Knowing Bodies
Emotive Embodiment in Feminist Epistemology

Emmie Särnstedt

Masteruppsats i Genusvetenskap

Centrum för Genusvetenskap
Uppsala Universitet
Uppsatstitel: Knowing Bodies. Emotive Embodiment in Feminist Epistemology.

Författare: Emmie Särnstedt

Masteruppsats i Genusvetenskap

VT 2011

Handledare: Lisa Folkmarson Käll

Sammanfattning (Abstract)
The aim of this thesis is to examine how the boundaries of the body are renegotiated by approaching emotive bodies as the power charged foundations of knowledge. Introducing the subject, I describe the subordination of bodies and emotions in Western thought as gendered and raced. While the dichotomy between bodies and knowledge prevail in many feminist paradigms, the postmodern feminist interest in the mutually constitutive role of bodies and knowledge production is seen as a dissolution of dichotomies such as nature/culture, body/mind and emotion/reason. With embodied reading as a methodological point of departure, I first analyze the role of emotions in academic writing, and then turn to exploring the concept of the lived body, as developed in feminist phenomenology. I touch on the intersectional potential of emotive, embodied knowledge in my concluding discussion, “Intersecting Bodies”.

In the first analytical theme, “Emotive Academic Writing”, I explore the chicana feminist María Lugones emotive imagery as a renegotiation of the boundaries between the bodies of writers, readers and written text. I describe emotions as materialized through embodied relations between writers and readers, arguing that they are sources of knowledge about the power structures that govern knowledge production. I see restructuring the emotive, intersubjective relations between subjects of knowledge as a way to change the hierarchical differentiation of bodies in knowledge production. In the second theme, “The Lived Body”, I argue that the phenomenological take on bodies and knowledge as mutually constitutive renegotiates the boundaries within bodies, between bodies, and between bodies and their surrounding world. I argue that the power sensitive approach to embodiment in feminist phenomenology opens up for feminist reliance on embodied experience, without reinstating it as essentially tied to differentiated bodies.

Keywords: Feminism, Epistemology, Emotion, Embodiment, Phenomenology, Intersectionality
# Table of Contents

1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 2
   1.1 Subject and Aim ............................................................................................................................... 2
   1.2 Methodology: An Embodied Point of Departure ........................................................................... 5
   1.3 A Background to Feminist Epistemology ....................................................................................... 7
      1.3.1 The Gendered Embodiment of Knowledge in Western Philosophy ...................................... 7
       1.3.2 Embodiment and Knowledge in Feminist Thought ................................................................. 11

2. Emotive Academic Writing ....................................................................................................................... 17
   2.1 The Subordination of Emotion in Academia .................................................................................... 19
   2.2 Reading, Feeling, Writing, Knowing ............................................................................................... 25
      2.2.1 Intermingling Bodies ................................................................................................................ 27
      2.2.2 Knowing Lovingly ...................................................................................................................... 28
      2.2.3 Independence and Interdependence ......................................................................................... 31
      2.2.4 Emotive Change ......................................................................................................................... 32
   2.3 Emotive Reading and Emotive Text: Intermediate Conclusion ......................................................... 36

3. The Lived Body ......................................................................................................................................... 38
   3.1 Bodies as the Grounds of Perception .............................................................................................. 39
      3.1.1 Embodied Objectivity ............................................................................................................... 41
      3.1.2 Bodies and Knowledge Overflowing ....................................................................................... 42
   3.2 Subjects and Objects in a World ....................................................................................................... 47
   3.3 Embodied Experience in Feminist Theory ....................................................................................... 52
      3.3.1 A Critical Approach to Embodied Experience ................................................................. 56

4. Intersecting Bodies .................................................................................................................................. 57
   4.1 Intersecting Summary ....................................................................................................................... 58
      4.1.1 Emotive Bodies in Knowledge Production ............................................................................. 59
      4.1.2 Bodies and Knowledge as Mutually Constitutive ..................................................................... 62
   4.2 Emotive Bodies and Intersectional Thinking .................................................................................... 67
   4.3 Situated Knowers ............................................................................................................................... 71

Literature .................................................................................................................................................. 76
1. Introduction

1.1 Subject and Aim

In her classic article “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective”, Donna Haraway asks how feminists can make truth claims, without reinstating epistemological ideals that deem women too emotional and corporeal to know the world outside of their own subjective realms of life. According to Haraway, our bodies, and their interrelations in a world, are the very foundations of knowledge. We are not overlooking our surroundings like immaterial gods, omniscient and untouchable. We know our surroundings through our bodies – they enable and limit our perception. We need to be in touch with the world we claim to know, and we need to recognize that when we try to know the world, it touches us.

Haraway imagines the world as a coyote, a trickster, who does not silently await our discovery and description, but participates in a power laden production of meaning, through which we draw the boundaries of our bodies. Our knowledge production structures the conditions through which our bodies materialize – bodies are boundary projects. If feminists want to know gendered bodies without reinstating them as brute matter which come in ready-made shapes of male or female, we need to examine the power charged processes through which boundaries between bodies are drawn.

The subject of this thesis is embodied knowledge. My aim is to examine how the boundaries of the body are renegotiated by approaching emotive bodies as the power charged foundations of knowledge. I do this by analyzing the role of emotions in academic writing, and by exploring the concept of the lived body, as developed in feminist phenomenology. I am interested in how these two analytical themes provide possibilities of approaching bodies without reinstating their sexual, or any other differentiation, as pre-cultural, natural or stable, while recognizing bodily differentiation as central in knowledge production. This interest directs me to examining how emotive bodies, as points of departure for analysis of power structures, promote intersectional thinking. I touch on the intersectional potential of emotive, embodied knowledge in my concluding discussion.

2 Haraway p. 595.
3 Emotive feminist writing is not a unified scholarly field in the same sense as Feminist Phenomenology. I draw on emotive writers from a wide spectrum of academic contexts. Some of them, like Maria Lugones and Canéla Jaramillo are known as chicana feminists, while others, like Mona Livholts, Sara Edenheim and Cecilia Persson, are known to me within the field of Swedish Gender Studies. However, they share a critical attitude towards the disembodied style of text that dominates academic feminism, and connects this textual ideal with somatophobia, sexism and racism. It is this aspect of their respective work that I refer to in my analysis.
In the first analytical theme, “Emotive Academic Writing”, I begin by describing the exclusion of emotion from academic text as gendered and raced. I account for my understanding of emotion, and analyze two articles by the chicana feminist María Lugones. Lugones elevates emotion as a possibility of creating non-explotative feminist epistemologies. I argue that her intimately emotive imagery questions the boundaries between the bodies of writers, readers and written text.

The second theme is the concept of the lived body, as it is developed in Feminist Phenomenology. Feminist Phenomenology examines how power-structures and our subjective embodied experiences intersect in our bodies. First, I describe the phenomenological take on bodies as the grounds of perception. I argue that the boundaries within our bodies, between our and others' bodies, and between our bodies and our surrounding world are renegotiated by the phenomenological approach to bodies and knowledge as mutually constitutive. I examine how the notion of the lived body allows feminist theory to rely on embodied experience, without reinstating it as essentially female.

The themes are interrelated and overlapping; they both imagine bodies and knowledge as mutually constitutive. They call for examinations of our bodies as lived within power structures that form our emotions, experiences, relations and our knowledge, while recognizing these structures as produced through our embodiment. They direct us to the challenge of analyzing bodies as belonging to hierarchies in society, while remaining sensitive to the particularities of each subject and each situation. Both themes point to that naming and categorizing bodies is not simply a matter of inventing categories and dividing bodies into them – it is a matter of making our bodies materialize as belonging to the categories we invent by differentiating bodies from each other, and by separating aspects of our embodiment from one another. As Judith Butler argues, gendered bodies are constituted through the abjection of features that do not fit into the category of gender⁴.

Butler questions the reliance on women's bodies and experiences as the ground of feminism since this reliance draws the boundaries between who is a woman and who is not – boundaries that are not natural or biological in any precultural sense, but gain status as natural through cultural production of meaning⁵. Throughout the history of feminism, the supposed generality in the term “woman” has been challenged by, among many, black, poor, queer and crippled feminists⁶ whose

---

⁶ While I draw on theorists who criticize feminist exclusion of people of color, poor and queer subjects, I do not specifically address the critique that Crip Theory directs towards the normative notions of bodies as functioning in a very specific way. Crip Theory deconstructs dichotomies such as ability/disability and functional/dysfunctional. It shows that norms of gender, race, class and sexuality underlie these dichotomies. See for example Garland-Thompsonson,
bodies do not sort under the white, Western feminist term “woman” without residue. Their critique has changed feminist theory profoundly. The recognition of the particular situation of all subjects, the implausibility of creating universal and generalizing accounts of categories such as gender, sexuality, race and class is often articulated as intersectionality, to which I return in the conclusion.

Questioning the dichotomy between the cultural and the natural, as Butler does, is central in feminist thought. The dichotomy recognizes only the cultural, ideological, social aspects of life as open to political change, while nature is reduced to brute matter, out of the reach of social science and political intervention. The desire to renegotiate this familiar pairing should not be mistaken for a refusal to acknowledge the fleshy, material conditions of life. Sara Ahmed argues that habitually gesturing towards a supposed feminist refusal to address material bodies obscures the many rich inquiries of the body throughout the history of feminism. Calling for a “return” to the body implies that is has been missing; a claim that relies on the eradication of feminist analysis of biology, materiality and embodiment. Ahmed finds that the anxiety that postmodern feminism reduces “everything” – the real world in general and material bodies in particular – to language, text, culture and discourse, promotes a caricature of feminism as anti-biological.

To be clear, I do not see gender, race, age, class, or any other category of identity, as immaterial illusions that force us to falsely experience our bodies as differentiated. They are dimensions of the sensations, physical appearances, textures, passions, smells and sounds of our real, material, fleshy bodies. I examine the materialization of bodies as intertwined with knowledge production, which means that neither embodiment nor knowledge is seen as contained within the realm of nature or culture – to the contrary, they illustrate the inherent interconnectedness of these spheres.

It is crucial that we do not view renegotiations of the nature/culture-dichotomy, often developed in feminist critique of misogyny and racism in biology, as a general anti-biologism or somatophobia. Feminism has a history of criticizing how some biological accounts of embodiment, due to their


7 Here, Ahmed questions Elizabeth Grosz's call for a feminist return to nature, matter and life. See Grosz, Elizabeth (2004) The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution and the Untimely. Duke University Press. Grosz describes feminist work on biology and evolution as a “knee-jerk pointing out of sexism”, which Ahmed sees as a striking forgetfulness or omission of feminist scholars such as Donna Haraway, Evelyn Fox Keller, Emily Martin, Sandra Harding and Sarah Franklin; feminists who all engage in questions of nature, biology and materiality. I am not engaging further in their work, or in the critique directed at Grosz, but, in agreement with Ahmed, I am wary of reinstating a feminist genealogy that exclude these and other voices on the matter.

fixity, serve as justifications of societal hierarchies. This is not a rejection of the biological as such, Ahmed points out, but a protest against specific models of biology. The theorists I draw on are deeply engaged in bodies as biological, material and fleshy. They all argue that isolated, reductionist takes on bodies in biology, medicine, chemistry, or any other natural or social discipline, does not do our experiences of being embodied justice. In Elizabeth Grosz’s words, bodies are the centers of perspective, insight, reflection, desire and agency. As such, their significance do not keep within any singular theoretical framework. Nor are they captured in the neat, silent, one-dimensional, black and white features of text on paper.

1. 2 Methodology: An Embodied Point of Departure

Here, I give an introduction to the role of methodology in the thesis. It is developed further in my analysis. By method, I refer to the techniques and procedures I use to explore the subject at hand. It is connected to my view on ontology – what there is to be known – and epistemology – how it can be known. My method springs from a view on the ontology of bodies as dependent on, and changed through, how we know them. My perspective is that epistemology, method and theory are inextricable dimensions of knowledge production that change with each other.

I integrate methodological reflections in my analysis, since I approach method as an aspect of theory. I am able to highlight, and work with, the change inherent in embodied methodology better by allowing method and theory to intermingle. In agreement with Sara Edenheim and Cecilia Persson, I argue that splitting theory and method risks obscuring their mutual methodological significance, and their power charged relation to bodies. Since the relations between knowledge and bodies are power charged, the authors argue that methodology in Gender Studies serves to examine power relations in specific research projects, and within Gender Studies as a field. From this perspective, it is crucial to see the interconnections between our embodied methods and our theoretical preferences, understandings and development.

By integrating method and theory, I point to that the norms of academic text affects the analysis. The formalities of scholarly text are intertwined with theory, Mona Livholts claims, arguing that this calls for recognition of the interconnectedness of thought, writing and form. “Dare anyone say,
I did not know before I wrote, I was surprised?”, she asks, exemplifying the complexity of this question with the temporality implied in the form academic text; the introduction is often written last, but written as if it predates the conclusions the author has arrived at\(^\text{13}\).

Livholts's example makes me picture an author sitting in front of a computer screen, reading through a text, pondering what to stress in the introduction; an image that connect bodies, form and analysis. Hiding the process of embodied writing behind the form disconnects these aspects of methodology from each other. Embodied reading means, to me, finding bodies behind texts through my own experiences of knowledge production – it is the fact that it could be me, pondering in front of the computer screen, that makes Livholts' example vivid. It is the fact that I imagine that it could be her, that makes her text connect our bodies and situate them in a body of knowledge. The question is, which bodies do not share the experiences of knowledge that are the entrance tickets to feminist epistemology? How can we deal with the paradoxical fact that theories that reveal the violence of normalization, written within Gender Studies, must be disciplined to fit into the body of knowledge that constitute the field? I do not provide an answer to these questions, but they motivate my reflections on my reading an writing as emotive, embodied and thus power charged\(^\text{14}\).

My reluctance towards describing my method in advance has not got to do with an aversion against method. It springs from a curiosity of embodied writing\(^\text{15}\). I could pick up the traces of methodology in my analysis, and discipline them into a method chapter. This would, undoubtedly, obscure an important dimension of my writing: I do not know before I write. I have come to new understandings of the interrelatedness of method and analysis through the process of writing this thesis. My theoretical understanding is not, I have learned, determined by any fixed particularities of my body – rather, it is intimately connected to changes in my body. My knowledge changes through my readings of creative, emotional texts, which also change my body. I, like Barbara Christian, find that the texts I draw on compel me to read and write differently. Christian emphasizes that literature surprises her and makes her unwilling to fix a method:

---


So my “method” [...] is not fixed but relates to what I read and to the historical context of the writers I read and to the many critical activities in which I am engaged, which may or may not involve writing. It is a learning from the language of creative writers, which is one of surprise, so that I might discover what language I might use. For my language is very much based on what I read and how it affects me, that is, on the surprise that comes from reading something that compels you to read differently, as I believe literature does. I, therefore, have set no method [...] since for me every work suggests a new approach. As risky as this might seem, it is, I believe, what intelligence means – a tuned sensitivity to that which is alive and therefore cannot be known until it is known.

In short, my method consists of examining how my understanding of embodied knowledge, the subject of the thesis, changes through embodied reading and writing – and how my method changes as I incorporate new understandings of theory. My theoretical understanding may be seen as an intersection of the texts I draw on, my reading and writing my own body, and the bodies of the authors I read, into this text.

1.3 A Background to Feminist Epistemology

Here, I point to how the body/mind distinction in Western philosophy influences feminist accounts of embodiment, arguing that postmodern feminism demarcates a split with the dichotomy. I provide a background to my subject, and specify it, by showing the interconnection of knowledge and embodiment in feminist thought and feminism's critical interventions in traditional epistemology. I situate myself in a postmodern feminist paradigm and present the theoretical framework I rely on in the following analysis.

1.3.1 The Gendered Embodiment of Knowledge in Western Philosophy

Elizabeth Grosz, Gail Weiss and Mary E. Hawkesworth all argue that contemporary feminism must renegotiate accounts of embodiment inherited from mainstream Western philosophy. Since Western philosophy's foundation in ancient Greece, it has suffered from a severe fear of the body in general and the female body in particular – it is essentially somatophobic and misogynist, Grosz contends. It relies on a hierarchical relation between the reasonable, transcendent, male mind and the passionate, immanent, female body. The exclusion of femininity from Western philosophy allows Western philosophy to be perceived as domain of purified mind, in need of protection from bodily threats. Speaking with Grosz, the body is perceived as a source of interference in the operations of reason.

17 Grosz (1994) p. 3 ff.
Daniela Vallega-Neu maps out the body/mind-split in the history of Western philosophy, as manifest in its focus on self-reflexive thinking as a desire to escape the interference of the body\(^\text{18}\). Plato draws a distinct line between the material body and the psyche, the soul; a line that is prevalent in Western thought at least until Nietzsche, whose thought is a break through in rethinking the body/mind-dualism\(^\text{19}\).

During the nineteen centuries that separate Plato and Nietzsche, the dichotomy has been fortified through Christianity and modern science as developed from the Enlightenment; paradigms that both emphasize the distinction between the material and the spiritual, the rational and the emotional. Nietzsche's project is, above all, to reverse the hierarchy between body and thought, as articulated by Descartes. Although Nietzsche does not entirely dissolve the body/mind-dualism, Vallega-Neu argues that he breaks up Plato's distinction between a true, pure, immaterial world and a deceitful material one. The conceptual shift from a two-world system to one world allows a new perspective on thought; it is of the material world, it belongs to the world of bodies. This redirects the interest from questions about the ontology of thought to how it is performed. The focus on the performatative aspects of thought, Vallega-Neu argues, is crucial for creating an embodied epistemology\(^\text{20}\).

Weiss agrees that feminist theory must refuse to abide by the pairing of a denigrated body and femininity versus an elevated mind and masculinity, and direct the attention to how bodies and knowledge interact. Feminist adherence to the schema woman-body-immanent and man-mind-transcendent is, she points out, understandable, since the female body is often evoked as the ground and justification for the subordination of women. Objectifying views on female embodiment, however, will not be quenched through denying the body. On the contrary, feminists need to show the limitations of the distinction between a transcendent mind and an immanent body\(^\text{21}\).

Hawkesworth shows that the strong connection between femininity and embodiment renders women problematic both as subjects and objects of knowledge. Mainstream science rule out women, as well as knowledge about women, in its definitions of intellectual problems, its forming of theories, concepts and methods, and in its interpretations of research\(^\text{22}\).

\(^{19}\) Vallega-Neu argues that the idea that Plato creates the body/mind-dualism and Nietzsche dissolves it is overly simplistic; there are openings in Plato that allow interpretations sensitive to the connection between the soul and the body. Vallega-Neu p. 21 ff.
\(^{20}\) Vallega-Neu p. 21 ff.
I find it crucial to see that the fear of the passionate, unreasonable body not only leads to the exclusion of women from philosophy, but to a suspicion of femininity in knowledge production. This recognition is central for understanding knowledge production as gendered, since it implies that even when women are not formally excluded from intellectual and academic contexts, the gendered disavowal of the body structure these contexts. Examining gender, bodies and power in knowledge production is not only of importance for understanding and changing the formal and informal exclusion of certain bodies from academia, be it female, queer, disabled or non-white bodies. It is of importance for understanding and changing its exclusion of certain aspects of embodiment – indeed, female, queer, disabled and non-white aspects, which, as for example Iris Young and Sara Heinämaa show, change the notion of embodiment and subjectivity profoundly.

Young argues that the exclusion of femininity from Western metaphysics has severe consequences for its conceptualization of embodiment and subjectivity. The notion of the autonomous, self-enclosed subject is profoundly questioned if we take female experience into account. Women's experiences of sharing their bodies with another human being during pregnancy upset the idea that the subject alone inhabits one, unified body – an assumption that grounds traditional philosophy. Regular bodily variations such as menstruation and pregnancy, shared by many women, contest the idea that normal embodiment is stable, and that rational reasoning should or can remain unaffected by bodily changes. Young convincingly argues that the normal state of bodies means stability only for a minority of persons – adult, but not yet old men.

Women are asymmetrically associated with sex, birth, age and flesh, and therefore, their experiences are excluded from the supposedly general and neutral conceptualization of embodiment. Female experience is seen as extraordinary and deviant, and thus dispensable in general accounts of embodied experience, rather than as crucial corrections, developments or radical overturns of theory. As Heinämaa argues through her reading of Simone de Beauvoir, the exclusion of wide areas of human experience, which Beauvoir detects in the history of philosophy, in the natural and human sciences, and in the phenomenology developed by, for example Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, has fatal consequences for their respective credibility. Beauvoir shows that male experience is normalized and neutralized through the exclusion of femininity from theory. Male experience serves as a model of human experience in wide fields of knowledge.

---

without being recognized as particular and gendered\(^26\).

I read the inquiries of Grosz, Weiss, Hawkesworth, Young and Heinämaa as investigations of the gendered disembodiment of knowledge, rather than descriptions of injustice between men and women. The disembodiment of knowledge is not caused or influenced by gender inequality, nor is gender inequality caused by disembodied knowledge. The hierarchical sexual differentiation of bodies does not precede knowledge production, but is constituted through the processes through which we come to know bodies. This perspective, as articulated in for example feminist phenomenology and butlerian theory, is crucial for the possibility of creating epistemologies that deconstruct, rather than rely on the categories that ground societal hierarchies.

The reliance on a disembodied mind producing purely conceptual knowledge obfuscates the body, as well as the interaction of the materiality of knowers and text in knowledge production, Grosz argues\(^27\). Influenced by Vallega-Neu, I see the specific exclusion of female bodies and aspects of embodiment as an opening for embodied readings of disembodied epistemology\(^28\). The careful exclusion of feminine elements from definitions of philosophical problems, theories, methods and interpretations strikes me as an obvious, though implicit, embodiment of knowledge. However oppressive and misogynist, the exclusion highlights gendered bodies as aspects of methodology, which clearly opens up for examining the role of bodies in knowledge production. Of key importance for understanding the gendered embodiment of knowledge is examining which bodies, or aspects of bodies, are constructed as anomalous, and which bodies are conceptually absent. Speaking with Grosz, the specific male body as productive of a certain kind of knowledge – as the foundation of objective, verifiable, causal and quantifiable knowledge, is invisible\(^29\).

The body and the mind, then, are constructed as mutually exclusive and exhaustive substances throughout Western philosophy. This is part of an implicitly gendered and embodied epistemology in which women and femininity are deeply problematic, while male bodies function as the invisible

---


\(^{27}\) Grosz (1994) p. 4. I return to the question of the relation between (written) text, authors and readers in my discussion of emotional writing.

\(^{28}\) Vallega-Neu finds that tracing the occurrence of bodily thought in for example Plato, Nietzsche, Merleau-Ponty and Foucault opens up the possibility of reading embodiment into their texts, even when they do not explicitly address bodies as dimensions of thinking. Reading their texts, Vallega-Neu examines both how they conceptualize the body, and how this conceptualization is structured by their bodies. She finds that reading embodiment into their texts demands that “...the reader stay attuned and alert to the movements and articulations of their thoughts by sharing a strange intimacy with the texts as these unfold in the readin”. Vallega-Neu (2005) p. xvi.

\(^{29}\) Grosz (1994) p. 4.
norm. In uncritically adopting phobic accounts of embodiment, views of the body as an obstacle, a threat or a lack, feminism reproduces misogyny in philosophical thought, Grosz argues. The split between mind and body is deleterious for feminism, because it places the body in a purely material, biological sphere that is posed as unmarked by culture and, thus, impossible to change. Such static accounts of embodiment naturalizes societal hierarchies, and obscures the interconnection of bodies and thought. It is crucial that feminism creates accounts of the body that escapes the body/mind-dichotomy, and the connections between a devalued embodiment and femininity.

1. 3. 2 Embodiment and Knowledge in Feminist Thought

The marking of the female body as unequal and anti-intellectual has led to a feminist attraction to noncorporeality – a desire to escape the constraints of the female body. This escapism, nurtured by the common intellectual ground of mainstream Western philosophy and Western feminism, makes Grosz diagnose contemporary feminism with some of the symptoms of the philosophical somatophobia. She discusses the status of bodies in Egalitarian Feminism, Social Constructionism and Sexual Difference. To show how embodiment and knowledge is interconnected in feminist theory, I relate Grosz's description to Hawkesworth's take on feminist epistemology in the versions of Feminist Empiricism, Feminist Standpoint Theory and Feminist Postmodernism.

Feminist Empiricism shares the truth claims of realism and empiricism: there is an independent world which we gain direct knowledge about through perception. Sexism and racism in knowledge production can be quenched by demanding obedience of methodological standards that secure objectivity. We should see the world as it is, not as it appears to us through subjective, emotive perception. Science is not inherently gendered or raced - such biases seep through from individual knowers. The task for feminist epistemology is to purify science from the biases of subjectivity, so that the world is no longer viewed through misogynist or racist lenses.

In Feminist Empiricism, the body carries the burden of sexism and racism – an attitude which

30 Grosz (1994) p. 3 ff.
32 In agreement with Sara Ahmed, who's criticism against the forming of a new materialism I discuss above, I am wary of erasing the body from feminist theory up until a certain point in history. I am not, to be clear, arguing that feminism failed to address embodiment before the postmodern turn to embodied knowledge. The claim that some feminist perspectives inherits somatophobia from Western Philosophy should not be read as a claim that bodies are absent in those theories. Instead, it is interesting to examine in which ways bodies are present in feminist epistemology – to what extent they are treated as obstacles, sources of knowledge and aspects of theory. Drawing the contours of embodiment in feminism, it is crucial to understand suspicion of certain aspects of embodiment in the forming of knowledge.
33 Hawkesworth p. 535.
connects it to Egalitarian Feminism. Egalitarian Feminism distinguishes between a biological, sexually determined body, and a sexually neutral mind, and holds out for technological development that will rid the female body of some of its particularities. As long as the reproductive functions of women and men differ, women will be constrained by their bodies. Grosz contends that this take on embodiment inherits the notion of women as more biological and corporeal than men. It is not only the ascription of values to female bodies that subordinate women, but their essential vulnerability and fragility. Feminist Empiricism and Egalitarian Feminism rely on that the neutral mind will control and correct the body, bearing the mark of inequality, subjectivity and bias, which hinders scientific objectivity and gender equality.

A common feature of all versions of Egalitarian Feminism is that the sexual differentiation of bodies is seen as biologically determined. This has different epistemological implications in the wide field of Egalitarian Feminism. Either, the body stands in the way of objective knowledge, or the defining experiences of childbearing and caring about others provides women with unique insights about the value of life, and the importance of nature. The body-affirmative versions of Egalitarian Feminism spills over into Standpoint Theory. Standpoint Theory contends that there is no unmediated truth to be extrapolated from the world, but there are social positions that promise better accounts of truth and objectivity than others. Perception is structured by our place in societies structured by gender, race and class. Those at the top of such hierarchies construct knowledge that naturalizes their privileges. Therefore, the oppressed are more trustworthy. They create more objective accounts of the world, since they have no interest in obfuscating inequality – women know gender inequality better than men, and their perspective should replace, not simply correct, biased, oppressive knowledge paradigms. Standpoint Theory is explicitly embodied, and shares a relatively indulging and positive attitude towards embodiment with some versions of Egalitarian Feminism. Still, the body is perceived as constant, sexually determined matter which influences

34 The body is perceived quite differently by egalitarian feminists from a wide range of ideological contexts such as the phenomenology of Simone de Beauvoir, the radical feminism of Shulamith Firestone and the liberal feminism of Mary Wollstonecraft. The sexual specificity of the body, in negative accounts of female embodiment, intrudes on the possibilities of women and, in the positive accounts of, for example, ecofeminism, gives women access to unique knowledge. Egalitarian feminism spreads through the fields of feminist empiricism and standpoint theories. 35 Grosz (1994) p. 16. 36 However, it is questionable to place Simone de Beauvoir's phenomenological approach to female bodies among the biologically determined accounts of embodiment that characterize Egalitarian Feminism. Sara Heinämäa argue that such readings of Beauvoir are deeply unsatisfactory. See Heinämäa, Sara (2003). For a discussion of Beauvoir's take on female bodies, see also Björk, Ulrika (2010) “Paradoxes of femininity in the philosophy of Simone de Beauvoir”. Continental Philosophy Review. 43: 1. Springer Science+Business Media. 37 Grosz (1994) p. 16. 38 Hawkesworth p. 536.
knowledge production, but remains stable throughout this production\textsuperscript{39}.

Social Constructionism divides materiality and ideology, according to the Marxist notion of base/superstructure. The body is material and the mind is ideological, and the inequality between men and women is manifest within each of these realms\textsuperscript{40}. It is in the realm of ideology that unequal gender structures can be changed. In agreement with Egalitarian Feminism, Social Constructionists see the body as biologically determined, although, it is not the body itself that causes inequality, but the constraints ascribed to it. Like Feminist Empiricists, Social Constructionists argue that our perception of the body must be neutralized: male and female bodies must be equally valued\textsuperscript{41}.

Social Constructionism, Egalitarian Feminism, Feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory all harbor the body/mind-dichotomy. They recognize the body's influence on knowledge to some extent, in positive or negative terms. However, the connection between power, knowledge and bodies, present especially within Standpoint Theory, leaves the material body largely untheorized. The sexual differentiated body is left in the material sphere as a hindrance and/or a resource in knowledge production, but is itself stable and unaffected throughout this process.

In agreement with Hawkesworth, I see the settling of gender limits as a decisive disadvantage in Feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory. She shows that they presume commonalities of women that are reductionist and lack clear connections to epistemology: "[T]he claim that women will produce an accurate depiction of reality, either because they are women or because they are oppressed, appears to be highly implausible"\textsuperscript{42}. All human experience, she states, is intertwined with cultural and lingual meaning and will not be cleansed through the female body\textsuperscript{43}.

Postmodern feminism, and its view on bodies as both constitutive of and constituted through knowledge production, designates a crucial shift in feminist epistemology. It puts forth a new perspective on the gendered nature of knowledge that has been of utter importance for rethinking the body/mind-dichotomy.

\textsuperscript{39} Hawkesworth p. 540 ff.
\textsuperscript{40} Materially, the two perceived sexes have different and unequally valued roles; men are productive in the public sphere while women are defined by their reproductive labour in the private sphere. Ideologically, men are privileged as active and rational, while women are devalued as passive and emotional.
\textsuperscript{41} Grosz (1994) p. 16 f.
\textsuperscript{42} Hawkesworth p. 540.
\textsuperscript{43} Hawkesworth p. 540.
Postmodern Feminism, the paradigm within which I situate my thesis, rejects the notion that certain bodies produce a truer, more objective account of the world. It stresses that all knowledge is situated in bodies in a world, and that this creates a finitude of perspective that hinders absolute, universal truth. This brings with it a sensitivity to the plurality and difference of perception, and a critical attitude towards once and for all drawing the contours of the world. To the most radical postmodernists, truth claims are no more than a map over the norms that each society makes use of in defining truth; it is a tale of form that has nothing to do with the state of the world. To others, such as Haraway, who argues that feminists must be able to claim truth, the awareness of the limitations of our bodies and the power-charged relations through which we perceive our surrounding world becomes the foundation of a renegotiated objectivity.

Grosz argues that postmodern theory demarcates a crucial shift in the understanding of corporeality, introduced by for example Luce Irigaray, Gayatri Spivak and Judith Butler, within the field of Sexual Difference. They examine the body as both subject and object, simultaneously forming and formed by gender structures that differ with historical and cultural context. The body is theorized as the intersection of nature and culture. The inextricable mutuality of power and matter, biological sex and social gender, knowledge and bodies, upsets the distinction between body and mind. Sex is no longer seen as a natural, material fact of the body, while gender designates an ideological, cultural aspect of the mind.

Judith Butler argues that there are neither prediscursive bodies, nor discourses that are purely lingual or cultural. Sex is neither a static fact of bodies, nor an ideology imposed on sexually neutral bodies. It is a process, in which bodies are forced to materialize through the reiteration of norms that make a binary sex structure, and heterosexuality, seem natural. Bodies are fully material, but their materiality is not brute or precultural. Materiality is an effect of power, Butler contends. Within heteronormative contexts, our bodies become viable and intelligible only through the exclusion of abject beings, whose queer bodies and lives function as the constitutive outside to the

44 Hawkesworth p. 536.
45 Haraway, (1988). p. 577. I will return to the call for feminist accounts of embodied, power-charged objectivity, as articulated by Haraway and Simone de Beauvoir.
domain of subjectivity. In heteronormative contexts, bodies materialize as male or female through violent exclusion of abject beings, and abject dimensions within our bodies, from the domain of subjectivity. The binary sex-structure gain status as normal, natural and valuable through the abjection of elements that challenge its status as normal

The materialization of gendered bodies can not be understood by opposing constructedness and materiality. Butler parts from a traditional constructionist view that pose some aspects of sex as natural, while the inequalities between men and women are seen as caused by ascription of values to their bodies. As both Haraway and Butler argue, the world is not a passive, unintelligible surface that has no meaning or history before it is socially marked by an immaterial “godlike agency”. The materiality of bodies is inextricable from our social, power structured relations. We do not exist as subjects prior to being marked by gender; we are both subjected to and subjectivated by gender, since, within the heterosexual matrix, we are only intelligible as men or women

It is crucial to bear in mind that Butler is theorizing the sexual differentiation of bodies. She examines gender as one of many aspects that structure the conditions of their emergence. The question is not, Butler clarifies, how varying accounts of gender affect the sexual differentiation of our bodies, but under which circumstances sex materializes. This, I believe, opens butlerian theory to intersectional examinations. The circumstances, the regulatory norms through which sex materializes, need not be analyzed through any specific or isolated understanding of gender. Gender has no autonomy or essence apart from its social materialization, as it takes place in particular contexts. In other words, bodies need not materialize in any particular way. In heteronormative societies, they materialize through sexual differentiation, and in racialized societies, they materialize through racial differentiation. Intersections of power structured relations between subjects constitute particular norms of materialization – norms that can not be known prior to, or apart from, the embodied subject.

In the Postmodern recognition of partiality and particularities lie the possibilities and necessities of creating epistemologies that do not reinstate the power structures that feminism sets out to dissolve.

It is not desirable to fix any particular account of gender that bodies are measured up against in analysis. Both Grosz and Vallega-Neu stress that questions about the ontology of bodies and knowledge are played down in favor of an interest in the performative aspects of embodied thought, once the mind is situated within and between bodies in a material world. The primary interest of feminist epistemology is no longer to decide whether it is the body or the mind that stands in the way of gender equality. The shift to questions of *how* thought and bodies interact is a shift from essentialist notions of embodiment, towards subjectively lived experiences of embodiment, as formed by intersecting power structures.

With this background, I situate my thesis in a postmodern tradition of epistemological interventions that name and analyze power structures, well aware of that this naming and analyzing is part of the processes in which bodies materialize. As Grosz argues, resistance against misogynist and dichotomous accounts of bodies must depart from the processes through which male and female bodies are differentiated. Viewing these processes in relation to specific bodies and situations promotes intersectional approaches, since bodies and experiences do not abide by our conceptual dichotomies. It entails possibilities of thinking about subjectivity in ways that supersede a world view in which we are either male or female, black or white, straight or queer, in the same time that we recognize our embodied subjectivity as structured by hierarchies grounded in these dichotomies. I end this background of embodiment in feminist thought with quoting Grosz. She puts forth the epistemological possibilities of the recognition that there is no body as such, there are only bodies:

> If women are to develop autonomous modes of self-understanding and positions from which to challenge male knowledges and paradigms, the specific nature and integration (or perhaps lack of it) of the female body and female subjectivity and its similarities to and differences from men's bodies and identities need to be articulated. The specificity of bodies must be understood in its historical rather than simply its biological concreteness. Indeed, there is no body as such: there are only bodies – male or female, black, brown, white, large or small – and the gradations in between. Bodies can be represented or understood not as entities in themselves or simply on a linear continuum with its polar extremes occupied by male and female bodies (with the various gradations of "intersexed" individuals in between) but as a field, a two-dimensional continuum in which race (and possibly even class, caste, or religion) form body specifications.

---

2. Emotive Academic Writing

Feminist scholars have developed a rich tradition in writing, crossing the boundaries between academic text, poetry and prose. They often trespass into domains of embodiment that are restricted and subordinated, though ever present, in knowledge production – emotions. Here, I examine the role of emotions in academic writing. I examine how text and bodies are disciplined through the subordination of emotion in academic text and theory, and how an integration of a power sensitive and anti-essentialist account of emotion in academic writing renegotiates the boundaries between the bodies of authors and readers.

Passionate texts promote, perhaps even demand, emotive reading. I find it impossible to resist the texts I draw on in this analysis – they force me to react emotively; reactions which guide my analysis. However, I do not see my emotional reactions as caused by an emotional essence that seeps through from the authors into me, as if emotions have lives of their own, and remain the same, even if they are felt by a different subject in a different context. Instead, I analyze emotions as materializing through intersubjective relations – in this case, between my reading body and the embodied texts I analyze. Emotions are aspects of bodies, and as such, never pure or unmediated. They are power charged through our description, naming and categorizing. The ways we experience, express and perceive emotion, and the ways we desperately try to ignore and hide them, are bound up with our positions in social hierarchies.

In agreement with Sara Ahmed, I approach emotions as performative. Our emotive responses entail ascription of meanings and values to the ones we encounter, she contends; emotions may be read as power laden claims about our surroundings. They do not solely touch on our surfaces or circle in the air between us, but are part of the reiteration of norms that constitute our bodies. In other words, we are constituted through our emotional relations with others. Ahmed argues that if we want to understand the role of emotions in embodied knowledge, which is my aim here, it is more interesting to examine how emotions shape our mutually constitutive relations – what they do – than to determine what emotions are.\[56\]

A performative approach to emotions means, to Ahmed, that emotions are neither reduced to bodily sensations, nor to cultural ascriptions. Our emotive reactions to others are not determined by any essence of theirs, nor of ours, but are part of a process in which we think, evaluate and feel. Our negative or positive feelings towards other subjects or external objects depend on whether we

perceive them as harmful or beneficial to us\textsuperscript{57}. This points to the complexity of emotions – they are neither fully contained within the subject nor within an object, but change through intersubjective encounters, which in turn change our bodies\textsuperscript{58}. This approach to emotions is central in my analysis of emotions as renegotiations of the boundaries between the bodies of readers and writers.

Equally central is Sara Heinämaa's discussion of the phenomenological concepts “expression” and “meaning”, which I find useful for contesting the supposed immateriality of emotion, and for understanding its significance in written text. I will not elaborate the concepts expression and meaning, or rely on other phenomenological terms in the following analysis\textsuperscript{59}. Some of the writers I draw on for understanding emotive writing are explicitly inspired by phenomenology, like Ahmed and Heinämaa. Others, like Lugones, approach emotive writing as a renegotiation of the boundaries between self and other, which clearly resonates with phenomenology. As I state in the introduction, the two themes are interrelated and overlapping, since they both examine the mutual constitution of bodies and knowledge. More specifically, they both approach emotive, embodied knowledge as performative. There are obvious traces of a feminist phenomenological perspective in the following analysis of Lugones articles; traces which I have neither tried to cover up, nor elaborate in this analytical theme. Instead, I return to the performative take on emotions and bodies as one of the interconnections of the two themes in my concluding discussion.

I return to Heinämaa with a quote that captures her approach to embodied emotions as performative: “The meaning of the body does not reside behind or above its visible, audible, or tactile elements; it appears in the relation between them”\textsuperscript{60}. She argues that expressing emotions, for instance smiling, is not merely a sign of joy – the smile is joy. There is no inner, hidden entity of joy, autonomous from our bodily expressions. Emotion is not an immaterial meaning translated or revealed through our facial expressions or bodily gestures, but forms through them. We recognize joy in the faces and gestures of other humans and animals, as well as in melodies, paintings and happenings. The joy we perceive in all of these realities does not reside within them, but take on

\textsuperscript{57} Specifically, Ahmed turns against the idea of a split between bodily sensations and cultural emotions, according to which love is the cultural interpretation of pleasure, while hate is the cultivation of pain. Such distinctions can only be analytical, she argues, since forming an impression of the object which supposedly evokes pleasure or pain involves a social process of perception, cognition and emotion. Experiences of love or hate contain aspects of what is usually divided into either thought, sensation or emotion. See Ahmed (2004) p. 6.

\textsuperscript{58} Ahmed (2004) p. 5 f.

\textsuperscript{59} There is a striking similarity in Merleau-Ponty's concept “expression” and Judith Butler's definition of “performativity”. Silvia Stoller compares these concepts, arguing that they are overlapping and highly compatible; a fact that shows the compatibility of poststructuralist feminism and phenomenology. See Stoller, Silvia (2010) "Expressivity and performativity: Merleau-Ponty and Butler". Continental Philosophy Review 43 (1).

\textsuperscript{60} Heinämaa p. 38.
meaning through our perception of them in a particular situation:

We recognize a gesture as joyful or sad in the same way we identify a concerto we have not heard before as one by Mozart or by Bach. We see a face as joyful, not merely because it repeats the movements of earlier joyful faces, but because it continues and modifies their “melodies” and “rhythms”. Different expressions of joy – smiling faces, laughing voices, and bright and colorful textures – are variations of each other; and joy itself is nothing but the open unity of these variations.

Seeing emotion as power-charged and material dimensions of embodiment points to its significance for understanding for example sexual and racial differentiation of bodies. We recognize emotion in faces, sounds, pictures, sensations – and in written text, which is my concern here. I emphasize the epistemological value of considering emotion as I describe its subordination in academia. Then, I turn to two articles by María Lugones to examine academic writing as an embodied, power charged, intersubjective relation through which bodies and emotions materialize.

2.1 The Subordination of Emotion in Academia

Passion and passivity both stem from the Latin word for suffering, “passio”. Passion is associated with the subject's vulnerability to the influence of others, and the mind's vulnerability to the influence of the body. Ahmed argues that the openness and passivity implied in passionate emotions, the fact that they force us to react to, take in, and be shaped by others, constructs them as threats to autonomous, rational thought. As supposedly more corporeal, vulnerable, passive and primitive than white men, female and non-white subjects are seen as less able to resist emotional impact. They are represented as slaves to their passions, and thus improper subjects of knowledge. The subordinating of emotion in academic text, then, is part of the gendered and raced disembodiment of knowledge.

While passionate, passive, unruly emotions are constructed as signs of weakness, appropriately expressed, controlled and cultivated emotions may be seen as resources, Ahmed points out. Ideals of masculinity and whiteness inform the hierarchy between embodied passion and intellectual reason, but also between different kinds of emotionality – primitive and cultivated.

Annelie Bränström Öhman describes the exclusion and cultivation of emotion in academic contexts

---

61 Heinämaa p. 40.
as a disciplining of bodies – a construction of proper subjects of knowledge. Bodies may talk, but not shout, they may argue, but not show anger or cry. As I claimed earlier, misogyny, racism and somatophobia is not only prevalent in formal and informal exclusions of bodies from academia, but in the exclusion of certain aspects of bodies – for example, uncultivated emotion. Bränström Öhman finds that letting emotions show in seminars, classrooms and written text may dissolve the dichotomy between subjective, private emotions on the one side, and the public, political and theoretical sphere of academia on the other – it may show that the theoretical differences within Gender Studies are emotional, personal and embodied. 

I let the postmodern turn to intersectionality illustrate Bränström Öhman's argument, and stress the significance of dissolving the dichotomy between emotion and reason. Intersectionality is not merely an improvement of feminist theory, reached through disembodied thought. It is the result of the recognition of the violent exclusion of, for example, queer, poor and non-white bodies – a physical, emotive exclusion which is not simply an intellectual shortcoming to be theoretically corrected. The development of intersectionality does not belong to the public, political and intellectual sphere, while embodied and emotive experiences of exclusion belongs to a private, subjective sphere. As Bränström Öhman argues, emotions structure scientific inquiry. The cracks that appear when they seep through are valuable for understanding power structures in academia.

Words and body, thought and emotion, are all irresolvable, Bränström Öhman contends. We write from our bodies and the spaces we occupy. In Western academia, this means that our writing is structured by middle class, white, masculine ideals. She finds that writing from a body that deviates from these ideals enforce self consciousness; this has become clear to me through writing this thesis. Feeling, thinking, writing and reading has been intertwined in different ways through my writing, as my body has varied in relation to these ideals.

---

64 The interest for the connection between disciplinary institutions and bodies is strongly influenced by Foucault. See Bränström Öhman, Annelie (2008) “Show me some emotion! Om emotionella läckage i akademiska texter och run”. Tidskrift för genusvetenskap 2.08.

65 Bränström Öhman makes a related point about the imperative of writing scholarly text in English. She analyzes this imperative as a part of a geo-political hegemony, but still welcomes some aspects of it. She finds it productive and interesting to see how the English language is turned into a pidgin-version of academic prose, which questions the notion of language as pure, and as belonging to an elite of Anglophone scholars. The subversive possibilities of writing in English lies in the cracks that appear in texts by non-anglophone writers – not in unreflected and uncritical imitation. I, myself not a native speaker, am simultaneously annoyed, self-conscious, and inspired by my struggle with reading and writing English text. While some of my lingual errors, such as spelling mistakes, are easily detected and corrected, other cracks remain in the text – not quite errors, but strained, uneasy reminders of my otherness and the world outside anglophone academia. See Bränström Öhman p. 8.

66 The interest for the connection between disciplinary institutions and bodies is strongly influenced by Foucault. See Brännström Öhman p. 14.
I was diagnosed with anemia some time after I had started writing. Before I was diagnosed, I forced myself to work in my usual pace\textsuperscript{67}. When I felt tired or unable to focus, I took short breaks, had some extra coffee and tried to force myself to carry on, as if my body could be manipulated into obedience and thus not affect my work. Since the anemia caused me nausea, short time memory loss and fatigue, trying to write was a source of confusion and anxiety, which left me utterly exhausted. During the first months of work, my body was an enemy – an anomaly. The feeling of failure was so intense that I have to bite my lower lip in order not to start crying, as I relive this experience through remembering and reflecting on it.

I read texts without consciously remembering what I had read the previous day, or the previous hour. I just read and wrote long referrals. Reading those referrals again, feeling better, I realized they where in fact quite useful. I had not, as I feared, written blindly. After all, the referrals where selective, and, if only loosely, connected to my topic. This made me realize that the definition of knowledge as exclusively active, conscious and rational relies on a very narrow image of embodiment. The literature I read told me so, but I did not understand it until I felt it. I grew more and more frustrated and angry with my body, and, simultaneously, with the ideals of how bodies should behave, and how it paralyzed me emotionally when my body deviated from the ideal.

Though I was at first resistant to let it, my method changed with my physical situation. As I slowly recovered, I was able to return bit by bit to thinking about several texts at once, and relate them to each other. I could spend a couple of hours in front of my computer without having to rest the entire next day. This was a great relief. The feeling of relief is significant – my body returned to functioning in a way that I find familiar, which is, I realize, quite close to the way of functioning that is normative in academia. With these reflections, I do not wish to reinstate bodies as obstacles in knowledge production. My body and my emotions are present throughout my writing, but the experience of devious embodiment forced me to pay attention to it as an aspect of my methodology. When my body kept me from writing, it became clear that my writing is embodied.

In the same way that the power structures within academia are highlighted when emotions burst through, when bodies misbehave, or when the normative form or language of academic text is challenged, the disciplining of my body became clear to me during the anemia. Being anemic

\textsuperscript{67} Lynda Birke discusses the persuasive power of medical language and it's impact on our experiences of our bodies. She argues that a patient seeking medical care is often deprived of the ability to know her own body, in favor of the authoritative knowledge of doctors. In relation to Birke's argument, I might say that I was not persuaded that I was sick until I had it spelled out to me in medical terms – until I was diagnosed. I felt that the diagnosis allowed me to feel sick. Birke, Lynda (2000) Feminism and the Biological Body. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press. p. 61.
certainly changed my writing these first, frustrating months, but the experience still shapes my understanding of the theories I draw on. I find many of them especially appealing in light of the experience, for example Young's criticism of the assumption that healthy bodies are stable and unchanging\textsuperscript{68}. Her argument is that female bodies undergo dramatic and regular change without it being a sign of illness, which, of course, is not the case of anemia. Nevertheless, being attuned to how my physical strength differed from day to day, more extremely than I had previously known it to, promoted a sensitivity to the smaller, less dramatic variations of my body, such as menstruation, feeling tired from a bad night's sleep, or being able to concentrate for longer hours than usual thanks to having taken a long walk in the sunshine, so rare during the Swedish winter.

This sensitivity is not simply a result of being observant of my body – my embodied experiences intersect with my reading Young. I direct my attention to certain features of my embodiment, which, had they not been named and categorized as objects of observation, would not have stood out as experiences to be noted. My incorporation of Young's text shapes the way I experience my body, and my reflection on it. And, accordingly, it shapes my approach to other bodies of theory. Sara Edenheim and Cecilia Persson make a related argument about the importance of reflecting on how the theories taught from the black board affect the bodies in the classroom, and the body of knowledge recognized as Gender Studies. Our embodiment affects our inclusions and exclusions of theory, as we consolidate Gender Studies as a discipline. They argue that we must take the consequences of insights gained from postcolonial and queer theories and ask which bodies are present in the classroom, which bodily experiences are canonized and thus represented on reading lists, and, which bodies are absent in the classroom and in theory\textsuperscript{69}.

Edenheim and Persson find that the typical approach in Gender Studies courses is to introduce students to the traditional theorists of Western feminism, filling the canvas of feminist history with their ethno- and heterocentrism, and only later on in the course present the critique offered by postcolonial and queer theorists such as bell hooks\textsuperscript{70}, Judith Butler and Gayatri Spivak, posing them as angry, exotic voices in the periphery of “real” academia\textsuperscript{71}. This is an implicit embodiment of Gender Studies, which reinstates the experiences of Western, white, middle-class women as central and normal, while non-white an queer bodies serve as additions and corrections, never quite

\textsuperscript{68} I discuss Young's argument in “A Background to Feminist Epistemology”. See p. 9.
\textsuperscript{69} Edenheim and Persson p. 11.
\textsuperscript{71} Edenheim and Persson p. 11
incorporated. As Trinh T. Minh-ha and Barbara Christian, both postcolonial thinkers, show, their embodied experiences clash with the male, white ideals of academia. Minh-ha argues that women of color must situate themselves in a position above and before their scholarly work, instead of being simultaneous with it. To Minh-ha, taking up a pen means weaving her gendered and raced body into a misogynist and racist language.

Christian argues that the lingual and formal ideal of Western academia validates theory only in a specific type of written text, caught up in an accelerating fixing and overthrowing of ideas. In this “race for theory”, knowledge produced by black, third world women is excluded, since their theorizing is structured by experiences of violence directed at their bodies, institutions, countries and humanity, – experiences which do not abide by the form of abstract, Western logic.

Christian finds that many postmodern theorists comfortably lean back on the very language they claim to deconstruct. Instead of redirecting focus to the effects of the power structures that elevate Western philosophy above all other knowledge paradigms, their attention remain focused on the “masterpieces of the past”. This favors a focus on Western philosophy, since the value of academic critique is defined by the same standards that prevail in the criticized texts. Christian describes her feelings towards postmodern jargon:

"Discourse, canon, texts, words as latinate as the tradition from which they come, are quite familiar to me. Because I went to a Catholic Mission school in the West Indies I must confess that I cannot hear the word “canon” without smelling incense, that the word “text” immediately brings back agonizing memories of Biblical exegesis, the “discourse” reeks for me of metaphysics forced down my throat in those courses that traced world philosophy from Aristotle through Thomas Aquinas to Heidegger."
To Christian, the overly abstract ideals of Western academia deprive the world, and the people in it, of the complexity of bodies and feelings. Pleasure, variety, multiplicity and eroticism are erased from scholarly language, since they reveal the embodiment of texts and writers. This erasure certainly has different consequences for different bodies. As Minh-ha and Christian show, it disqualifies entire bodies of theory by black, third-world women from academia, if they do not discipline their writing into the form that necessarily excludes crucial dimensions of their embodiment. The awareness of the harm of doing so has lead to people of color and feminists developing critical, creative writing traditions. Christian emphasizes that such traditions need to keep an open approach to the reading and writing of theory – they are not served by a fixated theory on how to read or write; instead, they need to nurture a sensitivity to the various ways in which intersections of language, class, race and gender structure knowledge.

I approach texts as sites of mutuality and connection between my body and the bodies of the authors I read, while stressing that bodies are not merely text and that texts and bodies never quite coincide. This recognition opens up for a dynamic perspective on bodies and knowledge – there is no way to grasp a body in its entirety and put it down in writing. Once we have started to describe bodies, both the text and the bodies we describe, as well as the body from which we write, supersedes themselves and each other. The difficulty of writing about bodies strikes Butler, as she tries to understand embodiment through thinking and writing about bodies:

I began writing this book by trying to consider the materiality of the body only to find that the thought of materiality invariably moved me into other domains. I tried to discipline myself to stay on the subject, but found that I could not fix bodies as simple objects of thought. Not only did bodies tend to indicate a world beyond themselves, but this movement beyond their own boundaries, a movement of boundary itself, appeared to be quite central to what bodies “are”. I kept losing track of the subject. I proved resistant to discipline. Inevitably, I began to consider that perhaps this resistance to fixing the subject was essential to the matter at hand.

Butler is concerned with bodies, but I find the difficulty she describes significant for writing and thinking about emotions; what happens when we pause, reflect on and describe our emotions? Are we losing them in this process, or are we gaining new and different access to them? What happens when I utilize the example of the anxiety, frustration and anger I felt, trying to force my anemic body to function normatively, in a methodological discussion? The text is no doubt a cultivation of

77 Christian p. 336 f.
my emotions. It is a movement away from an anomalous body, reeking with emotion, to a productive body that has a place in academic text only after it has been purified by reflection, and spread out in black across a white sheet of paper – neat. However, the cultivation is also a new epistemological relation to my body, and to the texts I draw on – encounters which changes both my writing and my body. Next, I turn to examining emotive, embodied academic texts as a movement of boundary itself; as a renegotiation of the boundaries between the bodies of readers and writers.

2. 2 Reading, Feeling, Writing, Knowing

In “Hablando cara a cara/ Speaking Face to Face: An Exploration of Ethnocentric Racism”, María Lugones' mixture of Spanish and English shows how lingual and racial differences structure knowledge production. The initiating sentences, “Esta es escritura hablada cara a cara. This is writing spoken face to face”79 raises questions: What does it mean to write that one is speaking face to face, on the pages in a book, where the writer and the reader cannot see each other's faces or hear each other's voices? Are these contradictions a way of showing that text is not a face or a body? Is it hoping that writing can be a way of showing one's face, and a way of seeing the faces of others?

I am immediately annoyed by the mixture of Spanish and English; I understand very little Spanish and my mother tongue is not English. The juggling of two unfamiliar languages makes me impatient; at first, I try to ignore the text in Spanish. Then, I find myself drawn to partly reading it, partly just looking at it, wondering what it means that I stare at letters, words and text. Is this me showing my face in reading? “If you do not read Spanish, see footnote below”80, Lugones writes, luring me into “Porque si compartes mis lenguas, entonces comprendes todos los niveles de mi intención. And if you do not understand my many tongues, you begin to understand why I speak them”81. As Lugones points out, this is a playful way of saying that my understanding of the text is central to me, but my reading does not exhaust the text, nor the body of the author. My understanding of the text is particular; it is structured by my language, among many things. And I have a choice – to appreciate the playfulness or to miss out on it. Or both, Lugones suggests, which is indeed an effect of my reading, since I do not read much Spanish82.

I see Lugones' lingual play as an invitation and a resistance to her embodiment, as it takes shape

80 Lugones, María (1990) p. 46 (footnote).
81 Lugones, María (1990) p. 46 (footnote).
82 Lugones, María (1990) p. 46 (footnote).
through the intersection between her writing body, her text, and my reading body. The play is funny because it is unpredictable – our bodies escape the playful text, as they are constituted and changed through it, and the playfulness escapes the text, as it is constituted between our changing bodies. The text invites us to share and be touched by Lugones' intimate, emotive experiences. Clearly, we do not have direct access to them – we can not ourselves share Lugones' embodied point of departure, since we depend on our own bodies to know it. Moreover, the emotions and experiences Lugones writes about are changed through her writing; she does not simply open up her body and pour her feelings out on the paper. Her body, as it is constituted through the practice of writing, and through our reading of her text, does not reveal all of her dimensions. She resists any exhaustive or fixing perception as she playfully pulls away from the reader's body – an effect necessitated by the cultivation of her body into the form of academic text, and purposefully evoked by her mixture of languages.

Lugones' withdrawal is constituted by the specific relation between writer and reader. I miss out on some of the playfulness, some of Lugones' Latina embodiment, since I do not understand Spanish. Her resistance is specific and involves both of our bodies – it is me, as a particular reader, that she resists through her mixture of English and Spanish. Her lingual play makes our bodies stand out as racially differentiated, and as shaped by our respective, and mutual, relation to the text. It emphasizes our differentiated bodies as the foundations of knowledge production, and their differentiation as taking place through the normative form of academic writing. Lugones lingual play is thus a way of recognizing our bodily differentiation as central in knowledge production, while seeing it as shaped by the norms that govern the production.

My emphasis on the particular relation between my white body and Lugones' Latina body should not be read as an examination of isolated, subjective bodies. As Lugones points out, our bodies are constituted in an predominantly Anglo-American context, which usually allows White/Anglo women, such as myself, to be simply human. “I can bring you to your senses con el tono de mi voz, with the sound of my – to you – alien voice”83, she states. Her mixture of languages is a renegotiation of the relations between our bodies – they are both recognized as raced, existing in Western Academia on unequal terms. I am not allowed to be simply human, nor to see Lugones' raced body as isolated from my raced embodiment. To Lugones, obeying by the the imperative of being straightforward in academic text is an erasure of her Latina dimensions. Conforming her text to the normative form of academia would mean disciplining her body, muting her ethnicity and

83 Lugones, María (1990) p. 50.
race, and letting white, Anglo readers in Western academia remain simply human.

2. 2. 1 Intermingling Bodies

I have argued that Lugones writes her Latina body into a predominantly White/Anglo academia, but refuses to participate on the terms offered. Referring to Lugones' text, I run the risk of forcing it into the form she refuses. Reading her textual style as a renegotiation of the boundaries and relations between our bodies directs me to the questions of what happens with our texts and our bodies as I make them intermingle. Where is the demarcation line between text and body; are writers and readers face to face? Lugones' text reminds me of a wound that opens again and again, as I turn the pages of the book in my hands, as I weave Lugones' body into my body, into my text, and open it.

Weaving our bodies into each other and into text causes wounds, since our bodies are differentiated, and since dimensions of them are abjected through their materialization in academic writing. Arguing that we are face to face, simply equating bodies and texts, creates both as static entities that allow no bleeding, no overflow, no mutually changing interaction. Imagining bodies and texts as same, or in a determined, causal relation, implies that a given body necessarily produces a certain kind of knowledge and remains uninfluenced by that knowledge. Arguing that there is a clear demarcation line between our bodies, and between bodies and written text, is, on the other hand, a refusal to see their mutual and power charged materialization. Instead, I argue that it is in exploring the bleeding wounds that separate and connect bodies and texts that the possibilities of creating non-exploitative epistemologies lie. I find such possibilities in Lugones' account of how her bilingual body is hurt by the norms of scholarly text. She embodies her text with playfulness, pain, and hope that allow our bodies and texts to resound – and crack – together.

It is not desirable to stop the bleeding between our bodies, and between our bodies and our respective texts. The wounds need not be stitched together, but acknowledged as wounds caused by an ongoing differentiation of bodies. Stopping the bleeding would mean muting the power charged processes through which our bodies materialize; it would mean muting the resonance in the particular relations that differentiate our bodies in academia. It would allow those of us who are white to remain unstained, comfortable in our own skins, in our own texts – safely and simply human.

Rather than closing up our wounds, I argue that we need to keep the blood from coagulating.

84 Lugones, María (1990) p. 50.
Lugones keeps the wounds moist by refusing to abide by the normative forms of academic text. She involves both of our bodies in her evocation of emotion, making them intermingle: I feel frustrated by missing out on some of her text. The frustration is not contained within Lugones, within her text or within me. It materializes through our particular relation, and is therefore valuable for understanding the power structures in epistemology. If we are face to face, our faces appear on unequal terms. We are left with an open wound – the sharp contrast between black letters and white paper is deceitful and significant. It hides and cuts our bodies.

Through my reading of “Hablando cara a cara”, I argue that the exclusion of embodiment and emotion from academic text connects and separates the bodies of writers and readers. I see Lugones' play with languages as a refusal to smooth over the violent and unequal materialization of bodies. I see the playfulness of her text as a material dimension of the embodied relation between us. As such, it is a particular and power charged aspect of knowledge production. Rather than seeing written text as the bodily expression of the emotions of an autonomous subject, I see it as an intersubjective forming of embodiment.

2. 2. 2 Knowing Lovingly

In “Playfulness, 'World'-Travelling and Loving Perception”, Lugones turns to experiences of love and arrogance to understand processes of bodily differentiation between women. Here, she suggests playfulness as a loving solution to differences of race and class between feminists – a way of acknowledging and dissolving the unequal terms under which women perceive each other.

As a racial “outsider” in White/Anglo life in the United States, Lugones finds herself traveling between hostile, white “worlds” and the familiar “worlds” of her own. The skill of traveling between locations and cultures and being different in different “worlds” is forced upon people of color in White/Anglo societies. This creates a complex self-perception, since self-experiences are not divided and contained within any single “world”; they are not a piece of clothing you wear in a cold “world” and lay off as you enter a warmer “world”. Being a “world”-traveler means simultaneously inhabiting and being different in a number of “worlds”, without reinstating any single version of yourself as essentially “me”. Lugones finds that she is playful in some “worlds”,

85 Lugones avoids a fixed definition of “world”, since she wishes to keep the concept suggestive. A “world” is inhabited by people of flesh and blood, but is also constituted by their imaginations, wishes and traces of encounters between people from other “worlds”. Her description emphasizes that the continuous interaction of people traveling between “worlds” makes clear demarcations impossible. Lugones, María (1987) "Playfulness, 'World'-Travelling, and Loving Perception" in (ed.) Anzaldúa, Gloria (1990) Making Face, Making Soul: Haciendo Caras. Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Color. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books. p. 395 f.
but not in others; as a “world”-traveler, she shifts between being one person and being another person. She incorporates experiences of herself as playful and as not playful.  

The “world”-traveling Lugones describes consists of enforced travels back and forth between places where you may feel at ease in your skin, and places where you encounter racism. “World”-traveling may also be willfully exercised, both by those who are at ease in the mainstream, and by those who have experiences of inhabiting hostile “worlds”. If the “world”-traveling is playful and rests on a loving identification with those whose “worlds” you visit, it may be a way of resolving the failure to love that Lugones sees as inherent in hierarchical relations between women.

The failure to love, she contends, is often caused by arrogant perception. Perceiving and being perceived arrogantly is constitutive of being a woman of a certain class in both Argentina, where Lugones learns arrogant perception through her upbringing, and the U.S., where she learns to be perceived arrogantly by White/Anglo women. In the U.S., arrogant perception is bound up with becoming a White/Anglo woman in relation to women of color. The relation between Lugones and her mother as well as between Lugones and some of the White/Anglo women she encounters in the U.S., are constituted by a unwillingness to see oneself in the other. This unwillingness is connected to an arrogant view on women as subordinated servants that Lugones, as well as White/Anglo women, has been taught not to love and identify with:

My love for my mother seemed to me thoroughly imperfect as I was growing up because I was unwilling to become what I had been taught to see my mother as being. I thought that to love her was consistent with my abusing her […] to love her was supposed to be of piece with both my abusing her and with my being open to being abused. It is clear to me that I was not supposed to love servants: I could abuse them without identifying with them […] When I came to the U.S. I learned that part of racism is the internalization of the propriety of abuse without identification: I learned that I could be seen as a being to be abused by White/Anglo men and women without […] rubbing off on them at all.

Trying to identify with subordinated women, while remaining to see them as subordinated, implies being forced to accept that one risks being abused. Lugones realizes that loving her mother, while perceiving her firmly associated with subordination and servitude, means loving her mother's subordination, as well as the actual and potential subordination of herself. Clearly, this kind of love

---

87 I return to the various meanings of being at ease in a “world” in my discussions of emotions as a source of knowledge about power structures.
is not a force in the fight against racism, Lugones argues.\textsuperscript{89}

To the contrary, “World”-traveling, as envisioned by Lugones, bears in it a hope of women restructuring hierarchies through learning to perceive each other truly lovingly, by realizing that they are all different in different “worlds”. This by no means implies that inequalities are reduced to difference. Loving perception is not possible without recognizing the power structures through which our bodies are differentiated. If White/Anglo women are to love women of color without reinstating their subordination, they must understand their own gender, race, and class as constituted through exploitation. Gendered and raced bodies materialize through our repeated perception of other women as subordinated or superior. Identifying with women of color therefore requires that White/Anglo women give up the myth of themselves as autonomous, simply human, subjects.\textsuperscript{90} Love must entail a recognition of the power charged processes of bodily differentiation that make up our particular ways of being different in different “worlds”. Speaking with Lugones, love is not an erasure of difference, but a revelation of a power charged plurality.\textsuperscript{91}

“World”-traveling entails the possibility of perceiving others as they are in their “world”, and ourselves as the strangers in that “world”. The potentiality of love lies in reacquainting each other in “worlds” some of us find unfamiliar. Simply changing perspective, or swapping positions, will not turn arrogance into love. Swapping implies that each of the positions remain intact, although inhabited by different bodies. It does not necessarily mean that we recognize our emotive bodies as the foundations of knowledge production in an epistemological paradigm in which our bodies are unequally differentiated. If this recognition does not structure our encounters, there is no renegotiation of our bodies – they are still autonomous entities, even if they are differently located. If we are to experience the kind of love that Lugones holds out for, there must be a mutual restructuring of the relation; this is why I use the term “reacquaint”.

Lovingly identifying with women we once perceived arrogantly, then, does not mean loving, or refusing to see, subordination. Loving means learning to see women as different in different “worlds”. It demands that we see their subordination in some “worlds” not as their essence, but as structured by interdependent relations through which our bodies materialize. Becoming aware of that we uphold and recreate inequality through the processes of performing our gender, race and class, entails a hope that we start to reacquaint those dimensions of ourselves through our changed

\textsuperscript{89} Lugones, María (1987) p. 393.
\textsuperscript{90} Lugones, María (1987) p. 393.
\textsuperscript{91} Lugones, María (1987) p. 390.
perceptual relations. Lugones account of loving perception demands that we reacquaint and restructure our embodied relations to others, through profoundly changing our knowledge about them and ourselves. Next, I argue that this requires an awareness of the mutuality of power-laden perception and embodiment, and especially, an emphasis on the change inherent in perception.

2.2.3 Independence and Interdependence

Lugones emphasizes the interdependence of intersubjective perception: “I am incomplete and unreal without other women. I am profoundly dependent on others without having to be their subordinate, their slave, their servant”92. And, she continues “We are fully dependent on each other for the possibility of being understood without which we are not intelligible, we do not make sense, we are not solid, visible, integrated; we are lacking”93. These quotes capture our dependence on interaction with others for becoming intelligible subjects. In my reading of “Hablando cara a cara”, I argue that our bodies resound and crack together, since they are mutually but unequally materialized through knowledge production. I see emotion as a material, embodied dimension of knowledge production that takes place between subjects. Therefore, emotive writing bears in it the potential for us to change the conditions under which we perceive each other – to change our embodied relations. I find that developing the independence, the non-coincidence and the change – the cracks and the wounds – inherent in intersubjective perception promotes an approach to loving perception not only as interdependence, but as a dynamic process of bodily change.

As we perceive the world, we are dependent on and independent from our bodies. Being sensitive to independence means recognizing that perception rests neither on the static materiality of bodies nor their surroundings. I imagine that the cracks between our bodies and our perception allow a breathing space within which our bodies can change. Change requires a space big enough for taking a breath, letting your chest extend, and exhaling, simultaneously changing your body and your surroundings. Perception and breathing are alike in that they simultaneously change our bodies and our surroundings. This requires independence and non-coincidence within as well as between the two. We are independent from or bodies and our surroundings as constituted in any given situation, since we are constantly restructuring ourselves, constantly superseding our embodiment, breathing in and out. Our bodies, and our relations, contain independence as well as dependence.

We are dependent on others in forming an intelligible subjectivity. This dependence is, however, structured by bleeding wounds within and between our bodies and the bodies of others. The wounds

crack open when we are perceived, described, or treated in hurtful ways, which implies independence between how we feel and how others perceive and treat us. In other words, our becoming subjects are dependent on interaction with others, but the entirety of our subjectivity escapes all determination and is in that sense independent from all knowers; we can neither grasp others nor ourselves fully. The indeterminate relations between bodies, texts and knowers imply that knowledge is never exhaustive – neither of text, our own bodies nor the bodies of others. If we where fully determined by how others perceive us, the way we perceive others would be mere reflections of their gazes upon us. Within this vacuum, knowledge and bodies are static; our gazes upon each other are essentially one gaze, bouncing to and fro the cold, hard, mirror-surfaces of our bodies. It does not wound us; there is no spillage of blood nor any cracks to breath in.

This is, indeed, very far from how Lugones depicts loving perception. It requires more than one's own will, interests, fears and imagination, she stresses. A gaze bouncing to and fro between two subjects will not do. Instead, feminists must travel to each others' “worlds” to learn each others' will, interests, fears and imagination⁹⁴. Mutual understanding and learning does not, however, express the full potential of “world”-traveling. I believe that it has the potentiality of containing more than reflections and exchanges of subjective experiences. As I argue above, swapping positions does not necessarily mean that power structures are renegotiated; it may well leave our bodies and the structures we uphold intact, even if we view them from new perspectives. I find that the potentialities of profoundly changing how we embody power structures in knowledge production can be explored further through embodied readings of Lugones' approach to emotions. Next, I turn to examining the potentiality of emotive change.

2. 2. 4 Emotive Change
Lugones employs emotion as a source of knowledge. The need to change her arrogant perception is emotional. Her point of departure is the feeling that something is wrong: “There is something obviously wrong with the way I was taught to love and something right with my failure to love my mother in this way”⁹⁵. Emotions entail knowledge about that there is something wrong, and motivate Lugones' exploration of another kind of love. Emotions also constitute knowledge about power structures. Being totally at ease in a “world” means feeling familiar and content with the norms of that “world”; it means that living in accordance with the norms make you happy. Ease may also come from loving relations with people in otherwise hostile “worlds”, or from shared

experiences and history, that allows you to participate in it anyway. Lugones being unplayful in some “worlds” while being playful in others is not simply caused by a lack of ease, or her being unwilling or unable to adjust to the norms of hostile “worlds”. Hostile “worlds” mute her experiences of herself as both playful and unplayful, because they are constructed in ways that makes it hard for her to be playful, in the same time as she is constructed as unplayful in that “world”. She argues that the plural self gained from being a “world”-traveler is made impossible in hostile “worlds”. It seems to me that total ease is granted only those who never travel, since the “worlds” in which they dwell are constructed in ways that mute experiences of “world”-traveling. Lugones mixture of languages is a refusal to mute her bilingual voice, which is an effect of her traveling; an incorporation of experiences of being at ease and being playful in some “worlds”, and being muted in hostile “worlds”. The differences between being at ease and being an outsider show emotions as sources of knowledge about power structures.

Lugones elevates emotions as the precondition of the forming of non-exploitative epistemologies. Non-arrogant “world”-traveling must be carried out in a playful, loving attitude, she argues. I find this argument especially fruitful if we imagine that emotions make us incorporate, rather than just reflect on the experiences of traveling. Traveling becomes an embodied, emotive participation in a process of mutual change – we change emotionally by being the fool in an unfamiliar world. Lugones describes foolery and trickery as potentialities of the double sense of self that is promoted by “world”-traveling. The skill of perceiving yourself and your surroundings with a double edge is a path of resistance, learned by traveling, she suggests. It has the potentiality of revealing the absurdity in hostile “worlds”, and it protects you from being consumed by arrogant perception:

As one sees any particular “world” with these double edges and sees absurdity in them, one animates the person one is in that world differently. Given that latins are constructed in Anglo “worlds” as stereotypically intense and given that many latins, myself included, are genuinely intense, I can say to myself “I am intense” and take a hold of the double meaning. Furthermore, I can be stereotypically intense or be the real thing and, if you are Anglo, you do not know when I am which because I am, as a Latin-American, constructed that way in their “world”. I may or may not intentionally animate the stereotype or the real

---

98 Lugones account of foolery and trickery as a central feature of knowledge production bears similarities to Donna Haraway's account of the world as a trickster that resists determination. In Haraway's imagery, the world makes our vain, self-centered attempts to pin it down look foolish. To Lugones, the indeterminate and multiple identities of “world”-travelers question the notion of self-coinciding and homogenous subjectivity. Trying to pin down the bodies or identities of “world”-travelers will no doubt make you look like a fool, just like trying to determine the world will.
thing knowing that you may or may not see it in anything other than in the stereotypical construction. This ambiguity is not just funny, it is survival-rich. We can also make a funny picture of those who dominate us precisely because we can see the double edges, we can see them doubly constructed, we can see the plurality in them. So we can know truths that only the fool can speak and only the trickster can play without harm. We inhabit “worlds” and travel across them and keep all the memories.\(^9\)

I find it hard to be the fool. Feeling insecure and unsafe makes my fear of ridicule strong. I am cautious about the fact that playing the role of the fool does not end at simply placing yourself in the position of the fool. It means feeling like the fool, and being perceived like the fool. As I have argued in agreement with Ahmed and Heinämaa, there is no essence hidden behind our feelings – they are dimensions of our corporeal relations to others. Feeling like the fool means incorporating the fool. Traveling to a “world” in which you do not know the codes of conduct means risking denigration, shame and confusion; emotions that I, for one, do not shake off easily. It is clear to me that they force us to incorporate our experiences and to bear them with us, even as we safely return to a familiar “world”. Willingly exposing yourself to emotions that you do not welcome can be a recognition and an experience of the deleterious effects of arrogant perception.

I see my fear of being the fool as significant for the potentialities of emotive writing through “world”-traveling as a renegotiation of the boundaries of bodies. Taking emotive risks makes “world”-traveling more than an exotic field trip, from which we return with some snap shots, at which we point and say “This is me, in that place!”, while remaining the same, once we return to our comfort zone.\(^10\) Emotions open up our bodies to the world outside, and to the bodies of others. I imagine emotions as materializing between our bodies in a way that changes both our bodies and our worlds. Therefore, emotions have the potentiality of changing the conditions under which our bodies materialize, namely our interdependent, embodied relations.

My anxious description of being a fool is, to be clear, far from Lugones' vision. In her account, “world”-traveling is not to be carried out in fear or agony. She turns painful experiences of arrogant perception into a foolery that is not derisive or malicious, but elusive and affectionate. Lugones' fools are not tricked into a contest with fixed rules, in which one of the players will conquer and one will be defeated. They play together by the river bank, throwing stones just for the fun of seeing


\(^{10}\) My approach should be read in line with Edenheim and Perssons criticism of the exoticism ascribed to postcolonial and queer theorists in Gender Studies -courses. In the beginning of this chapter, I argue that they show that the voices of queer and non-white feminists are added as exotic spice to the experiences of white, heterosexual, female bodies, which remain the solid, static ground for the body of knowledge that constitute feminist theory.
them break and reveal their beautiful, colorful insides. Both fools understand the purpose of the game, and the lack of rules does not create a deleterious uncertainty, but an openness to surprise\textsuperscript{101}.

The two fools joyfully and lovingly playing with beautiful stones is a vivid and forceful picture of a feminist epistemology that does not fix the boundaries within or between our bodies, but opens them up for the surprise of emotive experiences. The colors the fools discover through breaking the stones are not contained within the stones – they come alive and shimmer as they meet the sunlight and the water. The fools reacquaint each other and their surroundings through the creative play. As I argue through my reading of Barbara Christian and Anneli Bränström Öhman, fixed scientific methods – fixed rules – does not account for how knowledge and bodies change with each other. In agreement with them, and through a butlerian understanding of the materialization of bodies, I find that feminists need epistemologies that are sensitive to that perceiving, reading, writing and knowing is a process of bodily differentiation; a process that can be renegotiated through our incorporation of new experiences – through feeling like a fool, or through the pleasure and surprise of affectionate play.

The significant difference between the kind of foolery I fear and the joyful play Lugones imagines is that the play does not demand that the participants are trapped in any particular “world”, in which they may be forced to abandon themselves, or abject aspects of their bodies, to be allowed to participate. While playing, the fools create themselves and their “world” anew\textsuperscript{102}. Before they break the stones, they do not know which nuances will come alive before their eyes, and they do not know how perceiving the colors will make them feel. Their bodies are open. A playful attitude, then, means being open to reconstructing yourself in ways that are unfamiliar and surprising, because your relations, emotions and “worlds” are not fixated by any familiar hierarchy.

Returning to “Hablando cara a cara”, and my own method of writing, may further emphasize the role of emotive bodies in knowledge production. The emotions that Lugones bilingual voice evokes in me are neither fixated in Lugones' body, in her text, nor in my body or text. Like the friendly foolery described above, the lingual game has neither rules nor a given goal. Interacting with the text changes my body, my reading and my writing in ways that I can neither predict nor fully grasp. My emotive, embodied reading directs me to questions that have no exhaustive answers: Are Lugones and I, the author and the reader, standing on opposite sides of the text, both interacting

\textsuperscript{101} Lugones (1987) p. 399 ff.
\textsuperscript{102} Lugones (1987) p. 399 ff.
with the text, but disconnected from each other? Is the text a threshold, which demarcates both the
ends, the beginnings and an overlap of our bodies? Are our bodies connected and separated by a
wound that opens both when I write our bodies into each other and when I write them into text? Is
the text a bleeding, corporeal wound?

Any attempt at answering these questions is a textual, embodied relation that open the wounds up
anew, and point forward to new questions. Both I and the texts change through my reading and
writing. This is why I can not fixate my method in advance; I simply do not know before I read and,
even if I read, I do not know before I write. The process of reading and writing is a process of
bodily change, which in turn changes the ongoing process of knowledge production. Embodied
reading and writing, then, shows me that knowing bodies is an opening towards new knowledge
about bodies, and new conditions of bodily materialization. I am surprised.

2. 3 Emotive Reading and Emotive Text: Intermediate Conclusion

My aim is to examine how the boundaries of the body are renegotiated by seeing emotive bodies as
the power charged foundations of knowledge. I set out to examine how emotive academic writing
challenges the supposed stability of bodily differentiation, while in the same time paying close
attention to how our bodies, as they are materialized in particular situations, structure our
knowledge. Here, I discuss my conclusions from the first analytical theme, emphasizing the
interconnections of my methodology and my conclusions.

I have argued that approaching bodies and knowledge as mutually constitutive promotes a dynamic,
power sensitive understanding of embodiment. I see Lugones' disobedience of the textual ideals of
Western academia as a refusal to reinstate the gendered and raced hierarchies that exclude certain
bodies, and aspects of embodiment, from knowledge production. By integrating emotions, which
are strongly associated with feminine and non-white bodies, in academic text, she directs the
spotlight to the implicit misogyny and somatophobia that govern the ideals of scholarly writing.
Lugones' emotions tell her that there is something wrong with arrogant perception. She feels hurt by
racism, sexism and classism, and she is unhappy about her failure to love her mother. These feelings
makes her suggest loving perception as a way toward a non-exploitative feminist epistemology.

Loving perception requires awareness of our bodies situatedness in societal power structures and a
willingness to change our perception of others and ourselves through feeling differently. I argue that
feeling like a fool in an unfamiliar “world”, and seeing women we once perceived as subordinated as they are in their “world” has the potentiality of changing the relations through which our bodies materialize. Emotions, as material and power charged dimensions of our bodies, structure the conditions under which we become subjects of knowledge. I argue that emotions do not reside within us, but materialize through our embodied interaction. Feeling different therefore has the potentiality of changing the processes under which our bodies are differentiated.

My frustration with the mixture of Spanish and English in “Hablando cara a cara” is neither an immaterial essence of Lugones' writing body, my reading body nor the article. I see the feeling of frustration as a material dimension of my body, constituted through a process of power charged materialization which involves and interconnects my body, Lugones' body and the text. The lingual play takes shape between our specific and changing bodies, as they are connected and separated through the text. The text is an expression of intersubjective emotions. The rules of the play are not fixed in the text, but change through specific, embodied reading of it.

I resist fixing my method in advance, since I am interested in how my understanding of the subject at hand changes through embodied reading, and, accordingly, how my reading changes as I incorporate new knowledge. Reading Lugones together with Ahmed's and Heinämaa's accounts of emotion as embodied, material, power charged relations makes me see emotion as a renegotiation of the boundaries between my reading body, Lugones' writing body and the text I analyze. As such, emotions are valuable for understanding the hierarchies that govern knowledge production, and for understanding the relation between bodies and knowledge.

The possibility of renegotiating embodiment through emotive, embodied, power sensitive knowledge rests on indeterminate and interdependent relations between bodies and knowledge. If the relation between knowledge and bodies is determined, it is not possible to produce knowledge that renegotiates embodiment. My being white in a society where whiteness means privileges implies that any knowledge I produce reinstates racism, just like being a queer woman in a heteronormative society means that any knowledge I produce reinstates my subordination.

This is clearly opposed to the aim of feminist epistemology. Feeling hurt and being excluded by patriarchal, heteronormative and racist knowledge paradigms is what makes feminists create new epistemologies. It inspires us to see bodies and emotions as sources of knowledge. The very need to create new epistemologies is raised by the indeterminacy in the relations between bodies, emotions,
power and knowledge. We need dynamic accounts of power-charged embodied experiences and knowledge. Through embodied reading of Lugones, I examine how our ability to renegotiate aspects of our bodies through play, love and travels enables us to recreate knowledge through emotional interaction. Next, I continue to explore the indeterminate and interdependent relations between bodies and knowledge in the second analytical theme of the thesis: “The Lived Body”.

3. The Lived Body

Phenomenology takes an interest in bodies as they are subjectively lived. It examines our bodies as constituted by our relations with others, and our situatedness in a world. Edmund Husserl initiates the forming of phenomenology, and his thought is developed by diverse German and French philosophers such as Max Scheler, Simone de Beauvoir and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Vallega-Neu describes phenomenology as a turn to the world of appearances. The world of objects is not approached as a world distinct from our subjective perception; instead, phenomenology examines objects as they appear for us. I examine how feminist phenomenology, which points to the particular ways in which the world appears for us is power-laden, uses the concept of the lived body to approach embodiment and knowledge without depending on the dichotomies between body and mind, subject and object, and our bodies and their surrounding world.

Redirecting the spotlight from the body to lived bodies points us to the multiplicity of bodies, and our subjective experiences of embodiment, Grosz argues. The body, as it is conceptualized in Western thought, includes white, youthful, able, male bodies. A shade of the body remain in the imagery of traditional phenomenology, but its critical approach to experience and perception are valuable tools for a power sensitive, feminist phenomenology. Weiss stresses that our bodies are not general or neutral concepts to which particularities can be added – as constituted by social interaction in specific historical and cultural contexts, they are always particular:

Put simply, there is no such thing as "the" body or even "the" body image. Instead, whenever we are referring to an individual's body, that body is always responded to in a particularized fashion, that is, as a woman's body, a Latina's body, a mother's body, a daughter's body, a friend's body, an attractive body, an ageing body, a Jewish body.

First, I discuss our bodies as the grounds of knowledge about ourselves, other subjects, and our

103 Grosz (1994) p. 86.
104 Vallega-Neu p. 39.
surrounding world. I discuss the relation between bodies and perception, focusing on how phenomenology imagines bodies as both subjects and objects in knowledge production. Second, I discuss how feminist phenomenology develops power sensitive accounts of perception. I show that this allows feminist theory to rely on embodied experience, without reinstating any single or universalized experience, or any particular embodiment, as essentially male or female.

3.1 Bodies as the Grounds of Perception

The feminist phenomenologists Elizabeth Grosz, Lisa Folkmarson Käll and Gail Weiss develop Maurice Merleau-Ponty's take on perception as an intersection of body and mind. Merleau-Ponty's understanding of lived embodiment is especially fruitful for feminist thought, Käll contends, since it refuses any strict determination of bodies as natural or mechanical, and rejects the distinction between body and mind. Grosz finds that Merleau-Ponty's view on the mind as inherently embodied is a valuable point of departure for feminist theory. According to this line of thought, perception is neither contained within the sphere of material embodiment, nor within immaterial minds – it depends on the interconnection of body and mind, and on the materiality of them both.

The foundational dependence on our bodies structures our perception. We can not know ourselves, others or our surrounding world entirely or autonomously, since our reflections take place from an inside perspective – from our bodies, as they are constituted in specific social contexts. There is no way to leave our bodies behind in the search for pure perception, since our bodies condition our being in a world, in which we perceive ourselves and others. Our specific bodies, and their dependence on our surrounding world, are not obstacles, but conditions of knowledge. "It is through the body that the world of objects appear for me; it is in virtue of having/being a body that there are objects for me", Grosz writes, paraphrasing Merleau-Ponty.

We know our bodies through performing everyday movements. Grosz uses the example of scratching ones back to illustrate Merleau-Ponty's notion of the body image. Feeling the itch, locating it and scratching it does not require knowledge about the physiological processes involved. We can perform the action without reflecting on it. Weiss describes our body images are constituted through an interplay of physiological, social and psychical dimensions of our bodies.

---

110 Grosz (1994) p. 91 f.
which form a field of possible actions and movements\textsuperscript{111}. I can feel the itch, locate my back, and scratch it because I \textit{am} my body. My back and my hand are part of my body image. Should I use a device to reach the itch, that too is incorporated into my body image. It is the intimate, direct relation between my body parts, my sensations, and the instruments I use, that makes my body special to me, and distinguish it from external objects. In Grosz's words, my body is not an object that I can take up an outside perspective on, but the vantage point from which I have a perspective\textsuperscript{112}.

Weiss is wary of playing down the role of physiology in favor of the role of discourse and power in descriptions of our body images\textsuperscript{113}. I agree with Weiss, since playing down the role of physiology is a way of dispatching it from the sphere of discourse. However, if we see materiality and discourse as mutually constitutive, if bodies are seen as both the effects and the grounds of discourse, descriptions of our bodies as discursive are renegotiations of the conceptual boundaries between materiality and discourse, rather than a downplay of physiology\textsuperscript{114}.

As Weiss notes, Merleau-Ponty does not see our body images as constituted by an awareness of a given set of body parts, but the integration of body parts in proportion to their value for our projects\textsuperscript{115}. He also contends that the instruments we use cease being external objects for us, as they are incorporated into our field of possibilities – together with our body parts, the instruments we use decide how we can move and act in a world\textsuperscript{116}. In other words, the role of physiology in the formations of our body images is bound up with other dimensions of our situation\textsuperscript{117}. The body

\textsuperscript{111} Weiss (1999) p. 2.
\textsuperscript{112} Grosz (1994) p. 91 f.
\textsuperscript{113} Weiss (1999) p. 2.
\textsuperscript{114} As I discuss later, power sensitive, feminist developments of the concept of the body image show that the inclusion and exclusion of aspects into our body images are structured by the imperative of cultural intelligibility. While satisfying an itch on our backs is one example of an everyday movement through which we know our bodies, another equally foundational dimension of our body images are habitual gestures that make us intelligible as a women or men, black or white – as belonging to categories that constitute our subjectivity in a given spatio-temporal context. The physiological dimensions of our body images, then, are saturated with discourse and power. Put differently, physiology and power intersect in our body images. Playing down the role of physiology is, indeed, a denial of this intersection, and a reinstatement of dichotomous relations between bodies and materiality on the one side, and power and discourse on the other.
\textsuperscript{116} Grosz (1994) p. 91.
\textsuperscript{117} The recognition of the incorporation of external objects into our body images is fruitful for understanding the role of prosthetic body parts and other technological devices we use for achieving our projects. It is also of importance for examining a wide range of practices which Anne Balsamo refers to as the gendering of bodies, such as cosmetic surgery and body building. See Balsamo, Anne (1996) \textit{Technologies of the Gendered Body. Reading Cyborg Women.} Durham and London: Duke University Press. Judith Halberstam points to how the use of technology, such as computers, change the ways we interact with others, and come to know ourselves. She argues that “...we are already as embedded within the new technologies as they are embodied within us” (p. 482). See Halberstam, Judith (1991) “Automating Gender. Postmodern Feminism in the Age of the Intelligent Machine” in (ed.) Hopkins, Patrick D. (1998) \textit{Sex/Machine. Readings in Culture, Gender, and Technology.} Indiana University Press.
image is constituted by the interconnection of different aspects of our bodies – our body parts, our instruments, our muscles and organs, our situatedness in space and our intersubjective relations\textsuperscript{118}.

My body being my vantage point does not mean that I know it solely through my immediate bodily sensations. I feel my back itch, and I can pause and reflect on the feeling in a number of ways. I can reflect on how I experience the itch, and I can gain knowledge about the physiological processes that take place as I feel it, locate it and scratch it. These ways of knowing are embodied, and interconnected. If I were to pause and reflect on the itchy feeling every time it occurred, the feeling itself would change as a result. And, accordingly, my reflections would change with the feeling. Recognizing the inextricable relation between our immediate bodily sensations and the knowledge we produce is crucial for the feminist accounts of objectivity that I turn to next.

3. 1. 1 Embodied Objectivity

Though inextricably interconnected, feeling our backs itch and reflecting on the itch represent different ways of knowing our bodies. The fact that our bodies are our vantage points makes us dependent on a certain distance, if we are to consciously reflect on them. This distance is not made possible by us taking up an outside perspective on our bodies. It is the overflow between knowledge and bodies that creates a non-coincidence that makes it possible for us to know our bodies from a certain distance. As Käll argues, we can know our bodies since we never quite coincide with them\textsuperscript{119}. When we consciously reflect on our bodies, they are continuously changed through the reflection, which in turn changes the reflection itself.

Through her reading of Simone de Beauvoir, Sara Heinämaa argues that awareness of bodies and knowledge as mutually changing is a precondition of objectivity. She finds that Beauvoir connects objectivity with impartiality and detachment, but not with a desire to rise above or turn away from the conditions under which we belong to a world. Heinämaa suggests we imagine Beauvoir's objectivity claim through the image of stepping backward from our subjective, immediate sensations. If I step back from the object I examine, or from the activity I am engaged in, I do not leave my body behind, since it is that which takes the step. To Heinämaa, stepping backwards means creating an open space between ourselves and the activities we are engaged in, so that our reflections on them are different, though not isolated, from our immediate experiences and sensations. Understanding the epistemological role of our embodiment demands that we remain in

\textsuperscript{118} Weiss (1999) p. 9.
\textsuperscript{119} Käll p. 115.
contact with our bodies, and their situatedness in a world, as we perform objective inquiry\(^{120}\).

To Beauvoir, then, objectivity is possible, but not by rejecting or denying our embodied and emotive engagement with our world. Human thought is always saturated with value, but we are still able to reflect on our perception as value laden by suspending or interrupting our activities. According to Heinämaa, Beauvoir's emphasis on objectivity as dependent on the activities of a sensing, socially and materially embedded subject, shows the potentiality of phenomenological approaches to knowledge\(^{121}\). Any reflection on my itchy back is grounded in my immediate, subjective sensation. Objective reflection is possible only if I recognize the role of my immediate sensation, the situation under which it occurs to me, and the particularities that shapes my reflection on it. Stepping back from the feeling of the itch is a detachment, but is is not a disembodiment, or a denial of the social, value laden dimensions of my perception. Objectivity, then, is not a condition reached through once and for all keeping our bodies and emotions in check, but a continuous and dynamic reflection on our subjective experiences and their occurrence in particular contexts.

From my reading of Heinämaa's discussion of beauvoirian phenomenology, I conclude that objectivity, as an embodied activity, is not itself neutral. It does not mirror silently awaiting objects of inquiry. It is not solely our perception that is shaped by our situated bodies. Our activities, our perception and or production of knowledge shapes the objects of our examinations. As I step back, I affect the situation I am reflecting on, just like taking a breath of air changes the relation between my body and my surroundings. This feminist phenomenological account of objectivity bears striking similarities to Donna Haraway's imagery, in which knowledge production consists of a power charged conversation with the world; a conversation through which we change the world, and are changed by it\(^{122}\). I return to Haraway in my discussion of phenomenological understandings of the relation between us and our surrounding world. Next, I continue to discuss feminist phenomenological takes on embodied knowledge – specifically, how we come to know our bodies in relation to societal categories – by introducing the notions of double movement, double sensation and overflow.

3.1.2 Bodies and Knowledge Overflowing

I use the simile of taking a breath of air to illustrate the mutual change of our bodies and the knowledge we produce. In phenomenological terms, this mutual constitution of bodies and

\(^{120}\) Heinämaa p. 93.
\(^{121}\) Heinämaa p. 94.
knowledge is described as a double movement – an overflow. The double movement makes it impossible for us to pin down our bodies – as we pause to reflect, our bodies escape our reflection.

In feminist phenomenology, double movement explains how we come to know our bodies as, for instance, gendered or raced. Käll emphasizes that the process of knowing our bodies as belonging to any given category is structured by non-coincidence with ourselves. Our bodies are the foundations of categories, we are the ones who produce them, and, therefore, our bodies are fundamentally indeterminate in relation to the categories we are divided into. Through the process of knowing our bodies as gendered, our bodies change, as well as the category of gender itself. The differentiation of our bodies takes place through processes of perception in which we do not fully coincide with ourselves, since our bodies and our knowledge about differentiated bodies change with each other.

The double movement between bodies and knowledge is bound up with an overflow between the subject and object positions within ourselves. We experience our bodies as both subjects and objects. We have an immediate experience of our bodies as ours, or, simply, us – we do not have to stop and think about what to do when our backs itch. We will not, mistakenly, reach out to scratch someone else's back. However, our subjective relation to our bodies is partly constituted by the way others perceive us. We experience our bodies as an object among other objects, for instance, as a female body among others – in accordance with how we are perceived by our surroundings, and how we come to perceive ourselves in interplay with our surroundings. Such objectification, be it positive or negative, shapes our first-person experience of ourselves, so that there is no clear cut distinction between us experiencing ourselves as subjects, and others knowing us as objects.

Merleau-Ponty describes the double belongingness of our bodies through the notion of double sensation. We sense our bodies from within, and we incorporate the objectifying perception of others into this very sensation. Käll sees Merleau-Ponty's account of double sensation as the foundation of his take on all reflection – self-reflection, reflection on others, and on our surrounding world. It is illustrated by our two hands touching – both hands are touching and being touched, altering between the subject and object position. In the same way, our bodies and the categories we are divided into are doubly constituted through subjective experiences of objectifying naming and categorizing. Being a subject entails being an object for others, and for ourselves, through collective processes of doubly sensing our bodies as belonging to a number of categories. To Käll, the figure

123 Käll p. 111.
124 Käll p. 113.
of our hands touching describes our bodies as conditions of knowledge that makes them appear as objects of knowledge in the first place, and as classifiable in particular ways:

It is thus in this figure that we will ultimately find the source of the possibility of signification and language through which we come to categorize different bodies in different ways as female or male, feminine or masculine, black or white, young or old, thin or fat, etc. Whether this categorization is made in biological, cultural, social, geographical, neurological, historical, or any other terms or combination of terms, it entails marking specific features and qualities as those that will determine how to name a specific body and how to make that body visible as an object of experience and knowledge.\textsuperscript{125}

The image of our two hands touching does not, Käll points out, imply a full coalescence of their subject and object position. As one hand assumes the subject position of touching, the other responds by taking on the object position of being touched; our hands alter between these roles in response to each other. The touching hand is never fully in subject position. Its intimate and dependent relation to the touched hand, as the condition of it being in subject position, and as belonging to the same body, creates an overflow between the positions of the two hands. Speaking with Käll, both hands share the capacity of playing both roles, since they are of the same flesh.\textsuperscript{126}

The image of our hands, altering between touching and being touched, in interplay with each other, shows that the positions of subject and object are interdependent and reversible. Their double belongingness to the same flesh makes the touching hand dependent on that the touched hand is on the verge of assuming the subject position of the touching – otherwise, our hands would not be part of the same bodily experience. We would feel one of our hands doubly, while the other would be an external object, for the touching hand to perceive, though not itself feeling the touch. It would be like scratching someone else's back – performing the movement without feeling the scratch. It is the constant overflow between the subject and object positions, not the full coalescence of them, that constitutes our body images.

Heinämaa, drawing on Husserl, describes the lived body as a scene of sensations, an organ of free movement, and a center of spatial orientation. The sense of a unified, embodied subjectivity depends on the incorporation of sensations in interplay with motility, and, in the example used here, vision: “When I cut my finger with a knife, I have, in addition to the sensation of pain and

\textsuperscript{125} Käll p. 114.
\textsuperscript{126} Käll p. 115.
dizziness, the visual experience in which a physical body is split and the fluids it contains trickle out”127. When we cut our own finger, we simultaneously move, uninhibited and without reflection, direct the pain to our finger, realize that it is caused by the fact that we cut it, and see our flesh open and our blood seep through our skin. The simultaneity of these experiences is unique for our own lived embodiment. If I cut someone else's finger, I do not simultaneously see and feel the cut.

The overflow between the subject and object position within ourselves is bound up with the overflow between bodies and knowledge. We know our bodies as belonging to, or as being ambiguous in relation to categories of gender, race, sexuality, age, and so on, only since we do not quite coincide with these categories. The double movement between our subjective experiences of our bodies and our awareness of the categories they are divided into, hinder the full coalescence of our bodies and the categories.

The notion of overflow between the subject and object positions, between our subjective embodiment and objectifying categories, is central for understanding the relation between power charged bodies and knowledge production. I set out to examine how the boundaries of the body are renegotiated by approaching emotive bodies as the power charged foundations of knowledge. This aim is motivated by the need for feminist theory to analyze unequally differentiated bodies as the foundations of knowledge, without reinscribing bodies with static categories such as gender and race. The image of bodies and knowledge constantly overflowing brings bodily differentiation into the center of knowledge production, while seeing bodily differentiation as a simultaneous effect and ground of knowledge production. The feminist phenomenological take on embodied knowledge emphasizes the mutual change inherent in the movement between bodies and knowledge – they never fully coincide. As I argue in the previous analytical theme, we feel hurt by derogatory perception since it does not exhaust our bodies – we are not fully determined by the way's others perceive us, or by any knowledge about our bodies. Therefore, there are bleeding wounds – cracks and overflow – between the categories we are described by and our subjective experiences of ourselves. We do not fully coincide with the categories we are divided into, but they are part of the power structured relations through which we produce knowledge.

Moreover, overflow explains how selfreflection is possible without claiming a disembodied position, from which to take up an outside perspective. The distance we need for knowing ourselves is not the distance between our bodies and our minds, but the non-coincidence of our subject and

127 Heinämaa p. 30.
object positions implied in the image of double sensation. The dichotomy between body and mind, according to which the mind is striving towards objective knowledge, constantly haunted by the contagious subjectivity of the body, is undermined by the phenomenological approach to lived embodiment. The lived body allows examinations of embodiment without relying on the gendered and raced dichotomies inherent in the body/mind-dualism. The focus on bodies as differentiated through perception makes anti-essentialist knowledge about bodies possible, Käll argues. Therefore, the lived body is central in feminist phenomenology.128

Bound up with the dissolution of the body/mind-dichotomy is the recognition that our subjective experiences of embodiment intersect with the identity categories we belong to, and through which we become intelligible. Becoming intelligible contains an incorporation of the way others perceive us as objects. Our subjective experiences of embodiment include the objectifying ways in which we are perceived by others, and come to perceive ourselves in agreement or objection with. The subject/object-dichotomy is unsettled by the recognition of overflow between the subject and object positions within our bodies, between us and others, and between how we feel and what we know.

Double sensation, then, describes our incorporation of objectifying categories through relations with others. We doubly sense our own bodies, altering between the position of touching and touched. Simultaneously, we alter between seeing others and being seen by others. The reversibility within and between the bodies of subjects and objects is integrated in the notion of the flesh, which contains both the subject and the object, in a mutual criss-cross between seeing-seen and touching-touched.129 Grosz finds that Merleau-Ponty's conceptual shift from body image to flesh creates a mode of perception that differs from traditional phenomenology. While the body image presupposes an embodied subject that perceives a distinct object, the notion of the flesh stresses the interrelatedness of the bodies of subjects and objects to a greater extent.130

---

128 Käll p. 112 ff.
129 Grosz discusses Luce Irigaray's critique of the analogue between seer-seen and touching-touched. If we imagine our hands joined at the palms, instead of stroking each other, there is no necessary distance between the subject and object positions. It seems, on the contrary, as if both hands simultaneously share the experiences of touching and being touched. The double sensation of vision, then, cannot simply be translated into the tactile. To Irigaray, the tangible is the condition of vision, and the other senses. That there is some relation between vision and tactility is clear. What Irigaray questions is the predominance of vision, and the analogue between visual and tactile double sensation that constitutes the concept of the flesh. Grosz (1994) p. 104 ff.
130 Here, Grosz discusses the difference between double sensation as it is conceptualized in Merleau-Ponty's earlier work, including the central *Phenomenology of Perception*, and his last, unfinished *The Visible and the Invisible*. The feminist phenomenologists I draw on integrate the notion of the flesh and the body image in their accounts of bodies as inherently social. My aim here is not to map the writings of Merleau-Ponty, or the development of phenomenology, but to examine a phenomenological approach to embodiment, as it is developed by feminist phenomenologists, such as Grosz, Weiss and Folkmarsson Käll. I am not concerned with examining the differences between the phenomenology.
The flesh entails the subject and the object altering between the positions seeing-seen and touching-touched. In the same way that one of our hands touching the other implies its potential of being touched, vision implies that the seer has a visible body. Visibility is the fleshy commonality of the seer and the seen. The seer has the potential of being visible, and, therefore must belong to the material world. Merleau-Ponty uses the metaphor of a painter depicting trees, arguing that the trees mirror the painter's visibility and materiality, since they are part of the same flesh\textsuperscript{131}.

The intertwining of subject and object makes the notion of the flesh renegotiate the boundaries between subject and object, mind and body, Grosz shows:

The flesh is that elementary, precommunicative domain out of which both subject and object, in their mutual interactions, develop. The subject can no longer be conceived as an enclosed nucleus of identity or as an empty receptivity ready to take in the contents provided by objects. And objects can no longer be viewed as a pure positivity or simply an aggregate of sensations. Subject and object, mind and body, the visible and the invisible, are intercalated; the “rays”, the lines of force, indelibly etch the one into the other\textsuperscript{132}.

3. 2 Subjects and Objects in a World

The overflow between the subject and object positions that constitutes the lived body explains our being in a world – how we form livable body images in interplay with our surroundings. Here, I discuss phenomenological approaches to the relation between knowing subjects and their surrounding world. I initiate this discussion by returning to the notion of the body image as an intersection of our subjectively experienced selves and the particularities of the world we inhabit. I show some connections between the phenomenological approach to our being in a world and Donna Haraway's call for a power sensitive, feminist epistemology.

If our body images – the sense of our bodies being ours, or, simply us – are to provide us with adequate tools for our being in a world, they must be both stable and flexible. Weiss stresses that we need a unified, familiar perspective in order to recognize changes in ourselves, our surroundings, and in our field of possibilities. Merleau-Ponty uses the concept body equilibrium to account for the experienced stability and unity of our bodies; our sense of habitually performing movements and perceiving the world. If our body images fail to adjust to changes, their equilibrium will be lost –

\textsuperscript{131}Grosz (1994) p. 95 ff.
\textsuperscript{132}Grosz (1994) p. 102-103.
our perceived possibilities will no longer be adequate to our situation\textsuperscript{133}.

The experience of being embodied changes as our physiology change, and as our situations change – processes that in themselves contain physical as well as social aspects\textsuperscript{134}. How our bodies feel, function, and are reacted to by others, the mutual constitution of our physical and social possibilities, are effects of our being in a world. The physical changes in our bodies appear for us in a spatio-temporal situation – but the situation in which they appear is always partly constituted by our situatedness in it\textsuperscript{135}.

It is only through knowing our bodies in space, related to other subjects and external objects, that we are able to make judgments about our possibilities of action\textsuperscript{136}. Our spatial situatedness, then, founds our body images. It is through inhabiting space that our bodies become liveable. “Being embedded in the world is not something that is added to my being as embodied; instead, it is an essential dimension of my embodiment”, Käll writes\textsuperscript{137}. As subjects, we are not separate entities in the world, like a chair in a room or water in a glass, she argues. We can not step away from our surrounding world and experience it from an objective distance, precisely like our minds can not leave our bodies to inhabit a neutral vantage point\textsuperscript{138}.

Käll does not see our bodies as objects occupying space, but as engaged in an ongoing dialogue with their surrounding world\textsuperscript{139}. The boundaries of our bodies and our world are drawn through our social and material being in it. Weiss shows that our bodies do not impose a pregiven structure on the world, nor does the world provide our bodies with any precultural, natural shape. Rather, our bodies are structured by the particularities of their being in a world – their physical and psychical constitution is intertwined with their specific situatedness\textsuperscript{140}.

It is not a raw body that shapes the world, but the body as it is already constituted by the world. It is not a neutral world that shapes our bodies, but the world as already shaped by bodies. In other words, as we take in our surrounding world, we take in ourselves, as we are shaped by this world, and the world, as it is shaped by us. It is the reversibility between the subject and object positions

\textsuperscript{133} Weiss (1999) p. 17 ff.
\textsuperscript{134} Weiss (1999) p. 9.
\textsuperscript{135} Grosz (1994) p. 90.
\textsuperscript{136} Weiss (1999) p. 9.
\textsuperscript{137} Käll p. 120.
\textsuperscript{138} Käll p. 118 ff.
\textsuperscript{139} Käll p. 118 ff.
\textsuperscript{140} Weiss (1999) p. 11.
within ourselves, within our world, and between us and our world that opens them up to each other. Grosz discusses Merleau-Ponty's image of the world as doubled back on itself through our being in it. The non-coincidence of the subject and object positions within the subject makes the subject's being in a world entail the capacity “...to turn the world back on itself, to fold it over itself and the world”, she writes, paraphrasing Merleau-Ponty.\textsuperscript{141}

This take on bodies and their surrounding world is valuable for feminist epistemology, since it rejects the idea of a detached, static subject of knowledge, perceiving a passive, objectified world, and the idea of an immaterial, objective mind that needs to distance itself from the material, subjective body, if it is to produce reliable knowledge. As Haraway convincingly argues, feminists can not rely on accounts of objectivity that demand the mind's transcendence over the body, or the world, since disembodied objectivity reserves trustworthy knowledge exclusively for those who's bodies remain largely invisible – primarily white, male subjects. However, feminists can not accept the consequences of rejecting objectivity altogether, since we need a ground from which to claim truth about the gendered hierarchies that govern our lives:

So much for those of us who would still like to talk about reality with more confidence than we allow the Christian Right when they discuss the Second coming and their being raptured out of the final destruction of the world. We would like to think that our appeals to the real world are more than a desperate lurch away from cynicism and an act of faith like any other cult's, no matter how much space we generously give to all the rich and always historically specific mediations through which we and everybody else must know the world.\textsuperscript{142}

Haraway's suggestion is that feminism combines awareness of the historical, cultural, power charged dimensions of knowledge with our embodied experiences of the material conditions of the world, without reducing either to the other.\textsuperscript{143} This clearly resonates with the phenomenological approach to bodies as intertwined with the world, and the mind as inherently embodied. It provides a ground from which feminism can contest the exclusion of female, non-white or queer bodies, or aspects of embodiment, from knowledge production. Phenomenology refuses the dichotomous pairing of femininity, embodiment, emotion and subjectivity, versus masculinity, transcendence, reason and objectivity. It is our embodiment, and the reversibility of the subject and object positions within our bodies, that makes reflection possible – a recognition that is in line with Haraway's argument, and, according to Käll, central for feminism:

\textsuperscript{141} Grosz (1994) p. 102.
\textsuperscript{142} Haraway p. 577.
\textsuperscript{143} Haraway p. 579.
From a feminist perspective this move is pivotal, since the notion of ideal knowledge as detached objectivity is assumed to be reached through a transcendence of nature, matter, and body, which throughout history have been conceptualized as feminine and often identified with the actual lived being of women. Women have thus effectively been denied the ability of transcending the body and of achieving knowledge. With his turn to the structure of the lived body, Merleau-Ponty demonstrates that the detachment and dissociation of objective knowledge in fact by necessity rest on the self-sensing embodiment of the knower.\footnote{Käll p. 118-119.}

The reversibility of the subject and object positions between us and others, the mutually constitutive relation between seer and seen, questions the clear cut distinction between knowing subjects and known objects. Knowing other persons and external objects in our surrounding world, implies that we are ourselves part of this world, and have the potentiality of being known in it. The phenomenological account of vision, then, is far from the traditional approach Haraway describes as a god trick – the illusion of seeing everything from nowhere.\footnote{Haraway p. 581.} In phenomenology, “nowhere” is replaced by a body, and “everything”, is replaced by the world as it appears in the limited perceptual field of a specific body. The power to see and not to be seen, of marking others' bodies without being marked, is contested through the phenomenological account of vision as mutually constitutive of the bodies of the seer and the seen.

The image of the subject folding the world over itself and the world refuses any strict distinction between the natural and the cultural. It is fruitful for feminists rethinking the nature/culture-dichotomy that reinstates our material surroundings and our bodies as brute matter, outside the realm of social and political intervention. It is of key importance for understanding the social organization of life, the discourses and the power structures we are caught up in, as dimensions of our embodiment and our world. In feminist phenomenology, nature and our bodies are not only imagined as saturated with cultural meaning, but constituted by and constitutive of it. Like Haraway, feminist phenomenologists see our bodies and our surrounding world as active, and dynamic, participants in knowledge production. We are not subjects apart from, or through appropriation of, the world of objects, but through our embodied being in a world.

To Haraway, recognizing the agency of the objects of knowledge, be it our bodies, other subjects, or our surrounding world, represents the dissolution of the subject/object-dichotomy. Neither our

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{144 Käll p. 118-119.}
\footnote{145 Haraway p. 581.}
\end{footnotesize}
bodies, other subjects nor the world are resources for us to know – they are not the silent material grounds of our intellectual inquiries. Insisting on the reality of our bodily experiences and our surrounding world does not mean insisting on their static materiality. From Haraway's perspective on knowledge as firmly grounded in gendered bodies, the “real” world is always constituted through power charged conversations, in which nature and culture actively participate. “The world neither speaks itself nor disappears in favor of a master decoder. The codes of the world are not still, waiting only to be read”, she writes.\textsuperscript{146}

Haraway sees the world as a witty agent with an independent sense of humor; as we try to know it, we can search for fidelity, but not impose mastery – we can not pin down the ways in which our world and our bodies are mutually constituted. Her description of the conversation between our bodies and our surrounding world as a conversation between interdependent agents, constantly altering between subject and object position, may be understood in relation to the phenomenological account of double sensation. The world and our bodies participate in the conversation as material-semiotic actors, whose boundaries materialize through their ongoing, social interaction.\textsuperscript{147}

Weiss discusses our being in a world through Merleau-Ponty's claim that “the body not only flows over into \textit{a world whose schema it bears in itself} but possesses this world at a distance rather than being possessed by it”\textsuperscript{148}. It is significant that the body carries the schema of \textit{a} world, not \textit{the} world. Since the subject is physically located in a particular place, it can only be part of the limited world that it perceives and in which it is perceived. We have a take on the world only through perception, grounded in, and limited by, our bodily existence and motility.\textsuperscript{149} We do not fold the entire world over ourselves and the world, since we do not perceive and inhabit the entire world. The openness between us and the world does not imply our coalescence with, or expropriation of, the world. The phenomenological emphasis on the bodily limits of our perception, and the subsequent particularity of the knowledge we produce, is thus well in line with feminist call's for power sensitive epistemology, such as that of Haraway.

The recognition of our bodies as both the conditions and limits of our knowledge emphasizes that we are part of the world we claim to know, and that it is not exhausted by our perception. The subject and object positions of perception constantly alter within us, and become part of our world,\textsuperscript{146} Haraway p. 592 f.\textsuperscript{147} Haraway p. 593 f.\textsuperscript{148} Merleau-Ponty (1973) \textit{The Prose of the World}. Claude Lefort (ed.) (1973) Evanston: Northwestern University Press. p. 78. Quoted in Weiss (1999) p. 10. (Weiss's emphasis.)\textsuperscript{149} Weiss (1999) p. 11.
which in turn alter between those positions in relation to itself, and to us. The overflow between the positions of subjects and objects, between social and material dimensions of the world, is central in the phenomenological understanding of bodies as constituted through dynamic processes of knowledge that cross the conceptual boundaries drawn between the subject and other subjects, external objects and the surrounding world.

So far, I have discussed how the boundaries of the body are renegotiated by the phenomenological concept of the lived body. As the feminist phenomenologists I draw on all emphasize, the power dimension of embodiment is largely absent in the traditional phenomenology of, for example, Merleau-Ponty, whose work nevertheless opens up for power sensitive, feminist takes on embodied knowledge production. Through my reading of the lived body as it is conceptualized in feminist phenomenology, I have argued that the lived body's non-coincidence with itself, and the categories it is described by, is fruitful for feminist epistemology, since it places the body in the very center of knowledge production, while paying close attention to the mutually constitutive and power charged relation between bodies and perception.

Next, I discuss how the feminist phenomenological view on unequally differentiated bodies as the grounds and effects of perception promotes an anti-essentialist perspective on embodied experience in feminist theory. This discussion is connected to the purpose of examining the differentiation of bodies as central in knowledge production, without reinstating it as precultural or static.

3. 3 Embodied Experience in Feminist Theory

Our immediate relation to our bodies and others' reactions to us intersect in our body images. Our subjectivity is partly constituted by social interaction. We incorporate the specific ways in which others perceive us into our body images. As Sara Ahmed remarks, the feeling that our bodies are ours relies on their openness to other bodies\(^\text{150}\). Of course, the conditions under which we are open to others are formed by power structured encounters. We do not come to perceive others in particular ways out of mere coincidence – we recognize subjects as gendered, raced, of a certain class and age, or in relation to any other categories that make them intelligible in our eyes.

Perception is a social, collective process in which we incorporate societal structures through our encounters with others. The specific relations that form us are caught up in the reiteration of the norms that constitute our bodies in a particular situation. To show the specificity of such power

laden encounters, I, like Ahmed, quote Audre Lorde's essay “Eye to Eye: Black Women, Hatred and Anger”. Ahmed uses the quote to examine how encounters embody subjects. She argues that the encounter described by Lorde illustrates a drawing of the boundaries between bodies through bodily expressions of emotions. Lorde comes to know her black body through the hatred and disgust signaled by a white woman sitting next to her on the subway train 151:

The AA subway train to Harlem. I clutch my mother's sleeve, her arms full of shopping bags, christmas-heavy. The wet smell of winter clothes, the train's lurching. My mother spots an almost seat, pushes my little snowsuited body down. On one side of me a man reading a paper. On the other, a woman in a fur hat staring at me. Her mouth twitches as she stares and then her gaze drops down, pulling mine with it. Her leather-gloved hand plucks at the line where my new blue snowpants and her sleek fur coat meet. She jerks he coat closer to her. I look. I do not see whatever terrible thing she is seeing on the seat between us – probably a roach. But she has communicated her horror to me. It must be something very bad from the way she's looking, so I pull my snowsuit closer to me and away from it, too. When I look up the woman is still staring at me, her nose holes and eyes huge. And suddenly I realize there is nothing crawling up the seat between us; it is me she doesn't want her coat to touch. The fur brushes past my face as she stands with a shudder and holds on to a strap in the speeding train. Born and bred a New York City child, I quickly slide over to make room for my mother to sit down. No word has been spoken. I'm afraid to say anything to my mother because I don't know what I've done. I look at the sides of my snowpants, secretly. Is there something on them? Something's going on here I do not understand, but I will never forget it. Her eyes. The flared nostrils. The hatred 152.

Lorde describes being a black woman in America as being steeped in a hatred that shapes her self-perception and her perception of other black women throughout her life 153. Seeing the racist and sexist perceptions of herself in the faces of black women she encounters, makes her respond to them as she has learned to respond to her own gender and race – with hatred 154. The memory Lorde describes is a single event, but one of many which comes to shape her perception of her own and other's bodies. The quote describes how Lorde's self-experience changes as an effect of the white woman's reaction to her. She wonders what she has done, and whether there is something on her snowpants. The white woman's reaction makes Lorde feel guilty – it makes her incorporate the bodily expressions of hatred and disgust into her body image. The encounter constitutes an

---

153 Lorde p. 146.
154 Lorde p. 168 ff.
overflow between the two subjects: Lorde incorporates the white woman's bodily reactions. The white woman is emotionally and physically moved by Lorde's body – she reacts with horror, leaves her seat and prefers to stand the rest of the journey.

As a five year old, Lorde does not interpret the woman's hatred towards her as racist. Later in her life, she describes the event in relation to other encounters through which she has learned her black body as an object of hatred. In light of these experiences, and through her theoretical understanding of racial differentiation, she makes the event come alive in her article. Her description, then, constitutes an overflow between her subjective experiences of embodiment and knowledge about her body as an object of power structures. It represents a double movement between her immediate, subjective experience, and her knowledge about her body as a black object, to herself and to others.

Frantz Fanon describes how encounters with white subjects force him to incorporate racist images. He is not perceived as a black man, but The Black Man. Like Lorde, who incorporates the hatred her black body evokes, Fanon finds himself internalizing the “myth of the negro”, according to which he is “savage, brute and illiterate”. His body image comes to entail shame of his body, his race and his ancestors as a dimension of his subjective relations to his body, and as the conditions of his interactions with other subjects 155.

As Weiss notes, it is the encounter with alienated blackness, rather than with whiteness, that Fanon describes in Black Skin, White Masks. The derogatory image of blackness is incorporated into the bodies of both white and black subjects, which makes black bodies overdetermined from within and from the outside 156. The body image of the white subject is dependent on Fanon's inferiority. It is created through the white subject's perception of Fanon as The Black Man, and of Fanon perceiving the white subject as his master, since he perceives himself partly as The Black Man. As for Lorde, she first and foremost encounters her own body through the eyes of the white woman. She incorporates racist imagery and makes it part of her own reactions to black women. Racism thus structures encounters between black bodies, since it is part of black, as well as white, embodiment. The incorporation of racist perception is central also in Lugones description of her failure to love her mother. Lugones can not love her mother, since she perceives her mother's gender, race and

156 Weiss (1999) p. 29. The recognition of black bodies as overdetermined in racist contexts may be read in relation to Lugones description of being doubly constructed in hostile “worlds”. Lugones discusses how objectifying stereotypes and her self-experience intersect in her doubly constructed Latina identity. In hostile “worlds”, she knows herself to be simultaneously intense and being constructed as stereotypically intense. Accordingly, she finds herself both playful and unplayful.
class as essentially subordinated dimensions of her mother's as well as her own body.

Lorde, Fanon and Lugones show that it is problematic to rely on models of perception that do not recognize our intersubjective relations as power structured. Such models fail to explain the strong emotions Lorde evokes in the white woman, whom she has never met before. The woman does not know Lorde, but responds to her as The Black Body, which she knows to be a threat. Using Fanon's words, the white woman weaves Lorde “out of a thousand details, anecdotes, stories”\(^{157}\). Their encounter is predetermined by knowledge about their bodies as raced\(^ {158}\).

Ahmed argues that approaching perception as general our neutral reinstates an abstract body as objective and universal; an abstraction that we supposedly all belong to. She argues that while Merleau-Ponty claims to explain the mutual constitution of our bodies, he fails to take into account that the processes of perception through which we are constituted are processes of abjection. Our openness towards other bodies, the overflow between us and others, are not simply mutually constituting, but also differentiating. While some of us easily fit into the universal, abstract body, others do no even qualify as subjects, as an effect of our differentiating perceptual relations. Therefore, Ahmed advocates an approach to the mutual relations between bodies as differentiating, rather than including. This, she argues, allows analysis of the constitution of bodies as asymmetrically and violently carried out through power structured perception\(^ {159}\).

Despite Merleau-Ponty's omission of approaching the differentiating, violent and asymmetrical dimensions of perceptual relations, Weiss sees his phenomenology as a possible ground for feminist takes on embodiment. In addition to the dissolution of conceptual dichotomies such as body/mind, and subject/object that I have discussed, Weiss emphasizes that crucial possibilities for the forming of an embodied, feminist epistemology lie within Merleau-Ponty's elevation of the unseen and the indeterminate as phenomena of philosophical inquiry. It recognizes that when we attune our focus to one phenomenon, we will necessarily cast a shade on other phenomena. That which we do not see, or can not determine, are the conditions of what we can see, and determine\(^ {160}\).


This awareness is valuable for creating anti-essentialist accounts of the relation between embodied experience and feminist theory. As I have argued through Heinämaa and Haraway, feminist objectivity is possible only if we see objectivity as an embodied activity. When we perform objective inquiry, our bodies will cast a shade. The shape of the shade, or what is cast in shade, is no coincidence. This points to the normative, violent dimension of unreflected, uncritical reliance on “female” experience as the ground of feminist theory, which I discuss briefly before concluding.

3. 3. 1 A Critical Approach to Embodied Experience

Experience is fundamental in feminist theory. As Grosz notes, we have to allow our subjective, often intimate and personal, experiences to have a formative role in knowledge production. If we do not, feminism is derived of its very ground – experiences of patriarchal norms. Feminism shares a common ground with the phenomenological elevation of embodied experience as the condition of all knowledge. Postmodern feminism and phenomenology also share a critical approach to experience as both the condition and the result of our intersubjective, social and power charged knowledge production. It is not an unmediated, neutral corrective or validation of theory.\footnote{Grosz (1994) p. 94.}

Our experiences are interwoven, and made possible, within social contexts that shape how we interpret, value and feel about certain events in our lives. Lorde, as a five year old, does not understand why the white woman she encounters hates her. Remembering the event in light of continuously being perceived with hatred because of her black body, she knows the encounter to be racist. Her experience takes on different meaning as her memory of it is intertwined with similar experiences, memories, and as it is theorized in written text. Following Merleau-Ponty, Grosz argues that experiences are not pure, bodily reactions, but take place in the intersection of our bodies and our minds. This recognition is crucial in postmodern feminist critique towards fixing a universal, supposedly authentic and natural, “female experience”\footnote{Grosz (1994) p. 94 f.}.

\begin{quote}
Weiss shows that Merleau-Ponty's conceptualization of embodiment depends on particular experiences, and fails to account for other experiences, whose invisibility make the experiences he draws on appear as grounds for theory in the first place. To some extent, then, his work provides the tools for revealing its own lacks. The serious failure on Merleau-Ponty's account, argues Weiss, is that he does not recognize that who or what is cast in shade is determined by societal structures. Therefore, feminist phenomenology needs to recognize the ideological impacts of our blind spots, by including the particularities of our body images, as structured by our positions in societal
\end{quote}
hierarchies, in the phenomenological project.\textsuperscript{163}

If we want to understand the power structures under which we become embodied subjects of for example gender, sexuality, race, class, age and size, it is not sufficient to examine our perception as limited by “our” abstract bodies, or our bodies as generally constituted by mutual perception. As Ahmed and Weiss show, relying on abstract and general bodies as the ground for theory not only excludes bodies who do not share these experiences – it also reinstates embodiment as autonomous to power structures. It reinstates bodies as differentiated before, instead of through, power structures.

If feminism simply replaces, or corrects, theories that implicitly rely on experiences of white, male, heterosexual, able, wealthy bodies, with the experiences of female, queer, poor, crippled black bodies, we will still be lacking an account of how bodies come to materialize as belonging to any of these categories in the first place. We will still rely on a static account of embodiment that fails to recognize our bodies as constituted through differentiating perception. Therefore, feminism must approach embodied perception as the ground and the effect of power-laden differentiation of bodies. This means that when we analyze experiences, we analyze the societal structures that shape and are shaped by these experiences. The experiences of female bodies are not to be explained by any static facts of embodiment, but through analysis of how these experiences constitute female embodiment. Recognizing bodies as differentiated through power charged perception, then, opens up the possibility for feminist theory to rely on embodied experience, without reinstating it as essentially female, or essentially tied to any particular, static body.

4. Intersecting Bodies

I call this concluding part of the thesis “Intersecting Bodies” for two reasons. The first is that it is an intersection of the two analytical themes. After a summary of the purpose and the background to feminist epistemology, I emphasize the conclusions I draw in “Emotive Academic Writing”. Then, I summarize “Lived Embodiment” through a discussion of how the two themes are interconnected.

The second reason is that bodies and emotions are intersections – they materialize between and renegotiate the boundaries that demarcate nature and culture, self and other, subject and object, subjective experiences and power structures. Therefore, an embodied, emotive point of departure has intersectional potential. After the summarizing discussion, I point forward to how this

\textsuperscript{163} Weiss (1999) p. 42 f.
recognition can promote a perspective on bodies as always caught up in the intersection of how we feel, what we know, and how we are categorized in the “worlds” we inhabit.

4.1 Intersecting Summary

My aim was to examine how the boundaries of the body are renegotiated by seeing emotive bodies as the power charged foundations of knowledge. I examine how emotive academic writing and the concept of the lived body provide possibilities of approaching bodies without reinstating bodily differentiation as precultural, natural or stable, while emphasizing fleshy, material, passionate and power charged bodily specifications as central in knowledge production. My point of departure was that it is our bodies, materialized through societal power structures, that allow us to know ourselves and our surrounding world, and that the knowledge we produce changes the conditions under which our bodies are shaped.

Questions about the relation between bodies and knowledge are central in feminist epistemology, since women and non-white subjects are imagined as intellectually enslaved by their subjective, emotive bodies, and thus excluded from knowledge production, both as knowing subjects and objects of inquiry. In the background to feminist epistemology, I show that the dichotomy between body and mind in Western thought informs and relies on the exclusion of femininity from knowledge production. The intellectual work of white, male, middle-class bodies gain status as purely conceptual, rational and objective through the exclusion of female bodies and aspects of embodiment associated with femininity from the realm of philosophical inquiry. While the somatophobia of Western philosophy prevails in some feminist paradigms that pose bodies as obstacles in knowledge production, postmodern feminism turns to examining bodies and knowledge as mutually constitutive. The background situates my thesis in a postmodern feminist tradition of critical interventions in knowledge production.

My methodology is connected to the postmodern perspective on bodies and knowledge as mutually constitutive. I depart from an interest in seeing how my understanding of text and my body changes along with each other, during the process of writing this thesis. Therefore, I do not fix my method in advance, but reflect on my reading and writing throughout the analysis. This affects the disposition of the thesis. There are no separate chapters called “method” and “theory”, since I want to let these aspects of methodology develop together through embodied reading and writing.

In my initiating methodological reflection, I argue that the formalities of academic text risks
obscuring the bodily dimensions of knowledge. It often seems as if the authors of theses and articles know what to write quite independent of the process of incorporating new knowledge – quite independent of the texts we read and the phenomena we examine. This illusion makes it impossible to analyze the relations and processes under which texts take shape. If we see these relations and processes as embodied relations between knowing subjects that exist within academic contexts under unequal conditions, it is clear that disembodying the process of writing and reading is an obfuscation of how the ideals of academic writing affect our bodies.

4.1.1 Emotive Bodies in Knowledge Production

I approach the subordination of emotion in academic text as part of the gendered and raced disembodiment of knowledge production. Since female and non-white subjects are seen as more corporeal, vulnerable, passive and primitive than white men, they are represented as overly emotive and incapable of distancing themselves from their passionate bodies to engage in intellectual, distanced objectivity. Subordinating, cultivating and excluding emotion from academic text disciplines bodies to fit into the ideals of disembodied knowledge. I set out to examine how emotion can make us see the boundaries between the bodies of authors and readers as embodied and power charged – as unequally materialized through the norms that govern knowledge production.

The exclusion of emotions, bodies and traces of corporeality from academic writing and knowledge production has consequences for the very definition of theory. Only a very specific form of disembodied, written text gains status as theory, which creates the emotive experiences of women and non-white subjects as subjective, personal and deviant in relation to the supposedly general experiences that ground traditional accounts of embodiment. I argue that objectivity demands awareness of how our emotive bodies form our perception – an awareness that is strikingly absent in accounts of embodiment that represent male, white, young, heterosexual, middle-class, able bodies as the grounds of neutral conceptualization of embodied experience. Clearly, theories that exclude all other embodied experiences than these are very specific, and if they claim universality, they are reductionist. I examine the integration of emotion in academic text as a possibility of revealing the gendered and raced assumptions that ground scholarly writing, and a possibility of renegotiating the boundaries between unequally materialized subjects of knowledge.

Since the normative textual form of Western academia mutes feminine, queer and non-white dimensions of embodiment, people of color and feminists, among others, develop critical, creative writing traditions to make room for their embodied experiences and to reveal the normative form of
text as gendered and raced. María Lugones's articles “Hablando cara a cara/ Speaking Face to Face: An Exploration of Ethnocentric Racism” and “Playfulness, ‘World'-Traveling and Loving Perception” are examples of the integration and elevation of emotions as sources of knowledge about how race and gender structure scholarly writing.

I examine the boundaries between the bodies of writers and readers through embodied reading of Lugones, departing mainly from Sara Ahmed's and Sara Heinämaa's phenomenologically inspired understanding of emotion as material and intersubjective. Seeing emotions as materializing through embodied interaction emphasizes their importance for understanding power structures in knowledge production. Emotions are part of the conditions under which our bodies take shape.

As part of my methodology, I reflect on my emotions as they are constituted through the process of reading Lugones's articles, and writing my own text. I do not see the emotions I experience as residing within either of our bodies, or existing in the texts themselves. I argue that emotions materialize through specific, embodied, intersubjective interaction, and are therefore valuable for analyzing and changing the hierarchical differentiation of bodies in knowledge production.

I feel frustrated with Lugones's mixture of Spanish and English, since I miss out on most of the text in Spanish. The lingual play takes shape between our raced bodies. Lugones's text is not in itself playful or frustrating; the playfulness and the frustration is an intersection of the text and my particular, embodied reading. Our embodied interaction, the playfulness and the frustration, are mutually constitutive. Therefore, it is insufficient to say that it is the integration of emotion in Lugones's text that renegotiates the boundaries between our bodies. Instead, I argue that our bodies are interconnected through the process of emotive writing and reading. Departing from emotive embodiment, then, means departing from the bodies of subjects (and objects) of knowledge, as they are mutually constituted in the process of knowledge production. In other words, it is the intersection of our bodies that constitutes the emotive, embodied point of departure that I see as a source of knowledge about power structures in academia, and as a potentiality of change.

The claim that the boundaries of the body are renegotiated by departing from emotive bodies as the power charged foundations of knowledge contain a recognition of that emotive text touches us. While this recognition is important for questioning the idea of proper subjects of knowledge as emotionally detached from the objects of their inquiry, or from their situated embodiment, it does not suffice as an explanation of the potential of emotion in knowledge production. My argument is
that emotions structure the differentiation of bodies. Reflexively and consciously integrating emotions in academic text entails a possibility of changing the conditions under which our bodies take shape in knowledge production. Or rather, it is when the integration of emotion in scholarly text intersect with embodied reading that this possibility opens up.

I see Lugones's account of loving perception as an opening towards changing the hierarchical differentiation of bodies in feminist epistemology. It challenges us to restructure the unequal conditions of bodily materialization in knowledge production through reacquainting ourselves and the women we used to look down on. Loving perception demands awareness of our bodies as unequally differentiating through our processes of coming to knowledge. Failing to see our own role in the hierarchical differentiation of bodies makes any attempt to love or know others an attempt to love their subordination, and knowing them as essentially subordinated. Through my reading of Lugones, I argue that we can love each other without re-embodying hierarchies if we emotionally reacquaint ourselves and others in “worlds” where we are not unequally differentiated, or where our differentiation appear as a social construct rather than an essence.

Lugones emphasizes our dependence on others for becoming intelligible subjects. Her reason for creating a loving solution to the arrogant perception between women is that we are shaped, and often hurt, by the ways others perceive us. The fact that we are wounded through mutual processes of perception implies indeterminacy between bodies and knowledge, which I describe through the metaphors of breathing and bleeding. Instead of imagining our bodies as static, autonomous entities with mirror-like surfaces, between which our gazes bounce without changing or being changed, I see the relation between our bodies and the ways we and others know them as interdependent and indeterminate – like a breath of air or a bleeding wound.

When we breathe, we simultaneously change our bodies, as we fill them with air, and our surroundings, as we exhale the air that was just in our lungs. We depend on the interconnectedness between our bodies and our surroundings as we breathe, but the relation between them must be indeterminate enough to allow space for our lungs to extend within our bodies, and for our chests to extend into our surroundings. Perceiving ourselves and others, and experiencing ourselves being perceived by ourselves and others, depend on the same independence an non-coincidence between our bodies and any knowledge about them. Like breathing, perception is a precondition of our embodiment, and like breathing, it changes our bodies and how we and others know them. When we perceive our bodies and our surroundings, and perceive ourselves being perceived, we
constantly restructure and supersede our embodiment. The embodied relations between us and others, which govern the materialization of our bodies, do not remain the same through the process of producing knowledge. Therefore, loving perception entails a possibility of changing the conditions under which our bodies are differentiated.

While comparing breathing and perception emphasizes the non-coincidence of bodies and knowledge, and the potential of changing the differentiation of bodies through changing our emotional encounters, bleeding better illustrates the power charged relation between bodies and academic text. I describe the relation between my body and Lugones's body and our respective texts as a bleeding wound, connecting and separating them. Our bodies and our texts are mutually constituted and differentiated through processes of writing and reading. Lugones resists exhaustive perception as she playfully pulls away from my specific, reading body through mixing Spanish and English. Cultivating her body into scholarly text entails abjection of her Latina dimensions – both her own cultivation of it, and mine, as I refer to it. There is a wound between bodies and text, since academic texts entail abjection of bodily dimensions. There is a wound between the bodies of writers and readers since their perceptual relation constitutes and hurts their bodies.

4. 1. 2 Bodies and Knowledge as Mutually Constitutive

The images of breathing and bleeding illustrate the power charged, mutually constitutive relations between bodies and knowledge. The approach to bodies and knowledge as caught up in power charged, mutually constitutive processes connects my analysis of critical, emotive writing with the power sensitive, feminist phenomenological understanding of embodiment. I examine how feminist phenomenology renegotiates the boundaries between body and mind, between subjects and objects, and between our bodies and our surrounding world through posing the concept of the lived body as the foundation of knowledge production.

The boundary between body and mind is renegotiated by the phenomenological approach to perception as an intersection of the two. Bodies are seen as the grounds of all knowledge. We are fundamentally dependent on our bodies to know ourselves, others and our surrounding world. To the feminist phenomenologists I draw on, knowledge is always mediated through our culturally materialized bodies, and our bodies materialize in the processes of producing knowledge. Perception is never omniscient or pure, since it is structured by our bodies, as they take shape in specific social contexts. In “Emotive Academic Writing”, I examine academic writing as one of these contexts. A common ground of the two analytical themes of the thesis is thus the recognition
of that bodies are never brute, meaningless matter; they take shaped through knowledge production.

Another interconnection of the two themes is the renegotiation the body/mind-dichotomy, which is central in feminist epistemology. The idea of women and non-white subjects as more corporeal than white men, and thus improper subjects of knowledge, relies on the body/mind-dichotomy, as does the subordination of emotion in academia. Emotions are seen as passionate, unruly dimensions of embodiment, and firmly associated with female, non-white bodies. Renegotiating the body/mind-dichotomy and integrating emotion in academic contexts both reveal knowledge production as structured by hierarchies of for example gender and race. Feminist phenomenologists and feminist scholars taking a critical stance to emotive text overlap in their attempts to examine emotive bodies as fundamental methodological dimensions, as well as in their approach to bodies as unequally differentiated through the processes of knowledge production.

The subject/object-dichotomy is renegotiated by the phenomenological take on bodies as both subjects and objects in knowledge production. We incorporate others perception of us as objects into our subjective self-experiences, and thus come to know ourselves, and our surroundings, through double sensation. Merleau-Ponty, whose work is central to the feminist phenomenologists I read, illustrates double sensation through the image of our two hands touching. Both hands alter between the subject and object position; always on the verge of changing position, never fully coinciding with either of them. The overflow and non-coincidence of the subject and object positions makes it possible for us to reflect on ourselves, others, and our surrounding world. The distance we need for conscious reflection is neither the distance between our bodies and our minds, nor our bodies and the phenomena we examine. We know our bodies as for example gendered and raced since we do not fully coincide with such categories, while they condition our self-experience. In the same way, we know other subjects and external objects since they are distinct from us, while they are the conditions of our becoming intelligible through intersubjective perception.

Breathing and bleeding illustrate the overflow between our subjective perception of self and others, and the objectifying perception we encounter. It does not represent a full coalescence of our subjective experiences and others experiencing us as objects, but an interdependent and indeterminate relation between bodies and knowledge. The phenomenological understanding of knowledge as structured by the overflow between the subject and object positions, and between bodies and knowledge, resonates with the picture of the bodies of writers and readers as interconnected and separated by a bleeding wound, that I draw, reading Lugones. We are hurt by
the arrogant perception we encounter, because we are not determined by it – there are cracks between how we experiences ourselves and how others perceive us. Nevertheless, arrogant perception structures our perception as we come to perceive ourselves and others arrogantly.

Overflow, breathing and bleeding implies mutual change – our bodies and our surroundings change as we reflect on them, which in turn changes our reflection. The recognition of mutual change between bodies and knowledge and between our bodies and others' bodies is central in phenomenology. It influences my reading of Lugones's account of loving perception as a way to change the hierarchical differentiation of bodies through changing our perceptual relations. The dissolusion of the dichotomies body/mind and subject/objects bears in it a renegotiation of the boundaries between bodies and their surroundings. In terms of breathing, the phenomenological take on the relation between bodies and their surroundings is structured by the recognition that the breath of air we inhale is always already structured by our breathing bodies situated in a world.

Our bodies shape the world as they are constituted by being in it, and the world, as shaped by our being in it, constitutes our bodies. Merleau-Ponty describes the world as doubled back on itself through our being in it. The subject, altering between the subject and object positions, folds the world back over itself and the world. There are no sharp boundaries between our bodies and our surrounding world – they are doubly constituted. Lugones's description of herself as being playful in some “worlds”, while not in others, can be used as an illustration the double fold. Her playfulness is constituted by her embodied being in a specific world – it is not an essence of her body, or the “world” she inhabits. As a “world”-traveler, Lugones's embodiment is shaped by a number of “worlds”, both familiar and hostile. Her folding back of the world is thus shaped by her incorporation of both arrogant and loving perception – her ambiguous being in a world flows over into the world, which in turn constructs her as simultaneously playful and unplayful.

In relation to Lugones's analysis of her ambiguous, doubly constituted self-experience, it becomes clear that the phenomenological approach to bodies as inherently embedded in a world shows that neither bodies, nor the world, provide raw material for knowledge production, and that the relation between bodies and knowledge is dynamic. To feminist phenomenologists, it is not a static or neutral body that structures knowledge production. We know the world from embodied points of departure constituted by, and changed through, our everyday movements, our body parts, the instruments we incorporate, our muscles and organs, our situatedness in space and our intersubjective relations. All these aspects of our being in a world constitute our body images,
which condition our perception – we can not know our bodies apart from their surrounding world, nor can we know our surroundings apart from our bodies. Moreover, both our bodies and our surroundings change through knowledge production.

The phenomenological recognition of the inextricable relations between bodies, their surrounding world, and knowledge is valuable for feminist epistemology, since it provides tools for creating a feminist account of objectivity, and a non-essentialist reliance on women's embodied experiences as the ground of feminist theory. Once our bodies are recognized as the conditions of knowledge, it is implausible to claim that objectivity requires that our minds are purified from emotive embodiment. Seeing bodies and knowledge as mutually constitutive makes it implausible to assume a precultural, static body seeping through into otherwise neutral knowledge, or to assume that our otherwise neutral bodies are differentiated through ideological inscriptions.

To feminist phenomenologists such as Simone de Beauvoir and Sara Heinämaa, it is not our bodies, but the omission to see their role in knowledge production that threaten objectivity. Objectivity is performed by a socially and materially embedded subject. Objective knowledge departs from, and thus depends on, our immediate, subjective sensations, which take on new meanings as we reflect on them. Conscious, objective reflection is distanced from our immediate sensations, but not from our bodies. It requires recognition of the social, power charged nature of our immediate sensations, instead of a denial of their impact on our intellectual work. Heinämaa imagines objective reflection as a stepping backward from our immediate sensations. I find this image valuable, because it depicts objectivity as an embodied activity which itself affects our experiences as well as our surroundings. We depend on our bodies for taking a step, and we take the step in a particular surrounding, which is affected by our presence. The space we create by reflecting on our sensations, activities and other phenomena is structured by our being in a world.

I introduced the subject of the thesis by referring to Donna Haraway's call for feminist objectivity. Haraway stresses the importance of feminists being able to claim truth about the subordination of women. As Grosz notes, the very ground of feminism is women's experiences of being hurt by patriarchal norms – a recognition in line with Lugones's elevation of emotions as a source of knowledge about that there is something wrong. The experiences that ground feminist theory are often intimate, personal and subjective, as is the case with Lugones's failure to love her mother, and the methodological reflections I make about my anemic body. In knowledge paradigms where intimacy, engagement, emotionality, subjectivity and embodiment are opposed to objective,
trustworthy knowledge, crucial dimensions of feminist knowledge are muted, if feminist theory is cultivated into the disembodied epistemological ideal. The body/mind-dichotomy marks the body as unscientific and constructs embodied experience as the abject being of feminism, and emotions as the abject dimension of academic writing. The muting of embodied experience and emotion excludes certain experiences from feminist theory on misogynist grounds.

The role of bodily experiences in feminist theory is a central question in postmodern feminism. As Judith Butler argues, unreflected feminist reliance on female embodiment paradoxically reinforces the binary, heteronormative sex structure which makes bodies materialize as either male or female. Heinämaa and Iris Young question the credibility of any theory that claim general applicability, while excluding large realms of human experience, and failing to see the emotive embodiment that structures it as specific and power charged. Lugones argues that knowing ourselves and others without recognizing our bodies as differentiated through the norms of knowledge production essentializes hierarchies.

I argue that the phenomenological interest in how bodies and thought shape each other allows feminists to analyze differentiated bodies as structuring knowledge production, without reinstating their differentiation as essential or natural. Feminist phenomenologists approach embodied experience as the condition and the result of power charged, intersubjective knowledge production. As I argue in my discussion of Audre Lorde's encounter with a white woman on the subway train, our embodied experiences are never pure or isolated from our social situatedness. Lorde's knowledge about the event is constituted by memories of her black body continuously being perceived with hatred, and theoretical knowledge about racism. The confusion and shame both Lorde and Frantz Fanon feel when encountering racist perceptions of their bodies are not unmediated bodily experiences. These feelings are incorporations of a derogatory, alienated blackness, constituted by and constitutive of their embodied being in a racist world.

The phenomenological analysis of perception as structured by embodiment does not entail ascriptions of certain essential qualities to particular bodies. It is not a static black, female body that encounters a static white, female body on the subway train. The bodies materialize as raced and gendered through their socially and historically embedded encounter. Approaching embodied experience as constituted by and constitutive of the hierarchical differentiation of bodies means that analysis of experience entail analysis of how power structures shape and are shaped by these experiences. Feminist reliance on the experiences of female bodies does not have to reinstate any
static facts of embodiment as essentially female, if it analyzes these experiences as constituted by and constitutive of power charged female embodiment.

4. 2 Emotive Bodies and Intersectional Thinking

Throughout the thesis, I argue that if feminist epistemology settles for replacing white, male, heterosexual, able, wealthy embodiment as the implicit ground of theory with an essential, static female, queer, poor, crippled black embodiment, the relation between knowledge production and bodily differentiation is obscured. General accounts of static embodiment, no matter how widely defined and inclusive, reinstates the illusion of bodies as autonomous to power structures – as differentiated before, instead of through, knowledge production\(^{164}\).

Here, I argue that departing from knowledge as structured by specifically materialized, emotive bodies promotes intersectional understandings of embodiment, since bodies and emotions materialize in the intersection between interacting bodies, between our bodies and our surroundings, and between our subjective experiences and power structures. First, I discuss the intersectional potential of emotive embodiment as the ground of analysis. Second, and last, I reflect on the challenge of situating oneself as a subject of knowledge without relying on objectifying categories, through a reading of Canéla Jaramillo's “Postscript”.

Seeing emotions as intersubjective has intersectional potential, since emotions necessarily supersede any given categorization or familiar dichotomy, as they take shape between, and connect, different bodies. Approaching bodies as they are lived in a world shares the same intersectional potential\(^{165}\). We come to know ourselves, other subjects and our surroundings through emotive, embodied interaction. As we inhabit our world, bodies and emotions intersect in ways that will not be understood through seeing identities as the combination of a set of isolated categories. According to the phenomenological approach, we continuously shape the categories we are divided into by our being in a world. It is impossible to understand any given category or identity apart from our situated embodiment.

---

\(^{164}\) As Norma Alarcón argues, if mainstream feminism does not thoroughly question its construction of the subject of feminism, it risks reinstating a parody of the purified, male knower prevalent in Western epistemology, the only difference being that the male privileged knower is replaced by a female privileged knower. The construction of a privileged female knower obscures differences and relations among women – it obfuscates the fact that the construction is pursued through violence and exploitation along axis of race and class. See Alarcón p. 357 f.

\(^{165}\) Weiss argues that even when two people appear to share identical embodied relations to the power structures their world is shaped by, their experiences of those structures are differentiated by their subjective bodily being in a world. Weiss, Gail (2008) Refiguring the Ordinary. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. p. 6 f.
Seeing the processes through which bodies are differentiated in relation to specifically materialized and situated bodies promotes intersectional analysis, since bodies always supersede conceptual dichotomies. Departing from how specific bodies inhabit their world demands that we see them as structured by the particular hierarchies of that world. As I argue in relation to Butler's take on sexual differentiation, focusing on the circumstances under which sex materializes is an opening towards imagining a world in which bodies do not necessarily materialize as male or female. Butler shows that bodies materialize through sexual differentiation in heteronormative societies; not since they are essentially gendered. Accordingly, bodies materialize through racial differentiation in racialized societies – not since they harbor any inner, precultural race. Specific intersections of power charged intersubjective relations shape the materialization of specific bodies. These relations can not be known prior to, or apart from, the interaction of embodied subjects.

A performative approach to bodies, emotions and scholarly text connects the phenomenological concept of the lived body and my approach to emotive academic writing; performativity is one of the interconnections of the two themes of the thesis. As Silvia Stoller argues, the anti-essentialism in Merleau-Ponty's understanding of expressivity, which Heinämaa draws on in her understanding of emotions, and Butler's account of performativity, is that neither concept presupposes an essence or an agent before the action. My understanding of bodily differentiation and emotions as materialized through continuously repeated actions in intersubjective relations, instead of residing within bodies or written text, can be described as performative. I have argued that just like joy is in the smile, or in the sound of laughter, gender is in the performative acts through which we become intelligible men or women. Accordingly, I have argued that love, irritation and playfulness are not essences of the autonomous bodies of writers, readers or texts, but materialized through the process of knowledge production.

Seeing bodies and emotions from a performative perspective further clarifies their intersectional potential. Emotive bodies materialize as intersections of different subjects, and thus as intersections of a number of power structures, which shape the subject's self-experience, and which themselves

166 Butler uses the notion of performativity to show that gender comes into existence through continuously repeated actions and that there is no actor behind or before these actions, Stoller reminds us. According to Stoller, Butler detects a pre-discursive agent in Merleau-Ponty's concept expressivity and therefore considers it essentialist. Expressivity, viewed from Butler's perspective, implies a subject that expresses or acts out its inner core, its essence. Stollers argument is that this understanding of expressivity is inaccurate when it comes to Merleau-Ponty. In Stollers reading, Merleau-Ponty does not assume that bodily existence is preceded by an individual subject that expresses it. To her, expressivity is a collective and ongoing process of embodiment, much similar to performativity. Stoller p. 99 ff.

167 For a discussion on the connections between a butlerian understanding of gender and the lived body, see Young, Iris Marion (2005) “Lived Body vs. Gender: Reflections on Social Structure and Subjectivity” in Young (2005).
change through the subject's being in a world, encountering and shaping varying formations of power. Letting our analysis depart from particular bodies as they are lived in interplay with other bodies, without presupposing any inner essence of these bodies, but instead examining their interaction as the ground of their materialization, is a way to part with an understanding of bodies as shaped by isolated, autonomous power structures.

I see intersectionality as the recognition that subjects are constituted through interconnections of power structures that differ with situation. We are never subjectivated through one single, or any given set, of categories. This recognition stems from protests against the epistemological violence within knowledge paradigms that reinstate fixed accounts of subjectivity. Within feminism, narrow accounts of what it means to be a woman has excluded the experiences of for example poor, queer and non-white subjects. The concept of intersectionality is itself an intersection of postmodern feminism, postcolonialism, black feminism and queer theory.

The awareness of how white, middle-class, heterosexual women expropriate womanhood has not first and foremost lead to a widening of the definition, but to the question of whether is is at all desirable to ground feminist theory and politics on a given identity, no matter how wide it may be. Seeing knowledge as simultaneously structured by and constitutive of the world makes postmodern feminists wary of grounding emancipatory theories on the categories feminist theory aims at abolishing. Butler points out the paradoxical fact that subjects that participate in, and are represented by, feminist politics and theory must qualify as appropriate, intelligible, subjects within a paradigm in which this subjectivity is a ground of subordination. Simply widening the definition of womanhood risks, with Butler's words, annexing the differences that cast light on the fact that the concept itself is totalizing.

The reliance on a universalized womanhood not only excludes wide ranges of experience from feminist theory, but, as Butler argues, it also reinstates a hierarchical, binary gender structure, through a constant comparison and differentiation between men and women. This is deeply problematic from an intersectional perspective, since this comparison separates the particularities of women from other systems, such as class and race; differences between men and women are overemphasized, at the expense of differences between women. Gender becomes the sole ground

---

168 For a more extensive discussion of intersectionality, see Lykke, Nina (2003) ”Intersektionalitet – ett användbart begrepp för genusforskningen.” Kvinnovetenskaplig Tidskrift 1.03. p. 48.
169 Butler (1990) p. 50.
170 Butler (1990) p. 64.
171 Satu Gröndahl and Paulina de los Reyes advocate accounts of intersectionality that allow us to supersede questions
of subjectivity, and since it is stripped of all particularities, it becomes an empty and reductionist category that fails to explain the experiences of all subjects – those whose experiences are excluded, as well as those who are privileged by womanhood as defined within mainstream feminism\textsuperscript{172}.

Nina Lykke argues that the interaction of power structures, and the situation in which the subject crosses the intersection of structures must be understood as dynamic\textsuperscript{173}. There is no fixed intersection of power, nor is there a given pedestrian crossing at which the subject awaits and is struck by power\textsuperscript{174}. Since we are, speaking with Maria Lugones, different in different “worlds”, we are structured by and structuring power in various and complex ways. Our bodies are not only the sites where power is at play, but the sites where power is structured through our relations with other subjects. Our bodies and our relations change over time and differ between our “worlds”.

Lykke argues that intersectionality, and its sensitivity to temporal and locational differences, makes feminists ask new questions about the hybrid, diverse and complex process of subjectivity in postmodern society. Gender, ethnicity, sexuality, class and nationality are some categories whose meanings and interactions change and differ. Intersectionality, therefore, is not a fixed theory. Instead, Lykke argues that it helps us see the dynamic and fluidity in the interconnection of categories, which may be analyzed from a number of theoretical perspectives\textsuperscript{175}.

Here, I have argued that a departure from emotive bodies as power-charged promotes anti-essentialist and intersectional understandings of bodily differentiation – a departure that does not need to be tied up to any single theoretical framework. I see the temporal, locational, emotional differences of embodied, subjective lives as a way of asking new questions and developing theoretical perspectives from which to understand bodily differentiation. Bodies help us see fluidity in the power structures of our worlds. As my accounts of emotive academic writing and feminist phenomenology both show, as we see and analyze embodied power structures, they change.

about how subordinating structures coincide, and direct us towards examining how inequalities are structured through processes of discrimination. Instead of reinstating gender as an overarching category, or umbrella term, that varies with ethnicity, class and sexuality, they suggest a focus on the formations of power in specific situations and contexts. This focus redirects us from seeing gender as an overarching analytical category which is stable, though modified in different ways, to examining how categories assume different meanings and limits depending on when and where they are created and how they intersect other temporally and spatially specific power structures. de los Reyes, Paulina and Gröndahl, Satu (2007) Framtidens feminismer. Intersektionella interventioner i den feministiska debatten. Stockholm: Tankekraft Förlag. p. 14.
172 Butler (1990) p. 53.
173 Lykke p. 48.
174 I am inspired by Foucault in seeing power as ever present in our relations, not as something that strikes us from above, but something that we recreate through our interactions with others.
175 Lykke p. 52.
4. 3 Situated Knowers

As a Gender Studies student, I have learned to situate myself in relation to a number of categories of identity in order to show awareness of the limitations and particularities of knowledge production. I have seen admitting to a particular gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality, et cetera, as a way to create transparency in my text. Throughout the work of this thesis, analyzing the categorization of bodies as part of their differentiation, has made me question this. Becoming aware of the role of emotions in knowledge production has made me wonder whether accounting for a number of categories clarify the role of our situated bodies in knowledge production, or if it hides the mutual change inherent in embodied knowledge behind a number of objectifying, static names.

Here, I touch on some of the problems of sorting our bodies into a set of categories in order to situate ourselves as knowers. I continue to emphasize that an embodied, emotive point of departure clarifies that the role of our bodies in knowledge production is always intersectional.

Mikela Lundahl discusses Butler's arguments about the deleterious effects of a countless naming of axes of subordination. The list of deviations from the norm grows in pace with the development of new theories, and may pass as a growing awareness about the power structures that constitute our lives. We tend to account carefully for all axes of subordination we can think of, and, in order to show awareness of its insufficiency, we end the list with “et cetera”. While the lengths of our lists may well say something about the growing body of knowledge about the specific bodily norms that structure each situation, it risks functioning as an alibi for our necessarily limited knowledge about power structures. It is easy to hide some of the categories I have little experience or knowledge of, and feel unaffected by, behind an “et cetera”. It is a guilty pleasure, however, since I have the feeling that I am supposed to care equally about the effects of all power structures.

My point is not that we willingly exclude some aspects of power structures, but that the listing of categories and the use of “et cetera” hides our bodily and emotional limits. I sometimes get the feeling that we are repeating a modification of what Donna Haraway refers to as a “God Trick”, when we claim that our knowledge is structured by a number of identities that we fixate in our texts.

177 Haraway describes the illusion of seeing everything from nowhere, of knowing without being known, and touching without being touched, as a God Trick. See Haraway (1988) for a fuller description of the concept.
as if we could exhaust their meaning and predict the ways they affect our thinking and feeling. As if we were upset about the fact that we are limited, and try to trick our bodies into being as transparent as possible by putting them into writing. This bears similarities to what Grosz sees as the goal of somatophobic epistemology: to overcome the distortions of the body, or at least make bodies transparent, in order to distinguish corporeality from rationality.\textsuperscript{178}

From this perspective, naming a number of categories creates the illusion that our bodies are a knowable transparencies in text. Though our bodies are named as aspects of knowledge, their roles in knowledge production are cultivated and muted to fit into the disembodied ideal prevalent in academic text. Reading Canéla Jaramillo's "Postscript" made me see the naming of our bodies as a cultivation of our emotions and experiences into the logic of clean, unified identities.\textsuperscript{179}

Jaramillo captures the normative dimensions of the imperative of accounting for the categories we belong to. It presupposes that we are able to pick apart our bodies, emotions and experiences until they fit into a number of categories. Having ambiguous relations to the categories we confess to makes this process especially problematic. All subjects are ambiguous in relation to categories, since we supersede the names we use for self-description by that very naming. If we are to describe ourselves at all, reducing our bodies is unavoidable. But, as I argue in "Emotive Academic Writing", the significance of our bodily residue as we are divided into categories, differ. Since, for example the term "woman" is normatively defined by the embodied experiences of white, middle-class, heterosexual women, the residue for a subject that is fairly close to the norm is considerably smaller than if the categorizing excludes crucial dimensions of your body. As for Jaramillo, her ambiguous relation to the category "Chicana" makes it hard for her to account for her ethnicity:

\begin{quote}
The subject of my own ethnicity has not been explored in this piece; it was, in truth, one of the reasons I was so long in preparing this manuscript for you. I troubled myself for several months over the significance of a Latina heritage in my life, and realized that it was a question with which I have been grappling for many years. Cherrie Moraga's thoughtful essay "La Güera" comes closer to defining some of my confusion/guilt than other literature (or party lines), yet Cherrie can at least claim her culture through immersion, if not "appearance", while I was separated from my Chicano father and his dark family when I was very young.\textsuperscript{180}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{178} Grosz (1994) p. 10.
\textsuperscript{179} For a discussion of the raced and gendered implications of imagining subjectivity as unified and consisting of a number of separate, compatible experiences, see for example Lugones, María (1994) "Purity, Impurity and Separation" Signs (1994) 19:2.
Not quite white, “coming out of eight years at a lily-white Catholic school”, Jaramillo finds out that her original surname is not, as she had been told, Cindy, but Canéla. Identifying with the black people from her childhood neighborhood, though not passing as black, “Chicana” explains her relation to the dominance of White, middle-class culture more than anything else:

I didn't even begin to speak Spanish until I was in high school and, while it comes easily to me and is a source of great beauty in my life, I still return, almost unconsciously, to black “street talk” often - especially when I am angry. Yet, oddly, when I began college at fashionable and wealthy USCD, black women where the first to scrutinize and avoid me, until they discovered I wasn't white! I have one friend who still insists on forewarning her guests, “she looks Anglo, but she's Chicana”. Secret password. 181

In relation to Jaramillo's description of how her identity take on new meanings throughout her life, as she comes to know herself in different “worlds”, it strikes me that the naming of categories fixates the depicted subject in time and space, as if the subject is painted on canvas; as if we consist of dried paint whose colors might once have been mixed into suitable nuances, but that will no longer change, once the portrait has dried. The problem is, of course, that we change; naming the most recent identity or experience does not capture the significance of a given category. Weiss describes identity as “continuously constructed and reconstructed out of past, present and future intersubjective experiences” 182. This is an accurate description of how Jaramillo's identity as a Chicana woman form through the course of her growing up and starting to identify as a lesbian:

And the women […]. We were nothing unless we could stay off drugs and alcohol or away from pregnancy long enough to keep our desirability: “beauty”. Most of us didn't. All of us – men and women alike – are scarred now, our forces marred, our teeth ugly, out voices brazen and somehow paranoid. And the fury. I got out of there early – left home at fourteen – because my mother's was already dead. A practicing alcoholic, she's been telling me since she was thirty, “My life is over”. […] Shit. But I went out the wrong way, like most of us, at first, because we didn't have tools to make a smooth transition from the coarseness of the streets to the unblemished facade of the universities, corporates, whatever. I used my body against the way my mother had used hers: fucking but never cooking, cleaning or loving. […] Later, I married a gentle white man, grew a garden, baked bread, had a baby. […] So after one and a half years marriage, I fell in love with a woman – first in a long string of “broken children” I began to collect, trying to nurse my own pain, to rock it to sleep. 183

181 Jaramillo p. 77.
183 Jaramillo p. 78.
Trying to refer to Jaramillo's text without simplifying it, I lean on quotes that are too long and too many. I see this as a reminder of the residue of disciplining embodied experience into academic text. Borrowing Jaramillo's words, there are no tools to make a smooth transition from the coarseness of bodies and emotions to the unblemished facade of scholarly text. Writing the quote above, I was looking for a place to put the dot. I was trying to tell the most efficient way to make my point, only to realize that this is the very problem Jaramillo's text alerts me to: there is no given demarcation, because our experiences and our bodies supersede every categorization and description. Jaramillo writing her postscript, telling us why she finds it hard to account for her ethnicity, is yet another relation between her body, her text, and us as readers, a new experience, a changed identity, which will not be captured in its entirety, because every attempt at catching it means an ongoing movement of embodied text. I read the following, concluding, quote as a description of the indeterminate relations between embodiment, emotions and knowledge:

This is getting off track. The point is, I think, that I can never (or haven't) just pinpoint any event or series of circumstances or even emotions that I can label “Chicana”. […] Yes, there is a commonality between me and the lower-class women of color I grew up with and continue to meet. And, coupled with my lesbianism, there is a fervent bond with all despised peoples. I just haven't been able to categorize it all... not yet. My lover now […] is one of the most apolitical women I've ever met [...]. She's only just beginning to understand, and is often shocked by, the implications of her heritage – as a Latina and a lesbian. When we were stopped and searched at a border check near San Onofre, la migra harassed her so badly that when they asked her citizenship, she stammered, “Garden Grove” - where she was born, near L.A. She just didn't get it. I guess I don't get it either, not all of it. I hope this helps explain the absence of that aspect in my work.

My reading of Jaramillo is a gesture towards how departing from the experiences of a specific, emotive body makes clear that the role of bodies in knowledge production is not captured by any single, or any combination of, categories. It suggests that we can come to new understandings of the role of the categories we examine through lived, emotive embodiment. The only foresight I can make about these new understandings is that they depend on the knowing and known bodies, as they are doubly constituted in a world, and that they will point forward, as they are woven into embodied text. Seeing emotive bodies as the power charged foundations of knowledge production requires recognitions of that our analyzing and naming bodies constitutes a new, embodied relation between writers and readers, between our subjective experiences and power structures, and between our bodies and the knowledge we produce. It requires and promotes an openness to surprise.

---

184 Jaramillo p. 78-79.
Literature


Brännström Öhman, Annelie (2008) “Show me some emotion! Om emotionella läckage i akademiska texter och rum”. Tidskrift för genusvetenskap 2.08.


Irigaray, Luce (1985) This sex which is not one. New York: Cornell University Press.


