP building, the number of fans and spectators grew—security also seemed to be roaming around the building. Yet the vast majority of the fans, in addition to their signs and placards, wore facemasks to cover their mouths. I managed to ask one of the spectators why they were sitting, saying nothing and not blocking any traffic. The spectator said that the fans wanted to suffer in silence, or at least not cause any disruptions in movement. The image was clear, complemented by the boxes of albums, posters, post-it notes and voice of a single leader of the fans: they wanted JYP Entertainment to know, and everyone else who managed to see them, that they were in pain, and the only remedy was the return of Jaebeom (for images of the silent protests, see K Bites 2009).

If we juxtapose the image of the DBSK concert with the image of the 2PM silent protests, similarities and differences arise. The greatest difference is the rhetoric and *feeling*; concerts imbue a feeling of celebration for the cohesion of the idol family, while these silent protests expel a feeling of grief,

anger, loss and ultimately pain from the dissolution of the idol family. Yet the similarities between the two are compelling and illuminating. The organisation of fans in both instances was astronomical—fans knew exactly what to chant at very precise moments during the concerts, while the fans at the silent protests knew exactly where to sit, what signs to hold, and who would say what when. I suspect that the majority of these protests and the organisation of fans were orchestrated online—most of the fan clubs have an immense online presence in the form of fan cafes. Organisation of fans also implies togetherness and belonging of fans as there exists a relationship among fans—in the form of a fan club—that connects fans together. While at the concert, I could easily discern that fans did not go to the concert alone for it seemed that everyone I saw was talking to someone else. During the silent protests, a similar form of belonging was present if only because what would compel complete strangers to congregate in such an organised manner and speak with just one voice if there was not already a sense of togetherness involved? In other words, fans were fighting for the same thing as the fans sitting next to them, and if their friendliness during times of celebration is any indication of their relationship, then during times of strife I argue that the relationship deepens as the intensity of the situation increases.

Returning to Ahmed's (2010: 38) analysis of the fan club, I argue that the fans' orientation towards the happy object (i.e., 2PM) remains in moments of resistance, yet the affective value of the object intensifies, or at least becomes consciously recognised. Ahmed (2004) argues that our orientation towards objects yielding particular emotions is normative, insofar as there are culturally and socially sanctioned orientations that are deemed good or "happy" while others are banished as non-normative and unhappiness-causing. Yet she also argues that the normativity of emotions, or our orientation towards various objects, often goes unrecognised.²² Ahmed (2004, 2010) does allow for moments of realisation, especially with feminists and queers who are often embodying the non-normative orientations. In the moments of celebration and resistance, fans draw attention to their orientation towards 2PM as a happy object as 2PM brings the fans love, joy, and a sense of belonging to a family, be that the 2PM family, JYP Nation, or the family of fans. This is not to posit an always-present unconsciousness to fans' love and affection for 2PM—the amount of time fans spend online on fan websites (in Korea they are called fan cafes) discussing 2PM is a clear indication that they

²² Ahmed (2004) channels Judith Butler's (1990, 1993) discussion of gender performativity, whereby individuals unconsciously reify gender norms.

recognise the impact 2PM has on their lives.²³ Yet the dedicated moments of resistance differ from the everyday moments of celebration or the heightened celebratory events (i.e., concerts) because where celebration usually indicates a general celebration of belonging, this resistance is in response to an event. Resistance, in this regard, becomes affective—fans are attempting to regain the whole object by exercising their perceived power, but both the object and the power are contingent on a circulated history, one laden with affective residue yielding specific value. Affective resistance is the response to the fear that happy objects with immense affective value will disappear. Stated alternatively, affective resistance is a "diagnostic" of the relationship between the object (idols) and the subject (fans), much in the same way Abu-Lughod (1990: 42) claims resistance to be a "diagnostic of power."

Cvetkovich (2003) brilliantly describes how there was a rise in HIV/AIDS in the 1980s, institutions were silent regarding this epidemic. Friends watched friends die, and as a result of these traumatic events and moments, people banded together to form ACT UP in order to perform how they felt, to perform their grief and anger. They would perform die-ins at St. Patrick's Cathedral, in New York, rally around government buildings such as the FDA and chant "shame," and march in gay pride parades by the thousands. The group was able to rally large numbers of people together not because they all felt the same thing, but because they had been affected by the same thing: death from HIV/AIDS. Cvetkovich (2003: 43) posits that responses to these moments indicate that "trauma must be seen to inhabit both intense sensation and numbness, both everyday and extreme circumstances." Resistance is therefore about a traumatic event—the death of a loved one for Cvetkovich (2003) and the exile of Jaebeom for 2PM fans (symbolising the breaking of the happy object)—and a continuously felt traumatic state—the feeling of loss, grief, anger and pain. Resistance relives those moments by embodying that affective state, but fans relive those states, much like the members of ACT UP, because they had no seeming alternative. And yet resistance is cathartic, for though Jaebeom never returned to 2PM, fans were able to vent their frustration, call attention to the inequalities between the fans and JYP Entertainment, and declare that they have power. Yet "having" power is not necessarily the point, argues Abu-Lughod (1990), as resistance is diagnostic, drawing attention to the structures of power laden in both the musical entertainment companies and business in general. The power to which resistance calls attention is embedded in the relationship between companies

²³ Elsewhere I talk about the relationship between DBSK and their fans, especially the meaning that DBSK has in the lives of fans and the importance of DBSK in constructing meaning and identity for fans (Gitzen 2007).

and consumers, yet the affect that arises in resistance is between idols (as extensions of companies) and fans (as specific relationally-defined instantiations of consumers).

OBJECTS OF *AFFECTION*

Affect is contingent on relationships, as is resistance—one person complaining may illustrate the beginnings to a movement, but as Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987: 216–217) argue, "molecular escapes and movements would be nothing if they did not return to the molar organizations to reshuffle their segments, their binary distributions." The scale of resistance is therefore crucial, for though it may seem quite personal—especially given its affective contingencies—both resistance and affect expand the discursive boundaries the more intricate it becomes. And intricacy depends on size and population, so much so that either the build up, or snowball effect, of resistance—beginning with few resisters and seamlessly increasing in number over time (much in the way Deleuze and Guattari [1987] explain)—or the shock and awe of mass amounts of people induce an affective connection among resisters and a feeling of uneasiness in their audience. Resistance as a movement, as an emotional force, must chiefly incorporate the movement of bodies, the intensity formed between bodies as indicative of the feelings produced during specific moments. In the case of the 2PM protests, the intensity formed between fans, in the crevasses of their relationships and belonging, elucidates both the cause and effect/affect of resistance: the love and adoration of 2PM. Yet this is again contingent on multiple bodies, on multiple fans and multiple fan relationships. It is not one fan protesting but an ocean of fans, chanting in unison with (literally) one voice, one message and one demand.

We assume the object of affective value to be the idols, but perhaps there is an underlying object or a second object in circulation. All of these acts of celebration and resistance are contingent on groups of fans and their relationships—in their relationships lie both their power and their pleasure. I contend, along with Ahmed (2010), that there is immense pleasure to be had as a member of a group with a shared orientation; or, stated alternatively, we like being part of an "in" group, a group of people that likes the same thing. Belonging, Massumi (2002: 82–83) notes, is important to the extent that an institution (such as JYP Entertainment) "*follows* that which it regulates."

Let me suggest, then, that while the idols and idol groups circulate in one affective economy, the fan club as its own happy object is circulating in a

different, yet intimately related, affective economy. As I illustrated earlier in this article, the circulation of the idols and idol groups transpires over multiple forms of discourse, from producing music, appearing on television shows, holding concerts, and even acting in television dramas. As the idols and idol groups circulate, they garner specific affective value, meaning those consuming them, particularly fans, ascribe value based on both their interpretation and incorporation of these objects into their lives. In a similar fashion, fan clubs circulate but in a different set of discourses—they certainly are not acting in television dramas.²⁴ The intersection of these two objects, and their subsequent affective economies, lies in the moments of consumption for it is in those moments that the value of the idols and idol groups and the value of the fan clubs occupy the same time and space—concerts, meet and greet events, press conferences, and of course, acts of resistance.²⁵ Affective resistance is therefore an attempt to save those relationships as meaning exists within them—the circulation of both idols and fan club produced rather intense affective value. And therefore, the act of standing up for these relationships intensifies the relationships even further.

And so we return to Frankenstein and his monster(s), for though Frankenstein's monster vows vengeance on his creator, upon Frankenstein's death the monster does not feel satisfaction but intense grief and longing (Shelley 1869). He realises that without his creator he would not exist, but also that now that his creator is gone he is all alone—no mate, no friends, no family. Perhaps not as dramatic as Frankenstein's monster, the relationship between 2PM fans and JYP Entertainment could be similarly explained. Even though the choir of voices demanded Jaebeom to be disciplined, upon his departure from Korea fans felt an intense longing for the former 2PM leader. JYP Entertainment and fans need each other, and though they may be uneasy about each other—not to the extent that they want the other dead—that uneasiness keeps them moving together. Frankenstein dies and his monster laments his deeds and his dependency on Frankenstein. The catharsis, or at least the time following resistance, is therefore dedicated to lamentation, for all parties involved—musical production companies, idols, and fans—recall that they are dependent on one another, they are each other's monster and Frankenstein, and just like the monster, they are dependent on their

²⁴ One future research goal would be to illustrate that fan clubs circulate amongst themselves, garnering the affective value based on the importance the fan club as a group of relationships in the life of any given fan.

²⁵ Social relations between fans are no doubt important, and several Korean studies scholars, myself included, have argued the importance of groups in self-making projects (see Lee 2006; Shin 2006; Gitzen 2007; Gitzen 2012). The relationship between fans and idols and fans and fans, as a collective, involves at some level negotiations of identity and self.

Frankenstein. Unlike Frankenstein and his monster, fans have moved on, the controversy with Jaebeom a distant memory as his solo career is thriving.

Yet I wonder, perhaps too haphazardly or hypothetically: should there arise another instance of a Korean American speaking unpleasant words about Korea in the Korean entertainment world, would the controversy with Jaebeom be invoked? The archive of moments of threat, resistance and affect is growing for both Korean youth and in the Korean entertainment world—Jaebeom's controversy recalled discussions of Steven Seungjun Yoo—but the use of the archive and its material is rather selective. Earlier I discussed Lee's (2006) phrase "assertive nationalism," whereby younger generations of Korean were using their national identity in very particular contexts and for specific reasons. While global politics may not be of interest to Korean youth, as Lee (2006) argues, international competitions—such as the 2002 World Cup—drum up pride in the nation, contingent only on those individual events or situations. My point is not to theorise youth nationalism; rather I am concerned with affective resistance as emerging from discourses of nationalism and democracy (however one may define these terms), even if put to seemingly different affective purposes (i.e., the interpenetration of national and consumer discourses). The collective archive available to these fans—as it is available to all Koreans—includes a long and rich history of student uprisings, democratic movements, and protests, along with the past controversies and moments of resistance that past fans experienced.

As diagnostic of the relationships between fans and idols in addition to fans and other fans, affective resistance elucidates that fans and idols are monsters in the service of two masters. On the one hand, such forms of resistance are no doubt political as they are "diagnostic of power" (Abu-Lughod 1990)—fans are exerting their influence over musical production companies in order to recuperate their idols. Yet on the other hand, the affectivity of this resistance indicates that the intimacy between fans and idols alongside the intimacy between fans themselves is not easily broken as it ultimately strengthens during moments of resistance (c.f., Cvetkovich 2003). And so, while the resistance of 2PM fans may not have been effective in achieving its immediate goal, it was still immensely affective and placed another volume in the archive.

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