

But the fact that these are examples means that other conflicts and debates on intersectionalities could have been included. As indicated earlier, reflection on intersectional interplays between social categorizations is an integral part of much feminist thought—and in this sense is *not* limited to the examples that I have focused on here.

An important political and theoretical conflict over intersections, which I have not discussed in this chapter, is the fierce negotiations about the categories of gender and class that took place in the period before, during and after World War I and again in the 1970s between feminist and non-feminist Marxists and socialists. I have chosen not to present this conflict in the present chapter, because it does not play the crucial role it once did. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union undermined the authoritarian and orthodox kinds of Marxism that insisted on the primacy of class over all other social categories. However, I should like to stress that my leaving out this particular struggle over intersectionalities should not be taken as an excuse to ignore the still-important discussion of intersectionalities of gender and class. I shall come back to this in Chapters 5 and 6.

5 Theorizing Intersectionalities Genealogies and Blind Spots

As underlined in previous chapters, many feminist researchers are in agreement that gender should be theorized as intersectional, that is, as interwoven with other sociocultural power differentials and normativities categorized in terms of race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, nationality and so on. This can be understood, first of all, as an effect of Feminist Studies forming a site of resistance to hegemonic gender-conservative discourses that, co-construct gender and other sociocultural categories in such a way that sexist, racist, ethnocentric, class-privileging, homophobic, xenophobic and nationalist discourses often go hand in hand. I discussed this in Chapter 3, referring to the ways in which sciences like medicine, biology, psychiatry, sociology, anthropology and national philologies back to the eighteenth century have not only contributed to the construction of 'universal' and 'naturally' given hierarchies between women and men, but also hierarchies where other kinds of sexist, racist, ethnocentric, nationalist, colonialist and class-privileging classifications merged. To resist these hegemonic discourses, critical analyses of intersectionalities have been initiated. Second, in Chapter 3, I also examined the ways in which endeavors to build alliances between anti-sexist, anti-racist, anti-homophobic, anti-nationalist and anti-colonialist movements called forward reflections and mobilized theorizings of intersectionalities between key categories of the different movements. In Chapter 4, I followed up on these references to negotiations of intersections between different kinds of political movements and underlined that the question of intersectionalities in feminist theory has emerged out of tensions between movements and power-laden debates about which intersections, power differentials and normativities should be given priority in which political contexts.

In this chapter, I shall take a look at intersectionality as a critical theoretical and methodological tool in feminist analysis. I shall make it clear how I consider it to be a nodal point for different kinds of feminist theorizing of intersections between sociocultural categorizations. In order to carve this out, I shall apply a so-called genealogical approach, beginning with an introduction to what it means to work genealogically.

A GENEALOGICAL APPROACH

To introduce my discussion of genealogies of feminist theorizing of intersectionality, I shall start with a brief account of what it means to apply a genealogical perspective.

I build on Foucault (1984) when using the term genealogy. He argued that the representation of histories of knowledge production as linear development is problematic. They support an understanding of the 'progress' of rational thought as though it were linear and independent of social and historical contexts. Seen from this simplistic perspective, new theories are interpreted as though they documented a process of becoming wiser and wiser. Foucault introduced a genealogical perspective as an alternative to this traditional way of telling the history of science and knowledge production. The genealogical approach entails constructing a kind of 'family tree' for current strands of theory. Rather than asking if theory A has rationally developed into theory B, a Foucauldian genealogist will ask: What strands of thought can, in hindsight, be seen as woven together to constitute this particular theory that we currently consider to be important? In other words, instead of telling the history of knowledge production as some kind origins story, starting in the past and running forward, a genealogy will use the here-and-now as a lens and trace different theoretical strands that seem to have merged and intertwined while shaping the current version of the theory.

I agree with Foucault's suggestion that histories of knowledge production should be analyzed and told genealogically. As a hub for the following historical overview of feminist theorizing of intersectionality, I have, therefore, chosen the concept of intersectionality as it was explicitly introduced into feminist theorizing by black feminist scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in the late 1980s and as it is currently used. From this entrance point, I shall distinguish between three clusters of feminist analysis of intersections:

- *Explicit feminist theorizings of intersectionality*, that is, theories that—like Crenshaw's theory—explicitly use the concept 'intersectionality';
- *Implicit feminist theorizings of intersectionality*, that is, theories that focus on intersections, but without using the concept 'intersectionality' as the main frame of interpretation;
- *Feminist theorizings of intersectionality under other names*, that is, theories that concentrate on intersections, but while using other concepts and frames than 'intersectionality'.

There are certain overlaps between the three clusters, but as I have discussed in earlier work (Lykke 2006), I think the genealogical 'family tree' that they construct, nevertheless, may give a useful introduction to the diversity and richness of feminist reflections on intersectionalities. Consequently, I

shall also structure the following theoretical overview with the three clusters as the lens for my genealogical analysis. First, I shall take a look at *explicit feminist theorizings of intersectionality*. On the one hand, I shall discuss social justice and anti-discrimination approaches that take a more structural point of departure, and, on the other hand, I shall concentrate on poststructuralist approaches that put focus on subject formations in an intersectional perspective. Second, I proceed to *implicit feminist theorizings of intersectionality* in which intersections between sociocultural categorizations are discussed without placing the meta-theoretical label 'intersectionality' at the hub of the analysis. From the point of view of my genealogical analysis, I shall focus first on a couple of historical examples from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to stress how the intertwining of intersectional thought and feminist theorizing has a long and diverse tradition. Thereafter, I shall discuss more contemporary examples of feminist discussions of intersections that have explored them without a focus on the concept of intersectionality. To emphasize that there is no clear consensus among feminist theorists as to whether or not the concept of 'intersectionality' is the best tool to analyze intersections, I shall also discuss examples of *feminist theorizings of intersectionality under other names*, illustrating how other meta-theoretical frameworks are used to come to grips with the phenomenon of intersections between social categorizations, power differentials and normativities.

TO MAP OUT FEMINIST INTERSECTIONALITY STUDIES FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

To avoid misunderstandings, before starting my analysis I would like to stress that my genealogically based clustering of different feminist theories of intersectionality differs from the one suggested by USA-based feminist sociologist Leslie McCall in a frequently quoted article (McCall 2005). McCall's classification is motivated by the methodological question: How do different kinds of what I call 'explicit' feminist intersectional analysis handle the complexity of power differentials and identity formations? The broader range of feminist frameworks for intersectional analysis, which my genealogical perspective teases out under the headings 'implicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality' and 'feminist theorizing of intersectionality under other names,' are not discussed by McCall. To avoid the possibility that the two frameworks (McCall's and mine) are collapsed into each other or used interchangeably, I shall briefly summarize McCall's classification here. Moreover, as I find it useful within its (limited) scope, I shall also, where applicable, refer back to it, that is, I use it in the first part of my genealogical analysis on explicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality, and leave it out in the later parts of my analysis, which go beyond its scope.

In her article, McCall celebrates feminist theorizing of intersectionality as a major contribution to social theory and empirical analysis of the complexity and multi-dimensionality of social relations and subject formations. She singles out intersectionality as perhaps 'the most important theoretical contribution that women's studies, in conjunction with related fields, has made so far' (McCall 2005, 1771). In particular, McCall celebrates what she considers to be rather unique to Feminist Studies, compared to other academic fields—that feminist theorists have not only been looking at the category of gender from an intersectional perspective, but that they also 'have embraced intersectionality . . . as itself a central category of analysis' (McCall 2005, 1771).

What McCall wants to accomplish with her article is to push the feminist discussion of the methodologies of intersectional analysis further. To facilitate this process, she produces an overview of existing feminist intersectionality studies, clustering their approaches to the analysis of complexities and multiple social relations into three groups: anti-categorical, intra-categorical and inter-categorical intersectional theory and analysis. According to McCall, the goal of the *anti-categorical approach* is to deconstruct categories with a starting point in the argument that social relations and subject formations are so 'irreducibly complex' (McCall 2005, 1773) that categorizations will always be reductive. *Intra-categorical intersectional analysis* aims at analyzing 'neglected points of intersection' (McCall 2005, 1774), related to single social groups located on boundaries between different categories in ways that have made their specific situation invisible. An example is women of color, who are located in-between the categories of gender and race, which means that analyses taking either one or the other category into account will miss the complexity of the situation of this group.

Finally, the *inter-categorical* approach aims at analyzing 'relationships of inequality among social groups and changing configurations of inequality among multiple and conflicting dimensions' (McCall 2005, 1773). This is the framework within which McCall conducts her own research, among others large quantitative studies of inequalities, e.g. wage differences, where, in contrast to more traditional sociological studies, she goes beyond merely adding variables such as gender, race etc. onto each other, and instead aims at systematic comparative analyses of the complexities of relationships 'among multiple social groups within and across analytical categories' (McCall 2005, 1786).

THE CONCEPT OF 'INTERSECTIONALITY': SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION APPROACHES

As I have chosen the concept of intersectionality as my lens, I shall start my genealogical mapping exercise with the work of *Kimberlé Crenshaw*. In two key articles, 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex' (Crenshaw

1989) and 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color' (1995), Crenshaw coined the concept of intersectionality within the framework of USA Black Feminism, critical race theory and her background as a professor of law fighting for social justice and against discrimination based on the overlapping effects of race and gender. With the metaphor of intersections, of roads crossing each other, Crenshaw wanted to create an appropriate tool for analyzing and resisting discrimination and exclusion of women of color. Her point is that the situation of women of color becomes misrepresented by political initiatives that are built on conventional politics, founded around resistance to only one power differential. The image of roads crossing is intended to show how both identity politics and anti-discrimination policies that take either gender/sexism or race/facism into account, but not both simultaneously, miss the point in relation to women of color. Applying McCall's framework, we can say that Crenshaw calls for an intra-categorical approach to understanding the complexity of the situation of women of color.

In a recent booklet on intersectionality (Crenshaw and Harris 2009) from the think tank, African American Policy Forum, which is directed by Crenshaw, a famous court case on sex and race discrimination from the 1970s is presented in order to illustrate the point. The case was taken to court by five black women from the USA, who complained about the discriminatory hiring practices of General Motors (GM). White women were hired to do the front office jobs, while African American men were hired to carry out the heavy industrial work. African American women were hired for neither kind of job. Against this background, the five women complained that they were discriminated against because of the intertwined effects of gender and race. However, the court dismissed their case. They were caught in a trap of intersectional invisibility, because the anti-discrimination laws were geared to take into account only one-dimensional types of discrimination. The five women could neither prove that they were discriminated against as women, because white women were in fact hired to the office jobs, nor could they prove that they were discriminated against because of their skin color, because black men were hired to the industrial jobs. With the crossroads metaphor, Crenshaw wants to make it clear that anti-discrimination policies must change in order to be able to take into account what happens when gender- and race-based discriminations cross each other, as in the case of the five women who were not hired by GM.

In order both to adequately analyze the complex situation of women of color and to politically push for transformation, Crenshaw also suggests that it is important to distinguish theoretically between two dimensions. To do an effective intersectional analysis it is, according to Crenshaw, necessary to structurally analyze how power differentials around gender, race and ethnicity are entangled with each other. Crenshaw defines this as *structural intersectionality* (Crenshaw 1995, 358–360). But she argues that it is also important to underline that political resistance and work for change

must take into account the structural entanglement of power differentials and build up political alliances and coalitions, rather than base itself on a one-dimensional identity politics that takes only one categorization (e.g., gender or race) into account. Crenshaw identifies this multiple approach to political action as *political intersectionality* (Crenshaw 1995, 360–374). Applying McCall's analytical framework, we can say that with this distinction Crenshaw theorizes how intersectional analyses must take into account inter-categorical differences at both a structural and a political level.

Another central scholar who explicitly theorized intersectionality in the 1990s is the political philosopher and social justice theorist Iris Marion Young. In Young's book *Intersecting Voices* (1997), the distinction between structural and political intersectionality is elaborated. She introduces the concept of 'seriality' in order to grasp the ways in which oppressive structures are entangled with each other, that is, what Crenshaw defined as 'structural intersectionality' (Young 1997, 12–37). Borrowing from Sartre (1976), Young defines a *series* as a social collective that shares some structural conditions without necessarily forming a political identity around these. Like Sartre, Young exemplifies this with people queuing for a bus (Young 1997, 24). The people in the bus queue share a structural relationship: They are all waiting for the bus. But they do not necessarily develop a political consciousness and group identity around this shared structural condition. They may develop such a consciousness if, for example, they feel cheated by the bus company and decide to collectively do something about it. But, in many cases, they will just make up a series of individuals who do not engage in any act of social or political bonding.

In contrast to the series, Young defines a *group* as a political collective, whose members actively share a commitment to a common cause. According to Young, we are all submitted to intersectional networks of power differentials. Or, in other words, we belong to intersectional networks of series, which submit us to different axes of power (based on gender, class, race, ethnicity etc.). But we do not necessarily respond politically to all of these. In this analysis, political groups, mobilized via resistance against various power differentials, will tend to be made up of individuals who share some serial conditions, but who in other respects belong to different series.

If these differences are not taken into account, Young argues, they may cause tensions in the political collective. A women's movement that constitutes itself on resistance and the transformation of gendered power differentials will, for example, often tend to include individuals who belong to different series as regards class, ethnicity, race, sexuality and so on. These different serial belongings may cause conflict and tensions, particularly when they are concealed beneath an ideology of identity politics, that is, a politics claiming that members of the movement are subjected to identical social conditions, and therefore have identical struggles and goals. If a shared political struggle is to succeed, it is necessary, according to Young, to take differences into account politically—or, to use the conceptual

distinction of Crenshaw, to recognize structural intersectionality and build a platform for solidarity that is based on political intersectionality rather than on (false) pretensions about identity.

Like Crenshaw's theorization of structural/political intersectionality, Young's definition of serial belongings *vis-à-vis* group formation must be understood as a framework for analysis of what McCall defined as inter-categorical complexity.

POSTSTRUCTURALIST APPROACHES TO 'INTERSECTIONALITY'

From the structuralist and social justice-oriented versions of explicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality, I now proceed to some poststructuralist examples in order to show the wide span of theoretical positions within the field.

In this context, it should be mentioned that Crenshaw's metaphor of roads crossing has been criticized by, among others, feminists informed by poststructuralist theory. The crossroads metaphor may be effective when the purpose is to find tools for transforming the legal system. However, when the aim is to analyze the subtleties of the processes by which subjects are constructed discursively in and between a multiplicity of categorical identity markers, the crossroads metaphor becomes much too crude and too static as a tool, it is argued (Staunæs and Søndergaard 2010). It opens up the possibility of an understanding of entangled power differentials, but it also conjures up an image of categorizations as structural entities. Roads meet at an intersection, but they go in separate directions before and after this meeting. For feminist poststructuralists, it is important to be able to carry out intersectional analyses that can grasp the construction of subjectivities in discourses that weave together narratives of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, age and so on. In the poststructuralist view, the different categorizations are seen as mutually pervading and interpenetrating each other without any possibility of separating them out analytically. Moreover, poststructuralist feminists underline that it should not be considered a given from the outset of the analysis which categorizations are taken up and prioritized at the level of the everyday life experience of the subjects.

Feminist theoreticians informed by poststructuralism have made this point forcefully. As an example of this branch of feminist theorizing of intersectionality, I would like to refer to an article with the title 'Where Have All the Subjects Gone?' (Staunæs 2003), written by the Danish social psychologist, Dorte Staunæs. Analyzing gendered, ethnicized and racialized processes of subject formation among Danish school children, she argues that in order to apply the concept of intersectionality to 'meaning-making processes on a subject level' (Staunæs 2003, 3), it is necessary to engage in a 'reworking' of the concept. Referring to British

social constructionist psychologists Margaret Wetherell and Janet Maybin, Staunæs stresses that individuals are not to be analyzed as “cultural dopes” . . . acting out one homogenous cultural personality’ (Wetherell and Maybin 1996, 234). According to Staunæs’s poststructuralist social constructionist approach, although individuals are constrained by discourses, within these limits they are engaged in ongoing meaning-making processes, through which they take up subject positions, elaborate upon them and make them their own.

It is important, Staunæs claims, to recognize that different discursive normativities construct different constraints for differently gendered, ethnicized and racialized individuals. Moreover, she argues that this implies a production of ‘troubled’ (Wetherell 1998) or ‘inappropriate/d’ (Minh-ha 1986–87; Haraway 1992) subject positions for those who are othered by these normativities.

However, in order to come to terms with the ways in which individuals engage in their lives and experience and negotiate the framings and constraints in complex and ambiguous ways, it is not appropriate to consider them as merely caught up in a rigidly predefined grid of intersecting categories, Staunæs argues. In a poststructuralist vein, she suggests instead that we should look at the processes by which individual subjects create meaning out of the categorizations and normativities that frame their everyday lives. Following the constructionist assumption that gender, race and ethnicity are constructed in communicative processes and should not be seen as something people ‘are’ or ‘have,’ Staunæs suggests foregrounding the ‘doing of intersectionality,’ that is, ‘the doing of the relation between categories, the outcome of this doing and how this doing results in either troubled or untroubled subject positions’ (Staunæs 2003, 5). (For a further elaboration of the ‘doing’ approach, see Chapter 6.)

To give one more example of a poststructuralist feminist critique and reworking of the concept of intersectionality, let me refer to Dutch feminist and political philosopher Baukje Prins’s article in *The European Journal of Women’s Studies*’ special issue on *Intersectionality* (Prins 2006). Prins distinguishes between what she calls ‘systemic’ and ‘constructionist’ approaches to intersectionality and argues that the latter is more apt for grasping the complexities of intersectional identity formation. Her material is life-history narratives by her former primary school classmates, women and men who share a working-class background, but whose ethnicity is differently framed; about half are of Dutch descent, while the other half are of Moluccan descent.

Prins identifies the ‘systemic’ approaches as those which, like Crenshaw’s analysis, foreground structural inequalities and focus on intersecting systems of domination and subordination with the categories of gender, race, ethnicity and class as the central ones. The aim of these approaches, Prins argues, is to expose ‘the detrimental effect of the subordinate poles of gender, race and class, and simultaneously to problematize the dominant poles

of these binary oppositions, such as masculinity, whiteness and middle-classness’ (Prins 2006, 279).

This is fine in principle, Prins argues. However, the systemic approaches to intersectionality fall short when it comes to the analysis of agency and subjectivity and the ways in which individuals construct their social identifications. The homogenizing views of mono-categorical approaches (looking exclusively at, for example, gender or race) are, indeed, transgressed in the systemic approaches. People’s identities will not be analyzed solely through one lens; they will instead be seen as converging effects of different kinds of subordination. This does not, however, allow for a dynamic, relational and diversity-sensitive analysis of subject formations and agency, Prins argues. Instead of being homogenized into one category, people are seen as the converging effects of two lenses, but they are still conceptualized as ‘passive bearers of the meanings of social categories’ (Prins 2006, 280), and not as active agents who rework the categories in a diversity of subjective ways.

In contrast to the systemic approaches, Prins argues for a ‘constructionist’ one (2006, 280–290), which not only takes into account grids of intersecting systems of power, but also gives attention to the ways in which power, interpreted in a Foucauldian vein, is productive on a subjective level. In order to grasp subjective agency, the crucial analytical task, as defined by Prins, becomes to create tools to approach the question: How do intersecting power differentials produce individual life-history narratives in which the effects of genderization, racialization, ethnification, class stratification and so on can be seen as interwoven? Prins’s arguments for life-history narratives as an appropriate tool for analysis of the subtleties of intersectionality as experienced by individuals resemble Staunæs’s plea for an analytical foregrounding of the ways in which people make meaning of categorizations and take up untroubled positions in their everyday lives.

Reviewed within the framework of McCall’s classifications, both Staunæs and Prins inscribe themselves clearly into the anti-categorical ‘camp,’ even though the work of both also demonstrates that McCall’s classifications are too crude to grasp subtle nuances. Neither Staunæs nor Prins would simply reject categories.

HISTORICAL DEBATES ON INTERSECTIONAL GENDER/SEX

As stressed by many scholars (e.g., Davis 2008), a focus on various kinds of intersections of power differentials and normative identity markers was not a new idea in feminist theory when the notion of ‘intersectionality’ was first launched into circulation by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989 and 1995). What I call ‘implicit’ feminist intersectional analysis, that is, analyses of intersections of social categorizations that do not make meta-theoretical reflections on ‘intersectionality’ the hub of the analysis, have been an integral

dimension of several traditions of feminist theorizing. Moreover, it should be noted that debates on intersectional gender/sex have a long history in feminist thought. In one of the many recent articles on intersectionality, British feminist scholars Avtar Brah and Ann Phoenix make the point that the genealogies can be traced back to the nineteenth century (Brah and Phoenix 2004). They refer to reflections on gender and race and tensions between feminism and the anti-slave movement in the USA, quoting a famous speech by the former slave Sojourner Truth to the Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, in 1851. In a powerful rhetorical refrain, repeatedly asking the question 'Ain't I a woman?' Sojourner Truth maps out the troubled relations between herself as a black woman and the politics and images of feminism as conjured up by white feminism:

Well, children, where there is so much racket, there must be something out of kilter, I think between the Negroes of the South and the women of the North—all talking about rights—the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all this talking about? That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody helps me any best place. And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm. I have plowed (sic), I have planted and I have gathered into barns. And no man could head me. And ain't I a woman? I could work as much, and eat as much as any man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne children and seen most of them sold into slavery, and when I cried out with a mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me. And ain't I a woman?' (Gates and McKay 1997)

So, as Brah and Phoenix remark, with her precise and critical analysis of the paradoxes of black women's intersectional invisibility in-between anti-racist and white feminist political arguments, Sojourner Truth foreshadows 'campaigns by black feminists more than a century later' (Brah and Phoenix 2004, 77).

From a European perspective, I find it important to add yet another historical example of implicit feminist intersectionality analysis, namely the debates on intersections of gender and class that persisted for decades on the boundaries between feminist and socialist movements. Like the debates on gender and race, those on gender and class also date back to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Let me briefly illustrate how intersections of gender and class were brought forcefully onto the political agenda by women in the socialist movement around the turn of the twentieth century. They negotiated this intersectionality critically challenging both the mainstream of the worker's movement, dominated by men and ideologies of proletarian masculinity, and the bourgeois feminist movement that did not take class differences and power differentials between themselves and working-class women into account. I make my point by quoting

the Russian socialist Alexandra Kollontai, who organized women workers in the Bolshevik movement in prerevolutionary Russia, and who was later appointed minister in the first revolutionary government of the Soviet Union in 1917.

In her speeches and writings, Kollontai teases out the complexities of relations between gender and class. In words that resonate with present-day versions of postcolonial and anti-racist feminist critiques of notions of 'global sisterhood,' Kollontai attacks bourgeois feminist identity politics and discourses about an unproblematic unity among women. Her speech at the first all-Russian women's congress in 1908 is a case in point:

Bourgeois women talk all the time about the unity of women's interests, about the necessity of a joint struggle for women's rights. And this congress, the first congress in Russia for representatives for 'the fair sex' has as its goal to gather all women under a joint women's banner independent of class and party differences. But where is this joint women's banner? As the men's world, the women's world is divided in two camps: one that in its goals, its endeavours and its interests joins hands with the bourgeois classes; another one, which is closely linked up with the proletariat . . . (translated from the Danish edition of Selected Writings of Alexandra Kollontai, Kollontai 1977, 195)

However, Kollontai does not simply reduce gender issues to class issues. Differentiations based on class and the class struggle are crucial to Kollontai and make up the context in which, according to her, the effects of gender should be understood. But gender also has its own logic in Kollontai's political analysis. In her essay 'New Woman' in *The New Morality and the Working Class* (1918/1971), Kollontai reflects on the characteristics of the so-called 'new woman,' that is, women from both bourgeois and working-class backgrounds who take up the 'modern' position of wage laborers in capitalist society. Kollontai describes these 'new women' as women who are often unmarried or, if married, are not dependent on their husbands' wages. In spite of the fundamental class differences that separate them, Kollontai argues, these women share a feminist rebellion against the special kind of patriarchal subordination and dependency that women of all classes were submitted to in the past:

Capitalist reality . . . sharpens the feeling of the social conflict among wage earners. Only one thing remains common to the women of the new type: their unique difference from the woman of the past, those specific characteristics which are the hallmark of independent single women. The latter [i.e. the working-class woman wage earner], like the former [i.e. the bourgeois woman wage earner], go through a period of rebellion, the latter, like the former, fight for the assertion of their personality. . . . But whereas with the women of the working

class, the struggle for the assertion of their rights, the strengthening of their personality, coincides with the interests of the class, the women of other social strata run into unexpected obstacles: the ideology of their class is hostile to the transformation of the feminine type. (Kollontai 1971, 34)

With the examples of Sojourner Truth and Alexandra Kollontai, I want to sustain the point made by Brah and Phoenix (2004) that critical feminist reflections on intersectionalities do indeed have a long history. Moreover, I want to make it clear that it can be useful to apply a genealogical perspective and read history with 'intersectionality' as a lens, even though the label was not used at the time of Truth and Kollontai. Historical cases like the ones I have briefly referred to here illustrate how affinities between feminist and other movements have played a significant role for the theorizing of intersectional gender/sex. Through them we may also get a glimpse of the ways in which geopolitical differences have historically contextualized and toned struggles and negotiations of intersectionalities between feminists identifying with different political movements. While intersections of gender and race became a major issue of negotiation early on in the context of the USA on the boundaries of the feminist and anti-slave movements, major continental European debates on intersections have been absorbed by the issue of gender and class, and back to the nineteenth century, it has been negotiated intensely which category to prioritize in the spaces between class struggles and feminist movements.

FEMINISTS THEORIZE INTERSECTIONS FROM MANY PERSPECTIVES

From the historical examples of implicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality, I shall now return to more contemporary ones. It is important to note that the introduction of the concept of 'intersectionality' created an important nodal point and provided a name for a multiplicity of ongoing feminist debates, which no doubt accounts for the success of the concept (Davis 2008). However, reflections on what has now become widely known as 'intersectionality' have been taking place within many different frameworks both before and after Crenshaw's introduction of the concept. For example, only part of the contemporary theorizations of intersectional gender/sex that I discussed in Chapter 4 took place under the heading 'intersectionality'.

To exemplify the ways in which sophisticated meta-theoretical theorizations of intersections took place years before the concept 'intersectionality' was introduced, I shall refer to the work of two UK-based feminist researchers, Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, who, for three decades, have published extensively on the issue of intersections of gender, ethnicity, race,

class and nationality. In a key article from 1983, Anthias and Yuval-Davis enter into critical dialogue with early 1970s USA-based black feminism's understandings of intersectionality as a 'triple oppression' of gender, race and class. In addition to arguing for a broadening of the scope to include the category of ethnicity, Anthias and Yuval-Davis also call for a theorization that does more than mechanically add different kinds of oppression onto each other without analyzing the specificities of each or taking into account the 'specific effects' of the 'particular intersections involved' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1983, 63). Beginning with a Marxist framework, which they review and revise critically from a feminist and anti-racist perspective, Anthias and Yuval-Davis develop a sophisticated meta-theoretical program for intersectional analysis. They argue that it is not only important to go beyond the additive approach of the notion of 'triple oppression.' The reductionist and competitive approach of traditional Marxism, which reduces everything to class issues and considers the class category as *a priori* more theoretically and politically central than all others, is also targeted critically, and so is certain kinds of middle-class feminism that focus exclusively on a universal model of women's subordination. Instead, Anthias and Yuval-Davis propose an analytical model that understands the power differentials based on gender, ethnicity and class as governed by different logics, but also inextricably entangled in specific and contextually shifting ways, which make it analytically impossible *a priori* and abstractly to prioritize one over the others or to reduce one to the others:

All three divisions [based on gender, ethnicity and class] . . . are affected by and affect each other and the economic, political and ideological relations in which they are inserted. . . . It is not a question therefore of one [division] being more 'real' than the others or a question of *which* is the most important. However, it is clear that the three divisions prioritize different spheres of social relations and will have different effects which it may be possible to specify in concrete analysis. However, we suggest that each division exists within the context of the others and that any concrete analysis has to take this into account. (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1983, 65)

However, feminist and anti-racist Marxist frameworks, such as those within which the early work of Anthias and Yuval-Davis is located, form only one among many strands of what, from my genealogical perspective, I call 'implicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality.' Marxist feminism's general focus on gender and class, which was also demonstrated by the historical example of Alexandra Kollontai, will be presented in more detail as part of the discussion of gender constructionism in Chapter 6. The ways in which postcolonial and anti-racist feminisms generally are based on theorizations of gender, race and ethnicity, often in combination with issues of class and nationality, was discussed in Chapter 4 and was

also the focus of the historical example of Sojourner Truth. Chapter 4 also demonstrated that reflections on intersections of gender, sex and sexuality are an integral dimension of lesbian and queerfeminisms. That chapter also gave attention to the ways in which intersectionality in the shape of critical discussions of multiple masculinities and deconstructions of discourses on man as the universal human being were a *sine qua non* for critical and profeminist studies of men. Finally, in Chapters 6 and 7, I shall touch upon the ways in which various kinds of psychoanalytically inspired feminism and sexual difference feminism theorize intersections of gender/sex and sexuality.

In addition to these diverse strands of implicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality, which are being presented in more depth in other parts of this book, I would like to list a few more crucial ones in order to further demonstrate the wide and diverse scope of feminist theorizing of intersectionality.

First, it is important to note that the broad tradition of feminist Cultural Studies, which emerged in dialogue with the interdisciplinary field of Cultural Studies (initiated in the 1960s by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham, England, but later turned into a worldwide research endeavor), has been rich in empirical analyses and theorizations of intersections. Feminists, who for decades have been influential in the field, have critically gendered, for example, the classic Cultural Studies tradition of the study of working-class cultures and youth cultures. In so doing, they have contributed important intersectional analyses of the gender/class and gender/age nexus. More broadly, feminists working within the field of Cultural Studies have also developed cultural analyses of intersections of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, nationality, dis/ability, age and so on. To give a glimpse of the strong tradition of feminist intersectional analyses within the field of Cultural Studies, I point the reader toward classics such as Beverley Skeggs's analysis of gender and class cultures (Skeggs 1997 and 2004), Angela McRobbie's work on gender and youth cultures (McRobbie 1990) and Anne McClintock's cultural historical analysis of the ways in which race, gender and sexuality were entangled in colonialist discourses (McClintock 1995).

Second, I would like to draw attention to the emerging field of feminist studies of human-animal relations, which overlaps partly with certain dimensions of feminist science studies and its critical focus on the science of biology, among others, and partly with different ecocritical strands of feminist thought. Donna Haraway has been influential in the field with her seminal work on the history of primate research (Haraway 1989) and later on dogs (Haraway 2003 and 2008), together with British feminist biologist Lynda Birke (1994). Both Haraway and Birke have forcefully underlined the ways in which human-animal relations are currently being formed within the framework of strongly power-laden discourses on gender, race and sexualitv. and how mutual processes of performative construction

operate between discourses on gender/race/sexuality, on the one hand, and animals on the other. I shall go into more detail about this, with an analytical example, in Chapter 11.

While feminist Cultural Studies' focus on intersections of gender, class, age, race, ethnicity, nationality and sexuality coincides with central discussions in explicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality, more or less the opposite is the case as far as the intersectional constructions of animals are concerned. However, as I have argued in earlier research (Bryld and Lykke 2000, 28–29), I think that animals and what ecofeminist Val Plumwood poetically suggested we call 'earth others' (i.e., the world of animals, plants and minerals) (Plumwood 1993, 137) ought to be much more integrated into explicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality. I agree with Plumwood when she points out that reflections on the human domination of earth others is a 'missing piece' in feminist theory in general (Plumwood 1993, 2), existing as a strand of its own, which is normally not counted in when different kinds of intersectionalities are discussed. Likewise, I think that it is appropriate to make a parallel claim, based on Haraway's cyborg feminist theory (see Chapter 3): The category of cyborgs and posthuman others should also be taken much more into account in explicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality. However, it should also be noted that the two claims are partly overlapping insofar as cyborgs and posthuman others constitute categories that encompass animal technobodies—from genetically modified scientific laboratory animals to animals specifically bred for industrial food production.

Even though animals and earth others have been discussed much more widely in Feminist Studies since Plumwood made her ecocritical feminist statement about the 'missing piece' in 1993, the feminist discussion of non-human actors runs parallel, to, rather than being integrated with, explicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality. The latter is still a predominantly human affair and in this sense reinforces problematic modern dichotomies of 'human/nature' and 'human/non-human' that set humans hierarchically apart from non-humans, be they 'earth others' or 'posthuman cyborgs.' Current debates on climate change, however, might shift the perspective here. They make it so obvious that we are all in it together and that power differentials producing gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexuality and so on are also entangled with those governing the relations between humans, earth others and post/non-human others. USA-based feminist scholar Stacy Alaimo has forcefully made this point with her notion of 'trans-corporeal feminism' with which she emphasizes that bodies are not islands bounded off vis-à-vis each other, but for good and for bad inextricably interlinked as part of the material world (Alaimo 2008 and 2009). Also the growing feminist interest in 'posthumanities'—a transdisciplinary area of studies focusing on the setting up of meeting places of mutual commitment between human and natural sciences (Åsberg 2009)—might contribute to the integration between studies of intersectionalities in the 'human' domain with those that pertain to the world of non-human others.

In addition to animals, earth others and posthuman cyborgs, two other categories are also often emphasized by the feminists studying them as being 'missing pieces' in explicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality. These are the gender/sex-dis/ability and the gender/sex-old age nexus. Both these intersections are currently growing fields of study. Examples of sophisticated theorizations of the former intersection are the work of UK-based philosopher Margrit Shildrick (Shildrick 2009) and Norwegian sociologist Ingunn Moser (Moser 2006), while the latter can be illustrated by the work of USA-based researchers Toni Calasanti and Kathleen Slevin (2001 and 2006).

ARE THERE BLIND SPOTS IN FEMINIST STUDIES OF INTERSECTIONS?

When I ended the discussion of implicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality speaking about 'missing pieces' in explicit feminist intersectional analysis, I submitted the latter frame to one of its own tools, that is, to what feminist law professor Maria Matsuda has articulated as an important principle for feminist intersectional analysis, namely to 'ask the other question' (Matsuda 1991). What Matsuda refers to with this oft-quoted suggestion is to ask about blind spots in the analysis of intersections, that is, to ask if it would be important to include other categories in the analysis than those that appear to be most obvious to the analyst. Matsuda articulates this as follows:

When I see something that looks racist, I ask, 'Where is the patriarchy in this?' When I see something that looks sexist, I ask, 'Where is the heterosexism in this?' When I see something that looks homophobic, I ask, 'Where is the class interest in this?' (Matsuda 1991, 1189)

What I was doing, when I inserted reflections on 'missing pieces' earlier was to let the implicit intersectionality analysis frame critical questions about 'blind spots' and 'missing' categories in the grid of 'usual suspects' (gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality), which has almost turned into a mantra or norm for explicit feminist intersectionality analysis. But also I want to underline that it is important to thoroughly reflect on what it means to talk about 'inclusion' of 'missing' categories.

Reflections on the normativity of intersectional analysis and what it means to say that categories are 'missing' should be carried out against the backdrop of the fact that one of the issues that has attracted a lot of attention in the feminist debates on intersectional theory and generated different answers is the question of whether the list of intersections to be taken into account should be considered as finite or infinite. Should priority be given to a certain set of intersections (often identified as the trinity

of gender, race and class, e.g., Knapp 2005), or should an open-ended 'etc.-clause' always be added in order to take into account newly emerging issues? While structuralists and feminist Marxists would argue for the former viewpoint, poststructuralists would be in favor of the latter. But it should also be noted that a lot of in-between positions are being articulated by different feminists. Based on a poststructuralist understanding of signification as an unending process of displacements, Judith Butler argues, for example, for openendedness in the understanding of intersectional processes of subject formation. Nevertheless, she also suggests that the 'etc.' signals an 'embarrassed' and too easy way out (Butler 1990, 143), perhaps indicating that intersectional analysis of identities, seen from her point of view, is caught up in a dilemma between a wish for completeness and the necessity of recognizing the unending sliding of meanings.

The different feminist positions with respect to the issue of prioritizing and delineating of categorizations indicates how important it is to reflect carefully on the status and interrelatedness of the categorizations included in intersectional theory as well as in analytical practice. It is, as Matsuda suggests, important to ask the other question on both these levels (theoretical framework and analytical practice), but it is also crucial to make clear any presuppositions. Feminist theorizings of intersectionality and intersections are complex, and the complexity of the analysis increases the more categories are involved. This must be kept carefully in mind.

TO THEORIZE INTERSECTIONALITY UNDER OTHER NAMES: INTERSECTIONALITY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

As the last point in this exposé of genealogies of feminist theorizing of intersectionality, I elaborate on the point that there has been much debate in Feminist Studies as to whether the concept of intersectionality is best calibrated to explore the phenomenon of intersections between power differentials and normativities based on gender, race, class, sexuality and so on or whether other frameworks could do better. To round off my genealogical analysis, I shall mention examples of alternative concepts and frameworks and briefly summarize the motivations for them.

Black feminists in the USA used the term 'interlocking oppressions' as far back as the 1970s. The classic 'A Black Feminist Statement' of the Combahee River Collective (1977/1982) emphasizes that the members of the collective are committed to struggling against 'racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression' and that 'an integrated analysis' is needed to understand that these 'major systems of oppression are interlocking' (Combahee River Collective 1977/1982, 13). The metaphor of 'interlocking' suggests an image of intersections that, unlike Crenshaw's roads crossing each other, cannot be separated. Some feminist researchers find

this image more convincing and the term 'interlocking' is still in circulation (e.g., George and Ramkissoon 1998).

Taking inspiration from Donna Haraway's reflections on diffraction (1997, 268), about which I shall go into more detail in Chapter 9, Norwegian feminist and Science and Technology Studies (STS)-scholar Ingunn Moser (2006) has suggested the metaphor of 'interference' as an alternative to intersectionality in her study of the relations between gender, class and disability. What Moser wants to accomplish with this change of metaphor is to open up a space for analyses of the ways in which the different processes that construct gender, class and disability not only mechanically sustain and reinforce each other (as the metaphor of intersections suggests), but may also clash, come into conflict and neutralize each other. Following Hirschauer (2001), Moser also emphasizes that it is important to take into account the fact that the different axes of power differentials are not necessarily enacted all the time and in all spaces. However, this does not in any way mean that they simply vanish.

In a similar vein, Haraway has promoted the notion of 'inappropriate/d others' (Haraway 1992), drawing inspiration from the Vietnamese-American feminist artist and theoretician Trinh Minh-ha (Minh-ha 1986-87 and 1989) and with certain echoes of Foucault's notions of norm and deviancy. The concept refers to intersectional networks of power differentials, based on gender, race, class and so on, which produce social exclusion and marginalization, or, to rephrase this with Haraway's/Minh-ha's term, make groups of people 'inappropriate/d.' To use the concept of inappropriate/d otherness makes it possible to speak of subjects othered by clusters of power differentials, but without privileging certain intersections and axes of analysis as the *per se* and *a priori* most important ones. The concept is thus well suited as a way out of the dilemmas pointed out by Moser that categorizations may reinforce, but also neutralize each other, and that they might be enacted differently according to time and space, which basically implies that they should not be imposed as a grid from the outset of the analysis.

Chela Sandoval, a USA-based Chicana feminist, coined the term 'differential powers, politics and consciousness' in her seminal work on *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Sandoval 2000). She, too, is interested in alternatives to the grid-like understanding that the metaphor of intersections creates. With this concept, she emphasizes that the boundary work and the consciousness coming out of boundary crossing between categorizations are more important than the grid of categories itself.

The focus on boundary crossing, not only at the level of the consciousness of the subject, but also at an interpersonal level is also emphasized in Nira Yuval-Davis's work on transversal politics (Yuval-Davis 1997, 125), which is motivated by an interest in finding ways to establish boundary crossing solidarity between differently located individuals in political work. The concept of transversalism is inspired by Italian feminists and is intended as a proposal to overcome the political tensions that may occur

in women's movements when they try to bridge the gaps created by differences between group members. Yuval-Davis's example is of women who are politically divided by national or regional conflicts. Transversal politics is a specific method for establishing political solidarity and platforms for joint action without reverting to an identity politics that would suppress differences in politically unsustainable ways. The method is based on a dialogue in which all group participants commit themselves to combine 'rooting' (in their own local and partial perspectives) and 'shifting' (i.e., seriously taking up and committing oneself to the perspective of differently situated group members) (Yuval-Davis 1997, 130).

As my last example of alternative frameworks, I want to underline the fact that there is a long feminist tradition of theorizing intersectionality as difference, focusing on differences among women. I discussed this in Chapter 4 as part of the presentation of postcolonial and anti-racist feminist critiques of the homogenizing moves of white, middle-class feminism. In Chapter 7, I shall also go into more detail about sexual difference theorist Rosi Braidotti's theorization of the notion of difference, but for now I shall just briefly mention the part of her work that is of particular relevance to the intersectionality debate. Braidotti defines three levels of sexual difference. The second of these—differences among women—encompasses the intersectionality debate and takes the inspiration for its articulation from USA-based feminist scholar Teresa de Lauretis's semiotic reflections on the relationship between the terms 'women' and 'Woman.' Against this backdrop, Braidotti reflects on the ways in which the notion of differences, which has negatively defined intersecting hierarchies and hegemonies based on sexism, racism and so on, can also be reclaimed for feminist politics and affirmatively resignified as that which rings the death knell for the oppressive, gender-conservative category of universal womanhood as a viable identity category. The recognition of differences among women, Braidotti argues (1994, 187), makes visible how the category 'Woman' is an impossible abstraction.

CONCLUSION: INTERSECTIONALITY AS A NODAL POINT

In this chapter I have carried out a genealogical analysis of the concept of intersectionality, as it was originally framed within a context of black feminism in the USA. I have looked at explicit feminist theorizing of intersectionality, based on anti-discrimination and social justice approaches as well as poststructuralist ones. Via a genealogical analysis of a broad range of implicit feminist theorizings of intersectionality, I have also underlined that the theorizing of intersections between gender and other sociocultural categories is much more integrated into feminist thought than it appears when one looks only at the explicit use of the concept of 'intersectionality.'

I sustain the argument that the explicit articulation of the concept in the late 1980s gave voice to a theoretical endeavor that until then had been

widespread and outspoken in feminist theorizing, but without the kind of nodal point that a clear conceptualization establishes. I argue that it is important to have a nodal point, that is, a shared framework for the negotiation of the most effective analytical frameworks. The explicit coining of the concept of intersectionality has been productive in this sense. Such a conceptual nodal point facilitates the comparison of differences and similarities of related theoretical, political and analytical endeavors, and in this way it can create fertile soil for analytical refinement and sophistication—and more effective political interventions. But as part of the exploration of conceptual genealogies, it is important to keep in mind that intersectional ways of thinking have a long and complicated history in feminist thought.

Finally, I also wanted to underline that a lot of feminist theorizing of intersections did not make the concept of intersectionality the hub of the discussion, and that many feminist discussions of intersections were carried out under other names, that is, using other metaphors and frameworks than 'intersectionality.'

6 Genealogies of Doing

Besides theorizing gender/sex as intersectional, it has also been important for *Feminist Studies* to develop understandings of gender and other social categorizations as being historically, socially, culturally and linguistically constructed and to deconstruct and deessentialize stereotypes. Therefore, in this chapter I shall focus on feminist de/constructionism.

I cannot emphasize strongly enough the importance of gender de/constructionist theories for feminist critiques of biological determinism and cultural essentialism. The constructionist endeavor to establish sociocultural gender as a specific area of knowledge, independent of biological sex, has been a central contribution to feminist theory. This is also true of linguistic deconstruction, which has been a pivot of feminist poststructuralism. Although I shall elaborate in Chapter 7 (on corpomaterialist feminist theory) on the critique of the gender/sex distinction and the problems of gender de/constructionism, which I briefly mentioned in Chapter 2, this should not overshadow the theoretical significance of feminist de/constructionist thought. There is a widespread consensus among feminist theorists that the insights of feminist de/constructionism have been crucial.

In order to demonstrate the richness of feminist de/constructionism, I shall give examples of a range of different positions. More precisely, I have chosen to briefly illustrate the interplay between feminist theorizing and theoretical strands such as existentialism, historical materialism, psychoanalysis, symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, speech act theory and poststructuralist philosophy of language, which have all been significant inspirations for feminist theorizations of social and linguistic constructions, and deconstructions, of gender/sex.

As in the previous chapters on theories of intersectional gender/sex, I shall use a genealogical approach to map out different positions in feminist de/constructionism. In the first section of this chapter, I shall begin with the feminist de/constructionist theories that are currently influential. I shall give particular attention to theories highlighting gender as a phenomenon that is constructed discursively, linguistically and communicatively. In particular, I shall focus on the 'doing-gender' approach, mentioned earlier, which theorizes gender as something we 'do' rather than something we 'have' or

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