

Feminist Storytelling and Narratives of Intersectionality

Storytelling is a focal part of any critical work. As an intersectional enthusiast, I have applied intersectionality to my own research, taught it to students, presented papers, and followed theoretical debates on it—eagerly mapping the narratives of intersectionality for years. I have often been confronted with negativity toward intersectionality, however, making me wonder why it is discussed with such passion. In this article, I will analyze story lines and affects that have become recurrent within debates on intersectionality and examine what we can know about intersectionality in the light of this storytelling. How do the narrative habits of feminist storytelling affect intersectionality? Intersectional studies comprise almost as much metaspeech about intersectionality as a concept, paradigm, method, heuristic device, or buzzword as research applying it to concrete social situations and cultural products. In 2005 Gudrun-Axeli Knapp even wrote that mentioning intersectionality signaled, during its heyday, that the scholar was well informed, politically correct, and following the latest trends (255). However, this fast-traveling theory needed to be examined and defined more closely in academic discussions, turning intersectionality into a target of particularly critical debates. Here, I would like to concentrate on enthusiasm about intersectionality and ask: Do we risk losing ethical enthusiasm and compassion in suspicious, fault-finding feminist storytelling?

I will first consider feminist storytelling along the lines provided by Rita Felski in *The Limits of Critique* (2015), Robyn Wiegman in *Object Lessons* (2014), and Clare Hemmings in *Why Stories Matter* (2011). After that, I will analyze some recurrent story lines of intersectional debates in detail. These story lines concern genealogy and originalism; intersectionality's relation to black feminism; the narratives of revising and correcting it, revealing its "false" promises; direct critiques; issues of levels; problems concerning categories; and finally traveling and regional differences. To conclude, I offer an alliance with Felski's postcritical reading to develop new enthusiasm about, and engagement with, intersectionality.

I am deeply grateful to Turku Institute for Advanced Studies (TIAS) for funding my research during the writing process of this article.

The feminist critic as storyteller

In *Limits of Critique* (2015), Felski examines a mode of interpretation that she calls, drawing from Paul Ricoeur, the “hermeneutics of suspicion,” often utilized by critics and scholars. Felski analyzes the scholarly habit of criticality, which reaches measures of “outright condemnation” (2), as a scholarly virtue. According to her, critique, the urge to be critical in order not to be uncritical, is as much “a matter of affect and rhetoric as of philosophy or politics” (3). Here I will analyze the kind of criticality that is present in debates on intersectionality, which are also imbued with several affects—from enthusiasm to condescension, pity, fear, and suspicion. Critical thinking is regarded as the ultimate virtue of a good scholar. This is particularly true in feminist scholarship—within which concepts such as objectivity and neutrality have been questioned as sites of bias and power. Felski considers all kinds of critical traditions, from the Frankfurt school to Michel Foucault, that are imbued with the hermeneutics of suspicion. She asks: “There is, after all, something perplexing about the ease with which a certain style of reading has settled into the default option. Why is it that critics are so quick off the mark to interrogate, unmask, expose, subvert, unravel, demystify, destabilize, take issue, and take umbrage? . . . Why is critique so frequently feted as the most serious and scrupulous form of thought? What intellectual and imaginative alternatives does it overshadow, obscure, or overrule? And what are the costs of such ubiquitous criticality?” (Felski 2015, 5).

Felski tackles the hermeneutics of suspicion by mapping what kinds of plotlines scholarly criticality takes, and how these plotlines are structured through narrative conventions. Critics’ repertoires vary from rhetorical ploys to collecting motives and clues, finding a guilty party, weaving clandestine connections, decoding signs, and revealing wrongdoings—or, to put it briefly, acting as an investigator (2015, 87). Moreover, each particular scholarly discussion also begins to create its own kinds of plot patterns, which start to organize our arguments: to describe and to locate the objective of a study, to state what “we all know,” not to say what “goes without saying” or to “state the obvious.” Plot patterns define our topics, subjects, and passions as “current” or “obsolete,” affectively saturating scholarly stories (see also Hemmings 2011; Tomlinson 2013b). I argue that the debate on intersectionality is particularly affectively saturated. Intersectionality was considered a new tool for solving the problems of poststructural theory; it seemed like a savior for lost feminist unity, causing its opponents to shoot down this straw (wo)man by focusing on its weaknesses. Provoked by this affective criticality, I want to ask: Is there a political power in enthusiasm beyond the hermeneutics of suspicion?

Hemmings has insightfully analyzed how feminists tell stories and why feminist storytelling should be explored. According to her, the way we tell stories matters because it “intersects with wider institutionalizations of gendered meanings” (2011, 1). Hemmings emphasizes the amenability of feminist storytelling, claiming that feminist scholars need to pay attention to their own epistemic habits from “stories, narrative constructs, and grammatical forms to discursive uses of gender and feminism” in order to disentangle ourselves from them “if history is not simply to repeat itself” (2). Intersectionality, too, includes guiding narratives about what blind spots need to be illuminated or which weaknesses must be revised (see Tomlinson 2013b, 995). My metatheoretical reading does not intend to perform the Harawayan “god-trick of infinite vision” on intersectionality but rather to practice the “feminist objectivity” that Donna Haraway connects to translating knowledges between situated communities.¹ The stories I consider pervasive at the moment are as heuristic as intersectionality itself; they invite new narrative possibilities and debate with the epistemic habits of intersectionality.

Feminist objectivity also acknowledges the narrative conditions of theoretical debates. In *Object Lessons* (2014), Wiegman scrutinizes the “field imaginary,” or “the disciplinary unconscious” (14) that frames any critical identity knowledge such as intersectionality. The disciplinary unconscious presumes protocols and interpretative vocabularies that scholars use to express their belonging to the field. Wiegman emphasizes the rhetorical forms of critical arguments—the “shape of the conversations” that identity knowledges tend to “stage and sustain” or “deflect and avoid”—in order to grasp their modes of knowing (2014, 5). Wiegman’s lessons are reminiscent of Hemmings’s use of the term “technologies of the presumed” (2011, 16) to examine the dominant epistemic habits that, through their pervasiveness, gain a “status of common sense,” carrying a certain political grammar for feminist theorizing, which then gets reproduced and embellished (20). My interest here lies in the field imaginary of intersectionality.

Both Wiegman and Hemmings link affect with rhetorical forms of feminist knowing. Hemmings claims that she is interested in “affect as a core part of political grammar” (2011, 21), and Wiegman claims that any inquiry into the field imaginary of identity knowledge is “incomplete without attending to the affective investments” produced by its critical commitments

¹ See Haraway (1988, 580 and 582–83). The effort of mapping the metaspeech concerning intersectionality is not new. Intersectional debates have been reflected to some extent in several articles. See, e.g., Bilge (2010), Nash (2011, 2016), Kerner (2012), and Carbin and Edenheim (2013).

(2014, 241). This affective field imaginary is particularly true in the case of intersectionality. Besides passionate commitments, however, intersectionality is filled with passionate detachments: metaspeech concerning intersectionality may be filled with enthusiasm and inspiration, but it is also filled with suspicion and underestimation. Even among intersectional enthusiasts there have been discussions on whether others were doing it wrong, or mis-citing some key texts. The passionate nature of feminist discussions is no novelty: as Hemmings argues, the emotional appeals in feminist narratives. The teller of tales is positioned “as heroic, triumphant, wounded, or marginalized in turn” (2011, 24). In the following, I turn to the emotions within narratives of intersectionality and ask what kind of political grammar they carry.

Intersectionality as narrative

Intersectionality has been narrated both in terms of suspicion and in terms of enthusiasm. It has been blamed for lacking methodology, turning into a bureaucratic discourse, recycling black feminism, silencing real differences by talking about abstract complexities, stabilizing black women as eternal exemplary victims, being weak in theory, losing particular histories of particular vectors of identity, foregrounding identity and losing sight of structures, foregrounding structures and losing sight of identity constitution, creating a false consensus within feminism, and eternalizing certain categories by talking about them, to mention just a few of the critiques (see, e.g., May 2015). Intersectionality had to be revised, rethought, redefined, revealed, reexamined, and challenged. But it is also interpreted as providing an example of good feminist theory that initiates new discoveries and stimulates creativity (Davis 2008, 79). The affective and revisionary metaspeech about intersectionality has become extensive—framing it with “prevalent readings” (Carastathis 2016, 8) and “paradigmatic protocols” (Wiegman 2014, 249), which refer to much-repeated narratives on intersectionality.

From the point of view of academic storytelling, Maria Carbin and Sara Edenheim’s (2013) contribution to the debates on intersectionality is one of the most interesting. Carbin and Edenheim define their research question as follows: “to examine how intersectionality has become a success story and why the concept has developed in a signifier of ‘good research’” (2013, 234) while revealing intersectionality as an empty signifier. Their metaspeech represents the kind of rhetoric that I wish to map: Intersectionality is presented as a success story that actually signifies things other than the conclusions of its research topic. It affectively signifies something that is seemingly good and current but is actually suspicious and alarming, in need of being rectified.

Moreover, Carbin and Edenheim amplify in note 1 that “this introduction follows the *canonical narrative* of the concept and we wish to re-narrate it” (2013, 245; emphasis added). What interests me here is not the result of the renarration but the very act of renarrating a scholarly narrative. The authors of the article do not clearly define “the canonical narrative,” but it remains presumed and known, a state of the obvious. Randi Gressgård, for her part, refers to “the dominant evaluative standards” (2008, 2). I argue that references to “dominant evaluative standards” narrate such standards into being and compose narrative truths about intersectionality. I contend that by examining the storytelling, the rhetorical conventions of any theoretical discussion, we may cross-light a more amplified picture, for instance on intersectionality and its presumed standards.

Barbara Tomlinson (2013b) has analyzed the power that feminist scholars use “at the scene of argument,” particularly in the case of intersectionality. Following Louis Althusser, she considers reading and interpreting to be material social practices that function as technologies of power (2013b, 994). Tomlinson claims that the rectifying power used at the scene of the argument has often led to “destructive and distorted critiques of intersectionality” rather than to aims “to foster intersectionality’s ability to critique subordination” (2013b, 993, 996). While Tomlinson analyzes critiques of intersectionality, my aim is to examine the stories framing discussions on intersectionality at large. Academic storytelling has conventions that may be political, historically contingent, or even ideological. By focusing on them, I respond to the challenge of critical self-reflection by Rita Kaur Dhamoon to persistently reevaluate “dogmas about terms and discursive frames” (2011, 240). My intention is not to compete on the level of theoretical abstraction by writing metatext about metatext but to be ethically involved in, and engaged with reevaluating, intersectionality as a tool studying jeopardized experiences and structural inequalities, maybe even beyond the hermeneutics of suspicion.

At this point, it is impossible to analyze thoroughly all contributions to intersectionality debates, the mappings, revisitings, critiques, unsettlings, outlooks, complexities, rethinkings, representations, replications, considerations, accounts, challenges, framings, and guides that have been skillfully written on intersectionality. As Devon W. Carbado and his coauthors (2013) explain, intersectionality is always provisional and incomplete, “a work-in-progress, functioning as a condition of possibility” (304). The story lines that I am able to analyze are provisional and heuristic as well, a work-in-progress. Intersectionality should be mobile, affectively debated, and proliferating. The narratives that seem to predominate from my situated epistemological frame, as a white feminist scholar sitting in an office at a Finnish

university, are undoubtedly limited. The story lines I analyze below are tentative openings—suggesting that other stories could be told—yet directing the current debates.

Genealogy and black feminism

Intersectionality has stabilized its place in academic feminist discussions. Yet it is particular to intersectionality, more so than to any other theoretical tool, that its beginnings are renarrated in the texts applying the term. The politics of introduction is extremely important in feminist, passionate storytelling. Genealogy, starting with the Combahee River Collective's manifesto and naming Kimberlé Crenshaw as the one who coined the term "intersectionality" in 1989, is often carefully described in articles about intersectionality—so well that Gail Lewis names it "a well-rehearsed story" (2013, 871), and Wiegman refers to "the narrative of intersectionality's belated arrival" (2014, 244). However, I argue that the story should also be well rehearsed "if history is not simply to repeat itself" (Hemmings 2011, 2)—this history being that the global North produces knowledge about the global South. With the genealogical narrative, the scholar honors the African American feminist and activist roots of intersectionality and practices the politics of introduction.

Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge (2016) have analyzed the genealogy narrative insightfully, particularly the individualized story of Crenshaw doing the coining. According to them, Crenshaw "fitted the academic norms of ownership and cultural capital" (81) while the coining was "repeated verbatim" (83) by scholars addressing intersectionality.² With this claim, they encourage the reader to analyze how intersectionality has been "invited to settle down within . . . the established frames of knowledge production" (87). Crenshaw's coining has become such a well-rehearsed narrative that it seems to have gained metonymic qualities. As a poetic concept, "metonymy" refers to one thing being named as something closely related to it. It is possible to introduce the term "intersectionality" by stating that "the term was coined and the field established in the late 1980s" (Salem 2016, 403–4). Here, the mention of coining summons forth Crenshaw, even though she is not directly named. To counter the established frames of this individualist

² Hill Collins and Bilge do not aim to diminish Crenshaw's role in the process of academically articulating intersectionality. Rather, by analyzing the argumentation of her articles "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex" (1989) and "Mapping the Margins" (1991), they prove the strengths of Crenshaw's contribution (2016, 81–87).

story, Hill Collins and Bilge (2016, 65–77) seek to introduce multiple genealogies of intersectionality (Chicana, Latina, Native American, and Asian American feminisms) and intersectionality as a social movement and activism, even occurring prior to the Combahee River Collective—thus practicing the politics of introduction.

Genealogy is a powerful narrative within intersectional studies. In Bilge’s article, “Intersectionality Undone” (2013), she highlights two arguments that are often used to whiten the intersectionality narrative: intersectionality as a brainchild of feminism and the claim that the genealogy of intersectionality must be broadened (413–19). Bilge takes issue with whitening as a “political economy of genealogical and thematic re-framings” (412), referring to attempts to remove intersectionality from black history and activism. The claims made on the politics of genealogy have been so compelling that currently the story of intersectionality’s provenance has to include the facts that it arose from black feminist activism, was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, and is currently falsely represented as having emerged from the academic feminism of the global North (see, e.g., Salem 2016, 407). By actively reminding ourselves of intersectionality’s radical roots in the activism of feminists of color, we do not lose sight of the theory’s political horizon.

Moreover, by keeping in mind intersectionality’s origins, we do not comply with the narrative of exceptionalism (Mulinari et al. 2009), the idea that racial conflicts are irrelevant for example in Nordic countries—where only gender and class are claimed to be topical. By rooting intersectionality in critical race studies, we also mobilize race as part of feminist discussions and do not repeat the binary of “those who experience” and “those who know” (Lewis 2013, 873). Detaching black feminism from intersectionality would obscure the centrality of race from intersectional discussions. Crenshaw herself argues that “there is a sense that efforts to repackage intersectionality for universal consumption require a re-marginalising of black women” (Crenshaw 2012, 224)—providing the grounds for why the politics of introduction should, and must, be practiced. Thus, the genealogical narrative of intersectionality turns into a critical praxis against burgeoning versions of intersectionality.

I would like to conclude by pointing out that the narrative habit of removing the contributions of black feminism and obscuring Civil Rights movement activism in introducing intersectionality does not seem to be as common as claimed. Rather, it has turned into a narrative story line as ethically engaged scholars are reclaiming black feminist heritage. One could even claim that the narrative of removed and reclaimed black feminism is much more common than the versions that actually remove the activist roots

of intersectionality.³ For Jennifer Nash, this kind of reclaiming reaches measures of “originalism,” where a return to the inaugural texts of intersectionality and a “deep engagement with Crenshaw” are claimed in order to perform fidelity to foundational writings (2016, 4–5). According to Nash, this leads to the paradox of intersectionality’s past turning into its future, as originalism is affectively evoked in narratives that either evaluate, rescue, or forget its institutionalized presence (2016, 4–11). Originalism becomes a reading strategy that, by adhering to foundational texts, justifies the writer’s attempts to expand, revise, safeguard, or mainstream intersectionality (Nash 2016, 12–18). However, I argue that the affective act of engaging with black feminism in scholarly articles also confers the defining priority on radical knowledge. Reclaiming black feminist genealogy and repeating the provenance narrative is thus an ethical practice—which should not turn into parochial nostalgia or a blunt tool safeguarding one’s own arguments from criticism.

The second (meta)narrative of intersectionality considers its current relationship with black feminism. Is intersectionality merely another name for black feminism, or has it developed into something else? This narrative is often polarized into two strands, namely those who cannot imagine intersectionality without black feminism and those for whom intersectionality should also be directed toward other intersecting identities to avoid stabilizing black women as sample victims. Here, I claim that historical approaches to intersectionality must include the multifaceted tradition of black feminism if it is not to be turned into a static and appropriated form of knowledge ripped from its roots in political and poetic radicalism (Ilmonen 2019).

In the North American context, Carbado envisions a “colorblind intersectionality” (2013). He speaks about intersectional invisibility, which means that intersectional theory tends to not see other kinds of differences while reifying the experiences of African American women as essential subjects of intersectionality. Carbado reminds us that African American women also experience a distinctive matrix of advantages and disadvantages (2013, 814). According to Carbado, “framing intersectionality as only about women of

³ Actually, the recognition of black feminist activism is left out very seldom. Those writers who address the genealogy of intersectionality often also credit black feminism and activism: see, e.g., Hill Collins (1998), Brah and Phoenix (2004), Prins (2006), Erel et al. (2008), Nash (2008, 2011), Hornscheidt (2009), Lewis (2009, 2013), Levine-Rasky (2011), Lutz et al. (2012), Yuval-Davis (2012), Carbado et al. (2013), Tomlinson (2013a), Davis (2014), Lutz (2014), May (2015), Carastathis (2016), Salem (2016), and Ilmonen (2019). As any reader can see, these are examples; one could never do justice to the body of academic work written about intersectionality. Another thing is that the above-mentioned authors are all writing about intersectionality itself. Black feminism might be more discredited in a body of work applying intersectionality to research for other purposes than to discuss intersectionality as a concept.

color gives masculinity, whiteness, and maleness an intersectional pass . . . further naturalizing white male heterosexuality as the normative baseline against which the rest of us are intersectionally differentiated” (2013, 841).⁴

Colorblind intersectionality reminds us that majority-inclusive arguments have been developed, for instance by Cynthia Levine-Rasky (2011). Levine-Rasky argues that the dominant positionality is always embedded in intersectionality, both as part of a complex and ambivalent identity formation and in its emphasis on relationality, in which oppression and domination are regarded as co-conditional (239). Thus, intersectionality also provides knowledge of the norm that defines the sphere outside the norm. Whiteness and middle-classness, for example, are not mere facts but depend on the practices of the symbolic cultural capital that they enable. Whiteness, as is stated in critical whiteness studies, is an invented construct blending history, culture, assumptions, and attitudes (see Frankenberg 1999). In a way, an intersectional ethos forces vectors of domination, such as whiteness and middle-classness, to appear as race and class, stripping away their position as invisible norms. Vivian May argues that privilege and oppression are experienced and structured simultaneously: they are relational, and “addressing underprivilege requires identifying and dismantling overprivilege” (2015, 23). On the other hand, for some scholars, as quoted by May, intersectionality is “disadvantaged by its focus on disadvantage” (119). She refers to scholars who consider that intersectionality’s insistence on black feminism might even hinder its important justice-oriented work.⁵

However, it would be unethical to obscure intersectionality’s relationship to its conceptual home in black feminism. Lewis (2013), Tomlinson (2013a), and Bilge (2013) have criticized white academic liberal feminism for “undoing” intersectionality in order to promote it as a brainchild of feminism or Marxist feminism.⁶ The knowledge from the margins has been hijacked and whitewashed in order to be harnessed as the “proper” and rational way of doing theory. Tomlinson, for one, argues that “the critics utilize structures of argument that *evoke histories of racial hierarchy and colonialism*, treating the intersectionality of US women of color as a site to colonize

⁴ For more on majority-inclusive arguments, see, e.g., Staunæs (2003), Nash (2008), Levine-Rasky (2011), and Carbado (2013).

⁵ For more about this discussion, see May (2015, 119–25).

⁶ While the two narratives of intersectionality as having its genesis either in Marxist feminism or radical feminism of color are often seen as contradicting, Sara Salem reminds us that many black feminists explicitly aligned themselves with Marxism. The Combahee River Collective, for instance, address themselves as “socialists” and “in essential agreement with Marx’s theory” (1982, 16–17). Salem notes that the Marxism of radical feminists of color is not often included in the intersectionality “canon” (2016, 406).

and control” (2013a, 254). The discussion in “European academia” about shortcomings and definitions has appropriated the radical knowledge of feminists of color as “metatheoretical musings” (Bilge 2013, 411). Antje Hornscheidt suspects that intersectionality has been easier to integrate into hegemonic knowledge production if it is introduced with an apparatus of theoretical revisions by esteemed scholars, not by activists such as the Combahee River Collective or by radical thinkers such as Audre Lorde (Hornscheidt 2009, 34–40). According to Nash, intersectionality has been the “home truth” of black feminism from the beginning, as intersectionality gave name “to a practice that black feminists had been engaged in for decades” (2011, 449). I argue that for these reasons, the narrative of intersectionality’s relationship to black feminism is (and must be) repeated, even if it is applied to dominant positions. It is less about stabilizing black women as sample victims than about recognizing the long history of intersectionality within radical feminism of color.

Clues, crimes, and empty promises

According to Felski (2015), scholarly criticism often brings to mind the detection of a guilty party. Like a sleuth, the critic investigates crimes, clues, and criminals, harnessing the hermeneutics of suspicion to detect wrongdoings, “knowing that a crime has taken place” (98; see also 91–97). In this section, my aim is to address a second set of narratives often present in scholarly texts about intersectionality: revisiting intersectionality, revealing its empty promises, and imposing direct criticisms. A good scholar is never vigilant enough in detecting the invisible engagements of a text. The art of the critic is to unveil what is “camouflaged and kept from view” (Felski 2015, 98). In this pursuit, according to Felski, invisibility is the first clue that must be “recognized and interpreted by an expert” (98). Intersectionality is to be investigated and corrected in order to be stripped of the buzz surrounding it—as if enthusiasm could never coexist with scholarly proficiency.

Hemmings claims that correctives have been an integral part of feminist storytelling. Feminists have consistently sought “to tell other stories than dominant ones,” genuinely pulling toward “the corrective and the multiple” (2011, 12, 13). Paradoxically enough, these corrective stories have a corollary effect of constituting the dominant story as something stable and unwilling to traverse boundaries. In a similar manner, the constant tendency to narratively revise and rethink intersectionality consolidates the idea of a dominant intersectionality, a version that must be revisited even though this version exists only in revisitations. The urge to revisit intersectionality, I argue, is the writer’s narrative device to establish herself in a radical position suggesting something “else,” something more political, philosophical, and

insightful. Hemmings suggests that “the realization of feminist theory’s multiplicity, then, leads me to want to analyze not so much what other truer history we might write, but the politics that produce and sustain one version of history as more true” (2011, 15). In the case of intersectionality, we ought to analyze the consequences of intersectionality being defined through revisiting and correcting.

The narrative of revisiting also has political effects. Intersectionality is seen as always failing, filled with flaws that must be corrected. Tomlinson calls this a “rhetoric of rejection and replacement” that presents intersectionality as stuck, passé, and parochial (2013b, 1000–1005). According to May, this kind of discourse risks appropriating “the intellectual labors of women of color, as if their ideas were raw material” (2015, 109) for white academics. While intersectionality has also benefited greatly from the narrative strategy of revisiting, it may easily turn into a strategic caricature in the face of re-reading or renaming it. Intersectionality may be revisited from several angles: Hill Collins and Bilge from the perspective of praxis (2016), Avtar Brah and Ann Phoenix by revisiting the history (2004), Nash from the angle of methodology and inclusiveness (2008), Sylvia Walby from the context of social theory (2007), and myself from the point of view of Caribbean studies (Ilmonen 2017), to name only a few. May has a point in asking what it means “when critics render intersectionality as the fixed ground against which more viable ideas or practices are mobilized” (2015, 104). I argue that intersectionality is inclusive of all the corrections: there is no coherent and intact intersectionality beyond these revisitations. And maybe we need to keep on revisiting in order to preserve intersectionality’s radical and mobile nature, to grasp the question of “what intersectionality does rather than what intersectionality is” (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013, 795).⁷

The fourth narrative inherent in many writings about intersectionality is related to the previous narrative, but it reveals rather than revisits. According to this suspicious narrative, intersectionality’s promises must be revealed to be insufficient, empty, or incompetent in order to show that a scholar has given the matter proper thought. Some academics have considered how intersectionality makes promises it cannot keep, while others narrate the sequel that intersectionality cannot keep its promises *any more*. Intersectionality has lost something innocent and pure, and it should be returned to its original roots, whether to activism, legal studies, or heuristics. Hemmings

⁷ I do not mean that intersectionality should not be revised. All theories need to be debated. However, I agree with Tomlinson, who separates rhetorics of rectification from rhetorics of repair, meaning intimate involvement in the development of arguments, not distant and patronizing rectification (2013b, 1002).

separates three different, interlocking narratives of progress, loss, and return told about Western feminist theory's recent past (2011, 3–4). While the progress narrative refers to critically diversified feminism politically scrutinized by black and lesbian feminists, the loss narrative mourns the unified category of “woman” lost due to the fragmentation of categories and the feminist social movement downgraded by the hollow parodies of “post-feminism” (3–4). According to Hemmings, the third story circling around feminism is the return narrative, which emphasizes that we do not have to “accept the opposition between fragmentation and unity; we can combine the lessons of postmodern feminism with the materiality of embodiment and structural inequalities to move on from the current theoretical and political impasse” (4–5).

It may be that intersectionality became a healing buzzword in the face of loss. As Western feminists were losing the common motif of woman from our stories, intersectionality appeared as the new unity. Once again we had something in common, and this newfound commonality recognized the criticisms present in progress narratives and provided the intersectional bridge over the troubled waters of loss (see Davis 2008.) As Helma Lutz sums up, “In a situation like this where one group is holding for ‘we’ while others plea for its multiplications, intersectionality comes in—seemingly—as the solution of insurmountable contradictions, it became a concept of reconciliation” (2014, 6). According to Kathy Davis, intersectionality took up “the political project” of making visible both the material and social consequences of gender, race, and class while employing poststructurally compatible methodologies. It was “deconstructing categories, unmasking universalisms, and exploring the dynamic and contradictory workings of power” (2008, 74). As the reconciliative story spread, doxography about intersectionality widened, which formed into a pet peeve for some. Its empty promises should now be revealed.

For some scholars intersectionality became so watered down as it spread that it lost sight of material differences among women. Intersectionality became the jargon of academic feminism in the global North, appropriating black feminism in such a way that it became emptied of its political dimension. It was not a radically heuristic and political concept anymore.⁸ For other academics, intersectionality had not thought through the categories used, methodologies applied, identities undertheorized/overtheorized, complexities mentioned, or analogies made.⁹ Carbin and Edenheim reveal intersectionality's empty promise of complexity, its empty promise of being critical,

⁸ See, e.g., Hill Collins (1998), Erel et al. (2008), Bilge (2013), and Tomlinson (2013a).

⁹ See, e.g., Staunæs (2003), Gressgård (2008), Puar (2012), and Gunnarsson (2017).

its empty promise of overcoming divisions, its ghosts of black feminism, and its ghosts of poststructuralism (2013), while Cathrine Egeland and Randi Gressgård reveal that intersectionality's promise to reject essentialism and reductionism in fact turns into reproducing them in a more sophisticated manner (2007). In her book-length study *Pursuing Intersectionality* (2015), May illustrates how many ways intersectionality has been revealed to fail. Intersectionality has been accused of being an ineffective and individual-focused tool that is unable to meaningfully address inequalities. It has been regarded as a (neo)liberalized form of considering diversity, bureaucratized away from radical change, or an atomizing device piling up differences in “an oppression Olympics” (May 2015, 170; see also Hancock 2007).

Consequently, the fifth narrative consists of direct and indirect criticisms faced by intersectionality—the actual crimes. These crimes are claimed to be many, partially due to intersectionality's heuristic nature, harnessed in academia by criticisms. Carbado (2013) has listed intersectionality's supposed crimes, as follows:

1. Intersectionality is only or largely about Black women, or only about race and gender.
2. Intersectionality is an identitarian framework.
3. Intersectionality is a static theory that does not capture the dynamic and contingent processes of identity formation.
4. Intersectionality is overly invested in subjects.
5. Intersectionality has traveled as far as it can, or there is nothing more the theory can teach us.
6. Intersectionality should be replaced by or at least applied in conjunction with [fill the blank]. (Carbado 2013, 812)

May also notes that intersectionality has been accused of recycling black feminism, lacking nuance both in identity and power, and adopting more and more categories (2015, 98–140). Some scholars have been rightly worried that current applications forget the group politics and possibilities for legal representation in their focus on individual experience (Hill Collins 1998; Grabham 2009; Grabham et al. 2009). Many scholars have noted that intersectionality must not fall into analogy errors and have raised the problems of “like race” arguments. It is important to acknowledge the particular histories, traditions, effects, and distinctiveness of each inequality addressed.¹⁰ Gressgård suspects that intersectionality's all-encompassing talk

¹⁰ See Arondekar (2005), Phoenix and Pattyama (2006), Yuval-Davis (2006), and Carbado (2013).

about “complexity” and “multiplicity” ends up obscuring differences (2008, 1 and n. 6), and Beverley Skeggs has reservations regarding intersectionality’s ability to understand the particularities of certain categories—in her case, the capitalist system (2008, 40–41). Thus, Lewis reminds us that analyses passing as intersectional must not use it as “a way to short circuit complex and nuanced enquiry and become decontextualized” (2009, 207). On the other hand, Hornscheidt notes that intersectionality naturalizes categorical thinking by talking about categories: the frequent use of categories like gender, race, and class stabilizes these categories, risking invisibility of the relations between them (2009, 41–42).

Carbin and Edenheim use more critical tones when talking about intersectionality as a universalizing sweep, a “catch-all phrase” that seeks a false consensus of a common feminist language (2013). Intersectionality has been claimed to be either weak in theory, weak in ontology, weak in methodology, or weak in defining concepts, while the kinds of writings that concentrate on theory, ontology, concepts, and methodology are doing intersectionality a disservice by removing it from radical activism, racial politics, and feminism of color (see Erel et al. 2008). Intersectionality as a deradicalized consensus-creating signifier (Carbin and Edenheim 2013, 245) is claimed to be easily adoptable by neoliberalist university managerialism. Sara Ahmed, for one, warns against the use of intersectionality as “a method of deflection,” a defense against hearing more radical talk about racism, for example (2012, 195 n. 18). Intersectionality must not become the “happy point” of neoliberal strategy-paper discourse, claiming to focus on the very things it obscures.¹¹ Intersectionality must be able to answer the “so what” question, which according to Nash remains unresolved within intersectional studies (2008, 11–13). It is not enough for appliers of intersectionality to name categories and different types of oppressions if they do not articulate interventions.

There is no innocence in doing intersectionality studies. Intersectionality has been revisited, critiqued, and had its flaws revealed up to the point that May ends up asking “Why are intersectionality critiques all the rage?” (2015, 98). She discusses the interpretative politics included in reading, interpreting, and receiving feminist texts, which, in the case of intersectionality, is particularly affective. According to May, the discursive surveillance of intersectionality is “not unlike the institutionalized micro-aggressions and systematic dismissals faced by women of color in the academy and in society at large” (103). Felski claims—referring to detective-story plotlines of

¹¹ Ahmed (2012) uses the term “happy talk” to refer to diversity work done in managerialist institutions, hiding the systematic inequalities within them.

critical studies—that when the inspector calls, “the plot line of suspicion takes on a life of its own” within “the righteous impulse to call out a wrongdoer” (2015, 91). May confirms that intersectionality’s “power and authority are fairly ‘checked,’” suspecting that Nash makes an overstatement by characterizing intersectionality as enjoying “theoretical monarchy” (2015, 107; see also Nash 2011, 448), revealing the affective nature of intersectional debates. However, we can hardly say that intersectionality is a buzzword. Rather, it seems to be the suspicious process of deciphering clues and investigating crimes that makes intersectionality such a passionate and much-narrated case in feminist storytelling.

What, how, and where?

For Felski, the criminal in suspicious criticism is not a heinous individual but some larger entity such as Victorian society, imperialism, discourse, or Western metaphysics (2015, 89). In stories of intersectionality, this wrongdoer has often been a discussion about categories. In this section, I will examine the third set of narratives concerning intersectionality: the question of categories, the question of levels, and the question of traveling. The three narratives are interrelated, as the focal categories tend to change when intersectionality travels (class in Europe, race in the United States), whereas the issue of levels is often debated in relation to geography.

The ur-narrative of intersectionality, that is, Leslie McCall’s “The Complexity of Intersectionality” (2005), envisions the methodology of intersectionality by differentiating three ways of operating with categories: inter-, intra-, and anticategorical approaches. Based on her multileveled methodology, many writers have taken a stand on category issues. Categories may contribute to essentialist identity claims (Dhamoon 2011) or cause intersectional invisibility (Carbado 2013), as nobody ultimately fits the categories with their distinctive combination of advantages and disadvantages. Categories risk becoming ahistorical and falsely analogical (Brah and Phoenix 2004; Phoenix and Pattiyama 2006) or turning into evaluative standards, which may end up silencing those who do not fit these standards (Gressgård 2008). However, categories are crucial in legal and political uses of intersectionality, which, according to Crenshaw, should be focal in studies of intersectionality (2012). Emily Grabham tries to figure out a way to develop antiessentialist identity narratives in intersectionality’s encounters with law, which has an impetus toward clear-cut classifications, and refers to Davina Cooper’s “ontological fallacy” of intersectionality in its tendency to displace the very categories it actually relies on (Grabham 2009, 191; see also Cooper 2004). Anna Carastathis, for one, strongly argues against the integrity of

categories, claiming their inherent “impurity” as potentiality in imagining new coalitional identities (2016, 7). Thus, several scholars have tried to reconceptualize intersectionality with different names outside the logic of categories.

Because of the forceful presence of categories in intersectional scholarship, many writers have sought after ways of dealing with these categories. Dorte Staunæs has suggested that categories are performatively done; they are quoted, reproduced, and transgressed in situ (2003, 104). Myra Marx Ferree writes about dynamic intersectionality, within which categories are to be seen as processes through which race, for instance, takes on gendered meanings contextually in different temporal and spatial domains (2012). Lena Gunnarsson deals with the debate of separateness and the inseparability of categories by drawing on dialectical critical realist philosophy to analyze the unity in difference. In her view, categories can be distinguished neither as tangible units nor as something that precludes co-constitution and intraconnection (2017, 118). Besides the separate-versus-connected debates, one affective story line connected to categories deals with the “etcetera problem” of additive categories, which, according to Alice Ludvig, has become “the Achilles heel of intersectional approaches” (2006, 247). Judith Butler considers the “embarrassed etc.” that feminists add at the end of a list of identity markers, demonstrating the illimitable process of signification itself (1999, 182). I argue that the relative openness of the category question is a way to retain intersectionality’s radical nature as a heuristic device. It must have the ability to suggest new angles for interpreting data.

From a narratological angle, it is interesting that Lutz playfully names the scholars who have “revised” the race-gender-class triad with other categories as “amendment protagonists” (2014, 7), rendering visible the act of theoretical storytelling. However, the intersectionality debates have currently gone beyond these additive models. Among others, Nira Yuval-Davis has argued that intersectionality should not be about adding up layers of marginalization.¹² Rather, it should act as a framework for analyzing social stratification, including all members of society (Yuval-Davis 2012, 159). Both Yuval-Davis (2006) and Gunnarsson (2017) consider the question of levels, the identity-versus-systems controversy, together with the question of categories as facets of the same prism. For example, according to Yuval-Davis, intersectional categories cannot be separated on the level of subject but should be analyzed separately on the structural level, as each category has its own ontological basis and functional logics within society (2006, 195). Thus,

¹² Yuval-Davis refers to studies that identify fourteen, or even sixteen, categories of marginalization (2012, 159).

Yuval-Davis sees intersectionality operating both on the level of identities and on the level of structures, but in a different way.

In her early writings, Hill Collins connected intersectionality only to the level of experience and subjectivity (1990, 18), referring to the structural level as a “matrix of domination” (18). Later, in 2016, Hill Collins, together with Bilge, has listed the core ideas of intersectionality as social inequality, power, relationality, social context, complexity, and social justice (2016, 25–30), bringing intersectionality much closer to the level of structures, not separating it from the matrix of domination. In the twenty-six years between these studies, there was extensive discussion about the (in)separability of individual experience and systems of power. Some scholars criticize more systemic accounts of intersectionality, demanding a wider acknowledgment of lived experience and subjectification (see, e.g., Staunæs 2003; Prins 2006), while other scholars consider micro-level analysis too prevalent, demanding a wider focus on structural dynamics (see, e.g., Knapp 2005; Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013).¹³ The majority of writers, however, grasp the issue of levels by emphasizing the socially constituted nature of subject positions and acknowledging both levels simultaneously—a move that Crenshaw herself names as a “confluence of structure and identity” that intersectionality originally attempted to create (2012, 230).

The issue of levels can be found at the bottom of several anxious controversies about intersectionality. In analyzing the narratives of intersectionality, it seems that two plot lines frame the story of levels: first, whether intersectionality is about structures or experiences, and second, whether there are national differences in doing intersectionality—and consequently, the argument that “others” are doing it wrong. I argue that intersectionality’s strength is its ethical potential to cross-light a research topic that “obviously” seems to be about something or to polemicize the frames/results/questions used in research. In this way, intersectionality is reminiscent of the way “queer” was defined in the 1990s as a reactive tool without a clear ontology of its own. The questions of which categories to highlight, or which (inter-, intra-, or anticategorical) approaches to apply, should be answered in a case-specific manner—keeping in mind the centrality of race, gender, and class. However, even this basic triad of intersectionality needs to be contextualized

¹³ Ina Kerner, for one, disciplinizes the level narrative, claiming that scholars from the humanities did intersectionality by focusing on language and identities while social scientists focused (obviously) on structures. She herself suggests a tri-level analysis differentiating between the epistemic, the institutional, and the personal (2012). This model, however, is reminiscent of the division Hill Collins envisions in *Fighting Words* (1998): Hill Collins names the levels as macro, meso, and micro.

historically, geographically, socially, and culturally. There has been a large debate within intersectional studies on how race and class, for instance, are applied differently in European and US contexts, reflecting the travels of intersectionality (see, e.g., Knapp 2005; Ferree 2012; Lutz 2014). Thus, I will now turn to one of the most affect-arousing narratives of intersectional debates, addressing the question of intersectionality as a traveling theory.

One of the liveliest narratives within intersectional studies has considered the change of levels in traveling to Europe. While US-based intersectionality is claimed to be systemic and reductionist in its emphasis on systems of domination, European intersectionality has been claimed to be constructionist, burgeoning, interested in identities, and too occupied with individuals and small-scale case analysis.¹⁴ In her provocative article “Intersectionality Undone,” Bilge considers the individualized knowledge of “European feminist intersectionality studies” as a neoliberal discourse of the marketized management of diversity, undoing the radicalism of black feminism and white-washing intersectionality (2013, 405). Reading intersectionality studies, it is clear that US-based scholars also write about identities and European-based scholars about structures—not to mention all the multiply located scholars in the field. The curious thing, however, is the pervasiveness of the narrative about analytical levels as a national question. In an earlier article, Bilge spells this out by stating that while in “the Nordic countries where intersectionality . . . is more associated with post-structuralism and mobilized in analyses of the processes of subjectification . . . North American research is used principally in structural analyses of inequality” (2010, 62–63). One might ask, what about critics with multiple belongings?

The story of national differences in intersectionality studies has also reached in other directions than levels of analysis. There have been binaristically inclined arguments that intersectionality is a feminist process in “Europe” while it originates in racial projects in “North America.” “European intersectionality” is also represented as being more about class, whereas race is prioritized in “US conceptualizations.” Tomlinson insightfully traces a tendency to construct the narrative binary between “British” and “American” intersectional studies, placing the British one in hierarchical opposition to systemic studies (2013a, 262). This is a compelling reminder of the power of storytelling: the ways in which we constitute, depict, and repeat narratives about theoretical concepts matter. In fact, Sumi Cho, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall create a more useful template for a collaborative

¹⁴ See, e.g., Phoenix and Pattyama (2006), Prins (2006), Lutz, Herrera Vivar, and Supik (2012), and Lutz (2014).

intersectionality by envisioning its travels in totally different terms, as either centrifugal or centripetal. While the centrifugal movement of intersectionality goes from the disciplinary centers to the margins, centripetal processes occur at the margins of disciplines in a more insurgent manner (2013, 792–96). Both ways to transport intersectionality are needed in order create vital and proliferating fields of intersectional studies.

Consequently, the last chapter in narratives of intersectionality is its travelogue. Several scholars have linked intersectionality to “traveling theories,” first articulated by Edward Said (1983, 226), that journey across contexts, disciplines, and geographical domains. Here, I am interested in seeing how this traveling has been interpreted. Scholars want to report and narrate intersectionality’s travels and adventures—with the aid of shifting genres. The travelogue might be colonialist, romantic, tragic, or even developmental. Intersectionality may travel from the United States to Europe, from margin to center, or from radicality to mainstream. In addition to Tomlinson and Bilge, Lewis has seen colonizing impulses in intersectionality’s unsafe travels. Lewis has addressed the racialized differences that occur when intersectionality travels to European scholarship, disavowing the relevance of race as an analytical concept (2013).¹⁵ Here the colonial travelogue is closely related to the aforementioned narrative concerning intersectionality’s relation to black feminism. Lewis raises the concern that intersectionality traveled to Europe with the parameters of race belonging only “there” (the United States), not “here” (Europe)—which is the site of “real” theory work rather than activism or politics—creating internal racism in intersectionality (2013, 882–87).

These travels are narrated most negatively by those scholars who consider the effects of traveling to distort, misrepresent, twist, and displace something that it is meant to be. The most positive narrators are those who consider intersectionality in heuristic terms as being able to suggest new angles to old questions; mobilize standpoints; identify subversive coalitions; enable inclusivity, solidarity, and simultaneity; or pierce opacities and decenter common lenses.¹⁶ According to Crenshaw, “the need to *work* intersectionality and to develop methods that are both recognizable and insurgent within different disciplines is part of intersectionality’s travel log” (2012, 231). She connects intersectionality’s traveling to the aforementioned narrative of revisiting, as her term grows and develops while traveling—presenting a kind

¹⁵ There has been a wide discussion about the reluctance to use race as any kind of positive identity marker, particularly in German feminist discussions on intersectionality. See Knapp (2005) and Lutz (2014).

¹⁶ See, e.g., Davis (2008), Carbado et al. (2013), May (2015), and Carastathis (2016).

of developmental narrative for intersectionality as it migrates. In a way, intersectionality needs to move and reshape itself all the time in order to resist the story of theoretical completion of feminist progress.

As intersectionality travels, its travelogue becomes heavier. In many stories about intersectionality, it has been seen as the kind of traveling theory that Said introduced in 1983, referring to lost insurgency as theories move from one context to another. Carbado, however, connects intersectionality with Said's revisit of his traveling theory a decade later. Subsequently Said considered that movement might radicalize and reinvigorate a theory "back [from] its initial articulation" (in Carbado 2013, 812; see also Said 2000). These travels might include a return, as several feminist scholars work to radicalize intersectionality by going back to its initial articulation (e.g., Carastathis 2016). In any case, intersectionality's liberatory aims and political radicalism remain central themes in different kinds of travelogues—whether in the form of something to be reclaimed or something that is developing.

Conclusion

As feminists, our stories tell something about us too. When we analyze feminist narratives on intersectionality, intersectionality itself becomes contextualized anew, opening up novel ways of knowing. The most essential questions are: Why do we need to know in a certain way? Why has intersectionality been criticized with an intensity approaching rage? Why do the hermeneutics of suspicion seem to be more prominent than enthusiasm, and why is the academic community so keen on cutting the wings of enthusiasts? According to Felski, refusing to critique is often seen as a conservative complacency associated with the bad smell of the uncritical (2015, 8). She sees "antinormative normativity" in the ways scholars of humanities "are more fluent in nay-saying than in yay-saying," risking the repetition of autopilot criticism (2015, 9). Tomlinson, too, argues that expressing dislike often appears safer than expressing like; it might be "dangerous and humiliating to be out of date and out of fashion" (2013b, 997). By analyzing how intersectionality is narrated, we may reflect the affective modes of epistemological habits and feminist grammars in academia.

Felski recognizes an opposition between professional (critical) detachment and amateur enthusiasm (2015, 112). The word *amateur* comes from Latin, meaning lover (*amare*, "to love"). As a theory, intersectionality is more than a critical inquiry, or even critical praxis (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016): it is full of intellectual desires and political aspirations. Thus, I would like to argue that amateur (lover) enthusiasm might be the ethical engagement

with intersectionality, a commitment to intersectional goals beyond “meta-theoretical musings,” culminating in activism and social justice work. Narrative conventions do structure theoretical fields, and we need to be careful how we repeat and revise these feminist grammars, to avoid autopilot criticisms and to give room for amateur enthusiasm and engagement. However, telling scholarly stories also constitutes our scholarly identities. Some stories are more important to us as scholars, and telling those stories aligns us academically. Queer studies, feminism, or intersectionality might speak directly to scholars as practitioners of academic knowledge work—contributing to passionate attachments and detachments. We love certain stories and love to hate others.

There are several stories one could tell about intersectionality.¹⁷ Storytelling is inherent in feminist intersectionality studies, and the way we tell stories—which plotlines we follow—positions us, and intersectionality, epistemologically. New monograph-length studies about intersectionality as a research concept appear every year—telling the story that intersectionality is worth debating.¹⁸ Felski proposes postcritical reading as an alternative to the scholarly “fault-finding mentality” (2015, 172). For her, it means “attaching, collating, negotiating, assembling . . . forging links between things that were previously unconnected” (173). In many ways, this kind of assembling and linking also echoes the ethos of intersectionality. The postcritical reading is something that I propose for intersectionality studies as well—rather than criticizing the concept itself, intersectionality might postcritically create points of ethical encounters with other ideas. I share Wiegman’s view when she writes: “what interests me most is how intersectionality as a critical practice is motivated by love” (2014, 250).

Comparative Literature
University of Turku, Finland

References

- Ahmed, Sara. 2012. *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Arondekar, Anjali. 2005. “Border/line Sex: Queer Postcolonialities, or How Race Matters Outside the United States.” *Interventions* 7(2):236–50.

¹⁷ See, e.g., Lutz, Herrera Vivar, and Supik (2012, 1), Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall (2013, 787), or Carastathis (2016, 12).

¹⁸ For example, Hill Collins and Bilge (2016), Carastathis (2016), and Hancock (2016) all published monographs about the concept of intersectionality in the same year.

- Bilge, Sirma. 2010. "Recent Feminist Outlooks on Intersectionality." *Diogenes* 57 (1):58–72.
- . 2013. "Intersectionality Undone: Saving Intersectionality from Feminist Intersectionality Studies." *Du Bois Review* 10(2):405–24.
- Brah, Avtar, and Ann Phoenix. 2004. "Ain't I a Woman? Revisiting Intersectionality." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 5(3):75–86.
- Butler, Judith. 1999. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Carastathis, Anna. 2016. *Intersectionality: Origins, Contestations, Horizons*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Carbado, Devon W. 2013. "Colorblind Intersectionality." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 38(4):811–45.
- Carbado, Devon W., Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, Vickie M. Mays, and Barbara Tomlinson. 2013. "Intersectionality: Mapping the Movements of a Theory." *Du Bois Review* 10(2):303–12.
- Carbin, Maria, and Sara Edenheim. 2013. "The Intersectional Turn in Feminist Theory: A Dream of a Common Language?" *European Journal of Women's Studies* 20(3):233–48.
- Cho, Sumi, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall. 2013. "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Practice." *Signs* 38(4):785–810.
- Combahee River Collective. 1982. "A Black Feminist Statement." In *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies*, edited by Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith, 13–22. New York: Feminist Press.
- Cooper, Davina. 2004. *Challenging Diversity: Rethinking Equality and the Value of Difference*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989: 139–67.
- . 1991. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43: 1244–99.
- . 2012. "Postscript." In *Framing Intersectionality: Debates on a Multi-faceted Concept in Gender Studies*, edited by Helma Lutz, Maria Teresa Herrera Vivar, and Linda Supik, 221–33. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Davis, Kathy. 2008. "Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful." *Feminist Theory* 9(1): 67–85.
- . 2014. "Intersectionality as Critical Methodology." In *Writing Academic Texts Differently: Intersectional Feminist Methodologies and the Playful Art of Writing*, edited by Nina Lykke, 17–29. New York: Routledge.
- Dhamoon, Rita Kaur. 2011. "Considerations on Mainstreaming Intersectionality." *Political Research Quarterly* 64(1):230–43.

- Egeland, Cathrine, and Randi Gressgård. 2007. "The 'Will to Empower': Managing the Complexity of Others." *NORA—Nordic Journal of Women's Studies* 15(4): 207–19.
- Erel, Umut, Jin Haritaworn, Encarnación Guíérrez Rodríguez, and Christian Klesse. 2008. "On the Depoliticization of Intersectionality Talk: Conceptualizing Multiple Oppressions in Critical Sexuality Studies." In *Out of Place: Interrogating Silence in Queerness/Raciality*, edited by Adi Kuntzman and Esperanza Mikaye, 203–30. New York: Raw Nerve.
- Felski, Rita. 2015. *The Limits of Critique*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ferree, Myra Marx. 2012. "The Discursive Politics of Feminist Intersectionality." In *Framing Intersectionality: Debates on a Multi-faceted Concept in Gender Studies*, edited by Helma Lutz, Maria Teresa Herrera Vivar, and Linda Supik, 55–65. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Frankenberg, Ruth. 1999. "White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness." In *Theories of Race and Racism: A Reader*, edited by Les Back and John Solomos, 447–61. New York: Routledge.
- Grabham, Emily. 2009. "Intersectionality: Traumatic Impressions." In *Intersectionality and Beyond: Law, Power, and the Politics of Location*, edited by Emily Grabham, Davina Cooper, Jane Krishnadas, and Didi Herman, 183–201. Abingdon: Routledge-Cavendish.
- Grabham, Emily, with Didi Herman, Davina Cooper, and Jane Krishnadas. 2009. "Introduction." In *Intersectionality and Beyond: Law, Power, and the Politics of Location*, 1–17. Abingdon: Routledge-Cavendish.
- Gressgård, Randi. 2008. "Mind the Gap: Intersectionality, Complexity, and 'the Event.'" *Theory and Science* 10(1):1–29.
- Gunnarsson, Lena. 2017. "Why We Keep Separating the 'Inseparable': Dialecticizing Intersectionality." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 24(2):114–27.
- Hancock, Ange-Marie. 2007. "When Multiplication Doesn't Equal Quick Addition: Examining Intersectionality as a Research Paradigm." *Perspectives on Politics* 5(1):63–79.
- . 2016. *Intersectionality: An Intellectual History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Haraway, Donna. 1988. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14(3):575–99.
- Hemmings, Clare. 2011. *Why Stories Matter: The Political Grammar of Feminist Theory*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Hill Collins, Patricia. 1990. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge.
- . 1998. *Fighting Words: Black Women and the Search for Justice*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Hill Collins, Patricia, and Sirma Bilge. 2016. *Intersectionality*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Hornscheidt, Antje. 2009. "Intersectional Challenges to Gender Studies—Gender Studies as a Challenge to Intersectionality." In *Gender Delight: Science, Knowledge,*

- Culture, and Writing . . . for Nina Lykke*, edited by Cecilia Åsberg, 33–46. Linköping: Linköping University Press.
- Ilmonen, Kaisa. 2017. *Queer Rebellion in the Novels of Michelle Cliff: Intersectionality and Sexual Modernity*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars.
- . 2019. “Identity Politics Revisited: On Audre Lorde, Intersectionality, and Mobilizing Writing Styles.” *European Journal for Women’s Studies* 26(1):7–22.
- Kerner, Ina. 2012. “Questions of Intersectionality: Reflections on the Current Debate in German Gender Studies.” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 19(2): 203–18.
- Knapp, Gudrun-Axeli. 2005. “Race, Class, Gender: Reclaiming Baggage in Fast Travelling Theories.” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 12(3):249–65.
- Levine-Rasky, Cynthia. 2011. “Intersectionality Theory Applied to Whiteness and Middle-Classness.” *Social Identities* 17(2):239–53.
- Lewis, Gail. 2009. “Celebrating Intersectionality? Debates on a Multi-faceted Concept in Gender Studies: Themes from a Conference.” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 16(3):203–10.
- . 2013. “Unsafe Travel: Experiencing Intersectionality and Feminist Displacements.” *Signs* 38(4):869–92.
- Ludvig, Alice. 2006. “Differences between Women: Intersecting Voices in a Female Narrative.” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 13(3):245–58.
- Lutz, Helma. 2014. “Intersectionality’s (Brilliant) Career—How to Understand the Attraction of the Concept?” *Gender, Diversity, and Migration: Working Paper Series*, no. 1. http://www.fb03.uni-frankfurt.de/51634119/Lutz_Wp.pdf.
- Lutz, Helma, Maria Teresa Herrera Vivar, and Linda Supik. 2012. “Framing Intersectionality: An Introduction.” In *Framing Intersectionality: Debates on a Multi-faceted Concept in Gender Studies*, 1–22. Farnham: Ashgate.
- May, Vivian M. 2015. *Pursuing Intersectionality, Unsettling Dominant Imaginaries*. New York: Routledge.
- McCall, Leslie. 2005. “The Complexity of Intersectionality.” *Signs* 30(3):1771–1800.
- Mulinari, Diana, Suvi Keskinen, Sari Irni, and Salla Tuori. 2009. “Introduction: Postcolonialism and the Nordic Models of Welfare and Gender.” In *Complying with Colonialism: Gender, Race, and Ethnicity in the Nordic Region*, edited by Suvi Keskinen, Salla Tuori, Sari Irni, and Diana Mulinari, 1–16. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Nash, Jennifer C. 2008. “Re-thinking Intersectionality.” *Feminist Review*, no. 89: 1–15.
- . 2011. “‘Home Truths’ on Intersectionality.” *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism* 23(2):445–70.
- . 2016. “Feminist Originalism: Intersectionality and the Politics of Reading.” *Feminist Theory* 17(1):3–20.
- Phoenix, Ann, and Pamela Pattyama. 2006. “Intersectionality.” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 13(3):187–92.
- Prins, Baukje. 2006. “Narrative Accounts of Origins: A Blind Spot in the Intersectional Approach?” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 13(3):277–90.

- Puar, Jasbir. 2012. "‘I Would Rather Be a Cyborg Than a Goddess’: Becoming-Intersectional in Assemblage Theory." *PhiloSOPHIA* 2(1):49–66.
- Said, Edward. 1983. *The World, the Text, and the Critic*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- . 2000. "Traveling Theory Revisited." In *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, 436–52. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Salem, Sara. 2016. "Intersectionality and Its Discontents: Intersectionality as Traveling Theory." *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 25(4):403–18.
- Skeggs, Beverley. 2008. "Om moralismens ekonomi och arbetarklassens värdighet: Sofie Tornhill och Katharina Tollin intervjuar Beverley Skeggs" [On the economy of moralism and working-class properness: An interview with Beverley Skeggs]. *Fronesis* [Fronesis: a journal of Marxism and feminism] 25–26: 38–50.
- Staunæs, Dorthé. 2003. "Where Have All the Subjects Gone? Bringing Together the Concepts of Intersectionality and Subjectification." *NORA—Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 11(2):101–10.
- Tomlinson, Barbara. 2013a. "Colonizing Intersectionality: Replicating Racial Hierarchy in Feminist Academic Arguments." *Social Identities* 19(2):254–72.
- . 2013b. "To Tell the Truth and Not Get Trapped: Desire, Distance, and Intersectionality at the Scene of Argument." *Signs* 38(4):993–1017.
- Walby, Sylvia. 2007. "Complexity Theory, Systems Theory, and Multiple Intersecting Social Inequalities." *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 37(4):449–70.
- Wiegman, Robyn. 2014. *Object Lessons*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Yuval-Davis, Nira. 2006. "Intersectionality and Feminist Politics." *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 13(3):193–209.
- . 2012. "Beyond the Recognition and Re-distribution Dichotomy: Intersectionality and Stratification." In *Framing Intersectionality. Debates on a Multifaceted Concept in Gender Studies*, edited by Helma Lutz, Maria Teresa Herrera Vivar, and Linda Supik, 155–69. Farnham: Ashgate.