

UNIVERSITY OF READING

'Never too rich or too thin': Readings about the Fat Body

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Declaration

I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

Abstract

There has been a great deal of writing already on women's bodies, especially the overweight or 'fat' woman's body, including thousands of books on dieting or weight/ fat acceptance. My thesis, however, draws on the arguments of Judith Butler both to interpret the implications of Butler's arguments in specific ways and then to apply the implications of that interpretation to reading a range of texts (including websites, NHS policy documents and advertising materials) in this area *differently*. In this sense, this thesis critiques readings of Butler's work which retain notions of a real residual body and, instead, reads in perspective in terms of what is at stake in these claims about women's bodies.

I further draw on Michel Foucault's works on bodies and power, particularly the idea of body in a neoliberal society in order to read notions of power, surveillance, and control in perspective.

I take a psychoanalytical approach to a range of texts, not to claim to discover a 'truth' or an answer in them through this, but as a way of reading perspective, engaging with psychoanalytical and psychological ideas (Sigmund Freud, Susie Orbach) as ways of reading ideas of the 'fat' female body as site of danger and disgust (Mary Douglas, Julia Kristeva). This production of a 'proper' and 'desirable' body in texts which define bodies in this way (David Bainbridge), leads to questions on what should be done with improper, undesirable bodies, and what implications that produces in the removal of this undesirability.

The purpose of the thesis, then, is not to add yet another 'solution' to how to lose weight or how to accept the body, but instead to analyse the 'body' and 'fat' as constructions and to read in what perspective those constructions are claimed to be known.

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1 Introduction

'Much as I would rather it were not so, the problems raised in *FIFI* are still with us.'

(Susie Orbach)¹

'You can never be too rich or too thin.' (attributed to Wallis Simpson)

This thesis is concerned with readings of the body, and particularly with texts concerned with the 'fat' or overweight female body.

My interest in what might be at stake in claims made about the importance of how the body looked, and its relation to what was claimed as being inside this looked-at body, began during my study for an MA dissertation in which I read an article in an 1880 edition of *The Girl's Own Paper* entitled 'How Can I Look My Best?'² Following my readings on the advice given to a Victorian girl on looking her '[b]est', I became interested in the question of what looking one's '[b]est' might mean for women today. I found that I was reading again and again the claim that the '[b]est' female twentieth and twenty-first century body was a body that was *less*, that had less weight, less presence, less matter. A body that was less in the world.

The ideal female weight was defined, not specifically as 'thin', but instead through this idea of 'less'; 'you' always need to weigh less than you do to *look your best*, whatever your weight might be. As in the Victorian paper, the process is what matters, whilst completion is always deferred. Whilst I could read a claim that whilst the perspective had an answer to the question of 'How Can I Look My Best?' there was no corresponding claim that the reader might ever achieve this '[b]est', and so bring an end to the process.

¹ Susie Orbach, *Fat is a Feminist Issue* (London: Random House, 1988), p. 21.

² Elizabeth Harris, 'How Can I Look My Best? A reading from *The Girl's Own Paper*' (unpublished Masters Degree, University of Reading, 2014).

In these more modern texts, I was also reading the '[b]est' body as being different or separate to that which was constructed in these readings as the 'you' whose body was not '[b]est'. There was, just as with the 'Medicus' author of *The Girl's Own Paper*, a perspective claiming authority over what was not the perspective, a construction of an 'other' known as deficient and in need of a knowledge held by the perspective, an 'other' in need of help because they could not help themselves. The 'I' of 'How Can I Look My Best?' still asks, according to the perspectives I read in the texts which claim to answer.

This idea of text as authority appears at the beginning of a book on weight loss, *From Fat to Fit*; 'If all your previous efforts to lose weight have failed, this is the book for you.'³ It continues, '[t]his book contains complete information about obesity and a scientific analysis of facts supported by the statistical data' (p. 3). The claim here is that it is 'your' 'efforts' that have 'failed' because 'you' did not have this 'book' which is 'the book for you', (and so there is no other 'book for you'). 'This book' is all that 'you' need because it 'contains complete information about obesity'. The claim is for completeness (there is nothing outside '[t]his book'), but also for it being a 'scientific analysis of facts'; this 'analysis' is an addition to what is already claimed as 'complete'. The 'facts' are not the 'statistical data', but are 'supported' by them, and so the perspective on 'facts' is on what they are not; they are not 'complete information about obesity', they are not 'scientific analysis' or 'statistical data'. Since 'you' have 'failed' in 'your previous efforts to lose weight', and also that 'you' do not yet have '[t]his book', what 'you' did not have is 'complete information about obesity', 'scientific analysis of facts' or 'statistical data'. It is these things that are claimed as the knowledge which '[t]his book' has – they confer authority, through a claim to an outside-of-the-book knowledge by the perspective, which is not accessible to 'you'.

³ Dhiran Gala, and others, *From Fat to Fit* (Ahmadabad: Navneet Publications (India) Ltd., 2011), p. 1.

The idea of an authority who is separate from the 'I' who asks how to lose weight, was also problematic in my own writing on texts, particularly those focussing on dieting. During the course of writing this thesis I have often been asked questions such as, 'so what *is* the best way I can lose weight?' by people who were aware of my topic, the emphasis on the '*is*' seeming to imply that I had an answer to this question, or at least had knowledge of the subject that the questioner did not – I had become the authority outside the 'I' that asked. These always seemed impossible questions to answer, even if I accepted my status outside the 'I', since even a response such as 'I've no idea' seemed to me to imply that there was still a 'best' way to lose weight that I had been unable to discover. Equally importantly though, I could not accept this authority of answerer or knowledge-holder, given my problematic readings of those claiming to do exactly that.

It was not simply that my research was never intended to answer the question of the 'best' way to lose weight, it was also my resistance to the idea of a conclusion or a finishing. If my reading questioned the idea of the claims to a final answer within the perspective I read, then the whole idea of somehow writing any sort of an answer, even one that claimed to there being no answer, was problematic.

Whilst I was not able to answer my questioners, their interest in what they saw as the point of my research was incredibly helpful for me in my thinking about what I was doing. If I was not reading about the body and weight loss in order to get some sort of solution or answer to 'How Can I Look My Best' or 'what is the best way to lose weight', then what was I doing? Why read about dieting or obesity without being able to explain to people the 'best' way to lose weight?

For me, as it has been since I began the Reading MA in Children's Literature, this was about an attempt to read perspective. Reading narration in this way, reading out the claims within the text is what matters; it is the process rather than an end. I have chosen to write about ideas and claims about the body because, as I discuss later, my interest in the subject surrounds the problem, for me, of a discourse about the 'fat' body which reads the

body itself as an uncomplicated pre-existing 'real'. I could have, however, written about ideas of the beautiful body or the healthy body, or any other claims about the '[b]est' body. I could not, though, have read differently, and chosen to read, perhaps, an historical account of dieting and weight loss. Trying to read perspective has driven this thesis, which has then led to reading the body.

This process of close reading narrative, together with the experience of studying at Reading for an MA and PhD has been revelatory and terrifying. Previously, my study of English Literature had involved firstly and lastly the notion of an ending, an answer to a question posed at the beginning of an essay to bring the text to a conclusion, however much this might be couched in terms of consideration, evaluation, or comparison. To read narrative without this, can often feel like reading without a safety net because of the lack of the comfort of 'finishing' or of being, finally, 'done'.

The difficulty of whether I could or should claim to position my work, to 'place' it in a particular branch of study has been a challenge, as I have simultaneously resisted and been attracted to the idea of 'explaining myself'. I find it difficult to claim even that I write within a branch of literary theory, which leads to uncertainty when talking about my thesis. To perhaps claim this thesis is written within the scope of a poststructuralist approach or possibly from a deconstructionist position, is difficult for me. When I have occasionally tried to 'explain' that I write in this way, I have sometimes found an understanding about what these terms mean to my questioner, and therefore a sense of security or recognition ('ah, I understand what you are doing!') from this (sometimes imagined) questioner, has led to a corresponding sense of security in me: 'I am understood'.

The issue for me, however, is the question of what it would mean to claim to write from within a particular approach or theory and to be 'understood' in this way. Might this close down my reading by claiming to be reading from a particular perspective which I therefore claim as *other* to me? Would it not claim some sort of externality to my reading, a 'way' of

'doing' reading which already exists? Why would I want to explain myself and what would it mean to do so?

Nonetheless, to engage with the idea that there is a 'way' of 'doing' reading need not be an issue, I believe. To leave the above questions unanswered is, in many ways, the point of this thesis, to resist the idea of an answer that ends or completes. The main part of my thesis is formed from a selection of close readings from texts about the body and its boundaries. Most importantly, I try to read out what is at stake in these texts, to read what might be going on when a perspective claims to know the 'real' way to lose weight or claims to know the body in such a way as to be able to identify where the body begins and where it ends, to be able to describe what is inside and what is outside the body.

The temptation to decide that I have the answer, to finish my thesis with a conclusion that makes its own claims about the commodification of the body has sometimes been very strong during my time studying. What has helped, is to always try to return to reading perspective.

In *The Truth in Painting*, Jacques Derrida writes;

The passe-partout which here creates an event must not pass for a master key. You will not be able to pass it from hand to hand like a convenient instrument, a short treatise, a viaticum or even an organon or pocket canon, in short a transcendental pass, a password to open all doors, decipher all texts and keeps their chains under surveillance. If you rushed to understand it this way, I would have to issue a warning (avertissement); this forward [sic] (avertissement) is not a passe-partout.⁴

In committing to a close reading of these texts, I have committed to rejecting the notion of 'a password to open all doors' or to 'decipher all texts'. In close reading, it is not possible

⁴ Jacques Derrida, Geoffrey Bennington and Ian McLeod, *The Truth in Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), p. 12.

to look for the pre-existence of my imagined answer to why diets fail, for ‘proof’ of my thesis, since it is not possible to properly read out claims within the text if my reading already knew what I was looking for and what I would find. As Karin Lesnik-Oberstein notes,

For Derrida, in other words, deconstruction and the truth in painting – the truth in picture books – is not about methods of reading to achieve known and pre-determined results discussing characters, themes, plots, contexts, issues, messages and ideologies; not about the ‘what’ of texts and paintings (or pictures or anything else), but the how.⁵

Firstly, then, this thesis is concerned with the ‘how’, not of ‘how can I lose weight?’ but of the ‘how’ do I read weight, obesity and the body.

I have found again and again that there is no end or answer to dieting, that to ‘[l]ook’ one’s ‘[b]est’ is always ongoing and never completed, but that is not to say there are no texts that I might read in this way, or that I might re-read my texts and read them differently. What I write is specific to my readings of the texts here and to the time of reading them.

This thesis, therefore, offers a close reading of texts that make claims about the body and its boundaries, particularly the ‘fat’ female body. The texts that focus on weight loss and diets are often concerned with the idea of weight loss as something that is always ongoing whilst it simultaneously offers a solution to losing weight. For me, this insistence on an endless striving for weight loss was aligned to an equal insistence on spending money to achieve this weight loss. Just as the ‘[b]est’ body is never achieved or the target weight attained, there can be no end to the insistence on spending money in the attempt to achieve what can never be completed.

⁵ Karin Lesnik-Oberstein, ‘The case of *The Case of Peter Pan or The Impossibility of Children’s Fiction: Deconstruction, Psychoanalysis, Childhood, Animality*’, *Oxford Literary Review*, 41 (2) (2019), <https://www.eupublishing.com/doi/10.3366/olr.2019.0281>, Accepted manuscript version accessed on 14th July 2021 from <http://centaur.reading.ac.uk/85829>, para 10.

In *Maggie Goes on a Diet*⁶ Maggie was 'not only clumsy, she was also quite fat' but is 'determined to one day be fit and be lean', and so goes on a diet. 'In a little over ten months Maggie weighed fifty-one pounds less' (p. 28). One of the results of this 'less' is that;

All of Maggie's clothes were falling to the floor.

They were so big on her; she could not wear them anymore.

Maggie had no choice but to replace all her old clothes.

She had to buy everything new from her head to her toes.

Maggie was so excited; it was like having her own fashion show. (p. 28)

Whilst the perspective claims 'Maggie's' weight loss as positive - she is 'so excited' at buying 'everything new', I read a lack of 'choice' in the result of her weighing 'less'; she '*had no choice* but to replace all her old clothes', because 'she *could not* wear them anymore', she '*had to* buy everything new' (all my italics). The pleasure here is because of buying, but the buying is an obligation, it would not matter if for 'Maggie' 'having her own fashion show' was not pleasurable, she would still have had to 'buy everything new'.

When '*Maggie Goes on a Diet*', it costs money; a continual theme in the culture of weight loss. To buy the book, but then to buy another book and another, to pay for the class, to pay money weekly to come to a slimming group and not lose weight but keep paying, to sign up for gym membership, to buy 'diet meals' or slimming tablets, to have bariatric surgery; in the course of my thesis, I came to read that all this was itself the purpose, not to lose weight, but to keep paying to lose weight. Necessarily then, there must be no end since this would stop the requirement to keep paying. No diet can work, because then there would be no continuation of paying to lose weight, no way of continuing to commodify the 'fat' body.

⁶ Paul Kramer, *Maggie Goes on a Diet* (Hanalei: Aloha Publishers, 2011), p. 2. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

I do not, therefore, read about why diets do not work, but instead I present a possible reading of what might be at stake in the claims of these texts to have a knowledge of, and a solution to, the 'fat' female body. The solution is often couched as 'truth'. On the cover of Giles Yeo's *Gene Eating* is written 'The science of *obesity* and the truth about *diets*'⁷. Anthony Warner's book is entitled *The Truth about Fat*.⁸ Even if 'truth' is not explicit in a book's title, a claim to a certainty or a knowledge that 'you' do not have is often present, for example, *How Not to Die*⁹ or *The Better Brain: How Nutrition Will Help You Overcome Anxiety, Depression, ADHD and Stress*.¹⁰ What matters is this claim to authority which excludes the 'you' who does not know the 'truth', who does not know '*How Not to Die*' or how to '*Overcome Anxiety, Depression, ADHD and Stress*' (and so therefore has these things which need to be '[o]vercome'.)

There is no end to the attempt to be one's 'best' by losing weight since the process of looking your 'best' is always constructed as a 'how'; the perspective is always that which is not 'you' showing 'you' how to lose weight. During my time writing this thesis I have read many books, articles, websites and researched a variety of slimming groups which all claim to have the solution to 'How Can I Look My Best' by claiming to answer a different question; 'how can I lose weight?' These do not necessarily claim to be diet books; in fact, many claim *not* to be diet books since they already know that dieting does not work. In the 2016 edition of *Fat is a Feminist Issue*, there is a prologue (which does not appear in previous editions) entitled 'The Anti Diet Guide'.¹¹ In *The Truth About Fat*, Anthony Warner claims that '[a]nyone who claims they have a magic bullet is either mistaken or lying to you', and that '[c]ountless charlatans sell you their diets or offer up conspiracy theories to explain obesity's rise. When it comes to the diet industry, purveyors of false hope are

⁷ Giles Yeo, *Gene Eating* (London: Orion, 2018).

⁸ Anthony Warner, *The Truth About Fat* (London: Oneworld publications, 2019).

⁹ Michael Greger, *How Not to Die* (London: Pan Books, 2015).

¹⁰ Julia Rucklidge and Bonnie Kaplan, *The Better Brain: How Nutrition Will Help You Overcome Anxiety, Depression, ADHD and Stress* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2021).

¹¹ Susie Orbach, *Fat is a Feminist Issue*, (London: Random House, 2016), p. xxix.

thoroughly legitimised, sometimes even prescribed by doctors' (p. 330). Here, Warner is claiming not to be the '[a]nyone' who is claiming to have a 'magic bullet', but to know those claiming this, and to know that they are 'mistaken or lying to you'. Warner is not these people and so is not 'mistaken or lying to you'. He also knows the 'purveyors of false hope' and claims that they are different to him; he can identify that they offer 'false hope' despite their being 'legitimised'; this legitimisation is not accepted by him. '[D]octors' are part of this legitimisation since these 'false hopes' can be 'even prescribed by doctors', and so he claims to be different from 'doctors'; this is a perspective that denies 'even' the authority of 'doctors' to legitimise 'the diet industry'.

Warner also writes, though, '[a] book that discusses problems without offering solutions would be of little use to the world. So as we progress, I shall start to shape a few ideas that might help us reach a better place' (p. xii). Here the claim is that the perspective is part of the 'we' and the 'us' – 'we' are progressing together. However, it is 'I' who starts to 'shape a few ideas', not 'we' or 'us'; the 'I' who knows, remains present. The book's title is *The Truth About Fat*, and so there is only one '[t]ruth', which is produced only in Warner's 'book' which offers 'solutions'. There is, therefore, a denial of a solution to obesity, which is subverted by a claim to a solution, one that is known specifically by Warner and so is claimed as different because this solution is of 'use to the world'.

What is produced again and again in texts on weight loss is a perspective that claims to know what 'you' do not. Often, this perspective claims to be part of a 'we', an apparent denial of a separation between the perspective and 'you' which is, of course, not a 'we' together at all since within this 'we' is still a perspective that knows about fat and obesity and a 'you' who does not.

Whilst these are perspectives on weight loss that claim to 'know' that diets do not work, this does not alter their insistence on the necessity of weight loss. Diets might not work, they say, but what is represented as an alternative to dieting – psychology, society, exercise, science, surgery, even fat acceptance, still retain the idea of an unacceptable

'fat' body. What is always desirable is still the 'best' body, unachievable, unreachable and yet always offered as a possibility.

1.1 The Healthy Body

More recently, there have been claims that there has been a shift of perspective on weight, which now focusses not on the importance of being thin because this is an ideal *look*, but on the importance of being 'a healthy weight'. These texts claim that the danger of obesity is not that if you are obese you will not look 'your best', but rather that if you are obese you will have serious health problems.¹²

This 'healthy weight', though, is still constructed through a seeing of a 'fat' body; the reason behind issues with a 'fat' body might claim to be different, but the outcome is the same; the desirable body which is not the 'fat' body. I question any distinction here, between these claims for difference by 'healthy weight' advocates who distance themselves from the claim that what matters is the unacceptable look of the 'fat' body. When I read claims that a text has a different approach to obesity, when this maintains that it is only concerned with 'fatness' because of health rather than aesthetic issues, my readings are not different. The claim is always that 'fat' bodies are problematic. Samantha Murray brings this distinction into question when she claims that there has been a 'shift of dominant responses to fatness from a cultural aesthetic objection to fat flesh, to a more "neutral" politically correct concern with "health" and "fitness"'.¹³

¹² For example, the link between obesity as a risk factor for COVID-19, 'Studies in the United States have shown that having a BMI over 30—the threshold that defines obesity—increases the risk of being admitted to hospital with Covid-19 by 113%, of being admitted to intensive care by 74%, and of dying by 48%. Public Health England reported similar numbers for mortality, with the risk of death from covid-19 increasing by 90% in people with a BMI over 40', Meera Senthilingam, 'Covid-19 has made the obesity epidemic worse, but failed to ignite enough action', *BMJ* (2021), 411, <<https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n411>>.

¹³ Samantha Murray, "'Banded Bodies": The Somatechnics of Gastric Banding', *Somatechnics: Queering the Technologisation of Bodies*, ed. by Samantha Murray and Nikki Sullivan (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 153. See also Chapter 10 later in this thesis.

What I often read within texts on weight loss were claims of this connection between the body and “health”, although often without these marks around ‘health’ and so claiming a more uncomplicated reading of what ‘health’ might be. The ‘fat’ body is an unhealthy body and therefore this perspective claims that losing weight is *not* a question of an outside looked-at body, but a question of what is inside, the idea that being healthy on the inside produces an accepted body on the outside. These texts claim to be ‘different’ in this focus on health over appearance and yet their claims are strikingly similar to the ‘diet’ books they criticise^{14, 15} (cited earlier here, for example, *From Fat to Fit* (p. 3) or *Maggie Goes on a Diet* (p. 8)).

These ‘other’ texts read fat and obesity as undesirable not because they look undesirable but because of the claims around there being health issues associated with it. Seeing someone who is overweight is to see an unhealthy person. Other texts, however, go further; they construct a ‘fat’ body as one that cannot be seen. The idea of TOFI bodies (thin outside, fat inside) or MONW (metabolic obese normal weight) is raised as a danger;¹⁶ a body that might look ‘normal’ from the outside, whilst medical dangers such as type 2 diabetes and cancer lurk hidden inside.

Most people are aware that being overweight or obese has long term detrimental effects on your health and it can contribute to cancer, heart disease, diabetes and many other chronic diseases...but did you know that some people may be a ‘fat skinny person’? They look slim but they are actually fat on the inside.¹⁷

¹⁴ Laura Annette, *This is not a Diet Book BUT You'll Finally Lose Weight: Get to the core of unhealthy behaviors & create change that will last* (Seattle: Amazon, 2021), Kindle book.

¹⁵ James Smith, *Not a Diet Book: Take Control. Gain Confidence. Change Your Life* (London: Harper Collins, 2020).

¹⁶ Zigmont Zdrojerwicz and others, ‘TOFI phenotype - its effect on the occurrence of diabetes’ (2017), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29073292>.

¹⁷ Claire Georgiou, ‘The fat inside that kills you (and 8 ways to fight it)’ (2019), <https://www.rebootwithjoe.com/the-fat-inside-that-kills-you/>.

'[F]at' 'people' do not need to 'look' 'fat', and 'people' who 'look slim' can still be 'actually fat on the inside'. This idea of a hidden 'fat' body which is 'detrimental' to 'health' but cannot be seen is a perspective on the 'people' who 'look slim' which claims them as 'fat'. The 'inside' here is what matters because it is different to what can be seen and is claimed as more important than this seeing, because to 'look slim' is not to be 'slim' and being 'slim' is what matters because even if someone is a "fat skinny person" they are compromising their 'health'.

The 1:1 Cambridge Diet¹⁸ also claims to be concerned with the healthy body. '[T]he 1:1 Diet product range has been researched and tested by experts to provide all the vitamins and minerals your body needs for a manageable weight loss'. The claims are not for how 'your body' looks, but for what it 'needs'; it is the 'vitamins and minerals' that the '1:1 Diet product range' provides which results in 'manageable weight loss'. On the 'Dieter Stories'¹⁹ page, the claims are for health rather than how to look one's best; 'Couple lose more than 10 stone combined and reverse diabetes symptoms', 'World Health Day: Slimmer celebrates incredible six stone weight loss', 'Dad-of-two Luke loses four stone to improve his health'.

What is problematic, however, is that all the 'Stories' are accompanied by pictures, showing the before and after body. 'Seeing a photo of herself in a bikini was the trigger for Lizzie Stein to lose weight', 'Single mum Louise Mason finally feels happy enough to take pictures with her son thanks to The 1:1 Diet', 'Sylwia is finally dressed to impress!'. There is still a '[s]eeing' of 'herself' and a claim to the '[s]eeing' now being different for 'Lizzie'; "When I saw a photograph of myself in a bikini on holiday, I was horrified," she admitted. "I hated the way I looked and wanted to feel better about myself". This is still a claim to the problem of being obese being about what 'Lizzie' 'saw' and how she 'looked'.

¹⁸ Cambridge Weight Plan, The 1:1 diet <https://www.one2onediet.com/how-it-works/meals-and-food>.

¹⁹ Cambridge Weight Plan, The 1:1 diet <https://www.one2onediet.com/blog/dieterstories/?filter=diabetes>.

For 'Sylwia', "when I was invited to a photo shoot for The 1:1 Diet, the stylist encouraged me to wear a dress and I couldn't believe how good it looked". Again, what matters is the looking.

1.2 Bodies and Power

The discourse of the 'fat' body is the discourse of power; of who has the power to define what is 'fat', what is unhealthy, what is abject. The perspective that knows how 'you' should lose weight is the perspective of power and this perspective claims power over 'your' body, which is not the perspective's body. In reading this question of the 'you' who is not the perspective, other pronouns come under consideration, such as 'we' and 'us' who claim to be the same as 'you' and yet who retain a claim to knowing what 'you' do not²⁰, and 'they' who are not 'we', 'us' or 'you'.

In 'Bodies and Power Revisited'²¹, Judith Butler considers 'they' in relation to Michel Foucault's analysis of the body and power in *Discipline and Punish*. Butler quotes Foucault who writes,

This power is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those who 'do not have it', it invests them, is transmitted by them and through them; it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them [*prennant appui a leur tour sur le prises qu'il exerce sur eux*]. (p. 13)

To this, Butler asks, 'who is the "they" who struggle and resist?' (p. 14). For Butler, there is '*the "they"*' (my italics); her question of 'who' is already in the context of Foucault's 'they themselves'; there is already 'the "they"' to perhaps be known through the question of 'who'. '[P]ower', for Foucault, is 'transmitted by them and through them', the 'them' here

²⁰ See for example, chapter 13 on Weightwatchers, which considers the claims of 'We're all different' and 'Weight Watchers Your Way'.

²¹ Judith Butler, 'Bodies and Power Revisited', *Radical Philosophy*, 114 (2002), 13-19. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

being 'those who "do not have it"'. This is how 'they' are claimed to be, both in relation to 'power' as something that is 'on' them and also something that 'invests them' which leads to 'power' being something also 'transmitted by them'. These marks around 'those who "do not have it"', opens the "do not have it" to question by Foucault. This is not 'those who do not have it' without marks since then there would be no uncertainty as to who makes the claim that 'those' are the ones who 'do not have it'. It is not, then, Foucault who makes this claim, but his reading in perspective of 'those who "do not have it"' as a claim. Butler's "they" and Foucault's 'they' of 'those who "do not have it"', therefore are both claimed as open to question by recognising the 'the "they"' as problematic.

There is identification of 'those who "do not have"' 'power', but Foucault brings this powerlessness into question with these marks (as Butler writes, 'those who, in another vocabulary, are said not to have power' (p. 14)). '[T]hose who "do not have it"' are invested by 'power' and so can transmit it, so there is a relation between 'them' and 'power'. This transmission of 'power' is not a claim that the 'them' has 'power', however; 'power' is not 'them' it is 'through them' without being part of 'them'.

There is also the question of '[*prenant appui a leur tour sur le prises qu'il exerce sur eux*]'. This follows what is before and yet is different; it is in French, in italics and is within square brackets, so the claim is for this as being *not* like what goes before it. Is this, then, a claim to supplementation, to somehow being an addition to what is written before in that it writes what has already been written, but now in French, that the meaning is the same whilst the words are different? To be something that explains further (and so makes the English words insufficient)? To be a claim to being the *real* words? If this is a claim to be what Foucault *is really saying*, then the reading of the words that are not in italics or square brackets or in French are complicated by this, by then being *not what Foucault is really saying*. To write, for example 'their struggle' and to claim this as Foucault's words, is to claim a meaning which is now supplemented by '*leur*' or '*eux*', and so 'their' is now insufficient alone without '*leur*', but also '*eux*'. When I read 'they' or 'their', but also

elsewhere in other texts 'you', 'we', 'us', it is not to claim that I read with a knowing of a stability or 'real' meaning of these words.

For Butler, 'power is neither possessed nor not possessed by a subject, since here, in the moment in which a certain "they" is invoked, the "they" are both invested by power and in a struggle against it' (p. 14). This is read in relation to Foucault's writing on the 'body' and 'power' (p. 13) where the 'body' 'becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body'.

In my readings on the 'body', it is this idea of the 'body' as a 'useful force' and as a problem, which is perhaps what is at stake when claims are made around ideas of the healthy, slim body. To be a 'useful' body, as I read in my chapter on neoliberalism later, is to be a commodified body, but it is also a body that does not pose a problem for society. This distinction between public and individual is made in a speech by Tony Blair who identifies the 'individual' as the cause of 'public health problems'²².

Our public health problems are not, strictly speaking, public health questions at all. They are questions of individual lifestyle - obesity, smoking, alcohol abuse, diabetes, sexually transmitted disease.

[...]

And above all a state that sees its role as empowering the individual, not trying to make their choices for them, can only work on the basis of a different relationship between citizen and state. Government can't be the only one with the responsibility if it's not the only one with the power. The responsibility

²² The Nuffield Trust, *Speech by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair*, (2006), <https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/public/health-and-social-care-explained/the-history-of-the-nhs/speech-by-the-prime-minister-tony-blair-2006/>.

must be shared and the individual helped but with an obligation also to help themselves.

What matters is 'a state' that 'can' 'work'. Therefore the 'empowering' which 'a state' gives 'the individual' is given on this basis, that it is for the purpose of ensuring the 'state' still works, even with this 'different relationship between citizen and state'. The claim is for a 'shared' 'power' between '[g]overnment' and 'the individual', but it is the 'state' which empowers the 'individual', and so had 'power' before this, when 'the individual' did not. The 'obligation' is on 'the individual' and so, like Foucault's 'them', there is still subjection of 'the individual' despite the 'empowering'.

This 'obligation' complicates claims to empowerment. Here again, I return to Foucault, in *Discipline and Punish*, who writes about the use of force in Bentham's Panopticon.

A real subjection is born mechanically from a fictitious relation. So it is not necessary to use force to constrain the convict to good behaviour, the madman to calm, the worker to work, the schoolboy to application, the patient to the observation of the regulations. Bentham was surprised that panoptic institutions could be so light: there were no more bars, no more chains, no more heavy locks; all that was needed that the separations should be clear and the openings well arranged. The heaviness of the old 'houses of security', with their fortress-like architecture, could be replaced by the simple, economic geometry of a 'house of certainty'.²³

The claim is for a 'real'; whilst here this is 'subjection' that is 'real', there is first a claim that there is a 'real' which is already known and present and which is different to what is 'fictitious'. There might be other subjections, this is '[a]' 'subjection', specific in its reality here, but allowing for the possibility of other 'real' subjections and also those that are not

²³ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 202. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

'real'. What is 'real' is different to what is 'fictitious' and yet they are connected because what is 'real' is 'born mechanically' from what is 'fictitious'.

The claim is that this 'is born'; this birth is always happening. The birth happens 'mechanically' and I think I might read this as a birth without intervention, an automatic birth, but certainly that there is a claim to difference from something 'born' which is not mechanical. It follows 'a fictitious relation' and so '[a] real' is claimed as following and coming from, what is 'fictitious'.

'So' – this leads on from the 'real subjection', it is explained by it. Because of '[a] real subjection' 'it is not necessary to use force to constrain'. Since the claim is that this 'real' is 'born' from what is 'fictitious', this constraint also comes from 'a fictitious relation'.

'[F]orce' is something that is used, although since it is 'not necessary' to 'use' it here, this 'use' is elsewhere. There is something that uses 'force' that is not 'the convict', 'the madman', 'the worker', 'the schoolboy' or 'the patient'; they are different to the user of the 'force' which constrains them. What is 'necessary', though, is constraint. Here, this is not a forced constraint, but it is still 'necessary' to 'constrain'. Without constraint, 'the convict' would not behave, 'the madman' would not be 'calm', 'the worker' would not 'work', 'the schoolboy' would not apply himself and 'the patient' would not observe 'the regulations'.

The 'the'- this is not a 'convict', for example, the 'the' both indicates specificity and generalises. This is one particular 'convict' who is constrained to behave but is also all convicts; here there are none that do not need to be constrained to 'good behaviour'. What is claimed, therefore, is that all convicts, madmen, workers, schoolboys and patients, would not do the things that here they are associated with doing, were it not for constraint, and this then claims something outside to them, which is not them, which enforces what they would not otherwise do.

'Bentham was surprised that panoptic institutions could be so light'. This perspective on 'Bentham' is therefore not 'Bentham', but knows his surprise, and since he 'was surprised',

claims it as retrospective. Bentham's surprise was about 'panoptic institutions' and since there are more than one – this is not *the* 'panoptic' institution in the way that this was 'the convict' – leads me to read a claim to a connection between these 'panoptic institutions' and all 'the' convicts, madmen, workers, schoolboys and patients; they might each have something to do with different 'panoptic institutions'.

'[P]anoptic institutions' are claimed as present before 'Bentham', or, at least, before his surprise at their lightness. Since they are 'so light' and because of Bentham's surprise, there is something like these 'panoptic institutions' but which are not 'panoptic institutions' which are not 'light'; the surprise comes from Bentham's knowledge of this. Something which constrains has changed from needing to use 'force' and not being 'so light' and it is this which is surprising.

'[P]anoptic institutions' are also different because they have a lack. There are 'no more bars, no more chains, no more heavy locks'. This lack is what makes 'panoptic institutions' 'so light', compared to those which have this heaviness, so there is difference here, but also a similarity; these are still both instruments of constraint, one being lighter than the other. This is 'Bentham's *Panopticon*' (p. 200) and yet he was still 'surprised' at its lightness. Foucault's claim is that the panopticon is both 'Bentham's' but also separate from Bentham since he was able to be 'surprised' at it.

The need is not for 'bars', 'chains' and 'heavy locks', but they have been needed, and would still be needed were it not for what constitutes 'panoptic institutions', that 'the separations should be clear and the openings well arranged'. This clearness and these 'openings' are what produce the lightness, without this 'force' would still be necessary. What is 'clear' and has 'openings' therefore is not what has 'bars', 'chains' and 'heavy locks' since these are 'no more'. The claim therefore is for difference, and for improvement; what was heavy, used 'force', was 'fortress-like' is now the 'simple, economic geometry of a "house of certainty"'.

What has not changed, though, is the need to 'constrain'. This lightness, this simpleness and 'certainty' do not cause the 'convict' to exhibit 'good behaviour', or the 'madman to calm, the worker to work, the schoolboy to application' or 'the patient' to be observant 'of the regulations'. '[H]eaviness' is replaced with lightness and 'panoptic institutions' are not 'the old "houses of security"', but their purpose of constraining is the same.

What might be claimed by 'force', then, if there are still constraints? Who benefits by not using 'force' since the constraint on those in 'panoptic institutions' remains? Foucault claims that '[h]e who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection' (pp. 202-203). This is an assumption of 'responsibility' for these 'constraints of power' upon '[h]e who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it'. So, the assumption of 'responsibility' has changed, and 'force' is not necessary because of this, but the 'constraints of power' remain under the new 'responsibility'. There is no need for the one originally responsible for constraining to do anything now because the one 'subjected to a field of visibility' is 'the principle of his own subjection'.

There is a 'responsibility for the constraints of power', but also more than this because there is playing of 'both roles' in this 'power relation'. The claim is that 'he' is all that there is in this 'power relation' being both 'he' who is subjected, and 'he' who subjects. The 'he' apparently has control of the 'constraints of power' since 'he makes them play spontaneously upon himself' and 'he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles'. There is, though, no claim that there is a 'power' not to constrain or that there might be choice for him not to be 'subjected' by 'power'. There is still a 'power relation' between 'he' who both subjects and is 'subjected' by, but further, there is still a 'power relation' between 'he' and who is not 'he' despite the claimed absence of what is not 'he' in this 'power relation'.

By this very fact, the external power may throw off its physical weight; it tends to the non-corporal; and, the more it approaches this limit, the more constant, profound and permanent are its effects: it is a perpetual victory that avoids any physical confrontation and which is always decided in advance. (p. 203)

It is this 'external power', then, that is not 'he' but who still has 'power' and is not subject to the 'constraints of power' unlike 'he' who is responsible for them.

What affects 'power' and the 'responsibility' of 'power' and the 'constraints of power' is concerned with what is visible and what is 'light'. The 'panoptic institutions' which 'constrain' are 'so light', with 'clear' 'separations' and 'well arranged' 'openings'. Lightness, therefore, is not simply claimed as a difference to what is 'heavy', but also concerned with the visible. '[P]ower' is maintained through this 'field of visibility', so what is not visible is not subject to its 'power'. The 'external power' evades the 'field of visibility' in its tendency towards 'the non-corporal', it is the throwing off of corporality and 'physical weight' which produces the 'perpetual victory' without 'physical confrontation'. More than this; there is no question over the 'victory' since it is 'always decided in advance'.

For Tony Blair, 'the individual' could be 'helped but with an obligation also to help themselves'. For Foucault, '[h]e who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power' and so 'becomes the principle of his own subjection'. Throughout this thesis, I read this problematic claim to a bestowing of 'power' on 'you', 'they', 'we', 'us', where the 'power' instead is always retained. 'He' is only responsible for 'the constraints of power', but this is then not 'power' but 'obligation'.

1.3 The Question of the Body

“What about the materiality of the body”?²⁴

In *Bodies That Matter* Judith Butler questions this known, material ‘body’ as a result of her difficulty in attempting to ‘fix bodies as simple objects of thought’ (p. viii). These ‘bodies’ are therefore not ‘simple objects of thought’, firstly because of this resistance to being fixed. Butler writes, ‘[n]ot only did bodies tend to indicate a world beyond themselves, but this movement beyond their own boundaries, a movement of boundary itself, appeared to be quite central to what bodies “are”’ (p. viii). ‘[B]odies’ have a ‘movement’ which prevents this fixing as ‘simple objects of thought’.

‘[B]odies’, therefore, are not ‘a world beyond themselves’ since this is what they ‘indicate’, so these are ‘bodies’ and the ‘world’ as separate from each other. If therefore, ‘bodies’ are not of ‘a world’ which is ‘beyond’ them, then questions arise about the “materiality of the body” or of what ‘bodies “are”’, but here within marks; these are questions claimed as not Butler’s perspective, the question also comes from ‘beyond’, eventually being ‘formulated to me this way: “[w]hat about the materiality of the body, *Judy?*”’ (p. viii). The claim is that those who question accept that ‘bodies’ have a “materiality”, that what ‘bodies “are”’ is knowable, but this knowing is not true of the ‘me’ who is asked.

The complication of what ‘bodies “are”’ is in this ‘movement’, which is not simply the bodies’ ‘own boundaries’, but ‘a movement of boundary itself’. Since this is ‘central to what bodies “are”’, if ‘boundaries’ are ‘central’, then what is within these ‘boundaries’ is not ‘central’ and this centrality is claimed as what matters here. The question of what ‘bodies “are”’ is something to do with this ‘boundary’ between ‘bodies’ and the ‘world’, not what is inside the ‘boundary’.

²⁴ Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1993), p. viii. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

For Butler, this question of “materiality of the body” leads to gender when she asks, ‘[i]s there a way to link the question of the materiality of the body to the performativity of gender?’ (p. xi). For me, this question of “materiality” and ‘boundaries’ led to the question of ‘fat’ ‘bodies’. When I read Butler claiming that ‘the regulatory norms of “sex” work in a performative fashion to constitute the materiality of bodies’ (p. xii), I begin to wonder how ‘the regulatory norms’ of body weight and body weight management might ‘work’ to ‘constitute the materiality of bodies’. When Butler writes that ‘what constitutes the fixity of the body, its contours, its movements, will be fully material, but materiality will be rethought as the effect of power, as power’s most productive effect’ (p. xii), this informs my readings of claims about who has the ‘power’ to define what a ‘fat’ ‘body’ is and what ‘effect’ this might have on this ‘body’.

Mary Douglas writes that ‘[t]he body is a model which can stand for any bounded system. Its boundaries can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious’²⁵. There is a claim to a connection here between ‘[t]he body’ and a ‘system’ which also considers ‘boundaries’. Susie Orbach writes that ‘[w]hat is meant by boundaries is the amount of space one takes up in the world – where one begins and where one ends’²⁶. Again, here the ‘boundaries’ are important whether because of their uncertainty in that they can be ‘threatened or precarious’, or because of their definiteness in that they are ‘where one begins and where one ends’. Throughout this thesis, therefore, I read the question of ‘boundaries’ of the ‘body’ and how this relates to the question of the ‘body’ itself, particularly the question of the ‘fat’ female ‘body’.

The question of sex and gender arises in my consideration of the female ‘body’ which might lead to a question about the possibility of a ‘fat’ male (or not-female) ‘body’. The majority of this thesis reads the female ‘body’, mostly because of the (still) overwhelming

²⁵ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1984), p. 116. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

²⁶ Susie Orbach, *Fat is a Feminist Issue* (London: Random House, 1988), p. 93. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

body of work about weight loss focusses on women compared to texts on the 'fat' male body, but this is not to claim that none of the texts I draw upon are concerned with weight loss in general, simply that when they are gendered, they tend to refer (unproblematically) to a female body.

Throughout the text I also refer to the 'fat' body rather than the fat body. This then appears to be a disavowal of a word, 'fat', that this is somehow not *my* word, but is taken from 'outside'. This creates further problems in that here, 'fat' is not fat but also body is not 'body' (but then often in this thesis I write 'body'). Perhaps all I can suggest is that this is a sign of my hesitation in reading 'fat' 'body', not only to claim that there is a certainty elsewhere about these words (although I do read this), but in addition to declare my own uncertainty about how to read 'fat'/fat 'body'/body.

1.4 Chapter Outlines

I first consider psychological readings of the body from Sigmund Freud and Susie Orbach. I read the idea of the body itself, how this body might be read. I read Freud's *The Ego and the ID*, and *Fat is a Feminist Issue* and *Hunger Strike* by Orbach.

I then continue to look at claims around the boundaries of the body, following my reading of Orbach on this, on what might be read as inside or outside the body and so questions that arise over where a body begins and where it ends. Here, I read Mary Douglas's *Purity and Danger* and Stephen Connor's *The Book of Skin*.

The next chapters are concerned with this inside and outside turning the body into a site of disgust, given that often in texts on obesity the fat body is constructed as something that is disgusting. Here, I read Julie Kristeva on food loathing and Sara Ahmed on disgust.

The next chapters consider texts which are concerned with weight loss; *Somatechnics* by Samantha Murray, a website by The Harley Medical Group which is concerned with

surgical solutions to weight loss, a page from the Weight Watchers handbook, and *Curvology* by David Bainbridge.

Finally, I read articles from the NHS, *Neoliberalism and Biopolitics* by Ted Schrecker and Claire Bamba and an article by Isabelle Bray on positive body image in children, which all consider a connection between power, society and obesity. The relationship between neoliberalism, society and health is key in my reading of the fat body as here, more completely and unashamedly than anywhere else I read, is a claim for the 'you' who is responsible and who is never the 'I' who knows this 'you' and their responsibilities. Jürgen Martschukat describes the relationship between neoliberalism and fitness as follows;

Neoliberalism thus describes a certain way of thinking about society and subjects, understanding their behaviours and classifying it as appropriate or inappropriate. The individual is supposed to work on themselves, have life under control, get fit, ensure their own productive capacity and embody these things in the truest sense of the word. This requirement has achieved unprecedented importance under neoliberalism. Fitness is everywhere. Fitness, as philosopher Michel Foucault might have put it, is a "*dispositive*" or apparatus – an era-defining network of discourses and practices, institution and things, buildings and infrastructure, administrative measures, political programs and much more besides.²⁷

Whilst this text refers to the fitness industry, this is how I read the relationship between the 'fat' body and neoliberalism, in which the commodification of the body is constructed both as a cost to society and as a source of revenue. For the latter, therefore, there is no

²⁷ Jürgen Martschukat, *The Age of Fitness: How the Body Came to Symbolize Success and Achievement* (Cambridge: Polity Books, 2021), p. 3.

requirement for weight loss, in fact this is to be discouraged since if 'you' reach your desired weight permanently there will be no further need to spend money on losing weight.

I have considered the body and 'fat' here, but I could have as easily considered the beautiful body or the young body and read similar perspectives on women's desire to look their 'best' or at ways that keeping 'your' body young or beautiful also always defers and commodifies this body in the same way that attaining a slim body does.

2 Sigmund Freud on the Body and the Ego

A person's own body, and above all its surface, is a place from which both external and internal perceptions may spring. It is *seen* like any other object, but to the *touch* it yields two kinds of sensations, one of which may be equivalent to an internal perception.²⁸

A person and their 'own body' are separated; a person's 'body' is not the person; it is not this 'body' which constitutes this person but is an addition. What is known here, therefore, is what 'body' is; how it can be an 'own body', that it is not a person, but is owned by a person, that it has a 'surface'. The 'body' already has a presence, which in this claim is before the text.

What does it mean to have your 'own body'? This 'own body' is different to having a 'body'; it makes it specific to a person, (although person is not specific since this is not *the* person). In this 'own' there are other bodies which are not '[a] person's own'. The claim here is that there is something different about a 'body' that is '[a] person's own'; it is the *belonging to* which matters here. The ownership is of the 'body', however, rather than the body's 'surface'. What is 'surface' is not a 'person's own'; it is the body's 'surface', belonging to the 'body' rather than the person.

I am therefore reading 'its surface' as the body's 'surface', which is 'above all'. There is an 'all', therefore, below 'its surface', still the 'body'. It is 'its surface' which matters more, though, because this is 'above all' 'a place from which both external and internal perceptions may spring'. This springing, however, 'may' also come from the 'body' which is not 'its surface'.

'[P]erceptions' are firstly 'external' and 'internal', but where they 'may spring' from is the same; the 'body' and 'its surface'. They are not claimed as 'own' in the way '[a] person's

²⁸ Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1960), p. 19. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

own body' is. When they 'spring' 'from' this 'place', (which is '[a] person's own body'), is this a claim that they are no longer part of '[a] person's own body', that they, in being 'from' it, are away and separated from this 'body'? My reading of this 'from' is that this is not the claim, rather 'from' is a claim that this is where 'external and internal perceptions' begin; the springing is a beginning, uncertain in its 'may', but definite in the claim that these 'perceptions' come from the 'body, and above all its surface'. If so, then '[a] person's own body' is prior to these 'perceptions', existing first, before the 'external and internal perceptions'.

What is uncertain is what happens to the 'external' and 'internal' if the springing does take place, or how they are claimed as 'external and internal' if their origin is the 'body' and 'its surface'. If they 'spring' from the 'body' and 'its surface' as 'external and internal perceptions', then being 'external and internal' does not locate their origin; they remain 'external' and 'internal' even as they 'spring'.

'It is *seen* like any other object': what is the '[i]t' that is '*seen*'? This 'object' may be '[a] person's own body', but in this 'above all its surface', I might read 'its surface' as what is '*seen*'. This would mean, though, that 'surface' is what is here claimed to be an 'object', which brings '[a] person's own body' into question; is this then *not* an 'object'? Whilst 'body' is known, it is also uncertain in 'its surface' which is split from the 'body' that owns it, as a person is split from their 'body'. What is claimed is difference; a person is different to their 'body'; 'its surface' is different to the 'body'.

'A person's own body, and above all its surface' is also different to 'other' objects, not in the way it is '*seen*' (in which it is 'like' them), but 'to the *touch*'. '[O]ther' objects, therefore, do not yield 'two kinds of sensations, one of which may be equivalent to an internal perception' as a result of this '*touch*'.

If there is uncertainty as to the 'object' that is '*seen*', then this is also true of the 'it' that is touched. More than this – what is the 'the' that touches? There is no 'it' that sees or 'it' that

touches, but in '[i]t is *seen*' and 'to the *touch*', I read a claim to there being something 'external' to '[a] person's own body, and above all its surface' in that it is not this 'body' that sees and touches, but something else, not the 'own body' but what sees and touches '[i]t'.

What might this 'external' be? Freud describes 'consciousness' as 'consciousness is the *surface* of the mental apparatus: that is, we have ascribed it as a function to a system which is spatially the first one reached from the external world' (p. 10). There is an 'external world', therefore, but here 'consciousness' which is 'the *surface* of the mental apparatus' is the 'first one reached from the external world'. If so, the 'body' might be part of 'the external world', not being 'the mental apparatus'.

The claim is that the 'it' is what 'yields two kinds of sensations'. '[T]he *touch*' is prior to yielding 'two kinds of sensations'. These 'sensations' are not 'perceptions', rather, it is only one of these 'sensations' that 'may be equivalent to an internal perception'. There is a sensation which is therefore not 'equivalent', and uncertainty over the one that is.

There is a connection between 'sensations' and 'perceptions', however. Earlier in the text, Freud claims that '[i]nternal perceptions yield sensations of processes arising in the most diverse and certainly also in the deepest strata of the mental apparatus' (p. 14). Here, it is the '[i]nternal perceptions' that 'yield sensations', which is not the yielding of 'sensations' which come from 'the *touch*'. These may be different 'sensations', some of which arise from 'processes' which arise 'in the deepest strata of the mental apparatus' and others which are yielded through '*touch*', but I am uncertain whether this produces a claim of difference in these 'sensations', except in the location of their yielding.

This 'arising' from the 'deepest strata' does not claim that there is a rising to a 'surface'. I am reading 'arising', rather, in the way I read 'spring', that this is a claim to origin (of 'processes') rather than movement. The 'mental apparatus' has depth through its 'strata' and a '*surface*', the 'body' has 'its surface', and these are connected by the presence of 'internal perceptions'. Whilst there is no claim to movement, therefore, there is depth and

'surface', 'external and internal' which are connected through 'internal perceptions'. These 'internal perceptions' are still not definite, however. '[I]nternal perceptions' only 'yield sensations of processes' rather than the 'processes' themselves. The 'sensations' which are yielded from '*touch*' only produce the possibility of an 'equivalent' of 'an internal perception'.

'[P]rocesses' arise before '[i]nternal perceptions' which arise before 'sensations'. These 'sensations' are yielded by '[a] person's own body, and above all its surface' when there is '*touch*'.

Whilst I read here an uncertainty and an examining of 'perceptions', of what they might be and of where they might arise, I do not find this uncertainty in Freud's perspective on the 'body' which is known here. Freud reads the 'body' as part of his reading of the ego, and I will now look at this further.

The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but is itself a projection of a surface. (p. 13)

There is only '[t]he ego'; there are no egos which are not 'bodily' egos.

There is difference, however. 'The ego is first' *not* 'a bodily ego', in that it is already present as '[t]he ego' before it is 'bodily', and then is claimed as 'first and foremost a bodily ego'. In 'first and foremost' there are claims to other things '[t]he ego' 'is', which are not 'first and foremost' and, therefore, whilst being part of '[t]he ego', are not 'first and foremost'. '[F]oremost' is an addition to 'first'; in 'foremost' I read something that is the most forward, which then claims something else that is not 'foremost'. 'The ego', then *is* 'a bodily ego', but this is not all that it 'is'.

'[A] bodily ego' – is this an 'ego' *of the body*, in other words, is it the body that has '[t]he ego'? If so, this is a claim to a presence of the body as prior to its 'ego'; there cannot be 'ego' without a body before it. There is no claim, though, to the presence of a body and so,

instead, this is '[t]he ego' which is 'bodily', not of the body but itself 'bodily'. 'The ego' is what is present here, 'first and foremost a bodily ego', but not only this.

'[I]t' is a 'surface entity', and here I read 'it' as a claim to being '[t]he ego' and therefore also what is 'a bodily ego'. '[B]odily ego' is 'a surface entity', and so is not necessarily the only 'surface entity'. '[A] bodily ego' is 'not merely a surface entity', however, and so this claims there is something additional to it being 'a surface entity'. There is a connection between 'a bodily ego' and 'a surface entity'; it is the claiming of '[t]he ego' as 'a bodily ego' which leads to it being also 'a surface entity'.

If it *were* 'merely a surface entity' I would read a claim of insufficiency in the 'merely', but by 'not' being 'merely a surface entity' it is more than this. The 'bodily ego', then, whilst being 'a surface entity', is also more than this.

What produces '[t]he ego' as being more, as being 'not merely', is the claim that '[t]he ego' is also 'itself a projection of a surface'. Being 'bodily' is what alters '[t]he ego' which could be 'merely a surface entity' into what is also 'a projection of a surface'.

To be 'a bodily ego' '[t]he ego' is both 'a surface entity' and a 'projection of a surface'. Here, I am still reading a concern about what is 'first and foremost' about '[t]he ego'. Being 'bodily' is what produces '[t]he ego' as 'not merely a surface entity'. If it were not 'bodily', then, '[t]he ego' *would* be 'merely a surface entity'. This does not exclude '[t]he ego' from also being 'a surface entity', but, by being 'first and foremost a bodily ego' it is also 'a projection of a surface'.

If the claim is that '[t]he ego', by being 'a surface entity' is an 'entity' which has presence on 'a surface', then there is a separation between 'surface' and 'entity', the 'bodily ego' is not of the 'surface' but on it, along with other entities. Perhaps, though, the 'bodily ego' *is* 'a surface entity' – it is constituted as not on, but as, 'a surface entity'. '[B]odily ego', then, may be an 'entity' which is 'surface'. In either case, this produces something else which is not 'surface'. There may be entities which are not 'surface', but also there might be

something which has 'a surface', if there can be something on a 'surface' or that is 'surface', then there is something that is other than 'surface'.

Being 'a projection of a surface', there are other projections and other surfaces that are not '[t]he ego'. Since this is a claim, though, to '[t]he ego' being both 'a surface entity' and 'a projection of a surface', whether there are, or are not, other surfaces and projections, when it projects, it projects 'itself'.

¹ [I.e. the ego is ultimately derived from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body. It may thus be regarded as a mental projection of the surface of the body, besides, as we have seen above, representing the superficies of the mental apparatus.—This footnote first appeared in the English translation of 1927, in which it was described as having been authorized by Freud. It does not appear in the German editions.]
(p. 20)

This text appears as a footnote to '[t]he ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but is itself a projection of a surface.¹'. It is therefore both a part and not a part to this first text. In ¹ [I.e.] there is a claim to a connection, an addition to the text, which might be a claim to likeness; this is the same thing in other words. If so, 'the ego is ultimately derived from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body' is an 'I.e.' to '[t]he ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but is itself a projection of a surface'. Although the words are different, the claim may be that there is a similarity of meaning that can be expressed in other words, that what Freud *means* can be re-presented by this footnote.

The difficulty for me is that these things are not the same. The footnote separates; it is a claim to being an addition to the text, not quite the text itself. There is a '—' following 'the ego is ultimately derived from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body. It may thus be regarded as a mental projection of the surface of the

body, besides, as we have seen above, representing the superficies of the mental apparatus', after which another addition is written; '[t]his footnote first appeared in the English translation of 1927, in which it was described as having been authorized by Freud. It does not appear in the German editions.' There is, then, always more; a footnote to the text, an addition to the footnote, different editions and translations, which, although I read this as a claim to clarify, do not clarify, but instead complicate my reading of the text.

This is a perspective on '[t]his footnote' and therefore is not '[t]his footnote' or Freud, but a claim to be a perspective on Freud who 'authorized' it. This authorisation, though, is for 'the English translation of 1927' and not for 'the German editions', in which it 'does not appear'. *What* is translated is uncertain; if it is not a 'translation' of 'the German editions', then is it a 'translation' without a source?

The text I read, therefore, is not 'the English translation of 1927' or 'the German editions'. There is a claim to a presence of the text before '1927' since this is only where the footnote 'first appeared' - it is not claimed that this is where the text 'first appeared'. There are also 'German editions' which are not 'the English translation of 1927'. I am not sure whether 'the English translation of 1927' is of 'the German editions'. 'This footnote', therefore, appears as a 'translation', so the text I read is not the text which was translated.

In 'the English translation of 1927' the claim is not that '[t]his footnote' was 'authorized by Freud', but rather that it is 'described' as being so. There are claims of 'Freud' as an author of 'the ego is ultimately derived from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body' and yet this authorisation also falls away in its being 'described as' Freud's authorisation, which is therefore not 'authorized'. Freud does not describe, so there is a perspective, not Freud and not this perspective, which 'described'.

The claims to authorisation, of the possibility of reading this as a clarification, fall apart in this deferment of meaning. It is an addition which complicates and troubles the idea of Freud as author through its own claims to describe itself.

When I read 'the ego is ultimately derived from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body', therefore, I am not reading this as a claim that this is what Freud *meant*, or that Freud is the author of '[t]his footnote', or even that I am reading somehow a claim to authorship of any text. Rather, I will try to read the perspective of the text and what claims are being made within this perspective.

'The ego' is both 'first and foremost a bodily ego' and also 'ultimately derived from bodily sensations'. Again, there can be no 'ego' without the claim to its being 'bodily', but here what is 'bodily' has 'sensations' and this is where 'the ego' is 'derived from'. There is a prior-ness in the derivation of this 'ego' in which 'bodily sensations' have a presence before the 'ego' which is 'derived' from them. In 'ultimately' there is more than 'the ego' being only 'derived from bodily sensations'; it too, has a previous presence, an existence before it is 'derived from bodily sensations'.

These are 'bodily sensations' which are 'springing from the surface of the body', and so there are others which are not, but still may be part of what 'the ego' is 'derived from'. '[C]hiefly', though, it is those that are 'springing from the surface of the body' which matter here. It is 'bodily sensations', not 'the ego' which spring 'from the surface of the body'. Their 'springing' is not finished, they have not sprung 'from the surface of the body' and so these 'bodily sensations' are always in the act of 'springing'; it is this act from which 'the ego' derives.

'The ego' has already been described as 'a surface entity' and 'a projection of a surface', but there was no claim about what the 'surface' was – was it *of* something? Here, this is 'the surface of the body', and so whilst 'the body' now has a presence, it is only through its 'surface'. '[T]he body' is more than its 'surface', this is a claim to an inside and outside of 'the body', what is 'body' but not 'surface' and what projects and springs 'from' this 'surface'. This 'surface' is a boundary between the two; what is 'body' and what is 'from' the 'body'. The 'ego' is therefore not claimed as being inside 'the body'; it is 'a surface entity', 'a projection of a surface', it is 'from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing

from the surface of the body' and it is 'a mental projection of the surface of the body'. Whilst the 'ego' is both 'bodily' and 'derived from bodily sensations', it is not 'the body'.

'It' is 'the ego' which, as it 'ultimately derived from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body', now 'thus' leading to it being 'regarded as a mental projection of the surface of the body'. 'It may thus be regarded', and so is not certainly this, despite it always being 'ultimately derived from bodily sensations'. It is only 'a mental projection of the surface of the body' by its being 'regarded', its presence is only through this regard.

The 'ego' derives from the 'bodily sensations' which are 'springing from the surface of the body', but it is not 'the surface of the body'. There is difference when 'the ego' is 'regarded' which changes it from being 'itself a projection of a surface' to being 'a mental projection of the surface of the body'. Something happens, therefore, when 'the ego' is 'regarded', and this regard can only occur when 'bodily sensations' are 'springing from the surface of the body'. Again, 'bodily sensations' take precedence, both before 'the ego' and before it 'may thus be regarded as a mental projection of the surface of the body'.

Whilst '[i]t may thus be regarded', there is an addition to how it is 'regarded', a 'besides'. Here is it the 'we' who sees this, who has already 'seen above' that 'the ego' is 'representing the superficies of the mental apparatus'. It is also, though, 'regarded as a mental projection of the surface of the body' at the same time.

How 'the ego' is 'seen' and 'regarded' is different to the claim of what it *is*. When 'the ego' is 'seen' by the 'we', it is a 'representing' of 'the superficies of the mental apparatus'. These 'superficies' are not present and are 'seen' only as a representation. The 'mental apparatus' is not 'seen' at all apart from through this representation of the 'superficies' by 'the ego'.

'The ego' is 'bodily', but is not 'the body', it leaves it by being a 'projection', by 'springing' from its 'surface'. My question when reading this text is, what is at stake here? Why are

these claims about the 'ego' so concerned with 'the body', when this 'body' is always deferred? There is an additional complication in the footnote, which claims to be a perspective on 'Freud', claiming 'Freud' as an authoriser. This produces claims of 'authorized' meanings and the notion there could be a *real* 'Freud' who authorises, which then leads to ideas of there being a *real*, 'authorized' 'body'.

3 Susie Orbach *Fat is a Feminist Issue*

A very complicated fear which women almost invariably experience centers on the question of female boundaries. Psychoanalytic literature is full of references to the problem women have with boundary definition. What is meant by boundaries is the amount of space one takes up in the world — where one begins and where one ends.²⁹

'A very complicated fear' may be one 'fear' amongst others, possibly even one of other fears that are 'very complicated', but this particular 'fear' 'centers on the question of female boundaries'. Since 'female boundaries' can be centred 'on', this 'fear' is not 'the question of female boundaries' but is a 'fear' which already exists before it 'centers' on the 'question'. '[F]emale boundaries' too, are present before 'fear' centres 'on' it. '[F]emale boundaries' are both known and uncertain; they are present as something that can have a 'question' centred 'on' them, but this 'question' then calls them into 'question'; there is uncertainty about them. This 'question', then, is not whether 'female boundaries' exist; the claim is that there *are* 'boundaries' that are 'female', and it is these which are subject to 'question'. '[B]oundaries' which are not gendered, or are gendered as other than 'female' are not questioned.

The 'very complicated fear' is not centred on 'female boundaries' themselves, but on the 'question' of them. Whilst 'women' 'almost invariably experience' this 'fear', they are not claimed to be asking this 'question' that the 'fear' 'centers on' — there is no claim to identify a questioner, only that there is a 'question of female boundaries'. '[F]emale boundaries', therefore, are always subject to 'question'. Since the 'experience' is not universal for 'women', there are some who do not 'experience' this 'fear', and yet the 'question' still exists — it is not a 'question' only for 'women' who 'experience' 'fear'. This 'fear' is part of

²⁹ Susie Orbach, *Fat is a Feminist Issue* (London: Random House, 1988), p. 93. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

'women' through their 'experience' of it, but the 'question' is not. '[F]emale boundaries', therefore, are separated from 'women' by this 'question' and their 'experience' of 'fear' which 'centers' on it.

Whilst for Orbach, this 'fear' centring on 'female boundaries' is something 'women almost invariably experience', '[p]sychoanalytic literature' refers to 'the problem women have with boundary definition'. '[W]omen' are different, therefore when they are in 'references' in '[p]sychoanalytic literature'. '[W]omen' in '[p]sychoanalytic literature' do not 'almost invariably experience' a 'fear' which 'centers on the question of female boundaries' but have a 'problem' with 'boundary definition'. Orbach's perspective on what '[p]sychoanalytic literature' has to do with 'boundary definition', therefore, is claimed by her as different to her own claims about 'female boundaries'. Here, there is no 'question', but a 'problem' which is to do with 'boundary definition'. Whilst for Orbach 'boundaries' are plural, in '[p]sychoanalytic literature' there is only a 'boundary'. '[W]omen' have a 'problem' with 'boundary definition', so this is problematic for all 'women', unlike 'women' outside '[p]sychoanalytic literature'.

'[W]omen' 'have' this 'problem', so it is something owned by, or part of, them. 'Psychoanalytic literature', however, contains 'references to the problem' and so is not 'the problem'. '[R]eferences' are something that '[p]sychoanalytic literature' is 'full of', and so they are also separate, not being '[p]sychoanalytic literature' itself. This claim to separation, though, is complicated by 'full of'. 'Psychoanalytic literature' contains these 'references', is 'full of' them and, by being filled, contains nothing but 'references to the problem women have with boundary definition'. 'Psychoanalytic literature' is both not 'the problem' and is nothing but 'the problem'.

Whilst Orbach maintains a separation between her perspective and the claims of '[p]sychoanalytic literature', there is a connection; Orbach reads '[p]sychoanalytic literature' as support for her claims about 'female boundaries'. The 'almost', therefore, which implies that not all 'women' 'experience' a 'very complicated fear' – that 'women'

are not necessarily constituted as a single entity because there could be difference between them – is undermined by her reading of ‘women’ in ‘[p]sychoanalytic literature’ as having a ‘problem’ with ‘boundary definition’; here, all ‘women’ have this ‘problem’ ‘with boundary definition’. ‘[F]emale boundaries’ then, may not always engender a ‘very complicated fear’, but they always have a ‘question’ attached to them and ‘boundary definition’ is always a ‘problem’ for ‘women’. Whilst this is a claim to be what ‘[p]sychoanalytic literature’ claims about ‘women’, I do not read a questioning of this from Orbach’s perspective.

For Orbach, ‘boundaries’ mean ‘the amount of space one takes up in the world – where one begins and where one ends’. This meaning, though, is not necessarily claimed by Orbach as defined by her – she does not claim that *this is what I mean as boundaries* - but as ‘[w]hat is meant by boundaries’ – there are no meanings other than this. There is no claim to a different meaning, therefore, between ‘[w]hat is meant’ by Orbach’s ‘boundaries’ and ‘what is meant’ by the ‘boundary’ of ‘[p]sychoanalytic literature’, they are both ‘the amount of space one takes up in the world - where one begins and where one ends’.

The meaning of ‘boundaries’ is defined in relation to ‘one’, so this meaning is not associated particularly with ‘women’. ‘[B]oundaries’ here are not associated with a ‘question’ or a ‘problem’ as they are when they are relating to ‘women’ or ‘female’. There is here, therefore, the possibility that there are ‘boundaries’ which are neither subject to ‘question’ nor a ‘problem’, but, if so, these ‘boundaries’ are not associated with ‘women’. These ‘boundaries’ however, are not claimed to be another type of ‘boundary’ with a different meaning to ‘female boundaries’ and ‘boundary definition’ in ‘[p]sychoanalytic literature’ - ‘boundaries’ are always ‘the amount of space one takes up in the world – where one begins and where one ends’. ‘[B]oundary definition’ is not subject to ‘question’; it is not a different sort of ‘boundary’ that is the cause of the ‘question’ and ‘problem’, it is the ‘female’ and the ‘women’.

'[O]ne' is both 'in the world' and able to take up 'space'. '[B]oundaries' quantify this 'space' as an 'amount'; 'space' can be taken 'up'. '[B]oundaries' are also 'where one begins and where one ends', but in the '—' I am reading a claim to equivalency; 'boundaries' are not 'the amount of space one takes up in the world' *and* 'where one begins and where one ends'; these things are the same.

'[S]pace', then, might be what is between 'where one begins' and 'where one ends', but it is also 'where one begins and where one ends'; the beginning and the ending of 'one' are part of this. If 'the amount of space one takes up in the world' is equivalent to 'where one begins and where one ends', then there is not necessarily a claim to anything in between - 'boundaries' are only 'where one begins and where one ends' with nothing between the two; 'one' is only 'boundaries'. '[B]egins' and 'ends' though, implies difference; 'where one begins' is not 'where one ends' and so there is perhaps a claim to there being 'space' that is after 'where one begins' and before 'where one ends'. '[B]oundaries', mark 'where' 'one' is and, therefore, 'where' 'one' is not. '[S]pace' therefore can be both a part of 'boundaries', but also is not part of 'boundaries' in its entirety, as only an 'amount' is taken up.

I read 'boundaries', therefore, as a separation or a separating of 'one' and 'women' and 'female', without being certain about what they are a separation *from* – they are not claimed as separated from 'the world' as they are 'in' it. There is 'space' that 'one takes' up and therefore 'space' that 'one' does not take up, but what this 'space' is, is not known, except that it is not 'one' until it is taken up by 'one'. There is also uncertainty about the 'boundaries' themselves; they are not necessarily claimed as fixed in 'the amount of space one takes up in the world'; whilst they are always there as long as 'one' is 'in the world', the 'amount of space' they take up is undefined or subject to change.

Being fat expresses an attempt both to merge with others and, paradoxically, to provide an impenetrable wall around herself. Similarly, many women associate thinness with boundary issues. If the fat has been a way to express her separateness and her space, without it the woman will feel quite vulnerable and defenseless. (p. 93)

'Being fat' is gendered by its association with 'herself'. '[H]erself' is singular, but here I read this as a claim to be all women, as this is part of a section where, in addition to 'women' having a 'very complicated fear' and a 'problem' with 'boundary definition', they are also identified by Orbach as 'she' who is part of 'the female role' and 'feminine psychology'; 'she is actively dissuaded from developing her autonomy economically and emotionally', '[s]he is required to merge her interests with those of others and seek her fulfilment in adjusting her needs and desires to others' (p. 93). '[H]erself', therefore, is a claim to be an individual, but is not. '[W]omen', can be expressed as 'woman' – 'herself' – because they are all the same, for *all* women '[b]eing fat expresses an attempt both to merge with others and, paradoxically, to provide an impenetrable wall around herself'.

'Being fat' is an expression of an 'attempt', so 'herself' does not necessarily succeed in merging 'with others' and providing 'an impenetrable wall around herself'. The 'attempt' is to do two things which are paradoxical; 'to merge with others' is paradoxical with providing 'an impenetrable wall around herself'. For Orbach, this is part of the 'question of female boundaries' and 'the problem women have with boundary definition'. What is attempted to be expressed by '[b]eing fat' is paradoxical; it cannot succeed, and so becomes a 'question' and a 'problem'.

Orbach claims that "the reason why boundary issues are so difficult for women has social roots in the development of a female psychology. We know that the female role requires the woman to be a nurturing, caring person who gives emotional sustenance to the people around her. She is required to merge her interests with those of others and see her fulfilment in adjusting her needs and desires to others' (p. 93). 'Being fat' as an expression

of an 'attempt' to 'merge with others' is then, at least in part, a 'merge' of 'her interests with those of others'. 'Being fat' is connected with 'the female role' which 'requires' 'her' to be 'nurturing' and 'caring' and give 'emotional sustenance'. These things, therefore, are required from 'her', and do not stem from a desire from the 'woman' herself to be 'nurturing' or 'caring'. The requirement 'to merge her interests with those of others' is again not claimed as originating from 'her'. If '[b]eing fat' also 'expresses an attempt' to 'provide an impenetrable wall around herself', then is this 'wall' 'an attempt' *not* to do what is 'required', not to 'merge'? The requirement to 'merge' is, for me, claimed as not originating from 'her', but there is no such claim about 'her' 'attempt' to 'provide an impenetrable wall around herself'. 'Being fat' then, might be read as both acquiescence to, and rebellion against, what is 'required'.

Orbach claims '[b]eing fat expresses an attempt both to merge with others and, paradoxically, to provide an impenetrable wall around herself'. Is this a claim that this is a 'wall' of 'fat'; a 'boundary' that is delimited by 'the amount of space one takes up in the world'? I do read some equivalence here, since '[b]eing fat' is 'an attempt' 'to provide an impenetrable wall', this 'fat' could be read as what constitutes a 'wall'. Since '[b]eing fat' is 'an attempt', this 'wall' is not necessarily 'impenetrable', but the implication that 'fat' is a 'wall' remains - 'fat' may be a 'wall' that is, or is not, capable of being penetrated.

The difficulty with this, however, is that '[b]eing fat' is also 'an attempt' to 'merge with others', something which is paradoxical to the 'attempt' 'to provide an impenetrable wall around herself'. It is not as simple as '[b]eing fat' as a 'wall' which is a 'boundary'. A 'boundary' is not simply that which can be seen as 'fat' in its meaning as 'the amount of space one takes up in the world' – since this 'amount' is not defined as 'fat'.

'[F]at' is, anyway, not what Orbach claims as expressing this paradoxical 'attempt'; '[b]eing fat' is what does this. 'Being fat', therefore is a state; something both that 'women' can be and have been.

Since '[s]imilarly, many women associate thinness with boundary issues', '[b]eing fat' is, like 'thinness', also a 'boundary' issue. If 'thinness' and '[b]eing fat' are both associated with 'boundary issues', then I read 'boundary' as something whose 'amount' is not fixed. The 'thinness' and 'fat' affect how much 'space' the 'boundary' 'takes up in the world'; which being less or more means the 'boundary' is not necessarily stable; it can change as a 'woman' becomes thin. What 'thinness' and '[b]eing fat' are, however, is known within this instability. I read this perspective as claiming to know the meaning of all these; 'thinness', '[b]eing fat' and 'boundaries'. This is not true of those who are not the perspective however, who need a definition of '[w]hat is meant by boundaries' - but not an explanation of what 'thinness' and '[b]eing fat' are; their meaning is already known. Whilst '[b]eing fat' and 'thinness' as part of a 'boundary' might shift, their meaning remains stable and their definition unnecessary.

Whilst the claim that '[b]eing fat expresses an attempt to both merge with others and, paradoxically, to provide an impenetrable wall around herself' is not qualified, and I have read this as applying to all '[w]omen', 'thinness' does not have such an unambiguous connection with 'boundary issues', as it is only 'many women' who 'associate thinness with boundary issues' – so some do not. Once 'the woman' is 'without' 'the fat', her relationship with 'fat' becomes conditional; '[i]f the fat has been a way to express her separateness and her space' does not mean that 'fat has been' this. Once 'fat' 'has been' and therefore is now not '[b]eing fat', what it did does not necessarily apply to every 'woman'. For Orbach, the meaning and problems of '[b]eing fat' are known in a way that 'thinness' is not. This is not to claim that 'thinness' is not associated with 'boundary issues', only that Orbach's perspective is less definite on who this applies to – thin 'women' are not all the same in the way that 'fat' 'women' are.

'[T]hinness' is claimed as what has an association 'with boundary issues' when 'fat' is no longer there; 'thinness' replaces '[b]eing fat'. '[T]hinness' here, however, comes after '[b]eing fat'; it follows, and in its replacing, its 'boundary issues' replace the 'boundary

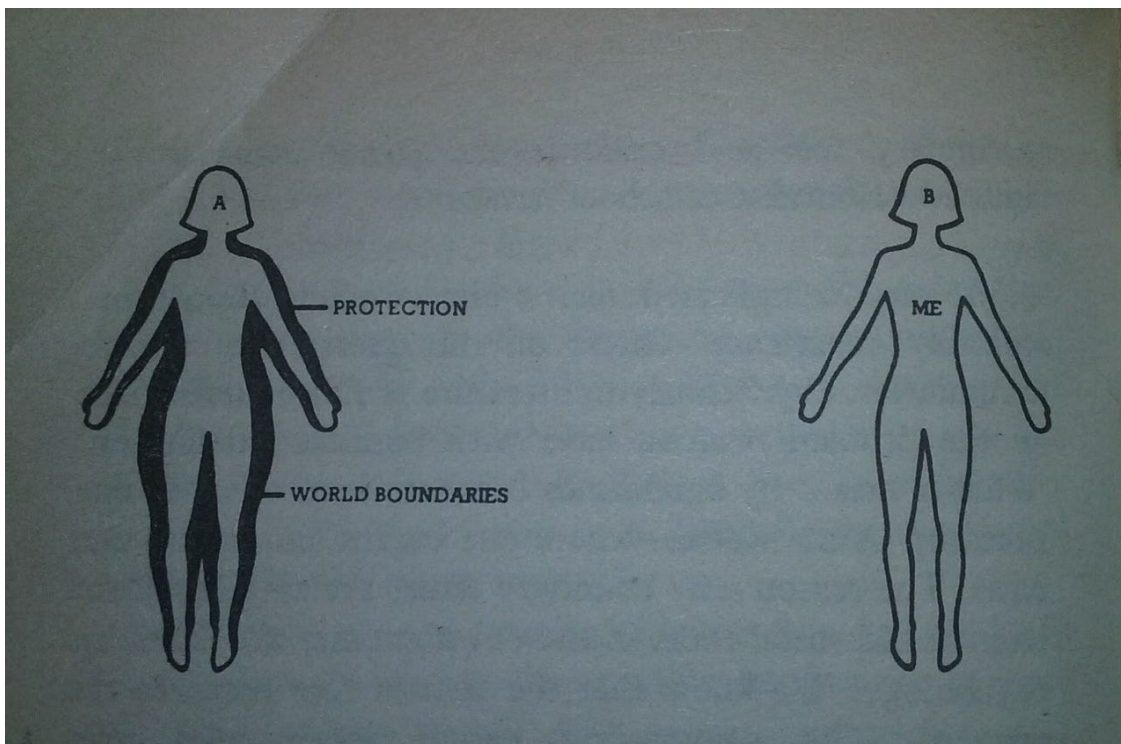
issues' of '[b]eing fat'. Now, the 'boundary issues' are constituted as 'the woman' feeling 'quite vulnerable and defenseless'. 'Being fat', therefore does not make 'the woman' 'feel quite vulnerable and defenseless', '[b]eing fat' is associated with 'an attempt...to provide an impenetrable wall around herself'. Although this is an 'attempt' (and is also 'paradoxically' part of an 'attempt' to 'merge with others'), I nonetheless read a claim that '[b]eing fat' is, in some way, a defence, a 'boundary' which attempts to be an 'impenetrable wall'. '[T]hinness', therefore, is not a way to 'express her separateness and her space'; whilst 'fat' here is constituted as a defence, when 'fat' is lost as a way to 'express her separateness and space', 'the woman' feels different, she feels 'vulnerable and defenseless'. To 'feel quite vulnerable and defenseless' because the way of expressing 'separateness' and 'space' has been lost, constitutes expressing 'separateness' and 'space' as not feeling 'vulnerable and defenseless'.

This need to 'express her separateness and her space', for me leads to a claim to there being something that is not 'the woman' which she feels the need to defend against. As the 'separateness' and 'space' belong to 'her', what makes her feel 'quite vulnerable and defenseless' is what is not-her; it is something other. '[F]at' is 'a way to express her separateness and her space', but when it is lost, her 'separateness' and 'space' are not necessarily lost too; it is the 'way' of expressing these things that has gone. What is important here then, is that 'her separateness and her space' can be expressed, and, therefore, that there is a not-her who is expressed to. What makes 'the woman' 'feel quite vulnerable and defenseless' therefore, is not that 'her separateness and her space' are not there, but that they are not expressed; without 'fat' they can no longer stop her feeling 'quite vulnerable and defenseless'. My reading, then, is that 'separateness' and 'space' must be expressed through '[b]eing fat'; 'thinness' creates particular 'boundary issues' because Orbach claims 'thinness' makes 'the woman' feel she no longer has a 'boundary' 'fat' enough to 'express her separateness and her space'. 'Being fat' here *is* the

'boundary'; it is there to separate what is 'her' from not-her by expressing 'separateness' and 'space'.

If the 'boundary' is '[b]eing fat', then is 'fat' part of 'her' or something else? Orbach writes about 'Maggie' who 'put it this way: "If I don't have all this weight *on me*, people will get in real close and I won't have any control or protection.'" I am reading the quotation marks around Maggie's speech as a claim to this being a speaking by someone who is not Orbach. I am reading insufficiency here; Orbach's perspective alone on 'thinness' is not enough, so 'Maggie' is here used to supplement Orbach. 'Maggie' speaking about herself, though, is not, for Orbach, only about 'Maggie'; she stands in for 'the woman' because she can 'put' how 'thinness' feels. Here, 'weight' is '*on me*' and therefore not of 'Maggie'; it is separate. 'Being fat' though is (in the '[b]eing') part of 'the woman'; 'fat' and '[b]eing fat' and 'weight' are not quite the same.

To examine this further, I want to look at a drawing in the book, since, for Orbach, 'drawings perhaps describe how these themes are experienced'.



In figure A the woman is fat and experiences her true self as existing somewhere inside the fat. The fat provides physical protection against her believed vulnerability. She imagines that if she loses the weight she will be losing a protective coating against the world. (pp. 93-4)

The drawing consists of two shapes, one outlined as a black line of similar breadth throughout, and one with uneven black around it, ranging from lines which are a similar width to the drawing on the right, to thicker black shading, particularly around what I read as the upper legs, and torso. On the left, the drawing has 'A' inside the lines where what might be the head is drawn, whilst the drawing on the right has a 'B' inside the lines that I am reading as the head, and 'ME' around the chest area.

As the text reads 'In figure A the woman is fat', I am going to read the drawing on the left of the page as 'figure A', which is that of 'the woman', (although the claim to 'figure A' being 'the woman' is outside the frame of the drawing. As 'figure A' is 'the woman', I also read figure 'B' as gendered as 'woman', as the shape is similar to 'figure A' but without the black shading, so this shape within the shading is to me a claim to being an outline of a woman, even without the addition of the black shaded part.

'[T]he woman', though, is 'in figure A', so 'figure A', by being something she can be 'in', is therefore not her. I am reading a complication here, then, between what is claimed as constituting 'woman' in 'figure A' and 'B'.

The black shaded area of the figure might be read as 'fat', since figure 'B' does not have this shading and is not described as 'fat'. This 'fat' is not evenly distributed around 'figure A', the lines around the top are of a similar width to those of figure 'B'. There is a narrowing of parts of the shading in a similar place to the outline, but the neck is not narrowed and the area around the hips is indented in the shading in a place where the outline is not. In 'figure A the woman is fat'; here, this is all she is. So if the shaded area of the figure is 'fat', then this is where or what she 'is'.

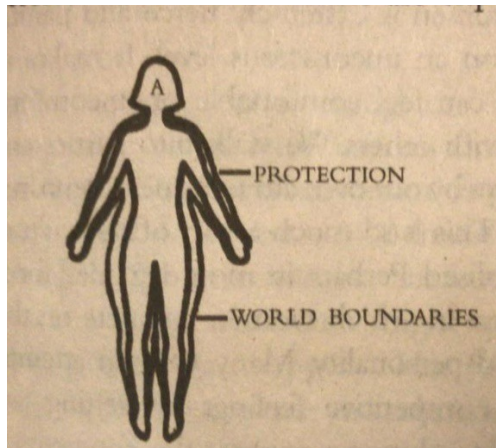
'[H]er true self', though, is experienced 'as existing somewhere inside the fat'. '[H]er true self', then, is not what she 'is'; what she 'is' and 'her true self' are not the same, since if 'her true self' exists 'somewhere inside the fat', then there is 'fat' that is not 'her true self'. If 'her true self' exists 'somewhere inside the fat', then where she 'is' as 'fat' is not 'her true self', and I am reading this as a claim to true-ness, not to 'self' – being 'fat' might still be 'her' 'self' but it is not 'her true self'.

'[I]nside the fat', though, is also not 'her true self', because it is claimed as the site of where the experience of 'her true self' is, rather than the thing itself. Here, it is experienced 'as existing', so this is the experience of 'her true self' 'existing' rather than 'her true self'. '[T]he woman' therefore is not 'her true self', since this is what she 'experiences'. '[H]er' and 'self' are also different; the 'self' is something that 'her' has, it is not 'her'.

By reading that 'fat' is not 'her true self', however, I am differentiating 'fat' from 'her true self' by identifying one as being 'inside' the other. What could be read, however, that 'inside the fat' is still 'fat' and therefore 'her true self' *is* experienced in 'fat', but only 'inside' it. '[F]at' here has an 'inside' and also what is not 'inside' and I am reading this as a perspective on seeing 'the woman' as 'fat' and being able to claim that she 'is fat', compared to experiencing 'her true self', which is experienced 'somewhere inside the fat'. What is not 'inside', therefore, can be known in a way that 'inside' cannot. What is not 'inside the fat' is not 'her true self', but is what she 'is', so this location of 'her' is definite, whilst what is 'inside' is not so certain; 'her true self' exists 'somewhere inside the fat'.

My reading of the figures as outlines, with my claim to see a difference between the figure with no shading and the figure with shading is more complicated for me than simply claiming I am able to identify what is outline and what is shading. I am reading 'figure A' as having two outlines, one inside and one outside the shading, but this would then be reading the lines around the head and all of figure 'B' as not shaded and therefore as not 'fat'. These lines have breadth, though, so in what way are they not 'fat'? For me, it is the unevenness and the thickness of parts of 'figure A' which leads me to read those parts as

'fat' rather than the lines. In the 2016 edition of the text³⁰, the 'fat' in 'figure A' is not a thick black line, but two lines, one outside the other. The 'woman' is still 'fat' but 'PROTECTION' and 'WORLD BOUNDARIES' are separated from 'A' by an additional space.



'[F]at' only appears around figure A's body, neither 'figure A' or 'B' have a 'fat' head. The ends of the hands and feet, too, do not have thick black lines around them. Being 'fat' here, does not mean the whole body is 'fat'; only certain parts of 'the woman' have this shading although this is sufficient for 'the woman' to be 'fat'.

This figure is part of the 'drawings' which 'perhaps describe how these themes are experienced', so these figures may be a description of an experience here somehow of 'these themes' which include 'boundary issues'. The black in 'figure A' extends out as two lines, which have 'PROTECTION' and 'WORLD BOUNDARIES' next to them. '[B]oundaries' here are not claimed as 'female', but are 'WORLD BOUNDARIES'. The black line appears to start or end at the black shaded area, but I am not reading this line as an extension of the woman's 'fat'; rather this is an indicator that certain parts of the 'fat' are 'PROTECTION' and 'WORLD BOUNDARIES'. Because the indicator line and the 'fat' are both black, it is not possible to see where the line finishes, where these things begin or end. 'WORLD BOUNDARIES', for example, appear to begin at the edge of the 'fat'. If so, this 'fat' is not part of 'WORLD BOUNDARIES'. '[F]emale boundaries' therefore might

³⁰ Susie Orbach, *Fat is a Feminist Issue* (London: Random House, 2016).

be different to 'WORLD BOUNDARIES', these being not where she 'begins' and 'ends', but where the 'WORLD' does. If so, 'figure A' is not part of the 'WORLD'. If, however, the line extends into the 'fat', then what is 'fat', what is 'the woman' and what is 'WORLD BOUNDARIES' is not clear.

Figure 'B' has none of the thicker black lines that 'figure A' has, and no 'PROTECTION' or 'WORLD BOUNDARIES' beside it. Does this therefore mean that figure 'B' is somehow part of the 'WORLD' because it has no 'BOUNDARIES'? This figure has 'ME' inside the lines, and therefore I am reading figure A as not-'ME'. The 'ME' of figure 'B' is also not-me though. I am reading this as where 'her true self is', as a claim that this figure 'B' is what is 'somewhere inside the fat'. 'ME', then, is a claim to being 'her true self'. If so, it can be located more certainly than being 'somewhere'; 'ME' is in the middle of the torso.

Does 'thinness', therefore make 'ME' part of the 'WORLD', and therefore 'quite vulnerable and defenseless'? I am reading a claim here that the woman's 'believed vulnerability' has a 'physical' manifestation as 'fat' which protects 'against' this. This, for me, is a claim to know about what 'fat' 'is', in several ways. Firstly, what it is to be 'fat' is known; it is defined as the description of 'figure A' as 'fat' and through the black area around 'her true self' in the drawing. Secondly, what 'fat' does is known; it provides 'physical protection against her believed vulnerability'. Thirdly, what causes 'fat' is known; the woman's need for 'physical protection against her believed vulnerability'. Lastly, 'the woman' herself is known – better than she does herself, because this perspective knows that 'her' 'vulnerability' is only 'believed', whilst 'the woman' does not. '[F]at', therefore is protecting 'against' something that does not necessarily exist.

Whilst 'vulnerability' is not certain, the woman's belief in her 'vulnerability' is; for 'the woman', she is 'vulnerable'. '[F]at' does not cause or stop 'vulnerability', which is already there in 'her' belief. '[T]he woman' does not believe that 'fat' will stop her being 'vulnerable', or necessarily that 'fat' 'provides physical protection' 'against' 'vulnerability'; it is Orbach's perspective on 'fat' which makes this claim.

This perspective claims to know both what 'the woman' believes and what she 'imagines', and, again, in 'imagines', I read a knowing that goes beyond what Orbach claims 'the woman' knows; that 'the woman' 'imagines' what will happen 'if she loses the weight', whilst Orbach identifies this as an imagining. For 'the woman' too, there is no completion; she always 'imagines' but will not discover whether without her 'weight' 'she will be losing a protective coating against the world'. '[I]f she loses the weight' means that here she is still 'fat'; the question of losing 'weight' seems uncertain in the 'if', but, for Orbach, it is not uncertain; 'the woman' here has not lost 'the weight'; the possibility is always in the future.

'She imagines that if she loses the weight she will be losing a protective coating against the world.' To imagine losing 'weight' is to imagine losing a 'protective coating'. '[C]oating' here is 'protective', so 'weight' is both protecting and 'coating' in the perspective on what '[s]he imagines'. The difficulty for me in the claim of 'weight' as 'protective' is that 'the woman' already believes herself 'vulnerable'; '[s]he' is not claimed as being 'vulnerable' once the 'fat' as 'physical protection' has been lost, but that '[s]he' already has 'believed vulnerability'. This 'protective coating' then, is also not 'protective' in that it does not stop her believing '[s]he' is 'vulnerable'.

This protection is 'against the world', so here is a separation between 'the woman' and 'the world' which is 'a protective coating'; this 'coating' is neither 'the world' nor 'the woman'. '[F]at' is claimed as 'the woman' in 'figure A'; it is all she 'is'. '[H]er true self' though is experienced as 'existing somewhere inside the fat', so there is more to what she 'is' than 'her true self'. Here though, 'weight' is separated from 'her'; it coats 'her' but is not 'her'; it is 'the weight' not 'her' 'weight', 'a protective coating' not 'her' 'protective coating'. I am reading a difference, therefore, in the perspective on 'the woman' as 'fat' and this perspective's claims about 'the woman'[s] perspective on 'fat'. The first is a claim to knowing what 'is' 'fat'. The second is a claim that 'the woman' does not know, but instead 'believed', 'experiences', and 'imagines'.

Body image and protection are very important. In the groups we try to address these two problems in the following ways: group members are encouraged to accept the physical aspects of [b]eing fat. Self-acceptance is the key task in the group; without it weight loss and breaking the addiction can only be temporary. (p. 100)

It is not '[b]ody' that is 'very important' or a problem, but its 'image'. There is no '[b]ody' here; this is an 'image' of something not present. '[P]rotection' is like '[b]ody image' in being 'very important', but it is not a part of '[b]ody image', it is an addition to it; these two things together are what are 'very important'. 'Body image and protection' are both 'problems', and although they are not the same problem they are addressed in the same way, through 'groups'. This addressing is not certain though; 'we try to address these two problems', so this may not be successful. 'Body image and protection', then, are not just 'problems', but 'problems' that 'we try to address' – there is engagement between the 'groups' and the 'problems', but the 'problems' are there first; it is the 'groups' that 'address' them. '[P]roblems' are required, therefore, in order for the 'groups' to exist. This trying and addressing is continuous '[i]n the groups', it is what the 'groups' *do*, and so I am not sure that I read that 'these two problems' are ever resolved; they are always present and always addressed. What is interesting for me, therefore, is that if I read that the 'problems' in *Fat is a Feminist Issue* – not only '[b]ody image' and 'protection', but also 'boundary issues' and other issues associated with bodies and 'weight' – are never resolved, then there is a difference between Orbach's perspective on 'problems' which can never be resolved, and Orbach's perspective on her own 'problem' (p. 13) which she addressed by joining a 'group' of 'compulsive eaters'; 'Some months later I left the group. I no longer defined myself as a compulsive eater and I had stabilized at a weight I found acceptable' (p. 13). In her perspective on the 'we' who 'try to address these two problems', Orbach is not claiming to address *her* 'problems', because she had already done so. Orbach's 'we' is in the 'group' but she is also the 'I' who is helping, not who is helped;

'[s]atisfied, I left the group...Carol and I went on to help other women sort through this problem. We ran groups' (p. 15).

In the 'Introduction to new edition' (p. 19), Orbach notes that 'much as I would rather it were not so, the problems raised in *FIFI* are still with us. Some issues have changed, but many of those I hoped to raise thirteen years ago are even more pressing now' (p. 21). If '[b]ody image and protection' were 'problems' 'thirteen years ago' and are 'still with us', then 'the groups' which 'try to address' them either did not 'address them' or the addressing did not remove the 'problems'. I read a perspective here on these 'problems' whose own 'problem' has already been addressed, but who is claiming therefore that it is *others'* 'problems' who are 'still with us'. 'Satisfied, I left the group' – the 'I' is '[s]atisfied' and I am reading a completion and a choosing here; 'the group' can be 'left'. '[T]he problems are still with us', however, 'the groups' still 'try to address' these 'problems', and therefore those in the 'groups' are not 'satisfied', they cannot leave.

Fat Is a Feminist Issue was first published in 1978. In 1988 it was re-issued 'with a completely new introduction' (book's cover). This introduction is where Orbach writes 'much as I would rather it were not so, the problems raised in *FIFI* are still with us'. In 1982 *Fat Is a Feminist Issue II* was published following the response to *Fat Is a Feminist Issue* when Orbach 'received hundreds of letters from individual women about their eating problems. Many of these letters made it clear to me that women needed more detailed guidelines on how to translate the ideas in *Fat Is a Feminist Issue* into practice'³¹. Here, 'women' are both 'individual' but also the same; they write 'letters'. The 'me' here is not the same, however; she does not write the 'letters', but receives them, she is not one of the 'individual women' who write about 'their eating problems' – she does not have 'eating problems'. This 'me' was not 'clear' before she 'received hundreds of letters', though; these 'letters' were needed for the 'me' to be 'clear' that 'women needed more detailed

³¹ Susie Orbach, *Fat is a Feminist Issue and its Sequel* (London: Random House, 1998), p. 154. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

guidelines on how to translate the ideas in *Fat is a Feminist Issue* into practice'. Here, then, the 'me' does not need 'more detailed guidelines'; she is not part of the 'women'.

The clarity is not present before the 'letters', but 'it' is; 'it' was already there, but not 'clear', or, at least, not 'clear to me'. '[L]etters' here clarify the 'it'; there is a making by the 'letters' which is not a making by the 'women'. These 'letters' then, clarify and separate the 'me' from 'women'; the clarifying does not stop the separating. It is, anyway, only 'many of these letters' which make 'clear'; not all 'letters' have this quality. The clarification is about women's need for 'more detailed guidelines on how to translate the ideas in *Fat is a Feminist Issue* into practice'. My reading, therefore, is that the 'it' which is what was 'made' 'clear' to the 'me' by the 'letters' is women's need for 'more detailed guidelines'. This is a claim for 'letters' and 'guidelines' being that which clarify and 'translate'. '[W]omen' need 'more detailed guidelines', but the 'me' needs 'letters' to see what is 'made' 'clear'; the clarity and translation come from these things; it is *they* which are doing, whilst the 'women' and the 'me' are receiving. Again, I am reading this as a separation between the 'me' and the 'women', but also as a claim to 'letters' and 'more detailed guidelines' being things that can clarify and 'translate' in a way that the 'me' and 'women' without them cannot.

The 'more detailed guidelines' are a 'how to' for 'women', so it is they who 'translate' 'ideas' into 'practice'. It is, therefore, a translation of the 'ideas' 'in' *Fat is a Feminist Issue*, which is needed, but only for 'women', and only in order to 'translate' them 'into practice'. This is not necessarily a claim that the 'ideas in *Fat is a Feminist Issue*' have not been seen or understood by 'women', but that something else needs to happen to these 'ideas', that they are insufficient as 'ideas' and require translation 'into practice'. I am reading here a claim that what is 'in' the book is only insufficient because the 'women' are insufficient; they fail because they need 'more'; the 'ideas' that were already there are translatable into 'practice'; but not by 'women'.

In 1998, *Fat Is a Feminist Issue and its Sequel* was published with 'NEW EDITION' written on the corner of the front cover. This contained an introduction to the 'NEW EDITION' in which Orbach writes 'There's a part of me that wishes I wasn't writing this new introduction to FIFI, that the issues raised in this book about food, fat, thin, compulsive eating, bulimia, anorexia and body image were now neutral issues for women' (1998, p. vi). There is a repetition and a returning here; the 'problems' and 'issues' have not gone away despite different editions of the book and 'more detailed guidelines' for 'women' on how to put the book's 'ideas' into 'practice'. The repetition of 'problems' leads to a returning to the text; Orbach adds to 'FIFI' to try to address the 'problems'. 'FIFI' itself does not change; it is identified as separate to the introductions by being written about in the introductions. The 'issues raised in this book' remain, and there is no claim that they could ever not be present – Orbach only 'wishes' that the 'issues' were 'neutral', not that they were not present. '[F]ood, fat, thin, compulsive eating, bulimia, anorexia and body image' are therefore always 'issues', however 'neutral', and they are always 'issues' *'for women'* (my italics). I also read an equality in Orbach's list of 'issues'; that these things are the same in that they are all desired to be 'neutral issues for women'. '[B]ody image', or 'food', therefore, is wished to be a 'neutral' issue in the same way that 'anorexia' is.

If there is 'a part of me that wishes I wasn't writing this new introduction to FIFI' then there is 'part of me' that does *not* wish this. Whilst I read, therefore, claims that Orbach 'wishes' that 'issues' had been addressed in 'FIFI', I also read a perspective that *always* writes about 'the problems' and 'the issues'. In this introduction, Orbach lists her 'wishes' regarding 'women' and 'their bodies': 'I wish that tomorrow, and the next day and the day after, all women could wake up feeling good in their bodies' (p. viii). '[W]omen' here, therefore, will never 'wake up feeling good in their bodies', this feeling is always deferred.

In this list of 'wishes' I also read a claim to difference between 'women' and 'their bodies'. Here, 'women' are not 'their bodies', but something that they can be 'in'. Whether they could be 'feeling good' in the future (or, not, therefore, 'feeling good' now), the 'feeling' or

lack is what belongs to 'women'; they can feel 'good'. Their 'bodies' do not feel, being the receptacle for 'women', and again I read a claim to there being an inside and an outside of 'bodies'; the inside being the place 'women' are 'in'. Similarly, 'we are a long way off from girls and women feeling comfortable in their bodies' (p. viii). Again, it is the 'feeling' of being 'comfortable' which I read as being part of 'women' and, here, part of 'girls' too, but 'bodies' are not part of 'girls and women'; these are what they are 'in'.

I wish that when women looked around, they saw images of themselves that they recognized, that they saw women's beauty represented in all sizes, ages and colors as different as we really are. (p. viii)

When reading 'I wish that when women looked around', I am uncertain whether 'women' have already looked 'around', or that there is no looking until after the 'wish' has come true – have 'women' not yet 'looked around'? My tentative reading is that 'when' implies that this looking 'around' *is* happening; 'women' have already 'looked around' - it is the recognising that is not present, that is causing the 'wish'. There is, then, a claim to a present looking here, either at something that is not 'images of themselves' or at 'images of themselves' which they do not recognise. These 'images' before the 'wish' has come true, therefore, are somehow 'of' 'themselves', but are not 'recognised' by 'women'. They are only present by what they are not; they are not 'recognised', they are not 'women's beauty represented in all sizes, ages and colors as different as we really are'.

'[I]images' are seen, but only when 'women looked around', and, by the looking, these 'images' are not 'women' despite being 'of' them. For 'women' to have to look 'around' for the 'images' implies an unavailability of 'images' – not only are they not 'of' them, they are not in front of them, a turning is required. There is also an availability of the 'images' though – a looking 'around' at 'images' is a perspective on 'images' that places them everywhere, all 'around' the 'women'. Here, the 'I' is not 'women', is not part of the 'they' who see 'images' they do not recognise. However, what the 'I' wishes is that 'women' 'saw' 'women's beauty represented in all sizes, ages and colors as different as we really are'

and therefore I read a claim that now the 'I' is part of 'women' who see 'as we really are'. The perspective shifts, then, from being the 'I' who wishes, who is outside the 'women' who do not recognise 'themselves' and being part of 'women' who might see 'as we really are'. The 'I' is part of the 'we' when 'women' see what is real, but the 'I' already sees 'as we really are'; it is the 'women' who have to change in order to be with the 'I' in seeing. '[T]hey' are not claimed as able to see this now, however, and I do not read that they ever would; it remains a 'wish'.

This is also a claim for there being a real 'we' here. Who 'we' 'are' is already known, but it is not what 'women' see, it is the 'I' who knows this without needing to see 'women's beauty represented in all sizes, ages and colors'. I am reading the 'we' as the 'I' and 'women', and therefore this being a claim for knowable, *real* 'women' who 'are' already there, before a seeing of 'images' or 'women's beauty'; a real, therefore, which is so present it does not need to be seen to be known.

It is claimed that 'women' have 'beauty'. There are no 'women' who are not beautiful; it is part of what 'women' are. '[I]mages' that 'women' see now, (if they are of 'women', and I read this as the claim) are, therefore, 'of' beautiful 'women' but do not represent 'women's beauty' in a way that can be 'recognised' by 'women', because they are not representing it in 'all sizes, ages and colors'. '[B]eauty', in being 'women's beauty', implies an ownership or a *having* of 'beauty' by 'women' whether they recognise it or not. '[W]omen's beauty' does not have to be 'recognised' in order to be present in 'images'; 'images' can be seen by 'women' without this recognition. In order for 'women' to recognise 'themselves' in 'images', though, they need to see 'women's beauty represented in all sizes, ages and colours as we really are'. Somehow, recognising 'images of themselves' requires a seeing of 'women's beauty' because it is so bound up or part of being a woman; it is not sufficient to have 'beauty', their own 'beauty' needs to be seen by 'women'.

'Women's beauty' is also not part of 'women' though. It is seen by 'women' only in 'images', it is 'represented' to them 'in' 'sizes, ages and colors', and, anyway, this

representing of 'beauty' as something recognisable to 'women' is only a 'wish'. '[B]eauty', therefore is something 'women' have or own; it is known, but cannot be seen in 'women', it is presented to them again in 'images', and, by this representing, is not them. It is, also, not only 'women's beauty' that is separated from 'women' since 'women' and 'themselves' are not the same here. The 'images' are of 'themselves', but the seeing is of 'women's beauty', not *their* 'beauty'. '[W]omen's beauty', even when 'represented in all sizes, ages and colors', still does not quite belong to 'themselves' or to the 'we'.

'[B]eauty' is not 'sizes, ages and colors' but is 'represented in' these things - 'in all' these things; there are no 'sizes, ages and colors' that do not represent 'beauty'. The claim, then, that 'we' 'really' are 'different' is undermined by the constant presence of 'beauty' which is always 'in' every size, age and color.

If 'all sizes, ages and colors' represent 'women's beauty', then why would there not be a recognition by 'women' of 'images of themselves' that they see now, before the 'wish' has come true? There is, therefore, a representation of 'women's beauty' that 'women' see in 'images' that is *not* 'all sizes, ages and colors', that is somehow not what 'we really are'. '[W]omen's beauty', then, can only be 'recognised' by 'women' if '*all* sizes, ages and colors' (my italics) are 'represented'; what is not 'all' is what leads to the lack of recognition. '[I]mages' must show 'all' in order for 'women' to see 'beauty'; so what is available to be seen now is somehow lacking, not being 'all sizes, ages and colors'.

'[W]omen's beauty' when 'represented in all sizes, ages, and colors' is 'different'. The 'we' is 'different' when it is part of what 'we really are'. What 'we really are' is 'different' in that 'we' are 'all sizes, ages and colors'. Difference is what lets 'women' recognise 'themselves' in 'images'. What is not 'different', therefore, is 'images' that do not represent 'women's beauty' as 'we really are', and therefore there is no recognition.

What I find interesting, is the claim to a knowing by the 'I' of a prior, stable existence of 'women's beauty'. Even in 'all sizes, ages and colors', the thing called 'women's beauty'

is recognisable and representable. I also read that whilst 'women's beauty' is not 'represented' in 'images of themselves' which prevents 'women' seeing and recognising 'women's beauty', 'beauty' as something known by the 'I' still exists; it is there before it is 'represented' in order that it can be 'represented'.

'[B]eauty' is not all that is claimed to have an existence apart from the text or that is in some way prior to the text. In her 'Introduction to New Edition', Orbach writes that 'the current aesthetic of thinness forces cruel pressures on the individual women. Few women are naturally thin, or indeed naturally any size' (p. 14). Here, 'women' are both 'individual' but also still a group – 'women' - who have shared characteristics known by Orbach – as long as they can be identified as a group. The '[f]ew women' who are 'naturally thin' or 'naturally any size' are not quite as easily recognised; they are known to be there, but they are '[f]ew', they are not like most 'women' whilst still being part of 'women'.

They are, however, claimed to be there. Natural 'thinness', or a natural 'size' is something that is possible, however '[f]ew women' there may be who are 'naturally thin, or indeed naturally any size'. What is natural, then, is already there; there is a state of 'thinness' or of 'size' which is not what most 'women' are. '[T]hinness' is therefore both natural and unnatural for 'women', but 'thin' 'women' are unlikely to be 'naturally thin'.

Since 'the current aesthetic of thinness forces cruel pressures on the individual women', I read that being 'naturally thin' would not force these 'cruel pressures' on 'women'. The 'cruel pressures' are for the many unnatural 'women' who are, or who are trying to be 'thin', not the '[f]ew' who are 'naturally thin'. There is a privileging here of the natural; it is achieved without 'cruel pressures', it is not forced. Is there also, perhaps, a privileging of 'thinness', a claim that if all 'women' *were* 'naturally thin' then this would be a desirable thing? This does not quite fit in with the claim about the '[f]ew women' who are 'naturally any size', since this is not specifically 'thinness'. It is not the 'thinness' that I read as explicitly desirable here (although I do read 'thinness' as desirable throughout this text) but the idea of the natural.

What is natural is not common or frequent; '[f]ew women are naturally thin, or indeed naturally any size'. There is no one 'size' that is natural, it is not that 'thinness' is natural whilst other sizes are not. It is, however, *there*; there are a '[f]ew women' who are a natural 'size'. What is natural precedes the text, it is a state that, by already existing, can be used to compare what is not natural, to split what is the same – 'thinness' – into what is 'naturally thin' and what is part of the 'current aesthetic of thinness'. The 'current aesthetic' is therefore not what is natural, it mimics the 'naturally thin' to appear to be something it is not.

The 'cruel pressures' are forced on 'the individual women'; this 'current aesthetic of thinness' is separate from 'the individual women', but it has power to force and exert 'pressures' on them, and in this forcing and in the description of 'pressures' as 'cruel' there is unwillingness; 'individual women' are not choosing the 'aesthetic of thinness', it is a cruelty that is claimed to come from something outside or apart from them.

In *The Beauty Myth*, Naomi Wolf also reads a connection between beauty and cruelty. 'The more legal and material hindrances women have broken through, the more strictly and heavily and cruelly images of female beauty have come to weigh upon us.'³² For Orbach, the 'cruel pressures' are 'on the individual women', whilst for Wolf, it is the 'images' which 'cruelly' 'weigh upon us'. Is this a claim, therefore, that Wolf makes for an 'us' which Orbach does not? There is still a knowledge of 'women' that Wolf claims to know, however, which is a claim to be different from the 'us' through a claim to know the 'us'.

What is 'cruel' is known by both Orbach and Wolf, whether it 'pressures' or weighs. For me, as in many of my readings, this is problematic. The claim to 'us' for Wolf or 'we' for Orbach, whilst not quite the 'you' of other texts which claim to have a solution to the

³² Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth* (London: Vintage, 1990), p. 10.

problem of women's bodies, construct a privileging for the perspective which knows and therefore excludes that 'us' and 'we; who do not.

In FIFI I have talked about fat, thin and overweight as they are used by the women I have worked with. This means that they are not so much descriptions of body size as they are emotional categories: emotional categories that carry the weight of cultural dictates we have all internalized. Re-reading the text, I think it would be helpful if quote marks could surround the words 'fat', 'thin' and 'overweight'. In this way we might be able to recognize the extent to which these words are so much more physically descriptive. They carry social meaning, fantasies, projections and misperceptions. When I write about what a woman's 'fat' might mean or might be saying about her, I am not writing about fat *per se*, but about her fantasies. Indeed, the woman may not be large or fat at all. (1988, p. 22)

What is '[i]n FIFI' is not 'fat, thin and overweight', but the talk 'about' them. This perspective comes from a point after the talk - 'I have talked' and after the work - 'I have worked with', but for 'the women' the use of 'fat, thin and overweight' continues - they 'are used'. There is uncertainty here for me when I read 'are used'. In 'are' I read a claim that this continues, but in 'used' I read that this has past, has been 'used'. Perhaps then the claim is that 'women' will always use 'fat, thin and overweight'; they have 'used' them, they 'are' using and they will always use – there is no claim that this use might stop.

There is a claim here about knowledge – the perspective knows how 'the women' use 'fat, thin and overweight' through this working 'with' them, and there is a claim to a prior-ness in this knowledge being present before the talk.

By claiming to know what '[t]his means' when 'the women' use 'fat, thin and overweight', the 'I' claims her understanding of this meaning and therefore claims an other who does not know what '[t]his means'. It is not 'the women', who are the other; rather, it is their perspective that the 'I' claims to understand and know what they mean by 'fat, thin and

overweight' which then produces this knowledge of the other that is 'talked' to. This separates the 'I', not only from 'the women', (despite these claims of connection in the use of 'with'; as the 'I' has 'worked with' 'the women', and so is not 'the women') but also from the one who has been 'talked' to '[i]n FIFI', who does not know what '[t]his means'.

This has implications for me about my reading of '[i]n FIFI I have talked about fat, thin and overweight as they are used by the women I have worked with'. Am I reading this as the other who does not know about 'the women'? Am I constructing this reading as an explanation by Orbach for those who do not have the knowledge of 'the women'? Certainly, this perspective is not claiming to talk to 'the women', who have been 'worked with'. This talking has been to someone else, and yet this is in the past – the talking is prior to this introduction and so the introduction is not this talking, but something else. It constructs what the perspective is *not*; not 'the women', not those who were 'talked to' and not I who reads, and in doing so Orbach claims to know what is not known to those that are not the perspective.

The 'women I have worked with' 'used' 'fat, thin and overweight' as 'emotional categories', and this is why the talk '[i]n FIFI' is 'about' this, not about 'body size'. The 'fat, thin and overweight' are 'used by the women' and so they are not 'the women'. It is this use which is why 'fat, thin and overweight' 'are not so much descriptions of body size as they are emotional categories'. '[T]he women' are using 'emotional categories' not 'descriptions of body size' and therefore there is a claim that when it is not 'the women I have worked with' what is 'fat, thin and overweight' would be described in terms of 'body size'; it is 'the women I have worked with' which are different.

'[B]ody size' has been displaced by 'emotional categories'; it is not what is described by 'fat, thin and overweight'. '[B]ody size' is still present, though; there is still a description of 'fat, thin and overweight' as 'body size', but '[i]n FIFI' this is 'not so much'. Outside 'FIFI', therefore, it is 'so much'; 'body size' is what 'fat, thin and overweight' 'are'. The 'descriptions of body size', though, being still present and still written by the 'I', undermines the perspective's claim that they 'are emotional categories' since 'body size' remains.

'[F]at, thin and overweight' are connected, they are all 'emotional categories' and 'descriptions of body size'. They are not the same, however, they are not described as a single 'emotional' category or a description of 'body size'. By making them 'categories' and 'descriptions', the 'I' makes them different: 'fat, thin and overweight' are different types of 'descriptions of body size' and 'emotional categories'.

In 'fat', I read a difference to 'thin' and 'overweight' in its previous presence in the book's title. '*Fat*', in the book's title, '*is a Feminist Issue*', whilst 'thin' and 'overweight' are not. I read a change, or an addition then, in what 'fat' 'is'; it 'is a feminist issue', but it is also a description of 'body size' (like 'thin' and 'overweight'), which are then written about by the 'I' as 'emotional categories'. '*Fat*' is identified by the 'I' as being '*a feminist issue*', but not when it is 'used' by the 'women'. *Fat is a Feminist Issue*, therefore, is a claim by Orbach, but she does not claim that this is also how 'the women I have worked with' use 'fat'.

'[F]at, thin and overweight' are 'emotional categories that carry the weight of cultural dictates we have all internalized'. '[C]ultural dictates' have 'weight' that can be carried by the 'emotional categories' of 'fat, thin and overweight'. '[F]at, thin and overweight', then, are not themselves 'cultural dictates', but 'descriptions' of the 'emotional categories' that 'carry' them; they bear this 'weight'.

'[C]ultural dictates' have been 'internalized', they are inside the 'we'. This internalization, therefore, claims 'cultural dictates' to be at some point outside - they do not come from the 'we' but are taken into it. Since 'we have all internalized' these it is not possible to be part of the 'we' without this happening; to be 'we' is to have these 'cultural dictates' inside us. In this idea of internalization, then, I am reading a not-we which is the not-internal origin of 'cultural dictates'. There is an inside and an outside to the 'we' and yet 'cultural dictates' are present in both, this internalization means that 'cultural dictates' are inside 'we', but I do not read that this claims they are no longer outside. What is doing the dictating – culture – is not 'internalized', however; this is the difference between what is

inside the 'we' and what is outside. Culture is therefore separate from the 'we'; it is not-we.

'[E]motional categories' are carrying the 'weight' of something inside the 'we' - are these 'emotional categories' of 'fat, thin and overweight', 'internalized' too? If so, they are inside the 'we', unseen, and therefore different to 'fat, thin and overweight' as 'descriptions of body size'. I read a claim that 'fat, thin and overweight' as 'descriptions of body size' can be seen in or on the 'body'; a 'body' could be described, for example, as being 'fat'. Perhaps 'fat, thin and overweight', then, are both inside the 'we' as 'emotional categories', carrying the 'weight' of 'cultural dictates', but are also manifest outside, as 'body size'.

What complicates this for me is that this manifestation assumes knowledge of what 'fat' is in order to claim a 'body size' as 'fat'. This is a definition of 'fat' which goes beyond, and exists before, the 'I'. I read that when the 'I' claims a knowledge and identification of 'fat, thin and overweight' as 'emotional categories' this is a claim to a specific knowledge by the 'I' which is not known or recognized in this way before this identification. '[F]at, thin and overweight' as 'descriptions of body size' are *different* though; this claim is not for a specific knowledge by the 'I'. It is as if everyone knows already what 'fat, thin and overweight' are when they are 'descriptions of body size'.

'Re-reading the text' is a return; 'the text' has already been read by the 'I' - this introduction is Orbach's reading of her own reading in 'FIFI'. Therefore, whilst the 'I' has 'talked' and so finished in some way, the reading is continuing in its '[r]e-reading' - it is happening now in a way that the talking is not. More than this; this reading claims a future where 'quote marks could surround the words "fat", "thin" and "overweight"'. And yet, these words are already surrounded in this introduction, they are now present as "'fat", "thin" and "overweight"'. Does this claim, therefore that the marks here are not 'quote marks'? For them to be 'helpful', therefore, the 'quote marks' would be present somewhere else, separate from this introduction.

“‘[F]at”, “‘thin” and “‘overweight””, then, are more ‘helpful’ than ‘fat, thin and overweight’. These ‘quote marks’ help ‘if’ they could ‘surround’, the ‘I’ *thinks*. So the surrounding is not certain, and if there was surrounding, the help would still not be certain. The claim is, though, that help is needed, that “‘fat”, “‘thin” and “‘overweight”” are not helpful without ‘quote marks’.

‘In this way we might be able to recognize the extent to which these words are so much more physically descriptive’. The surrounding of “‘fat”, “‘thin” and “‘overweight”” is a ‘way’; it might lead to a recognition. Without quote marks, then, there is no recognition. Again, there is uncertainty; even with the ‘quote marks’ ‘we’ only ‘might’ be able to ‘recognize the extent to which these words are so much more physically descriptive’. Whilst “‘fat”, “‘thin” and “‘overweight”” might still not help the ‘we’ look at the words differently, the claim is that they need to be looked at differently, recognised differently; “‘fat”, “‘thin” and “‘overweight”” are not sufficient without ‘quote marks’ because their meaning is not known to its full ‘extent’. Recognition alone of ‘these words’ is insufficient; it is recognizing the ‘extent to which these words are so much more physically descriptive’. ‘[T]hese words’ are still ‘physically descriptive’ without ‘quote marks’, but with ‘quote marks’ they can be recognized as being ‘so much more’.

It is interesting to me that the claim is that ‘these words are so much more physically descriptive’. This is not, then, a claim that when ‘these words’ are ‘emotional categories’ or when they ‘carry social meaning, fantasies, projections and misperceptions’ they somehow go beyond the physical description of the ‘body’, that they leave the physical behind. The opposite is the case; they are ‘*more* physically descriptive’ (my italics). It is not the ‘quote marks’ that make them ‘more’ so since these only enable recognition, it is the ‘words’ themselves which are already so much ‘more physically descriptive’ through what they ‘carry’. I read no uncertainty in these claims by the ‘I’; it is the ability of the ‘we’ to ‘recognize’ this which is in doubt. The ‘more’ of ‘these words’ is already present; it exists before the ‘we’ recognizes. The ‘I’, however, already knows they exist (and so is *not* ‘we’,

despite the claim) and does not need 'quote marks' to know they are 'so much more physically descriptive'.

If 'these words are so much more physically descriptive', then there is something which is less 'physically descriptive' and what this is, is uncertain. There is, however, 'fat *per se*', and I wonder if this is the claim, that there is 'fat' which is not written about and which is not 'so much more physically descriptive'. If so, is it this writing which changes 'fat', which causes it to become not 'fat *per se*' but 'so much more physically descriptive'?

To 'recognize' that 'these words are so much more physically descriptive' is insufficient; what is needed, it is claimed, is a recognition of 'extent'. I read this as a claim by the 'I' that it is necessary to mark out the 'extent' of 'these words', to see how far they go in their 'more'. If so, the claim is that the meaning of 'these words' as 'more' than 'physically descriptive' goes farther than might be recognised now, but this is inadequate without knowing the end of the 'more', without knowing when they stop. When this 'extent' is reached, then, is there something beyond this which does not need to be recognised? Does an 'extent' which implies an end, therefore, make a claim that there is something beyond this 'extent' where 'these words' are not 'more physically descriptive'? If their 'extent' can be known, then, "fat", "thin" and "overweight" are already defined; their meaning is claimed as stable even if it is not recognised by the 'we' who only sees them as 'physically descriptive'.

What causes a difficulty for me is that I read that a claim is being made that these meanings already exist. '[F]at, thin and overweight' are somehow waiting to be discovered through this text, but the claim is that they would be present even without this talking or writing. What they are, and how they are 'used by the women I have worked with' is written about here, but their existence is not open to question.

'The women' have 'used' 'fat, thin and overweight' as 'emotional categories'. '[T]hese words' 'carry social meaning, fantasies, projections and misperceptions'. When the 'I'

writes about what 'a woman's "fat" might mean', the 'I' claims to take this meaning from the use by 'the woman' herself, even though 'the woman' cannot not know this if she is part of the 'we' who cannot yet 'recognize the extent to which these words are so much more physically descriptive'.

Are 'the women' then, perhaps also not part of the 'we'? I do not read that this is the claim; for me, the 'I' is including 'the women' in the 'we' that would be helped by 'quote marks' to 'recognize' what "fat", "thin" and "overweight" mean. I am reading, then, a claim of a recovery of meaning by Orbach from 'the women', who would not otherwise be aware of it. This meaning, though, is not created by 'the women', it is produced as something present inside them, as being 'internalized' within them that the perspective brings out and makes recognizable.

'They carry social meaning, fantasies, projections and misperceptions'. I am reading '[t]hey' as being 'these words'; it is the 'words' which 'carry'. It is this carrying which is why 'these words are so much more physically descriptive'. '[S]ocial meaning, fantasies, projections and misperceptions' are not 'these words' therefore. Again here, I am reading a claim to a knowledge by the perspective which others do not have, a knowing of 'these words' and what they 'carry'. For 'misperceptions', for example, there is a claim to a perception by someone who is not 'I' and who does not know these are 'misperceptions'. The claim to a 'we' is again undermined; Orbach claims to be part of the 'we', but in the knowledge of what 'these words' 'carry', is making herself different.

When I write about what a woman's 'fat' might mean or might be saying about her, I am not writing about fat *per se*, but about her fantasies. Indeed, the woman may not be large or fat at all. (p. 23)

Here, "fat" is surrounded by 'quote marks' and therefore the recognition of 'the extent to which these words are so much more physically descriptive' is claimed as possibly present. Where this presence is, however, is uncertain. The 'quote marks' already

surround “fat”, but Orbach writes ‘[w]hen I write about what a woman’s “fat” might mean’, and so this writing is displaced; being ‘[w]hen I write’, is therefore not writing here.

When the ‘I’ writes ‘about’ ‘a woman’s “fat”’, it is insofar as what it ‘might mean or might be saying about her’. The ‘I’ is therefore removed from ‘a woman’s “fat”’ - this is not the “fat” that belongs to the ‘I’. The ‘I’ is also removed from ‘her’ - not ‘her’, not writing ‘about’ ‘her’, but ‘about’ what ‘her’ “fat” might mean or be saying about her’. The writing, therefore, is not ‘about’ a woman. Meaning is situated ‘about’ ‘a woman’s “fat”’, the question of what a woman ‘might mean’ is not asked. A woman has no meaning to be discovered; she is present only through what belongs to ‘her’; ‘her’ “fat”’.

There is uncertainty about what ‘a woman’s “fat” might mean or might be saying about her’. The ‘I’ has enough knowledge to be able to write about possibilities, then, but not certainties; knowledge about meaning and saying is limited. The uncertainty, though, is not connected to the separation of the ‘I’ and the ‘her’; it is not that the ‘I’ is not ‘her’ which creates the ‘might’. There is no claim, either, that the ‘her’ knows ‘what a woman’s “fat” might mean or might be saying about her’, the claim to write about what “fat” might mean’ resides with the ‘I’.

Where is this uncertainty, then? The ‘I’ writes ‘about what a woman’s “fat” might mean or might be saying about her’, so I am not identifying the ‘might’ as whether the ‘I’ may or may not ‘write about’ ‘a woman’s “fat”’. I read this as the ‘I’ being able to recognize the ‘might’ and write about it. The uncertainty lies within the meaning and the saying, it is *these* things which are not certain in their connection to ‘a woman’s “fat”’.

The uncertainty lies in ‘what’ ‘might’ be said, not who is saying it. It is “fat” which can speak about ‘her’, not the ‘her’ who can say something ‘about’ “fat”. “[F]at” is ‘saying’ something, but this ‘saying’ is not to ‘her’; “fat” speaks ‘about her’. Nor is “fat” speaking to the ‘I’ – the ‘I’ writes about what “fat” ‘might be saying about her’, so the ‘saying’ is already happening whether the ‘I’ writes or not.

The '[w]hen' of '[w]hen I write' displaces the writing – it is a claim that the writing is elsewhere. This is further complicated for me, in that the claim is 'I am not writing', which is a denial of writing about 'fat', or at least about 'fat *per se*'. 'I write', then, is not here, (in the same way as 'I have talked about fat', in which the talking is elsewhere); there is a claim 'I write' about "'fat'" somewhere else, but what is nowhere written about is a particular 'fat'; 'fat *per se*'.

This is a claim to the making of difference through these 'quote marks' which might enable the 'we' to 'recognize the extent to which these words are so much more physically descriptive'. When Orbach writes, she writes "'fat'" with 'quote marks' and this is a claim to difference to 'fat *per se*' which she is not 'writing about'.

'[F]at *per se*' is put aside, not written about, but by claiming *not* to 'write about' 'fat *per se*' it is therefore introduced and made present. I read 'fat *per se*' as a claim to define 'fat' as something different to "'fat'". What '*per se*' does, though, is add on to 'fat' and make it more. '[F]at' which is '*per se*' therefore becomes a particular type of 'fat', which is different not only to "'fat'", but also to 'fat'.

The 'I', then, does not 'write about' 'a woman's "fat"' in any context other than what it 'might mean' or 'might be saying about her'. '[A] woman's "fat"', is not 'fat *per se*', or, at least, it is not *only* 'fat *per se*'; it is something else too. Even if this 'woman's "fat"' includes 'fat *per se*', this part is excluded from the 'writing'. I do not read this division necessarily as a claim that 'fat *per se*' and 'a woman's "fat"' are different in their type or origin. There is a particular distinction between 'fat *per se*' and 'a woman's "fat"', which is the 'writing about' what it 'might mean or might be saying about her'. '[F]at *per se*' may still have meaning, but this is not written about by the 'I'. '[F]at' has additions, then, the 'quote marks', '*per se*' and 'woman's'. The 'I' claims that once it is 'a woman's "fat"' it can be written about as having meaning or be 'saying' something about 'her'. What this does is privilege 'a woman's "fat"' in writing; it is this which 'I write about' and which has meaning to be discovered.

The 'I' is 'not writing about fat *per se*' but about 'her fantasies'. Perhaps 'a woman's "fat"' is 'fat *per se*' with an addition, which is 'her fantasies'? It is here in the writing where 'a woman's "fat"' becomes divided into what has meaning, or can be saying, and what does not. These 'fantasies', then, are what gives 'a woman's "fat"' meaning when they are written 'about'. The 'writing' surrounds the 'fantasies' as it does the meaning of 'a woman's "fat"', and in surrounding it creates what it claims to remove. The 'writing' claims to give meaning, to give the 'we' the chance to 'recognize', and yet it separates by 'writing about'; here 'writing' is between the 'we' and 'the woman' and 'fat'/"fat".

These are 'her fantasies' but are known by the 'I' who writes about them. I read the meaning of these 'fantasies' as being defined through the 'I' too, through this 'writing'; it is not 'her' who provides meaning to the 'I', but the 'I' who defines meaning through 'writing'. "[F]at" itself can be saying something 'about her fantasies', unlike 'her' who does not speak. Owning these 'fantasies', then, does not include ownership of meaning or speaking, which are located elsewhere. It is the 'I' who names these as 'fantasies', not the 'her' or a woman. These are 'fantasies' *for* the 'I' who writes them as such, but this does not necessarily make them 'fantasies' for 'her'.

As 'fantasies' are carried by 'the words "fat", "thin" and "overweight"', does this mean "fat" was therefore present before the 'fantasies' in order to 'carry' them? This is not how I read this, that the word "fat" was present before 'fantasies'. Rather, my reading is that these 'fantasies' are claimed as already in existence, but the word "fat" is claimed as a way that 'we' can know them through this 'writing'.

'Indeed, the woman may not be large or fat at all'. The claim is that it is 'the woman' or 'her' who is 'fat', but '[i]ndeed' counteracts this – 'her' perception of herself as 'fat' is unreal, a fantasy. Meaning is located through a fantasy, but the claim to truth - the '[i]ndeed' - is outside this fantasy and so can identify it for what it is *not* – 'Indeed, the woman may not be large or fat at all'.

There is a claim for a stable identification of 'fat' or 'large'; they are known by the 'I' who can then categorize a woman as being 'large or fat' – or not these things. '[F]at', therefore, is never open to question as something that is present, even when 'the woman' is possibly not 'large or fat at all'.

As 'the woman may not be large or fat at all', does this mean that 'fat' is not present when 'the woman' is thus identified as 'not...fat'? It has already been claimed that 'I write about what a woman's "fat" might mean' and that 'her' "'fat'" 'might be saying' something 'about her'. So "'fat'" is present, even when she is not 'large or fat at all'. '[F]at', then, exists as something that always belongs to a woman, but, it is claimed, might not be there 'at all'. In fact, 'when I write about what a woman's "fat" might mean' includes those times where 'the woman may not be large or fat at all' - It is still written about as present without a woman being 'large or fat at all'.

What is troubling for me, though, is a claim for the stability of the word 'fat' by the 'I' who knows what 'fat' and "'fat'" is, whilst a woman – whose 'fat' it is - does not. The 'I' writes about 'what a woman's "fat" might mean or might be saying about her', so "'fat'" is already identified before what it means is written about. Meaning is apparently not certain for the 'I', but "'fat'" is, and therefore I question this 'might'; am I reading this as uncertainty by the 'I' that she 'might' *not* know what "'fat'" means? Rather, this 'might', for me, is an apparent denial which is not denial or uncertainty at all; the 'I' is claiming to know what 'a woman's "fat"' means.

Whether it is 'fat *per se*' or 'a woman's "fat"', it is known by the 'I' who can therefore identify 'her fantasies' as not being 'fat *per se*'. '[H]er' 'fat'/'"fat"', then, is both a fantasy and something that 'the woman' may not be 'at all'. Whether it is or is not present, though, it is *known* by the 'I' as something that is already there, as a stable definition, which can then be identified as there or not there 'at all'.

'In FIFI' this is produced by 'writing' and talking. '[W]riting' is what the perspective does which 'the women I have worked with' do not. This is what is at stake here; the perspective writes 'the women I have worked with' and so claims to write *for* them. The interpretation of the meaning of 'fat' resides with the 'I', but 'the women' too are produced by the perspective. This is, of course, inevitable in the act of 'writing', but it problematizes the claim that Orbach makes, which is to be part of the 'we'. In her Preface, Orbach writes '[t]his book is written as a self-help manual' (p. 45). This 'self-help' is not Orbach helping herself, however. The self is not the perspective. The issue for me, therefore, is that whilst Orbach claims that following the publication of her book 'many women were able to give up dieting and accept their bodies at sizes which had repulsed them before' (p. 20), her book is still a writing of a perspective claiming to be outside 'the women' and therefore able to 'help', and so the difference claimed between this and other diet books is accordingly open to question.

4 Susie Orbach *Hunger Strike*

There is no notion or sense of the body as an integrated aspect of self, rather it represents in physical form the internal struggles to control needs and unsatisfactory object relations, in an attempt to dress oneself with an acceptable self-image. The body is something one puts on and takes off, not a place in which one lives. In this stance towards her body the anorectic woman is, as we have already noted, exaggerating the response that all women in this culture come to have towards their bodies.³³

‘[N]otion’ and ‘sense’ are absences for Orbach when she writes about their being ‘of the body’; ‘the body’ is a presence whilst these are not. ‘[T]he body’, though, is described through having a lack – as not being an ‘integrated aspect of self’. ‘[T]he body’ – there is only ‘the’ ‘body’; it does not belong, it is not specific to, or owned by, anyone. The ‘notion or sense’, too, is not the ‘notion or sense’ of a particular person, and yet there is a perspective that does have a ‘notion or sense’ of ‘the body as an integrated aspect of self’ in its claim to be ‘no notion or sense’ of it here. The perspective that claims there is ‘no notion or sense of the body as an integrated aspect of self’ produces this ‘notion or sense’; they are present in their absence.

Orbach does not claim that ‘the body’ is not ‘an integrated aspect of self’, but that there is ‘no notion or sense’ of this – it is a ‘notion’, and it is this absence which does not therefore describe ‘the body’ as an ‘integrated aspect of self’. There is no claim to this being a lack of integration – ‘the body’ may already be ‘an integrated aspect of self’- it is the ‘notion’ and the ‘sense’ of this that are missing. ‘[N]otion’ and ‘sense’ are here not ‘of the body’; they are, then, not ‘the body’. Even if ‘the body’ was ‘integrated’, though, ‘notion’

³³ Susie Orbach, *Hunger Strike* (Harmansworth: Penguin, 1993), p. 91. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text

and 'sense' would be separate from it. '[T]he body' has a possibility of integration that 'notion' and 'sense' do not.

To be 'an integrated aspect of self' seems to imply a possibility of 'the body' becoming part of 'self'; if there *were* a 'notion or sense' of this, 'the body' might be 'an integrated aspect of self' and therefore part of something else that was not 'the body', but had integrated 'the body', apparently making 'the body' part of 'self'. Even if this were so, though, is there still a separation between 'body' and 'self'? Is 'the body' here doubly separated from 'self', firstly by there being 'no notion or sense' of it as 'an integrated aspect of self', but then even if this were not the case, in its being an 'aspect', by being an appearance or quality of 'self' and therefore not 'self' at all? '[T]he body' and 'self' are different; there is no integration apart from the implication that, since there is 'no notion or sense of the body as an integrated aspect of self', this is a possibility, a claim of integration *elsewhere*, where the 'anorectic' woman's 'stance towards her body' might not produce this separation.

The 'rather' to there being 'no notion or sense of the body as an integrated aspect of self' is the body's construction as a representation 'in physical form the internal struggles to control needs and unsatisfactory object relations'. '[N]eeds' are always a struggle 'to control', but 'object relations' are only like this when they are 'unsatisfactory'. '[O]bject relations' which are *not* 'unsatisfactory', therefore, are not a struggle 'to control'. This is, apparently, the description of 'the body' – what it is, rather than what it is not. But this is still not quite 'the body'; it is a re-presenting of something else that is not 'the body' – 'the internal struggles to control needs and unsatisfactory object relations' – in 'physical form'. These things do not have 'physical form'; it is 'the body' which again presents them (so they have already been presented in something that is not 'physical form') constructing them as 'physical'. '[T]he body' shows what cannot be seen, it presents again what cannot present itself. '[T]he body', then, is the 'physical form' which represents that which does not have 'physical form'. '[F]orm' here is 'physical'; 'internal struggles' may have a 'form'

that is not 'physical', but without this reification, they could not be represented in 'an attempt to dress oneself with an acceptable self-image'.

The 'struggles' are the attempt to 'control' and they occur internally. '[N]eeds and unsatisfactory object relations' are always present, as are the 'struggles' to 'control' them. It is their representation which is not certain, which might not be there if there were a 'notion or sense' of 'the body' as an 'integrated aspect of self'.

Since there is the 'internal', then there is also the external, where 'struggles to control needs and unsatisfactory object relations' do not occur. What is 'internal' is not 'the body'; rather there is internality to 'the body', which is not in 'physical form'. '[N]eeds and unsatisfactory object relations' are not necessarily 'internal', but they are not claimed to have 'physical form'. The site of struggle is 'internal' - inside 'the body' - which is then represented in 'physical form' as 'the body'. Is 'the body', then, external? Is this what is outside, presenting the things that are 'internal' and so unable themselves to present 'in physical form'? If so, then there is a perspective which is presented *to*, which is not 'internal'. To go back to the 'notion or sense of the body as an integrated aspect of self': if there were this 'notion or sense', then 'the body' would not represent 'internal struggles'. It is the body's separation from the 'self' that produces this representation of 'internal struggles' in 'physical form'. What is being represented *to*, therefore, is presented *to* by 'the body' because it is separate or not integrated with 'the body' – whatever it is that 'the body' represents *to*; the 'self' is part of this.

'[T]he body 'represents in physical form' in order to 'attempt'. This 'attempt' is not 'the internal struggles', rather these 'struggles' come before the 'attempt'; they are there before they are represented 'in physical form' by 'the body'. The representation by 'the body' is not a dressing but only an 'attempt to dress oneself with an acceptable self-image' – its success is not guaranteed. '[O]neself', therefore, may still be undressed, or dressed with an *unacceptable* 'self-image': the claim here is that what is 'acceptable' or unacceptable

is already known, and the success of attempting 'to dress oneself with an acceptable self-image' can therefore also be known.

'[O]neself' is not 'self', it individualises 'self' into the one, the singular, but this 'oneself' is also 'the anorectic woman' which implies more than one – it encompasses 'all women' who are 'anorectic'. All 'anorectic women' are the same, therefore; they are all 'the', who attempts to 'dress oneself with an acceptable self-image'. '[S]elf-image' dresses 'oneself'; it is therefore not 'oneself'. '[S]elf' has an image and is part of one which can be dressed with this image. '[S]elf' attempts to be seen, to have an 'acceptable' image. '[T]he body', by not being 'an integrated aspect of self' 'represents in physical form' what is not seen. What is shown, though, is an image, not the thing itself – 'self'. This image is both an image of 'self' and a representation by 'the body' of what is 'internal' – the 'struggles to control needs and unsatisfactory object relations', and so whilst 'the body' and 'self' are separate, the image of 'self' dresses 'oneself' with 'the body'. The 'physical' dresses 'oneself' which does not have a 'physical form' and yet 'self-image' does, since it is this that dresses. It is not 'self-image' which attempts however; 'self-image' is what something else attempts to 'dress oneself' with. Is it 'oneself', therefore, which attempts and, if so, who is 'oneself', and who is the 'self-image' 'acceptable' to? I return here to my reading of 'oneself' as 'the anorectic woman' – and yet 'oneself' implies more than this, which is something I read further on in my text.

'The body' is not sensed as 'an integrated aspect of self' but is 'something one puts on and takes off'. 'The body' has 'physical form', it can be put 'on' and taken 'off' from 'oneself'; 'the body' represents 'internal struggles to control needs and unsatisfactory object relations' by attempting to 'dress oneself with an acceptable self-image'. This dressing, though, can now be taken 'off'; it can be undone. 'The body' can be taken 'off' 'one', its presence 'on' 'one' is impermanent. This produces a 'one' with a 'body' it 'puts on' – this happens now – but also with no 'body' – it 'takes off', leaving 'one' bodiless.

Is 'the body' 'not a place in which one lives' *because* of this putting on and taking off? The implication here might be that if 'the body' is not 'something one puts on and takes off' then it could be 'a place in which one lives'. There is also the possibility, though, that here 'the body' is never 'a place in which one lives', but that this might not be the case elsewhere – the possibility that there could be 'the body' which is 'a place in which one lives' is produced in its impossibility here. It is the 'internal struggles to control needs and unsatisfactory object relations' that lead 'the body' to represent them 'in physical form' and so perhaps this is why 'the body' is not 'a place in which one lives'.

It is tempting to infer that if there were no 'needs' or 'unsatisfactory object relations', then there would be no 'internal struggles' to 'control' them and therefore no 'attempt' to 'dress oneself with an acceptable self-image'. 'The body' might then not be a representation of this 'in physical form' but might be 'an integrated aspect of self' and 'a place in which one lives'. There is no implication, however, that there could be no 'needs and unsatisfactory object relations'; they always exist and therefore 'the body' must always present them again 'in physical form'. Equally, there is no implication that here – for this 'one' – 'the body' could ever be 'a place in which one lives'. It is 'not' this, it is only 'something one puts on and takes off'. What is at stake here, therefore, is a claim of difference for 'the body' of 'one', which is therefore different to something else – to 'the body' which is not 'one'.

When 'the body' becomes 'her body' this 'her' is also 'the anorectic woman'; it is 'her' 'stance towards her body' that is described here. There is a gendering now which makes this 'stance' not only of the 'anorectic', but of the 'anorectic woman'. If there are 'anorectic' men, they do not have the same 'stance'. This 'stance' is 'towards her body', separating 'the anorectic woman' from 'her body' – these are seemingly 'her' 'internal struggles', 'her' 'attempt' to 'dress oneself with an acceptable self-image' and she has 'no notion or sense of the body as an integrated aspect of self'. But this 'body' is *not* the anorectic woman's 'body' because it is not 'her body' when it is 'the body' which 'represents in physical form

the internal struggles to control needs and unsatisfactory body relations'. 'The body' is not gendered; it is not claimed that there is 'no notion or sense' of *her* 'body as an integrated aspect of self', or that she attempts to 'dress' *herself* with 'an acceptable self-image'. These claims, then, do encompass 'the anorectic woman', but they are more general; they imply a universality of 'the body'.

This is the case. These claims are not restricted only to 'the anorectic woman'; 'this stance', which is also a 'response', applies to 'all women in this culture'. '[T]he anorectic woman' and 'all women in this culture' are the same; the anorectic woman's 'stance' is an exaggeration of the women's 'response' 'towards their bodies'. '[T]he anorectic woman' and 'all women in this culture' are also not the same, however. By having a 'stance' which exaggerates 'the response', the 'anorectic woman' does not, therefore, have the same 'response' – she is different. There is a separation of the two – 'the anorectic woman' and her exaggerated response and 'all women in this culture' whose same 'response' is not exaggerated – but this is a similarity, and, for Orbach, the similarity is what is at stake because it identifies 'all women in this culture' with 'the anorectic woman'. Difference is a matter of scale – 'the anorectic woman' has the same 'response' of the 'women', only exaggerated; it is an amplified form of the same thing. If the 'stance' towards 'the body' is that it 'is something one puts on and takes off, not a place in which one lives' then 'all women in this culture' have this 'response' 'towards their bodies'; it is present to a lesser extent, but it is the same 'response'.

This produces a 'stance' and a 'response' towards bodies which the perspective identifies and distances from – 'we have already noted'. This 'we' is not 'the anorectic woman' or 'all women in this culture' because this perspective has already noted these things in a way that these 'women' do not. There is, though, also an implication of association with 'we' and 'all women'; 'the body', 'self', 'dress oneself', and 'one puts on', all imply a universal 'body', 'self' and 'one' which is not specific to 'anorectic women' and

'women in this culture'. 'The body', then, is always inclusively 'the body', as is 'self' and 'one' – it is the 'response' and 'stance' which distinguish the perspective from 'women'.

The 'response' towards 'their bodies' is not timeless; 'all women in this culture' *come* to have it, and therefore did not always 'have' this 'response'. There are 'women in this culture' who do not have this 'response' – yet – but inescapably will, since 'all women in this culture come to have' it. There are though, those who do not have this 'response' 'towards their bodies' besides those who have not yet 'come' to it. The 'response' is gendered, and therefore men do not have this 'response'; it is cultural, and so those outside 'this culture' do not 'come to have' this 'response'. The 'anorectic woman', as already noted, does not have this 'response' because hers is exaggerated – this is not the 'response' of 'women' who are not 'anorectic'. The claim though is for a universal 'response'; it is this writing of 'all women' which implies a collective uniformity of 'response' which excludes without specifying exclusion. For Orbach, what matters is 'women in this culture' and their 'response' 'towards their bodies'.

The relentless pursuit of slimness is, then, in this context, about the need for denial. It is about the gains that arise from the denial *per se* and *not* from the slimness. Achieving slimness is an important factor. It is visible proof of the woman's success. But it is the achievement, not the thinness which is psychologically important. (p. 91)

'[S]limness' has not been attained because it is being pursued. This 'pursuit' persists in its relentlessness; there is no claim that 'slimness' can ever be realised, or that the 'pursuit' could stop at any time whether for achievement or failure – it is always there. Since 'in this context' the 'relentless pursuit of slimness' is 'about the need for denial', this then implies that there are other contexts which are *not* 'about the need for denial' but which are still subject to the 'relentless pursuit of slimness'. This 'pursuit' is everywhere; its context varies but its presence does not.

This 'relentless pursuit of slimness' is '*about* the need for denial' (my italics), so it is not 'the need for denial' itself. This 'relentless pursuit' is 'about' 'denial'; it surrounds, but it is not 'denial' itself. '[D]enial' has not been achieved here, since the 'need' for it still exists. There is, though, something else here – the thing that is being denied. '[D]enial' of what, is not specified; 'denial' is the object itself – it is the point, rather than what is implied as denied.³⁴

'[T]he gains', though, 'arise from the denial *per se*' and so are about 'denial' rather than 'the need' for it. 'The relentless pursuit of slimness' is 'about' both the 'need for denial' and the 'gains' that 'denial' produces. This 'pursuit' then produces both a 'need' for, and 'denial' – or, at least, 'denial *per se*' which in its claim to be essentially 'denial' itself becomes something other than 'denial', something more than 'denial'.

Since 'the gains' rise from 'the denial' and not from 'the slimness', the 'relentless pursuit' continues. There is no end to the 'pursuit' because '[i]t' is not what this is 'about' 'in this context'.

'[S]limness' and 'thinness' are already defined and present – they are states that are known and therefore can be recognised when they have been achieved. What is not 'slimness' or 'thinness' are therefore also known; the non-achievement is also present. The 'achievement' is known by 'visible proof'; 'the achievement' of 'slimness' can be seen – must be seen – to show 'the woman's success'. It is not the 'slimness' itself which is at stake, but in its 'achievement', which is 'important'. '[S]limness' and 'thinness' can both be achieved and for both it is the 'achievement' rather than the 'slimness' or 'thinness' that are 'important', and yet 'the relentless pursuit' continues; the 'achievement' does not stop this.

³⁴ In her introduction to the 1986 edition Orbach writes about 'a syndrome that is about the denial and overriding of hunger and appetite' (p.xi). Since 'denial' here is the 'denial' of 'hunger and appetite', perhaps 'the relentless pursuit of slimness' as 'the need for denial' is 'about' the 'need' to deny 'hunger and appetite', but this is not what is claimed here, this is my reading of a possible implication, for Orbach it is only 'denial'.

The 'woman's success' is proved by her 'achievement' of 'slimness'. It is not, therefore enough to be slim, or even to achieve 'slimness'; until it is 'visible' it is not proved to be successful. '[S]uccess' in itself, therefore, is not at stake here; it is the seeing of 'success' which matters. '[S]uccess' is not '[a]chieving slimness' because this is only an 'important factor'. 'Achieving slimness' only proves something else has been successful.

The implication, then, is that 'visible proof' is a visibility of 'success' and therefore there is something that is doing the seeing of what is 'visible' – who sees the 'success' as 'slimness'. This is a 'visible proof' for the woman, but it claims another perspective known by the woman for whom this 'proof' is 'visible'. This is still Orbach's perspective on the woman, however, it is her claim that this 'visible proof' is the woman's perspective on her 'success' at '[a]chieving slimness'.

The 'achievement' of 'thinness' is seen as 'visible proof' and it is also 'psychologically important'. I am not reading a claim to a difference between 'slimness' and 'thinness' by Orbach here. There is, then, the 'important factor' of '[a]chieving slimness' and the 'psychologically important' 'achievement', which raises the question of who these 'important' things are 'important' to. There is a perspective who knows what is and is not 'important', both visibly and 'psychologically' and who here attributes this as being an importance to the woman herself. For Orbach, the importance of '[a]chieving slimness' and 'the achievement' itself as 'psychologically important' is a perspective which claims to know what the woman considers 'important'. For Orbach herself, '[a]chieving slimness' is not claimed to be 'important'. She therefore differentiates herself from the woman for whom – according to Orbach – '[a]chieving slimness' is 'important'.

The achievement of slimness is important in the context of what fat and thin symbolize for the anorectic. Fat has come to stand for need, greed, indulgence, wantonness, unruliness, a loss of control, an unstopability. Fatness represents folds and folds of uncontrollable needs and the guilt associated with the satisfaction of those needs. Fat represents the *exposure* of need. (p. 91)

'[S]limness' has a presence in its 'achievement' and yet there is also the threat of its absence – '[t]he achievement' implies also a non-achievement, a lack of 'slimness' and the possibility of failure. Perhaps, though, the failure is not implied, but certain; 'slimness' will never be achieved – there is always a 'relentless pursuit' towards it, but it is never gained. Its 'achievement' is 'important', however. '[S]limness', which is always pursued and never attained, is 'important in the context of what fat and thin symbolize for the anorectic'. What is 'important' therefore is not 'slimness' itself but the idea of its 'achievement'.

'The achievement of slimness' contextualises 'what fat and thin symbolize for the anorectic'. '[S]limness' is not 'fat' or 'thin', but it is connected with them when it is achieved. '[F]at' and 'thin', though, are not achieved, but like 'slimness' they are known – there is no question of what 'slimness', 'fat' and 'thin' are – they are claimed as pre-existing. What 'fat' or 'thin' are therefore is already read by Orbach as something 'the anorectic' recognises. Orbach knows what 'the anorectic' identifies as 'fat' and 'thin' in order to be able to recognise its symbolism for them. This is not the anorectic's perspective; it is Orbach who makes these claims about what 'slimness', 'fat' and 'thin' 'symbolize' for 'the anorectic'. Orbach, then, is not 'the anorectic'; she knows her by being outside her. For me, this is a claim to a seeing; seeing 'fat and thin' as things that are known, and seeing when 'slimness' is achieved claims an outside-perspective that can see the 'visible proof' or not on 'the anorectic', but can also see 'psychologically' what these things mean to 'the anorectic'. To know how 'the anorectic' feels towards these things requires the perspective to claim to be other than 'the anorectic', and yet to know her inside and out.

'Fat has come' – therefore '[f]at' has not always been this, there has been a movement of '[f]at' which now stands 'for' something else – 'need, greed, indulgence, wantonness, unruliness, a loss of control, an unstoppable'. Since '[f]at' stands 'for' these things, they are absent, replaced by '[f]at'. 'Fat', though, is not these things, it only stands 'for' what is therefore still present. 'Fat' is, and is not, 'need, greed, indulgence, wantonness,

unruliness, a loss of control, an unstopability'; it is in their place, but it does not remove them. 'Fat' stands for these things whilst also symbolizing them – so, are to 'stand for' and to 'symbolize', then, the same here? They both imply that 'fat' is not the thing it is claimed to stand in place of – the thing that is still there, that is still present. Since '[f]at' has come to stand for need, greed, indulgence, wantonness, unruliness, a loss of control, an unstopability', these things were present before '[f]at' came 'to stand for' them. For 'the anorectic', though, (and only 'the anorectic'), there has been a movement of '[f]at' which symbolizes and stands for these things, and this movement is not claimed for those who are not 'the anorectic'. The perspective who knows 'the anorectic', also knows 'need, greed, indulgence, wantonness, unruliness, a loss of control, an unstopability', and claims their connection with '[f]at' for 'the anorectic'.

'The achievement of slimness' is also 'important in the context' of what 'thin' symbolizes for 'the anorectic': 'thinness... reflects an asceticism of purpose, a praiseworthy puritan morality, a needless self. She needs no extra, no padding, she can make her way in the world as a spare and independent character' (p. 91). '[T]hinness' is the state of being 'thin'; here, it is not 'slimness' any more than 'fat' is. It is a reflection of something else – 'an asceticism of purpose' – so a particular kind of 'purpose' which is seen only through its reflection. It is also a 'praiseworthy puritan morality', which therefore implies there is someone who praises, who can judge whether this 'thin' is worthy of praise. This is not a claim to there being an other who sees the reflection of 'thinness' and recognises it for what it is, but instead this is a claim to know the perspective of 'the anorectic', to know that this is what 'thin' symbolizes and 'thinness' 'reflects' for 'her'. What is at stake here is not the idea that others recognise what a 'thin' or 'fat' body are, and what this means, but that Orbach here knows what 'the anorectic' means by these things from a perspective which is not 'anorectic'.

'[T]hinness' also 'reflects' 'a needless self', in contrast to '[f]at' which stands for 'need', and '[f]atness' which 'represents folds and folds of uncontrollable needs'. It is the 'self'

which is 'needless', not 'the anorectic', but this is the anorectic's 'self', it is the part of her which is not known without reflection. '[T]hinness' 'reflects' what kind of 'self' 'she' has. What is 'needless' is specific; 'she needs no extra, no padding'; 'extra' and 'padding' are present but not needed by the anorectic's 'self'. This presence, though, complicates things. '[E]xtra' and 'padding' *are* here and produce need, the need for 'no extra, no padding' which is not the same thing as if 'she' had no need for 'extra' or 'padding'. This 'needless self', then, has needs, and, anyway, is not claimed as anything other than a reflection. '[T]hin' is not 'the anorectic', but symbolizes for her a 'needless self', which is never achieved.

'[E]xtra' and 'padding' imply an addition to the 'she'. There is, then, 'she' and something else which is not 'she'; this 'extra' and 'padding', which 'she' would have a need for if 'she' were not 'thin'. '[S]he' is not 'thin', however; 'thin' symbolizes a lack of need for 'extra' and 'padding', and therefore 'she' *does* have a need for 'extra' and 'padding' – these things that are, and are not, 'she'. This 'extra' and 'padding' therefore stops 'her' making 'her way in the world as a spare and independent character'.

Like 'thin', 'fat' is not 'slimness'. 'Fatness', too, is not the 'fat' itself, but the state of being 'fat', and here '[f]atness' 'represents'. This is a representation of excess; 'folds and folds of uncontrollable needs' – these 'folds' are continuous, these 'needs' break out, they cannot be controlled. 'Fat', too, is 'a loss of control, an unstopability', which again implies excessiveness, an inability to contain. In this symbolizing, standing for, representing, there is a claim to a management of this excess; '[f]at' and '[f]atness' are not the 'loss of control' itself, but its symbol and representation. The '[f]at' that stands for 'need, greed, indulgence, wantonness, unruliness, a loss of control, an unstopability' and the '[f]atness' that 'represents folds and folds of uncontrollable needs' therefore reify and objectify these things; they present again what was already there, but which is now exposed.

'Fatness' and '[f]at' represent and 'stand for' what is 'uncontrollable' and 'a loss of control'. Therefore, there are 'needs' that are controllable; there is 'control' which is not

lost. There is, then, an implied *other* which controls its 'needs' and therefore is not in this state of '[f]atness'. This is a claim to know the anorectic's perspective on herself (p. 91) (and for Orbach, this is always gendered as '*herself*'³⁵) as having both a desire to achieve 'slimness' and possessing 'need, greed, indulgence, wantonness, unruliness, a loss of control, an unstopability'. Whilst there is the possibility of not being those things, this does not apply to 'the anorectic' who will always use '[f]at' and '[f]atness' to 'symbolize', 'stand for' and represent her 'loss of control'.

'Fatness' 'represents' more than 'folds and folds of uncontrollable needs' for 'the anorectic'; it also 'represents' an addition to this - 'the guilt associated with the satisfaction of those needs'. '[U]ncontrollable needs' can be both present and satisfied; their 'satisfaction' does not remove them but leads to 'guilt'. 'Fatness' shows 'the guilt' – without it, 'uncontrollable needs' might be satisfied and there would still be 'guilt' associated with them, but it would not be represented – it would not be known. '[S]atisfaction' and 'guilt' are therefore always associated with each other by 'the anorectic' and they always follows 'uncontrollable needs'; firstly 'the satisfaction' and then 'the guilt', even as the 'uncontrollable needs' remain, manifest in '[f]atness'.

'Fat' stands 'for', but it too 'represents'. Whilst '[f]at' stands for 'need', and '[f]atness' 'represents folds and folds of uncontrollable needs', here 'fat represents the *exposure* of need'. As the 'achievement' of 'slimness' is 'visible proof of the woman's success', here '*exposure*' is an exposing of something that would otherwise not be seen. '[S]limness' and '[f]at' both represent and reify what is already present – 'success' and 'need' – but which

³⁵ Orbach writes that 'a new introduction to *Hunger Strike* has to take into account the rise in incidences of anorexia in males'. Despite this, she also writes that 'I have had no direct clinical experience of working with men or boys suffering with anorexia. Since a psychotherapist's way of understanding derives from clinical work, from the in-depth exploration of the individual's psychic life as expressed in the conscious content of what they share with the psychotherapist and in their unconscious communications in the transference/countertransference matrix, I find myself unable to comment about the meaning of anorexia in males' (p. xxvii). The anorectic is female in *Hunger Strike* because of Orbach's perspective on herself as a 'psychotherapist', which prevents her commenting on the '*meaning of anorexia in males*' (my italics) since she has had no 'direct clinical experience of with men or boys suffering with anorexia'. The implication is that she has a 'way of understanding' women because she has had 'direct clinical experience' of working with them.

could not be known without this representation. Who, then, sees this representation? If 'slimness' and '[f]at' make 'visible' and expose – who is being exposed to, and who sees? There is an implication of an outside who sees 'slimness', '[f]atness', '[f]at' and 'thin' and recognises what these things represent to 'the anorectic'.

The claim, though, is not that this is what these things 'symbolize', 'stand for' or represent to everyone. For Orbach, this is the anorectic's perspective on 'slimness', '[f]at', 'thin' and '[f]atness'; it is Orbach's knowledge of what is 'psychologically important' to anorectics which informs these claims. This perspective is not the anorectic's, but claims to know her from the outside and therefore is not 'the anorectic'. This is an uncovering or explanation; Orbach writes 'we can begin to get a glimmer of what is going on' (p. 90), so 'we' did not know 'what is going on' before this, and, even now, it is only a beginning and a 'glimmer'.

'[W]e' – there is a 'we' that excludes 'the anorectic'. '[W]e' is not Orbach alone; this is a perspective that is an outside-anorectic view which is multiple. The 'anorectic' is the other to the 'we' that does not understand, and only begins to 'get a glimmer of what is going on'. The claim is that there is more than one perspective that is not 'the anorectic'; 'we' are everyone who is not 'the anorectic'. This claim is still made through Orbach's own perspective, though. She knows that there is a 'we' who encompasses more than her, that this 'we' is the same as her (as she is also part of the 'we') by not being 'the anorectic'. When she writes that 'we can now begin to get a glimmer of what is going on', this assumes a knowledge of the 'we' that is no different to her knowledge of 'the anorectic'. She knows the 'we' in a way that the 'we' itself does not.

Anorexia is a spectacular and dramatic symptom. To encounter an anorectic woman is to be confronted with turbulent and confusing feelings. These feelings can be so uncomfortable that one is inclined to try to distance oneself from the experience by various means. Unknowingly one moves into the role of the spectator. (p. 78)

'Anorexia' is a 'symptom'; it is not claimed to be the thing which has symptoms, (where other symptoms that are not 'spectacular and dramatic' may be present). The implication here is that '[a]norexia' is a 'symptom' that is being 'spectacular and dramatic' *to* something else. It is a spectacle that is being watched, therefore, and a drama with an audience - and this audience is not '[a]norexia'. There is a split, between the perspective which sees the 'symptom' of '[a]norexia' and '[a]norexia' which displays the 'symptom' as 'spectacular and dramatic'.

This 'anorectic woman' can be encountered, so here it is the perspective which encounters, and 'an anorectic woman' who is encountered. The 'encounter' is with '*an anorectic woman*' (my italics) and therefore from this position, all anorectic women are the same, the 'feelings' 'confronted' on meeting them will always be 'turbulent and confusing'. Equally, the perspective on the 'anorectic woman' will always be the same – everyone who encounters her will always confront 'turbulent and confusing feelings'. The implication here is, I think, that the 'feelings' are experienced by the one who encounters – they feel 'turbulent and confusing feelings' - and yet there is a reading of this which implies that it is the 'anorectic woman' who is encountered who has these 'turbulent and confusing feelings'; the 'encounter' is with 'an anorectic woman' who is experiencing the 'feelings' which the perspective then confronts. There is uncertainty, therefore, in an apparent claim of separateness between the perspective and 'an anorectic woman', which is not quite as separate as is asserted – there is a possibility of shared 'feelings' or an indecision about who is having these 'turbulent and confusing feelings'. This 'encounter' is a confrontation, which implies a separation between what confronts and what is 'confronted', but this confrontation is not necessarily between the one who encounters and 'an anorectic woman'. It is the 'feelings' themselves which cause the confrontation, which are 'turbulent and confusing', not the 'anorectic woman'. There is no certainty about these 'feelings'; they are present, they are engendered by an 'encounter' with 'an anorectic woman', but that is all; their ownership – if there is an ownership - is undecided.

The 'feelings' 'can be so uncomfortable' - and so are not always 'uncomfortable' - or at least, not 'so uncomfortable that one is inclined to try to distance oneself from the experience by various means'. There is a claim of a continuous discomfort – 'one' *always* feels 'uncomfortable' with 'turbulent and confusing feelings', and so *always* feels 'uncomfortable' when encountering 'an anorectic woman'. It is not claimed that these 'feelings' are always 'so uncomfortable' that the inclination 'to distance oneself' always occurs (if 'one' 'can', then 'one' also *cannot*), so there is the possibility of this not happening, that 'one' might not be 'inclined to try to distance oneself from the experience'. There is, then, an uncertainty, not about the presence of '[t]hese feelings' and their being 'uncomfortable', but as to the level of this discomfort which can cause the inclination to 'distance oneself'; it is their intensity which is subject to question not the 'uncomfortable' 'feelings' themselves.

The 'one' is not 'an anorectic woman'; she can therefore never 'distance' herself from 'the experience'. '[O]ne' and 'oneself' are the not-anorectic woman; 'one' has 'the experience', but is able to 'try' to separate from it. Whilst this separates 'one' and 'oneself' from 'an anorectic woman', the distancing is not certain; 'one is inclined to try' and so there is an inclination rather than a certainty, there is a trying rather than assurance of success.

The perspective identifies as being 'one' and 'oneself', but this is not *I* and *me* – there is a claim to inclusion here, for this to be what everyone feels, rather than Orbach alone, who experience the discomfort of confronting 'turbulent and confusing feelings'. This perspective knows that 'one is inclined to try to distance oneself from the experience by various means', implying that this always happens – to everyone – when 'one' encounters 'an anorectic woman'. '[O]ne' is therefore everyone except for the 'anorectic woman'.

The trying to 'distance' involves 'various means', so again there is uncertainty. One of these 'means' appears to be, or is connected to, moving 'into the role of the spectator'. This happens '[u]nknowingly', however. Is this an unconscious result of the trying, or is it one of the 'various means' – is it the trying itself? Inclination and trying imply a

consciousness, a knowing of what 'one' is doing, so there is a difference between the trying and the moving – 'one' is aware of the first but does not know the second. There is therefore a claim that what is happening on encountering 'an anorectic woman' is occurring both consciously and unconsciously; 'one' knows that 'one' is being 'confronted with turbulent and confusing feelings' and that 'one' 'is inclined to try to distance oneself from the experience by various means', but 'one' does *not* know that 'one' has moved 'into the role of the spectator'.

If Orbach, though, is 'one', she is also separate, because she knows what is unknown to 'one' – that there is movement into being in 'the role of the spectator'. '[O]ne' is therefore not everyone – not the 'anorectic woman' and not Orbach herself who knows what 'one' does not. Her claim is that this is not the case; she writes 'one' as including her, and yet she also is outside 'oneself' in her knowledge of how 'one moves into the role of the spectator'.

Is it possible, though, that this is a claim to a previous unknowingness – that the knowing that 'one' has moved 'into the role of the spectator' comes only after this has occurred – that therefore everyone (apart from the 'anorectic woman') comes to realise that '[u]nknowingly' they moved 'into the role of the spectator', that this, therefore, is a perspective on the past, a movement also from unknowingness to knowledge? Even if this were so (and I do not read Orbach in this way), there is still an implication that Orbach herself has knowledge that others do not – even if they may come to know this eventually. What is at stake here is a claim to expertise through a knowledge of both the 'anorectic woman' and of those that encounter her, a knowledge that they do not have of themselves.

'[O]ne' was not a 'spectator', but 'moves' into being this because of the 'feelings' which 'can be so uncomfortable'. '[O]ne' is still not a 'spectator', however, because the movement is 'into the role'. This implies a putting-on of what it means to be a 'spectator', something that is played as a part by someone who is not 'the spectator'.

The claim is that '[u]nknowingly one moves into the role of the spectator'. This raises the question of where the unknowingness lies. Is it the movement into the 'role of the spectator' that 'one' does not know about, or is it the 'role' itself? If it is the movement which is unconscious, then this raises the possibility that when 'one' is in 'the role of the spectator' then 'one' is aware that 'one' is playing a 'role', that 'one' is, therefore *not* 'the spectator'. There is a splitting between the playing of the 'role of the spectator' and the player themselves who is something else, even when in 'the role of the spectator'.

By siting this unknowingness as being in the movement 'into the role of the spectator', I have read that 'one' might come to knowledge, that 'one' might be aware of playing a 'role'. I might also read the possibilities that it is the playing of the 'role' itself, which is not known – that 'one' believes 'oneself' to be 'the spectator' - or that 'one' does not know 'oneself' to be 'the spectator'. This is not the perspective of the 'one', however. From Orbach's perspective, there is no claim to 'one' knowing, only that '[u]nknowingly one moves into the role of the spectator'. Again, here there is the perspective that knows of the other that is unknowing. Orbach claims to be part of the 'one', by being in the 'role of the spectator', and yet is not because she is not unknowing – but is, at the same time, a 'spectator' on the 'one'.

This belonging and not belonging to 'one' by the perspective is connected to the claim that being 'the spectator' is a 'role'. This is how Orbach distinguishes and connects herself to the 'one'. Orbach knows that being a 'spectator' is a 'role'; the 'one' she is part of are all spectators to the 'experience' of encountering 'an anorectic woman', but Orbach knows she is a 'spectator' in a way that 'one' does not.

There is a painful continuity between most women's daily experience and that of the anorectic woman. Nearly all women feel the necessity to restrain their appetites and diminish their size. (p. 78)

Not all 'women' have a 'daily experience' which has a 'painful continuity' with 'the anorectic woman', although whilst 'the anorectic woman' does have this 'experience', she is not 'most' 'women'. It is '[a]norexia' (p. 84) which removes 'the anorectic woman' from 'most' women – '[a]norexia' separates. '[M]ost' 'women', though, have a connection with 'the anorectic woman'; the implication is that, whilst they are not 'the anorectic woman', they are like her – they have 'experience' and 'continuity' in common. These claims also exclude the 'women' who are not 'most' 'women'. There is a claim that 'women' are the same; they have a 'painful continuity' with 'the anorectic woman', and yet they are also not the same, since only 'most' 'women' 'experience' this. '[M]ost women's daily experience' has a 'painful continuity' with 'the anorectic woman', so not all 'women' have this 'daily experience' or, if they do, it does not have a 'painful continuity' with 'the anorectic woman'. Since '[n]early all women feel the necessity to restrain their appetites and restrict their size', here too, is an exclusion of some 'women' – not all 'women' 'feel' this 'necessity'. In 'most' 'women' and 'nearly all' 'women', though, there is a claim that 'women' mainly do 'experience' these things; Orbach writes about those who are 'most' and '[n]early all women', not the 'women' who are not. There *are* others though; this is not a claim about all 'women', but in order to make this claim about knowing 'most' 'women' it is also necessary to know the 'daily experience' of all 'women' in order to exclude those who do not have this 'painful continuity' with 'the anorectic woman'.

The claim about 'the anorectic woman' and 'most' 'women' implies both a separation between the two – 'most' 'women' are not 'the anorectic woman' – but also claims a connection in this 'painful continuity'. This is why 'women' who are not 'most' 'women' are absent, because they do not have this connection. The implication is perhaps that 'most' 'women' have more in common with 'the anorectic woman' than with those 'women' who are *not* 'most' 'women'. There are degrees of similarity where there are those who are more, and those who are less, alike.

Restraining 'appetites' is a 'necessity' which is felt – feeling is all there is here - it is not certain whether 'women' do 'restrain their appetites'. This is therefore an emotion which Orbach claims that '[n]early all women feel' – and therefore that there are some that do not. Diminishing 'their size' is also felt as a 'necessity', which is here an addition to the restraining of 'appetites'. Women's 'appetites' and 'size' are not 'women' but belong to them; they are something separate from them, which, in the 'women's' need to 'restrain' and 'diminish' these things, are somehow *too much* as they are. '[W]omen' 'feel the necessity to restrain their appetites and diminish their size', but it is not certain that this restraining and diminishing has been successful. Something owned by 'women' is implied as being excessive in the possibility of what might happen if there was no restraining or diminishing – that having 'appetites' that were unrestrained, or a 'size' that was not diminished would be more than the 'women' 'feel' they should be.

This implication is a claim to be what '[n]early all women *feel*' (my italics), however. It is the 'women' themselves that 'feel' it necessary to 'restrain' and 'diminish' what is, if not themselves, is at least a part of them. They own 'their' 'appetites' and 'size', but are engaged in an attempt to control these things which is by no means certain of success. This is a 'daily experience'; 'women' are feeling the need to 'restrain' and 'diminish' every day, and therefore there is no final success: 'their appetites' are never finally restrained and 'their size' is never completely diminished, since every day this is experienced again. There is a split between what 'women' 'feel' and a restraining and diminishing that is happening or has happened. This 'daily experience' implies no end to what 'women feel', and there is no claim that 'women' *do* 'restrain their appetites and diminish their size', only that they 'feel the necessity' to do so. If, therefore, 'women' did 'restrain their appetites and diminish their size' they would still 'feel the necessity' to continue doing this; these things always need to be done. Orbach writes that '[n]early all women feel the necessity to restrain their appetites and diminish their size', so does this 'necessity' arise from within the 'women' or is the need implied as being from outside '[n]early all women' which they

then 'feel'? Here, I think the claim is that this feeling arises from the 'women' themselves – they 'feel' this need. The 'necessity' which is felt, however, does not definitely arise from the 'women' themselves; it is not claimed to be their 'necessity'. There is, therefore, the possibility of a 'necessity to restrain their appetites and diminish their size' which is outside '[n]early all women' which they 'feel' – the feeling is theirs whilst the 'necessity' is not, and it is this feeling which Orbach knows.

A woman's idea of herself in her body inevitably reflects her internalisation of prevailing social attitudes. A contributing factor or detractor in her self-esteem stems from her assessment of how in or out of step she is with contemporary standards for female attractiveness. (p. 173)

There is no claim here to divide 'women' by 'most' or '[n]early all'; here, a woman is every woman, all with an 'idea of herself'. '[H]erself' is separate from a woman; it is something which she has 'an idea of'. '[H]erself', is also separate from 'her body' in that it is 'herself in her body', not 'her body', but 'in' it. I find it difficult to read the claim here, however. A woman who has an 'idea of herself in her body' might be a claim that it is this woman that is 'in her body' and having an 'idea of herself' – or it might be that it is 'herself' that is 'in her body', that a 'woman's idea' is of this 'herself in her body'. These readings locate a woman differently; in the first she is 'in her body', but in the second a woman is not; it is 'herself' here which is 'in her body', and therefore a woman is outside 'herself in her body'; her 'idea' comes from outside as 'herself in her body'. An 'idea' is not a knowing; this is not a claim that a woman knows 'herself', only that she has an 'idea of herself'. '[H]erself' is separate from a woman by this 'idea'; it is only the 'idea' which is present, there is no 'herself' which is not 'of' an 'idea'.

'[H]erself' is a 'woman's idea' of what is not 'her body', but, as I might read, 'in her body'. The claim is that there is a split between 'herself' and 'her body'; a woman having an 'idea' of her gendered self that is separated from her gendered 'body', a self that is 'in' this 'body'. It is still the 'idea', though, which is of 'herself in her body', the 'idea' is of a

self that is 'her', but I do not read this as an 'idea' of gender, rather that this is a claim of a 'her' that is already present; this 'idea' is of 'herself in her body'.

This 'inevitably reflects her internalisation of prevailing social attitudes', and in this inevitability there is no 'idea of herself' which does not reflect this. This 'idea' is not 'her internalisation of prevailing social attitudes', it is a reflection of this 'internalisation' that has already happened, not the 'internalisation' itself. It is '*her* internalisation of prevailing social attitudes' (my italics); this internalising belongs to 'her', so these 'prevailing social attitudes' are firstly outside 'her' before they were internalised. There is also a claim to there being a prior 'her' *before* there had been 'internalisation of prevailing social attitudes', but that, now, there is no 'her' that has not internalised these; the 'her' has both always internalised and was present as a 'her' that had not internalised.

'[S]ocial attitudes' change, or are different. The 'social attitudes' which are reflected in a 'woman's idea of herself in her body' are those that are 'prevailing', so there can be other 'social attitudes' which, because they are not 'prevailing', are not internalised. The 'prevailing' happens before the 'internalisation', it is not caused by it, and so is not from a woman; it happens outside 'her'.

The claim here is for an outside – a woman who is not 'in her body' possibly, or the 'prevailing social attitudes' before they are internalised – and an inside, which is 'herself in her body' and 'prevailing social attitudes' after they have been internalised. Is 'her body' therefore inside or outside? If 'herself' is 'in her body', this implies a 'body' which is outside 'herself'; which surrounds. The 'idea', though, is not 'in her body', so this might be a claim to an 'idea' which is outside 'her body'. I could still read this, however, as a woman being 'in her body' whilst having an 'idea of herself', which then sites the 'idea' as being in 'her body' along with a woman; what is inside and outside is uncertain. There is the possibility of movement, of a change of the situation of an 'idea' or woman being outside and then inside. Certainly, 'prevailing social attitudes' which must firstly be

external to 'her' are then internalised. '[H]er body' though is never claimed as internal – I always read this as being outside 'her'.

'[S]elf-esteem' is affected by other 'contributing' factors or detractors, but this is one that 'stems from her assessment of how in or out of step she is with contemporary standards for female attractiveness'. Since this is a 'contributing factor or detractor', this 'assessment' might be positive or negative; 'her self-esteem' can be contributed to, or taken from. This is a claim to 'her' having an effect on 'her *self-esteem*' (my italics), how the 'her' esteems 'her' self. This is 'her assessment of how in or out of step she is with contemporary standards for female attractiveness', this is not an 'assessment' from others, from an outside. It is 'her' therefore, which is outside the self; this 'her' esteems what belongs to 'her', but is not 'her'. This 'assessment' externalises 'her', it is 'her' assessing 'she'.

There are claims about what is not 'her', however. '[C]ontemporary standards for female attractiveness' are not assessed by 'her'; it is only 'her assessment of how in or out of step she is with' them that is hers. These are 'contemporary standards', and I read a connection between these and 'prevailing social attitudes', a claim to a *now* which therefore implies a not-now, where there are different 'social attitudes' and 'standards'. This now is not specific, however. It is not a claim to identify when 'prevailing' or 'contemporary' is, because this is always now. There will always be 'prevailing social attitudes' and 'contemporary standards for female attractiveness' and therefore always a 'her' who internalises and assesses 'herself' against them.

'[P]revailing social attitudes' and 'contemporary standards' are not subject to question. The uncertainty is with the 'her' who assesses 'how in or out of step she is with contemporary standards for female attractiveness'. There is not a question therefore, of a possibility of there not being 'prevailing social attitudes' or 'contemporary standards for female attractiveness', nor is there a possibility of a woman not internalising these 'prevailing social attitudes'. There is also, always, 'assessment' by 'her' of 'how in or out

of step she is with contemporary standards for female attractiveness'. There is the possibility of failing, however, which results from 'her assessment'; this assessing judges whether or not 'she' is 'in' 'step' – the failure is being 'out of step'. An 'assessment' of being 'out of step' is made by 'her'; this is not an 'assessment' by those who are not 'her'.

'[F]emale attractiveness' has 'contemporary standards'. There have been, or will be, other 'standards', therefore, but 'female attractiveness' always does have 'standards', even if they change. There is a possibility, then, that 'she' could be in 'step' with other 'standards for female attractiveness', could be attractive by other 'standards', but this is not what 'she' assesses: this 'assessment' is about 'contemporary standards' and it is these that concern how much 'she' is 'in or out of step' with in order to assess 'her' 'attractiveness'.

To be 'out of step' is to move away from 'contemporary standards for female attractiveness', the implication is of a movement along, a togetherness and a synchronicity of 'she' and 'contemporary standards for female attractiveness', the extent of which is decidable by 'her' through 'her assessment'. This 'assessment' affects 'her self-esteem'; it changes what is already there. What 'stems' from 'her assessment' is not 'self-esteem' but a 'contributing factor or detractor', which is 'in' it. '[S]elf-esteem' is not only dependant on 'her assessment', but it is all that there is here.

This is a woman whose 'self-esteem' is added to or taken away by what is not 'her' – 'prevailing social attitudes' and 'contemporary standards for female attractiveness'. These things do not directly contribute or detract from 'her' 'self-esteem', however; an 'assessment' by 'her' of these things occurs before, since the 'contributing factor or detractor in her self-esteem stems' from this 'assessment'. This does not give 'her' choice of whether or not 'she' assesses, however, and so the claim is not that a 'woman's idea of herself in her body' is 'her' 'idea' alone; whilst this is 'her' 'idea', 'she' always internalises 'prevailing social attitudes' and always assesses 'herself' against

'contemporary standards for female attractiveness' and therefore cannot have an 'idea of herself' that is not affected by what is not 'her'.

5 Mary Douglas on External Boundaries

The idea of society is a powerful image. It is potent in its own right to control or to stir men to action. This image has form; it has external boundaries, margins, internal structure. Its outlines contain power to reward conformity and repulse attack. There is energy in its margins and unstructured areas. For symbols of society, any human experience of structures, margins or boundaries is ready to hand.³⁶

It is not society itself which is 'a powerful image', but the 'idea' of it which seemingly follows after a pre-existing 'society' and then in turn is replaced by its 'image'. To replace, though, I would have to read 'society' as the original and '[t]he idea of society' and the 'image' as following on from this, but there is no 'society' here, it is an 'image' of an 'idea'. A reading that 'society' is pre-existent to the 'idea' and 'image' is not claimed; in this text there is only the 'image', nothing replaces 'society', and the 'idea' of it is present in its 'image'.

This 'image' of an 'idea' of 'society' is 'potent in its own right'. '[S]ociety' may also be 'potent' to 'control or to stir men to action', as could '[t]he idea of society', but I read '[i]t' here as referring to the 'image'; this is itself 'potent'. This 'image' has power 'to control or to stir men to action' independently; it is not part of, or associated with, 'society' in order to do this. There is no claim that this 'right' has been bestowed by anything or anyone; its potency is part of it, it is 'in' it.

'[M]en', therefore, are not the 'image', but are controlled or stirred into action by it. I am reading here a claim to a seeing or reflection in this 'image' of '[t]he idea of society', rather than '[t]he idea of society'; what is seen is 'potent' which is not the thing itself. If this 'image' controls or stirs 'men', this then raises the question for me of where 'men' are. Are they in

³⁶ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1984), p. 115. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

or part of 'society' and therefore part of '[t]he idea of society'? Or are 'society' and 'men' different? Either way, they are controlled and stirred by something that is not them; the 'image' of an 'idea'. I think whether or not they are part of 'society' matters, however, because the perspective here may be claiming that 'men' are controlled and stirred by something that is an 'image' of what contains them. I cannot read whether 'men' are part of 'society' though, because Douglas does not define what constitutes 'society'; it is here, already known and present, so much so that 'society' is not in the text at all except as an 'image' of its 'idea' or as 'symbols'.

'This image has form' – therefore 'it' is the 'image' of '[t]he idea of society' which is 'potent in its own right'. The 'image' is not claimed by the perspective as already known in the way 'society' is, but is defined by its 'external boundaries, margins, internal structure'. '[F]orm' is made up of 'external boundaries', so 'boundaries' which are outside – what? If the 'boundaries' are 'external' then they are not part of 'form'; these are not form's 'boundaries'. In 'it has external boundaries, margins', I am also reading 'margins' as being 'external' or at least at the ends of 'form' in some way, in contrast to 'internal structure' which is inside 'form'. '[F]orm' therefore has an inside and an outside and whilst what is inside has 'structure', what is outside does not. What is inside, therefore, is not as troubling as what is separating - the 'external boundaries' and 'margins'. Even this claim to internality, though, is not quite clear, for where does 'internal structure' end and 'margins' begin? What is 'form', therefore, what separates 'form' (and from what) and what is not 'form' is not clear. I am reading here a claim to a 'form' which has structures which make up a whole and yet are defined by their difference.

There is a claim to limits here, this 'image' is bounded and is therefore separate to what is not an 'image' of '[t]he idea of society'. There might, therefore, be other images or others that are not this 'image', separated from it by these 'boundaries'. This externality of 'boundaries' and 'margins' though, leads me to read them as not being what is claimed as the 'image' and yet be what defines it, what gives it 'form'. '[I]t has' these 'external

boundaries', however, they are part of 'it' in its having them, and in being so might be 'external' to something else. Either way of reading, however, claims a separation by something that is not part of 'form' but not apart from it, which are 'boundaries' and 'margins' and therefore different to each other and themselves and yet, as a whole, constitute 'form'.

'Its outlines contain power to reward conformity and repulse attack'. It is the 'outlines' of the 'image' that contain 'power', not the whole 'image'. I am reading that what are 'outlines' are nearest to what is not the 'image' and this is where the 'power' rewards and repulses; the site of conflict is not in the centre, but at its edges. What is interesting to me is that whilst the repulsion against 'attack' implies 'outlines' that are outwardly concerned with what is not the 'image', the rewarding of 'conformity' also implies an outline concerned with what is inside, with what makes the 'image' more like itself. '[O]utlines', therefore, are guards against what is outside and inside; their lines hold the 'idea of society' as an 'image'.

'There is energy in its margins and unstructured areas'. Like 'power', 'energy' resides, not at the centre, but at the 'margins', and also in the 'unstructured areas'. As the 'image' has 'internal structure', then it is what is not 'internal' that is 'unstructured'; the 'external' holds the 'energy'. This is still part of the 'image' though, its 'margins' are part of it. The potency of the 'image', therefore, is part of the 'power' and 'energy' of the edges of the 'image', where it becomes 'unstructured'. What is inside the 'image', is not what controls and stirs, but rather is what is subject to the 'power' of the 'outlines' which 'reward' its 'conformity'. '[P]ower' is not held by 'structure', but by what delineates it, by its 'boundaries'.

'For symbols of society, any human experience of structures, margins or boundaries is ready to hand' This '[f]or' implies that 'symbols' are in place of 'society'; 'society' is then not present here except as an idea or symbolically. They are here though as being '[f]or' 'symbols', not '[f]or' 'society', so this 'human experience of structures, margins or boundaries' stand '[f]or symbols of society', not for 'society' itself.

'[S]tructures, margins or boundaries' are only 'ready to hand' as 'symbols of society' as part of 'human experience' of them. I am reading, then, a claim to a pre-existence of 'structures, margins or boundaries' which are 'symbols of society' once they are part of 'human experience'. It is not they themselves which are the 'symbols', or even the 'experience' of them but the 'human experience', the 'men', which makes them more than 'structures, margins or boundaries' but also available as 'symbols of society'.

I am uncertain about my use of the words 'makes' and 'available', and yet it seems to me that this is what the 'human experience' is claimed to do to 'structures, margins or boundaries'. They are 'ready to hand', they are already there; the 'human experience' is not necessarily the 'experience' of the 'hand'. The 'hand', for me, is making these 'structures, margins or boundaries' into 'symbols of society', they are not 'symbols' until they are taken up by the 'hand', and so there is a twice changing here of these 'structures, margins or boundaries' to make them 'symbols of society', firstly by 'human experience' and then by the 'hand'.

I am reading 'men' and 'human experience' as related to each other, and also reading the 'image' of '[t]he idea of society' and 'symbols of society' as connected. If so, the claim to potency and 'power' of the 'image' is interesting, because by my reading this 'image' is created by what is then controlled by it. '[S]tructures, margins or boundaries' are not 'potent' until they are the 'form' of the 'image', but this 'image' is part of the 'human experience' which was 'ready to hand' and so is claimed as used by the 'hand' as a 'symbol'. The 'image' of '[t]he idea of society', then, has become 'potent in its own right' and has separated from what created it, has become powerful enough to 'reward conformity and repulse attack', even when this rewarding and repulsing is directed towards its creators.

Douglas claims that '[f]or symbols of society, any human experience of structures, margins or boundaries is ready to hand'. An example of this are 'thresholds' (p. 115), which 'symbolise beginnings of new statuses' and therefore the carrying of a bride over the lintel

expresses these 'beginnings' through the 'step, the beam and the doorposts' (p. 115). For Douglas, though, 'the structure of living organisms is better able to reflect complex social forms than doorposts and lintels'. '[L]iving organisms' are both similar to 'doorposts and lintels' in that they are all 'ready to hand' to be 'symbols of society', but they are also different, since 'living organisms' are 'better able to reflect complex social forms' because of their 'structure'; their difference lies in what and how they are made or put together. Although 'any human experience of structures, margins or boundaries is ready to hand', they are not equal; 'complex social forms' are 'better' reflected by 'living organisms'.

Even more direct is the symbolism worked upon the human body. The body is a model which can stand for any bounded system. Its boundaries can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious. The body is a complex structure. The function of its different parts and their relation afford a source of symbols for other complex structures. (p. 116)

I read a claim to a hierarchy of symbolism here, that whilst 'any human experience of structures, margins or boundaries' can be 'symbols of society', 'living organisms' are 'better' than 'doorposts and lintels', and 'the human body' is '[e]ven more direct' than these 'living organisms'. The 'human body' here though is not exactly a symbol; it is a 'source of symbols', and also a site which has 'symbolism worked upon' it. '[S]ymbolism', then, is something that is done to 'the human body' not something done by it, and therefore the body is passive, 'worked upon' by what is not itself, by something other.

Whilst '[t]he body is a model', it is not a 'model' of 'any bounded system'; it is not a 'model' of anything. By being a 'model', it can 'stand for any bounded system', and it seems to me that here is a possibility of replacement; by standing for 'any bounded system', the 'bounded system' is absent, with '[t]he body' in its place. The claim is not that '[t]he body' is always 'a model' that stands 'for any bounded system'; its characteristic of being able to 'stand for' is a possibility, not a certainty, and in this I return to the 'worked upon' of 'the

human body'. It is the working upon '[t]he body' that makes it 'stand for any bounded system'; it becomes this, but does not begin as this.

I have read that '[t]he body' is 'worked upon' and this implies that there is a body before this, which has not yet been 'worked upon'. I am not sure that there is this linearity, however, that there is a claim for an unworked body. 'The body' is always a 'model', even before 'symbolism' is 'worked upon' it; 'symbolism' does not make it a 'model'. Here I begin to doubt my reading of 'the human body' as becoming something else that can now 'stand for any bounded system'. There is no claim to '[t]he body' as a presence which is itself alone; it is *always* something else.

There is a claim that 'symbolism' is 'worked upon the human body', but not necessarily that it must follow that it then always stands for 'any bounded system', it 'can' rather than it *does* 'stand for any bounded system'; the body's importance lies in its possibilities.

'The body', Douglas claims, has 'boundaries'. I find it difficult, though, to read what constitutes 'boundaries'. Is there a claim that 'boundaries' are in '[t]he body' and, if so, where might they be sited? What of '[t]he body' is boundary or not boundary? Are 'external boundaries' in '[t]he body' at all? Douglas reads a connection between the 'external boundaries' of the 'image' of the 'idea of society' and the 'boundaries' of '[t]he body', without reading what these 'boundaries' are; they are simply already known and present and therefore one can be substituted for another, the body's 'boundaries' 'can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious'. Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble* usefully reads Douglas's claims for boundaries as follows;

Her analysis, however, provides a possible point of departure for understanding the relationship by which social taboos institute and maintain the boundaries of the body as such. Her analysis suggests that what constitutes the limit of the body is never merely material, but that the surface, the skin, is systematically signified by taboos and anticipated

transgressions: indeed, the boundaries of the body become, within her analysis, the limits of the social *per se*.³⁷

Here, it is 'social taboos' which 'institute and maintain the 'boundaries of the body' as such'. Without 'social taboos', there would be no 'boundaries of the body'. Would 'the body' then be unbounded? '[S]ocial taboos' are what keeps 'the body' from what is not 'the body'. This institution of 'boundaries of the body', however is not 'worked upon' 'the body' as Douglas claims for 'symbolism'. Instead, there is a 'relationship' between 'social taboos' and 'the body' which results in 'the boundaries of the body'. '[B]oundaries of the body' here, however, are not definite; they are maintained 'as such' by this 'relationship' with 'social taboos'. In the claim of 'boundaries' being 'as such', Butler is not reading that there could be no 'boundaries of the body', but that the 'relationship' between them and 'social taboos' constitutes them both 'of the body' in their materiality, and also of the 'social'. This 'as such' then is a specifying of 'boundaries' as being in a 'relationship' with the 'social' in order to be 'boundaries of the body'. What constitutes 'boundaries of the body' here, then, is both 'material' and 'social'.

This reading, as with Douglas' reading of '[t]he body', reads difference between that which is constituted as limits and boundaries and what is not, although they may be claimed as parts of the same, which is 'body'. Here, then, is 'the body', but also the 'limit of the body' which is 'the surface, the skin' and where 'taboos and anticipated transgressions' are 'signified'. Butler reads the 'limit of the body' as 'the surface, the skin', so here 'skin' is both 'surface' and 'body'; it is where 'the body' can be seen which is where 'taboos' and 'transgressions' are 'systematically signified', at its 'limits'.

Butler reads that, for Douglas, 'all social systems are vulnerable at their margins, and that all margins are accordingly considered dangerous'. The danger at 'the body', if it is 'synecdochal for the social system *per se* or a site in which open systems converge'

³⁷ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 167.

(Butler, p. 168), is a danger at its 'boundaries'. Vulnerability and danger are connected here; a place that is vulnerable is also a dangerous place and this in 'the body', as in 'society', is at its 'boundaries'. Since 'its boundaries can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious' (Douglas, p. 116), I read that the body's 'boundaries' are *always* 'threatened or precarious'; it is what defines them.

Douglas also claims, however, that the body's 'outlines contain power to reward conformity and repulse attack' (p. 115). '[P]ower' and what is 'threatened or precarious' are in the same place, then; the 'boundaries of the body' are both vulnerable *and* powerful; 'bodily margins' are 'thought to be specially invested with power and danger' (p. 122). '[P]ower and danger' are therefore not exclusive to 'bodily margins' but there is something special about their investment here.

When asking why this should be so, Douglas notes that 'all margins are dangerous. If they are pulled this way or that the shape of fundamental experience is altered. Any structure of ideas is vulnerable at its margins. We should expect the orifices of the body to symbolise its specially vulnerable points' (p. 122). Since 'all margins are dangerous', the danger comes from 'margins', not from 'the body'. I read a claim here that this danger, which must always be present in 'margins' is the very reason that the body's 'boundaries' 'can represent any boundaries which are threatened or precarious' (p. 116), and so this is why they are 'specially invested with power and danger'; the body's 'margins' are doubly 'dangerous', containing danger within their own 'margins' but also representing the danger in the 'margins' of the 'structure of ideas' as a symbol of its vulnerability.

'[M]argins' can be 'pulled this way or that'. '[M]argins' are not fixed, therefore; they are altered in being 'pulled' ('they are pulled'; something outside 'margins' pulls them), and in doing so change 'fundamental experience', because this is shaped by 'margins'. Their danger, though, lies in the possibility of their changing, not that they will certainly be 'pulled this way or that', but that they might be; the danger is already present before they are 'pulled'. What is not 'margins', therefore, is not 'dangerous' in the same way as the

'margins' of the 'structure of ideas' and in 'the body' because it cannot be altered in the way that they can. In the shifting and altering of 'margins', therefore, I am reading a claim to a stable, unchanging core or centre; what is inside is not 'dangerous' because it does not alter 'the shape of fundamental experience'. It is changing and altering which are 'dangerous', and it is at the 'margins', whether of 'the body' or of the 'structure of ideas' which is where this takes place.

Since '[w]e should expect the orifices of the body to symbolise its specially vulnerable points', then these 'orifices' are, or are at, the 'margins' of 'the body'. They 'symbolise' the vulnerability of the 'structure of ideas', whilst being 'vulnerable' themselves; it is through their vulnerability that the symbolism is expressed. The 'orifices of the body' are claimed as already known as symbols because of what is already known about the 'structure of ideas'; that it has 'specially vulnerable points'. 'Matter issuing from them is marginal stuff of the most obvious kind. Spittle, blood, urine, faeces or tears by simply issuing forth have traversed the boundary of the body. So also have bodily parings, skin, nail, hair clippings and sweat' (p. 122).

What is 'marginal' here, then, is not the 'orifices' themselves, but the '[m]atter issuing from them'. Is it therefore this '[m]atter' which makes 'orifices' dangerous? Is this issue of '[m]atter' what makes 'margins' dangerous? I read that the 'orifices of the body' as symbols of the 'structure of ideas' is something 'we should expect' because this '[m]atter' which issues from them is 'marginal stuff of the most obvious kind'; its obviousness leads to expectation; it is already known to be 'marginal'. So perhaps 'margins' of one thing are not always so obviously symbols of another, despite their common danger. It is 'the body' which is especially suited for expressing the vulnerability of the 'structure of ideas' because of this 'marginal stuff of the most obvious kind' which issues from its 'orifices'.

'Spittle, blood, urine, faeces or tears' are 'marginal stuff of the most obvious kind'. '[B]odily parings, skin, nail, hair clippings and sweat' are not quite this 'marginal stuff' though, although they too 'have traversed the boundary of the body', but not by 'simply

issuing forth', they are the 'also' who come after the '[s]pittle, blood, urine, faeces or tears'. '[S]weat' here is perhaps one of the 'bodily parings' or it is an addition to them, but it is an 'also' and so unlike '[s]pittle, blood, urine, faeces or tears' does not simply issue 'forth'.

All these things have 'traversed the boundary of the body', however; they are beyond 'the body' and therefore no longer 'the body'. To 'traverse' implies movement, even a crossing; these things were in one place and are now in another. The 'issuing forth' follows the traversing and so this traversing is done within 'the body', before or within its 'boundary'. I read here a claim to breadth or depth for the 'boundary'; to be traversable implies extent. The 'boundary', therefore, has a size. Like 'margins' that can be 'pulled this way or that', it has a physicality in its existence. Douglas claims that '...rituals work upon the body politic through the symbolic medium of the physical body' (p. 129) and I read the 'physical body' as having a physical 'boundary'; the 'boundary' is not just symbolic here.

What is 'marginal' is that which is not fixed in one place; it is of 'the body' and then traverses outside 'the body' as the 'boundary' does not hold it. This is the danger of 'boundaries'; whilst they separate 'the body' from what is not 'the body', they are also 'threatened or precarious' (p. 116), they can be 'traversed', and therefore the inside and outside are not clearly distinct and it is this lack of separation which is dangerous. Further, it is not only the lack of separation which holds danger, but also the lack of structure, the ability of 'margins' to be 'pulled this way or that' which alters 'the shape of fundamental experience' (p. 122). This is dangerous both in 'the body' and in 'society', but in 'the body' I read a double danger; the danger of its own vulnerable 'margins', but also the danger in society's 'boundaries' which are symbolised through the body's. It is this which makes the body's 'boundaries' 'invested with power and danger' (p. 122). The 'outlines' of the image of '[t]he idea of society' 'contain power to reward conformity and repulse

attack', but once they are symbolised through the body's 'boundaries', they become 'vulnerable' and open to attack, both from the outside and the inside.

6 Steven Connor on Skin

Skin has come to mean the body itself; it has become the definite article, the 'the' of the body. But skin is not the body. I have even come to think, and aim to bring you to agree, that the skin is really *not even a part of the body*.³⁸

'Skin has come', and in this coming I read something before this, when '[s]kin' had not yet 'come' and did not 'mean the body itself'. Something has occurred, a movement from where '[s]kin' was and where it has 'come' to, and therefore this change of meaning is not instantaneous or sudden, of '[s]kin' abruptly meaning 'the body itself', whilst before that, *not* meaning this. Whilst there is a claim that '[s]kin' did not mean 'the body itself' and that now it *does* mean this, there is also something between the two; where the meaning of '[s]kin' is neither and both 'the body itself'.

But even now, '[s]kin' has not 'come' to *be* 'the body itself', rather than to 'mean' it. '[T]he body', then, is not '[s]kin' and neither is it 'itself'; it is known but in a way that '[s]kin' is not, since '[s]kin' is attached to meaning. '[T]he body' is already known and already present; unlike '[s]kin' it has not 'come' to 'mean' anything, its meaning is always already there.

'[T]he body itself'; here there is a claim to something additional or extra to 'the body'; this is not only 'the body' but 'the body itself', something which is more 'itself' than if it were 'the body' alone. This 'itself', then, claims 'the body itself' as *more* than 'the body' without 'itself'. For me, this makes 'the' problematic. The 'the' claims a single 'body', that there is only 'the body', but then claims 'the body' is more than this, that is 'itself' in a way 'the body' alone is not. '[T]he body', then, implies something that might not be 'itself'.

Judith Butler asks, 'What is it that circumscribes this site called "the body"? How is this delimitation made and who makes it? Which body qualifies as "the" body? What

³⁸ Stephen Connor, *The Book of Skin* (London: Reaktion Books, 2004), p. 29. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

establishes the “the”, the existential status of this body?’³⁹ Connor claims that it is ‘[s]kin’ that is ‘the “the” of the body’ (Connor, p. 29). Perhaps here, ‘[s]kin’ is what ‘circumscribes’ and delimitates; without it, ‘body’ cannot be “the” body’, it is only with ‘[s]kin’ that ‘it has become the definite article’. ‘Skin’ here is not ‘the definite article’, however, - ‘it’ is - but since I read a connection between the two, that ‘it’ *stands for* ‘[s]kin’, then what ‘[s]kin’ ‘is’, is different to what ‘[s]kin’ means. As it ‘has come to mean’, ‘[s]kin’ has also ‘become the definite article’, and so, like the change in skin’s meaning, there is a movement and a becoming where ‘[s]kin’ was one thing and is now another. Whilst ‘[s]kin’ does not ‘mean’ what it ‘is really’, there is nonetheless a connection; ‘[s]kin’ coming to mean ‘the body itself’ is connected to ‘it’ becoming ‘the definite article’. The claim, then, is that whilst ‘[s]kin’ means ‘the body itself’, ‘it’ is the ‘the’, which is before, and next to, ‘body’. ‘Skin’ is what makes ‘body’ ‘the body’; without it, ‘the body itself’ cannot be ‘the body itself’.

‘But skin is not the body’. The claim that ‘[s]kin has come to mean the body itself’ was not Connor’s. Now, the implication is that it was another perspective making this claim, one that Connor can write, but is not Connor’s own. I do not necessarily read, though, that Connor is claiming that ‘skin’ does not ‘mean the body itself’. The meaning remains; ‘skin’ does now ‘mean the body itself’ but meaning and what ‘skin is’ are different; what ‘skin’ means is not what it ‘is’. There is also the claim that ‘it’ is ‘the definite article’, and here is a possibility that Connor is reading against the first perspective, is claiming that whilst ‘[s]kin’ apparently has ‘become the definite article’, this is not the case. I have already read, though, that it is not ‘skin’ that ‘is the definite article’, that, anyway, ‘the definite article’ is not ‘the body’. It is the ‘[b]ut’ which claims a difference or a turning from the first perspective, and yet I cannot read this difference; there is no claim that ‘skin’ is ‘the body’; Connor is denying a claim that has not been made. My reading of this, is that the denial occurs because Connor, like the perspective that claims that ‘[s]kin has come to mean the

³⁹ Judith Butler, ‘Foucault and the Paradox of Bodily Inscriptions’, *The Journal of Philosophy*, 86 (11) (1989), p. 601.

body itself', does not consider 'the body' as having meaning; it simply is. '[S]kin', on the other hand, has meaning, a meaning which is controversial. What 'skin' 'is', can be debated, its definition can be agreed on; what it 'is' might be different depending on 'I' or 'you'. This is the difference here between 'skin' and 'body'; the insistence of meaning for 'skin'; it means 'the body', it is not 'the body', it is 'really *not even a part of the body*'. So, in addition to a claim to meaning, there is another claim that there is something that is already known here; 'the body' which is claimed to be outside this narrative, which is retrievable as being *really* there.

I read this claim throughout this thesis, this idea that whilst what might surround 'body' might be open to question, the claims to there being a prior, real, retrievable body are not questioned; 'the body' is different in this certainty of its existence. As Judith Butler writes,

The body is a site where regimes of discourse and power inscribe themselves, a nodal point or nexus for relations of juridical and productive power. And, yet, to speak in this way invariably suggests that there is a body that is in some sense there, pre-given, existentially available to become the site of its own ostensible construction. (p. 601)

In my reading of Connor, 'skin is not the body', because, for Connor, 'the body' is not readable in the way that 'skin' is, because for him it is, as Butler argues, read as 'there, pre-given', whilst 'skin' is not.

'I have even come to think, and aim to bring you to agree, that the skin is really *not even a part of the body*'. Here is a looking back, a perspective on the perspective that has thought that 'skin' was '*part of the body*', but also on the perspective that does not; the perspective that has 'come to think [...] that the skin is really *not even a part of the body*'. Like '[s]kin' that has 'come', the 'I's thinking was in one place and has now 'come' to another, but, to me, the perspective is claiming even to be beyond this, is claiming to look back on when this thinking about 'skin' '*not even*' being '*a part of the body*' took place, and

so is claiming a knowingness of the whole journey, of *all* the thinking, and so possibly a finishing; for the 'I', the understanding of what 'skin' means and what it is, has been decided.

In the 'even' of 'I have even come to think', I read a claim to a thinking that goes further, to being something more than 'I have' 'come to think'. Here, what the 'I' thinks is surprising or unusual in some way; it is a different way of thinking about 'the skin'. I read something similar in 'skin is really *not even a part of the body*', the claim to a difference from what '[s]kin has come to mean' that the 'I' knows but others do not. The implication here is that what is meant by 'skin' is not understood by anyone other than the 'I' who can define what 'the skin is really' in a more correct way than has been done before. '[T]he body', however, is not defined in this way, thinking about 'the body' is not subject to change, whether or not 'skin' is *'part of'* it, it is still *'the body'*.

'[Y]ou' are separate from the 'I' because 'you' have not yet 'come to think' about 'the skin' in the way the 'I' does. Indeed, 'you' will never think about 'skin' as being *'not even a part of the body'* without the 'I' bringing 'you' to agree this. There is, again, a movement, this time by the 'you' that the 'I' aims to 'bring'. This bringing, then, is not certain, the 'you' may not be brought despite the aims of the 'I'. If '[s]kin has come to mean the body itself', then 'you' think this now, 'you' are part of the agreement of what 'skin' means. '[Y]ou' do not yet 'agree', therefore, that 'skin is really *not even a part of the body*'. 'Skin has come', though, there has been movement in the meaning of 'skin' and therefore possibly in what 'you' 'mean' by 'skin'. What is brought; what comes; is 'skin', 'I' and 'you'. All these things are the same, in that all these things are subject to change. What is different, perhaps, is the process of change. Skin's meaning is changed by what is outside it; 'you' are brought by 'I' to 'agree that the skin is really *not even a part of the body*'. The 'I' though controls the I's thinking; there is no claim to an outside which changes what the 'I' thinks.

Skin is not a part of the body not because it is separate from it but, surprisingly, because it cannot come apart from it. Unlike a member, or an

organ, or a nail clipping, the skin is not detachable in such a way that the detached part would remain recognizable or that the body left behind would remain recognizably a body: a body minus. (p. 29)

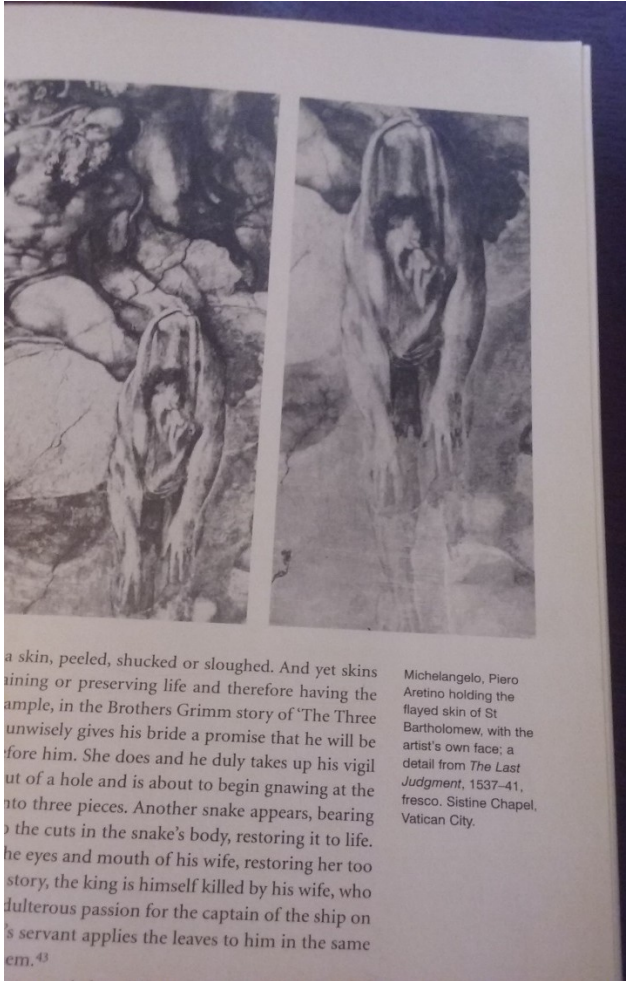
It would not be surprising if '[s]kin' were 'not a part of the body' if it were 'separate from it'; the surprisingness lies in its inseparability to 'the body'. The impossibility of its being 'apart from it' is the thing that makes it 'not a part of the body', but there is uncertainty in this claim to be 'separate'; this double 'not' implies both that '[s]kin' is and is not 'separate'. '[I]t is separate from it', 'it cannot come apart from it', and so here is not '[s]kin' and 'body', but 'it' – which *is* the same. 'Skin', then, is both 'separate' from 'the body' and inseparable; it *cannot* come apart from it' (my italics). Connor claims a difference here 'Skin is not a part of the body', but also a sameness, and, for me, this is again a claim to an understanding or a defining of what things are; '[s]kin' can be defined in its relation to 'the body' (although 'the body' cannot be defined in relation to '[s]kin', except that it is not '[s]kin'), '[s]kin' can be open to question. What is not open to question, though, is a perspective on '[s]kin' which claims it as definable and explainable, at least by the 'I', but eventually, possibly, by the 'you', as having meaning. It is here that the claims to movement and transition stop; '[s]kin' that has 'come to mean' and has 'become', now 'cannot come apart'; it is both immovable in its attachment to 'the body' and in its meaning.

'Skin' is '[u]nlike a member, or an organ, or a nail clipping' and so these things are like each other, they are joined together in not being like '[s]kin'. They are also different to each other; 'a member' is not 'an organ' or 'a nail clipping', but their differences here are less than their shared quality of being 'detachable' in a particular way. 'Skin' too, is 'detachable' but differently, its detachability results in a derecognising. 'Skin', then *can* 'come apart' in some way, but in doing so it changes itself so drastically it is no longer 'recognizable'. 'Skin' is only itself when it is recognised as being '[s]kin'; it is the recognising which makes it '[s]kin'. It is therefore not the detachability which distinguishes '[s]kin' from 'a member, or an organ, or a nail clipping', but what detachment does; it stops

'[s]kin' remaining 'recognizable'. The claim here is that '[s]kin', when attached to 'the body' is already 'recognizable'. Whilst what '[s]kin' means is questionable, whilst whether its being 'really *not even a part of the body*' is something that can be argued for, there is also a claim that '[s]kin' can be recognised even whilst its meaning is open to debate.

It is 'skin' that is detached from 'the body', not 'the body' from 'the skin', which is then 'left behind'. '[T]he body' too would become unrecognisable after detachment; both 'skin' and 'body' once apart cannot be recognised as what they were. It is not, however, the contention that 'skin' would no longer be 'skin' or that the 'body' would not be 'the body' anymore. Instead, it is the recognition which ceases, a claim that without 'skin' or 'body' being identified as such, 'skin' and 'body' are no longer recognised as what they are.

Despite this, 'skin' and 'body' are still knowable; even when they cannot be recognised, but there is a difference in 'body' detached from 'skin' which is now no longer 'the body' but has become 'a body'; it has changed from 'the definite article' to the indefinite 'a' and, in doing so, is claimed as not 'recognizably a body'. And yet although it is 'a' not 'the' it is, always 'body', recognised or not. Again, Judith Butler is helpful to me here: 'In effect, the statement, "the body is constructed", refuses to allow that the indefinite article is itself a construction that calls for a genealogical account' (Butler, p. 601). My reading of Connor is that 'the body left behind' in becoming 'a body' if 'the skin' was detached does refuse 'to allow that the indefinite article is itself a construction'. For him, though, 'the body' too is not 'a construction', whether definite or indefinite, 'body' is simply present in a way that 'skin' is not.



Connor writes, 'Michelangelo, Piero Aretino holding the flayed skin of St Bartholomew, with the artist's own face; a detail from *The Last Judgement*, 1537-41, fresco, Sistine Chapel, Vatican City' (p. 31).

Here 'skin' has been detached by being 'flayed' and yet is still 'recognizable'. It has 'come apart' from 'the body' but is still recognized as 'skin'. This 'skin' is 'flayed skin', however; it has another quality, and I read this 'flayed skin' as 'skin' that has been 'detached'. This flaying, though, does not make it not 'skin'. Whilst the

flaying is an addition to 'skin', it is nevertheless still identified as 'skin'.

This raises the question of what it means to be 'recognizable' and who it is that is recognising. '[F]layed skin' is identifiable in the same way that 'the artist's own face' is, or 'a detail from *The Last Judgement*'; it is produced as something known by Connor. '[F]ace' here is 'separate'; it belongs to 'the artist', it is owned by, but is not 'the artist'. This is 'a detail' which is 'from' something that is already there. It is a perspective, therefore, that claims a prior knowledge of these things; 'the artist's own face', '*The Last Judgement*', and 'flayed skin', and so, perhaps, it is not Connor, therefore, who cannot recognise 'skin' that is 'detached', but 'you'. 'Skin' is claimed to be no longer 'recognizable' once 'detached' from 'the body', but what is and is not 'recognizable', therefore, is dependent on perspective, and a claim to being a perspective that owns the knowledge of 'skin' and can explain it to the perspective that does not.

'Skin', when 'detached', is not a 'skin' 'minus', but when it leaves 'the body' what remains is this possibility of 'a body minus' – 'a body' that is still itself, but 'minus' its 'skin'; 'a body' that therefore has an addition (the 'minus') but is still 'recognizably a body'. The implication here, though, is that this is not the case; whilst 'a body' could be 'a body' without 'a member, or an organ, or a nail clipping' and still be recognized as 'a body', this is not true of 'a body minus' its 'skin'. Connor's claim here, then, is that what 'a body' *is*, is not dependent on recognition, or on the body having 'skin', or 'a member, or an organ, or a nail clipping'. All these things can be done without, can be removed and still 'the body left behind' remains 'a body'; unrecognisable, 'minus', 'detached', but still 'a body'. For me, here, Connor is claiming an importance or a pre-eminence of recognition over the thing itself. '[T]he body' is still 'the body', but without recognition this does not matter; to know what 'the body' is, is not of concern because it is already known. What matters is what is 'recognizable'⁴⁰.

The skin always takes the body with it. The skin is, so to speak, the body's face, the face of its bodiliness. The skinned body is formless, faceless, its face having been taken off its skin. (p. 29)

If 'skin' is detached, 'the body left behind' is no longer 'recognizable' as 'a body'. Here, though, 'the body' cannot be 'left behind' (p. 29); '[t]he skin *always* takes the body with it' (my italics). This, then, is *not* a detachment, since this would leave 'behind' an unrecognizable 'body', but a claim to an inseparability of 'skin' and 'body' which is not this, which is about the movement of 'skin'. '[S]kin' can leave 'behind', 'skin' 'takes the body with it'; it moves, whilst 'the body' both remains and goes 'with'. My reading here is that,

⁴⁰ It is Connor who identifies what is, and is not 'recognizable'; it is his seeing that allocates what it is that is recognized. Here, my reading is informed by what Yu-Kuan Chen, in her 2012 PhD thesis, describes as '[t]he object(s) of vision'. 'The object(s) of vision can therefore be understood as playing a key role in any studies of vision; however, it is *allocated* to play such a role rather than it simply or spontaneously takes such a role as the object(s) of vision. In other words, the object(s) of vision can only be *the* object(s) of vision in the light of *it* being *seen as the* object(s) (of vision – both the referencing, the production and the construction of it as *the* object(s) of vision are unavoidably and inseparably attributed by the vision itself, by a vision (or visions) *visioning* the object(s) of vision *as the* object(s) of vision'. *Objects of Vision: Text Colour Gesture*, Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Reading (2012), 1-2.

for Connor, if there is no 'skin', there is no 'body'; it is taken. There is an absence of 'the body' because, even as it is 'left behind', it is no longer itself. This perhaps goes beyond the claim that when 'skin' is 'detached', 'the body left behind' is not 'recognizable', because here 'the body' has gone. Yet both are claimed here. '[T]he body' is both 'left behind' and taken 'with'. The difficulty for me, in this implication that there is no 'body' without 'skin', is that whilst 'skin' has become 'it', 'the body' is still 'the body'; it remains even as it is claimed as absent.

'The skin' is not '[t]he body's face' but it can be spoken of as such; it is the speaking which produces '[t]he skin' as 'the body's face'. I read two faces; one which is 'the skin', 'so to speak' here and another 'face' present when there is no speaking which is 'the body's face'.

'[S]kin' is also 'the face of its bodiliness', and, as I read 'its' as 'the body', this is the claim for what 'skin' 'is'; it is the thing that gives 'the body' a 'face', but also gives it 'bodiliness'. Without 'skin', 'the body' and 'bodiliness' itself are unrecognizable and 'faceless' – to have a 'face', therefore, is to be recognised.

More than this; the 'skinned body' is not only 'faceless', but 'formless'. The body's recognisability, therefore, is dependant not only on its having a 'face' but also on having form. '[S]kin' provides 'the body' with its form; it outlines and defines it. 'The skinned body' has no 'skin', no 'face', no form. It is still 'body', but not 'recognizably a body', it still has the quality of 'bodiliness', but this quality is 'faceless'. The claim is that 'the body' remains without 'skin' but is absent too, since '[t]he skin always takes the body with it'. For this reason, '[s]kin has come to mean the body itself'; it is 'the body itself' because without it 'the body' is *only* 'the body', the thing that is not 'itself'; without recognition. '[S]kin', which is *not even a part of the body*, is what makes 'the body' 'recognizable' – 'the body' is recognized, therefore through something that it is not.

The skin is an organ, but, unlike the other organs, also has many functions in maintaining the definition, uprightness and continuing life of the body it demarcates. (p. 41)

'The skin' is not only 'unlike the other organs' in its inability to detach from 'the body' whilst remaining 'recognizable'. It also has 'many functions', which 'other organs' do not; it maintains 'the definition, uprightness and continuing life of the body'. Whilst 'skin is an organ', there is a claim to its being different and it is produced through these differences that define what it is *not*; it is not 'the body', it is '*not even a part of the body*', it is 'unlike the other organs'. There is a secondariness to 'skin', then, both in these comparisons which claim a presence for 'the body' and 'organs' before 'skin' in order to define what it is not, but also in its functionality in relation to 'the body', which must already be present in order for '[t]he skin' to have these 'functions'.

If the skin's 'definition' is produced by what it is not in relation to 'other organs' and 'the body', the body's 'definition' is maintained by '[t]he skin'. The body's 'definition', then, has already been produced; it is kept defined by '[t]he skin' – and kept upright and alive – by demarcating. '[S]kin' separates 'the body' from what is not 'the body'; it both defines what 'the body' is and marks it so it can be recognized as 'itself' (p. 29), apart from what is not 'the body'. However, since 'skin is not the body', does this demarcating include or exclude 'skin'? There is an apparent claim here for certainty: 'the body' is demarcated by '[t]he skin' from what is not 'the body' and this leads to recognition of both 'the skin' and 'the body'. I am not sure there is a claim for such a certainty, however. If 'skin is really *not even a part of the body*' then what 'demarcates' 'skin' itself as something outside 'the body' from 'the body'? Where is the place that 'body' is not 'skin', or 'skin' not 'body'? If 'skin' is not 'the body', if it is something outside 'the body' that 'demarcates', then there is no separation from 'the body' and outside 'the body'; there is no demarcation.

For Connor, 'the division between inner and outer is just a tactic, a way of getting us to the apprehension we need. A column of smoke possesses no simple inside or outside,

but the supposition of interiority and exteriority, repeatedly insurgent and abandoned, helps us to see it feelingly' (p. 39). If this 'division' is 'just a tactic', then this is *all* it is; not a 'division' at all. This 'tactic' though, is also 'a way', and so already there is a proliferation of meaning; what is 'just' one thing is now another. This 'way' gets 'us to the apprehension we need'; there is a knowledge of the 'we' here; Connor identifies with/as 'we' whilst knowing what 'we need' – and this knowledge makes him not quite 'we', it is not claimed that 'we' all know what 'we need'. This perspective identifies both what is 'simple' – 'inside or outside' - and what is not; 'the supposition of interiority and exteriority' in relation to '[a] column of smoke'. This 'supposition' is 'repeatedly insurgent and abandoned', subject to change whilst maintaining its 'interiority and exteriority', and therefore able to change whilst remaining the same *because* it is a 'supposition'.

This 'supposition of interiority and exteriority' is what 'helps us to see it feelingly'. A 'column of smoke', therefore, must be seen by 'us' to be '[a] column of smoke'; it is not itself without being seen. More than this; the 'column of smoke' is seen through 'the supposition of interiority and exteriority', this is what produces the seeing even though these things are supposed. Seeing here, is more than seeing, it is seeing 'feelingly' and I am reading a connection here between 'supposition' and 'feelingly'; a claim that these things are what are thought of, or experienced, and so are different to what Connor describes as 'the material world' (p. 40). Whether 'the division between inner and outer' or 'interiority and exteriority' is of 'the material world' or not, it is the demarcation of what is 'inside or outside' which is what the 'us' sees and therefore recognizes.

This 'division' between what is 'inside' and 'outside' is claimed as nothing more than 'a tactic', 'a way', a 'supposition', but is nevertheless necessary because it gets 'us to the apprehension we need'. '[A]pprehension' is therefore what is important here, it is this that 'we need', together with help to 'see' 'feelingly'. Whilst there is a claim to query 'division' or what is simply 'inside' and 'outside', therefore, there is still a perspective which claims

a difference between what is 'apprehension' and what is not. There is still a binary perspective here despite its denial.

Connor reads Michael Serres who claims that skin can be understood as 'a milieu [which] requires a physics of the imagination that lies between the conditions of liquid and solid'⁴¹ (p. 40). Skin, as a 'bodily envelope' is an 'intermediary material' between 'the conditions of liquid and solid'. The body, then is enveloped by this 'intermediary material'; it is what is inside, recognized through what it is not. In 'bodily envelope', I again read a secondariness to skin; it is the 'envelope' to the body. What is in the 'envelope' is what 'skin' describes in its 'topological' (Serres in Connor, p. 40) state. This is how the body is described, not by what it is, but by what envelops it; perhaps because the thing that covers is the thing that is seen.

The difficulty for me here, is that if I accept that this is why the 'skin' is described in detail by Connor and Serres; that it can be seen whilst 'the body' cannot, then how do I read claims about the 'supposition of interiority and exteriority' or the ability to 'see...feelingly'? I read Connor's perspective as equating '[a] column of smoke' with 'the skin'; his description of the imagination of '[a] column of smoke' having 'interiority and exteriority' can be applied to 'the implicative capacity of the skin – its capacity to be folded in upon itself' (p. 40). This 'capacity' is 'implicative', it has not yet happened, but can be imagined; '[t]his is why the kinds of entering into skin undertaken through this book often require exercises and investigations of the material imagination' (p. 40).

'[S]kin' can be entered into, 'often' through 'the material imagination', (and so, therefore, perhaps in other ways too); as regards 'the skin', what cannot be seen can be imagined as seen; 'we' can 'see...feelingly'. This is not the case for 'the body,' though; there is no

⁴¹ Serres describes 'an intermediary material' which includes "veil, canvas, tissue, chiffon, fabric, goatskin, and sheepskin, known as parchment, the flayed hide of a calf known as vellum, paper, paper, supple and fragile, linens and silks, all the forms of planes or twists in space, bodily envelopes or writing supports able to flutter like a curtain, neither liquid nor solid, to be sure, but participating in both conditions. Pliable, tearable, stretchable...topological' (Serres, in Connor p. 40).

imagining of 'the body' without 'skin', except to claim its unrecognisability. '[S]kin' cannot be 'detached' from 'the body' and 'remain recognizable' and yet here it is, apparently 'detached'; it is constantly read by Connor without 'the body', 'outside' or imagined, and yet describable. For me, it is this describability which emerges from Connor's reading of 'skin'; it is the 'skin' that writes and marks 'the body'. I am tempted to read that by imagining the 'skin', we also imagine 'the body' 'itself', but I cannot read that here; 'skin' is imagined and described in relation to 'the body', it envelops it, but 'the body' is somehow absent; it is not imagined or described except in relation to 'skin'. I am left wondering if it is my insistence on reading 'the body' which is causing difficulty. Connor is not claiming to describe 'the body' and then failing to do so; his concern is with 'the kinds of sense we make of the skin, and the kinds of sense we make of the world and each other with it, which is to say, through the action of various kinds of epidermal shape, story, device and figure' (p. 48).

But Connor *is* concerned with 'the body'; it is written again and again throughout the book in relation to 'skin'. '[T]he body' in this perspective is 'the body' without explanation, and I cannot help but read this as an implication that this is because 'the body' has already been explained. For Connor, the visibility of 'skin' is new; '[e]verywhere, the skin, normally as little apparent as the page upon which is displayed the words we read, is becoming visible on its own account' (p. 9). '[T]he body', however, is not a new consideration; to write 'the body' is to know 'the body'.

'We invent with our bodies and thereby reinvent those bodies. Unlike other animals, we have a relation to our bodies. Our bodies are the kind that are always in question, or transition, are always work in progress. (p. 30)

Here are 'our bodies' rather than 'the body', and by belonging to us are therefore not 'we', but separate; something that is 'with' us. When 'our bodies' have been reinvented, however, they are not even 'with' us; they are 'those bodies'. 'Our bodies' change as they are reinvented, but are still 'our bodies', even when they are 'in question, or transition'.

'We' are 'animals' and yet are not like 'other animals' in having a 'relation to our bodies', so 'other animals' do not have 'a relation' to their 'body'. Again, this separates 'our bodies' from the 'we' that has a 'relation' with them. Here, despite the claim that 'bodies' change through invention and reinvention, 'bodies' are still already known. I read a difference between 'the body' and 'our bodies' in this 'question' or 'transition' of 'our bodies', which is not something that is under 'question' in 'the body'. Whilst I read claims here for 'bodies' as being subject to change, being 'in question', this change does not imply an ignorance of 'bodies'; the claims for a stable 'body' remain despite any reinvention.

What is also known, too, is the 'we' who own 'our bodies'; who 'we' are is not 'in question'. As the skin's meaning changes, as it has 'come to mean the body itself' whilst being 'really *not even a part of the body*', then here it is 'our bodies' that are claimed as changing in meaning, being 'always work in progress', and it is 'we' who are written as known. There is always a claim to a previous knowing, however. There is always an implication of something already there, here claimed as 'always in question', and yet not claimed as questionable in its existence as something that can be knowable, producible, 'recognizable'.

7 Julia Kristeva on Food Loathing

Food loathing is perhaps the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection. When the eyes see or the lips touch that skin on the surface of milk – harmless, thin as a sheet of cigarette paper, pitiful as a nail paring – I experience a gagging sensation and, still farther down, spasms in the stomach, the belly; and all the organs shrivel up the body, provoke tears and bile, increase heartbeat, cause forehead and hands to perspire. Along with sight-clouding dizziness, *nausea* makes me balk at that milk cream, separates me from the mother and father who proffer it. “I” want none of that element, sign of their desire; “I” do not want to listen, “I” do not assimilate it, “I” expel it. But since the food is not an “other” for “me”, who am only in their desire, I expel *myself*, I spit *myself* out, I abject *myself* within the same motion through which “I” claim to establish *myself*.⁴²

The uncertainty is not a question of whether or not there is ‘[f]ood loathing’; this is known. ‘Food’ here is loathed and although there is the possibility of ‘[f]ood’ that is not loathed, this would not be ‘perhaps the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection’; it is the ‘loathing’ of ‘[f]ood’ which is a ‘form of abjection’.

What is ‘perhaps’ is whether ‘[f]ood loathing’ is ‘the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection’. ‘Food loathing’ *is* a ‘form of abjection’, therefore, this is certain; it is to what degree this is the case, whether there may be no other ‘form of abjection’ which is more ‘elementary’ and ‘archaic’. This is a claim to the extreme, to be ‘the most’, for there to be nothing more ‘elementary’ and ‘archaic’ than ‘[f]ood loathing’ as a ‘form of abjection’. There are other forms of ‘abjection’, but ‘perhaps’ none which have these claims to be the ‘most elementary and most archaic’.

⁴² Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), pp. 2-3. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

Whilst 'perhaps', though, is an apparent claim to uncertainty – it might be this or not - in this reading of 'the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection' it becomes certain; it writes what is 'perhaps' about '[f]ood loathing', and in doing so, writes it as not 'perhaps', but as a *claim to be*, because of its presence.

There are other forms of 'abjection'. They too are 'elementary' and 'archaic', but not as much as '[f]ood loathing'. There is a claim here that 'abjection' has a 'form', or many forms, of which '[f]ood loathing' is one, so it is not 'abjection' itself which is present, but instead it is represented as '[f]ood loathing', which has its 'form'.

'When the eyes see'. This is inevitable; 'the eyes' will always 'see' and yet they do not see *now* – this reading is not claimed to be happening when the seeing takes place. The 'eyes' will 'see', 'the eyes' have seen, but not here, 'that skin on the surface of milk' is not seen or touched now.

These are not *my* 'eyes'; this does not claim to be the 'I' who has 'eyes' that 'see'. When 'the lips touch', too, is a claim to a universal 'the'; it is always and everyone '[w]hen the eyes see or the lips touch'. What happens '[w]hen the eyes see or the lips touch that skin on the surface of milk', however, is that 'I experience a gagging sensation'. It is the 'I' that experiences 'a gagging sensation' of what 'the eyes see or the lips touch', not 'the eyes' or 'the lips'. There might, then, be other 'eyes' that 'see' or 'lips' that 'touch that skin on the surface of milk', but only 'I experience a gagging sensation'.

When the 'experience' is 'farther down', though, there are 'spasms in the stomach, the belly; and all the organs shrivel up the body, provoke tears and bile, increase heartbeat, cause forehead and hands to perspire'. Now this is not 'I', this is 'the stomach', 'the belly', 'the 'body', and then not 'the'; it is 'tears and bile', 'heartbeat' and 'forehead and hands' which 'perspire'. The claim is for 'experience' which happens to 'I', 'a gagging sensation' is the 'I's 'experience' (although this is 'a gagging sensation', not *my* 'gagging sensation'), but 'the body', 'the stomach' or 'tears and bile' for instance, are not mine.

'[S]pasms' are 'in the stomach, the belly', there can be no 'spasms' without 'the stomach, the belly'. Without 'all the organs' that 'shrivel up the body', there can be no provoking of 'tears and bile' or 'increase heartbeat' or for 'forehead and hands to perspire'. This is a claim to a something to come from 'experience', which leads to 'tears and bile' and perspiration from 'forehead and hands' – and also for this to happen the other way, for 'experience' to come from 'the eyes' or 'the lips'. This is not a claim to a materiality of 'the body', however, it is not a claim for a split between things that are of 'the body' and those that are not, but rather a separation of 'the eyes' and 'the lips' from the 'I' that experiences 'a gagging sensation'.

This 'experience' makes 'all the organs shrivel up the body'. What shrivels? Is it 'all the organs' which 'shrivel' and so move 'up the body' or is it 'the body' which is shrivelled by 'the organs'?

'[E]yes' alone, 'lips' alone, do not cause 'a gagging sensation'. There is a seeing and a touching - the 'eyes see' and the 'lips touch that skin on the surface of milk' in order that 'I experience a gagging sensation'. Equally, then, without 'the eyes' that 'see' or 'the lips' that 'touch', the 'skin on the surface of milk' will not cause 'a gagging sensation'. It is 'harmless' before 'the eyes see or the lips touch' it, this is not a claim for it to cause 'a gagging sensation' by itself; it must be seen or touched. There is a separation between 'that skin on the surface of milk' and what is not 'that skin on the surface of milk; to 'see' or to 'touch' this 'surface' causes this 'experience' for the 'I'. The 'I', then, is not 'that skin on the surface of milk'; it is being not 'that', but seeing and touching 'that', which causes this 'experience'.

'[M]ilk' has a 'surface', there is what is below this 'surface' – 'milk' - and what is outside it, which is therefore not 'milk'. This 'surface' is 'of milk', it belongs to it. What is 'on the surface of milk', however - 'that skin' - is not 'milk', but is 'on the surface of milk'. It is other to 'milk'; 'on' its 'surface', but not it, and it is this not-'milk' which causes 'a gagging sensation' when what is also not-'milk', the 'eyes' and the 'lips' 'see' and 'touch' it.

The 'skin on the surface of milk' is 'harmless' and yet it provokes 'a gagging sensation', 'spasms in the stomach, the belly; and all the organs shrivel up the body, provoke tears and bile, increase heartbeat, cause forehead and hands to perspire'. What is 'harmless' causes harm through these sensations, something 'harmless, thin as a sheet of cigarette paper, pitiful as a nail paring' causes this 'experience'. It is this very harmlessness that is at stake here; it should not cause this 'experience', it should not be able to, being 'thin' and 'pitiful' and yet it does.

'[T]hat skin on the surface of milk' shares characteristics with other things, it is 'thin as a sheet of cigarette paper, pitiful as a nail paring'. It is not like 'cigarette paper' in any other way, it is only their thinness and harmlessness which connects them, which makes them 'as' each other. The 'nail paring' is as 'pitiful' 'as' 'that skin on the surface of milk', this is how they are 'as' each other. These things that 'as' 'that skin on the surface of milk' are parts of something else, not 'cigarette paper' but a 'sheet' of it, not a 'nail' but 'a nail paring', they are less than the whole, or are parts separated from the whole. If so, then 'skin' might be separated from 'milk' in the same way, part of 'milk' and not part of it.

It is not the characteristics of 'that skin on the surface of milk' that provokes these reactions, then, because they are 'harmless', 'thin', and 'pitiful'. It is the claim of a connection between 'that skin on the surface of milk' and '[f]ood loathing' which causes these sensations – because '[f]ood loathing is perhaps the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection'. This is the 'I's 'experience' of 'abjection' in its 'most elementary and most archaic form'. That 'skin on the surface of milk' is not 'abjection', but it provokes it in the 'I' who experiences these sensations through '[f]ood loathing'.

'Along with sight-clouding dizziness, *nausea* makes me balk at that milk cream'. Now this is 'that milk cream', not 'that skin on the surface of milk', the sensations change; they are 'sight-clouding dizziness' and '*nausea*'. Whilst the claim has been that 'the eyes see or the lips touch that skin on the surface of milk', now there is a lack of seeing, or, at least, a clouding of what is seen because of the 'dizziness'. This 'dizziness' comes after the

seeing; there has been a seeing which is now clouded. With 'sight-clouding dizziness' is 'nausea' – they are both what 'makes me balk at that milk cream'.

The balking is not at 'milk', but 'milk cream', 'cream' that is from or of 'milk', but is not 'milk'. '[M]ilk', then, is not what causes '[f]ood loathing'; it is what is 'of' it that does – 'that skin on the surface of milk', 'that milk cream' which is '[f]ood loathing' and therefore 'abjection'. It is always 'that' which does this - the thing that is not this or 'I'. '[M]ilk' is not 'that' 'milk', it is not separated in the way that 'skin' or 'cream' are, so it is what comes from 'milk' that is distanced, which is 'that'.

'Along with sight-clouding dizziness, *nausea* makes me balk at that milk cream, separates me from the mother and father who proffer it.' Although 'the eyes see', now there is 'sight-clouding dizziness'. Perhaps then 'the eyes' have to 'see' in order for 'sight' then to be clouded; the 'dizziness' follows the seeing, which results in 'sight-clouding'. There is both a seeing and a 'sight-clouding' concerning '[f]ood loathing' and 'abjection'. Firstly the 'skin on the surface of milk' is seen, but then *after* this there is the 'sight-clouding dizziness' which causes 'me' to 'balk at that milk cream'. There is also '*nausea*', which is '[a]long with sight-clouding dizziness', and, being '[a]long with' are what 'makes me balk at that milk cream', so 'sight-clouding dizziness' alone would not make 'me balk at that milk cream'.

The 'me' is separated 'from the mother and father who proffer it'. Is it the balking that 'separates me from the mother and father who proffer it', or perhaps it is the 'sight-clouding dizziness' and '*nausea*'? The balking and the separation seem to be connected in that they are both a consequence of 'sight-clouding dizziness' and '*nausea*', which themselves are a result of 'that milk cream'.

Although it is 'me' who is separated, it is "I" who wants 'none of that element, sign of their desire'. The perspective is not from an 'I' then, but from this "I" which claims another

separation, not from 'the mother and father', but from 'I', perhaps an "I" called so by another who is not 'me'.

"I" do not want to listen, "I" do not assimilate it, "I" expel it'. The "I" does not only 'want none of that element', there are additions to what the "I" does now. It is the proffering by 'the mother and father' which results in the not wanting to 'listen' or in the not assimilating, in the expelling. '[T]hat milk cream', then, is proffered by 'the mother and father' and so it is this proffering by 'the mother and father' which both 'separates' but also is connected to the balking. The 'skin on the surface of milk' and 'that milk cream' may not alone cause 'abjection'; it is when they are proffered which makes them so. More than this, it is the proffering by 'the mother and father' that matters, here, they always 'proffer' and "I" always wants 'none of that element' which is the 'sign of their desire'.

This is not 'their desire', but a 'sign' of it. The 'milk cream' is, I think, 'that element', so it is the 'milk cream' which is this 'sign of their desire' and which "I" want none of'.

"I" expel it. But since the food is not an "other" for "me," who am only in their desire'. '[I]t' has been expelled, and if I read 'it' as 'that element', then 'it' is also 'milk cream' and perhaps here is also 'the food'. Now there is "me" who is different to the 'me' who is separated from 'the mother and father'. This "me" exists 'only in their desire', unlike the 'me' who is present when separated 'from the mother and father'.

'But since the food is not an "other" for "me"'. There is "me" and 'me' and "other", but no 'other', unless this might be 'the food' which 'is not an "other"'. Being 'not an "other" for "me"' means that 'I expel *myself*', so the "me"/ *myself* becomes 'it', expelled as not "other" to 'the food'. If skin, for Connor is '*not even a part of the body*' (p. 29), then similarly the 'skin on the surface of milk' is not a part of 'milk'. Its 'abjection' arises through its being a border of 'milk', it is the nearness of this 'harmless' thing to 'milk', being 'milk' and not being 'milk', which causes the 'loathing' and so the 'abjection'. It is not abject, though, until 'the eyes see or the lips touch'; the 'abjection' comes from the

'experience' from 'the eyes' and 'the lips', so 'skin on the surface of milk' alone is not abject. It is this being, like Connor's skin, '*not even a part of* something which is abject because it both 'separates' but also is 'not an "other" for "me"'.

There is a 'motion' which both abjects '*myself*' and claims to 'establish *myself*'. Whilst this is 'the same motion', the results, the 'abjection' and establishment, are not the 'same'. It is the 'I' who comes to 'abject *myself*' through this 'motion', but the "I" whose establishment remains only a 'claim'.

This question of what is the "other" arises in the question of the border. Here, as elsewhere, the border is the danger, it does not separate as it should. Kristeva writes about what 'corpses *show me*' (p. 3);

If dung signifies the other side of the border, the place where I am not and which permits me to be, the corpse, the most sickening of wastes, is a border that has encroached upon everything. It is no longer I who expel, "I" is expelled. The border has become an object. How can I be without border?
(p. 3)

Borders, then, separate the 'I' from where 'I am not'. Further, they permit 'me to be', they construct the 'I'. This is why the 'I' becomes the "I", who no longer expels but 'is expelled'. If there is an 'other side of the border', this is what permits 'me to be', but 'the corpse' is a 'border that has encroached upon everything', there is *nothing* that is not 'encroached upon', and so the 'border' itself is 'encroached upon' and this causes it to 'become an object'. If the 'border' is an 'object' then it is not a 'border', which therefore raises the question of '[h]ow can I be without border?'

Here, I return to Orbach and her reading of boundaries, when she writes that '[t]he loss of fixed boundaries of the self produces another of the terrifying states women have associated with loss of weight' (Orbach 1988, p. 94), and also Mary Douglas who warns about boundaries when she writes that 'all margins are dangerous', particularly

the body's 'margins' since '[a]ny structure of ideas is vulnerable at its margins. We should expect the orifices of the body to symbolise its specially vulnerable points' (Douglas, 1984, p. 122). I do not try to make a connection between Kristeva's 'abjection', Orbach's 'terrifying states' and Douglas's 'vulnerable' 'margins', but rather read that both consider that 'border' (Kristeva), boundary (Orbach) or 'margins' (Douglas) produce something extreme when they are lost. Kristeva's question of '[h]ow can I be without border?' asks about the possibility of there being no 'I'. Orbach writes about the 'loss of fixed boundaries of the self'. For Orbach, 'boundaries' are the 'amount of space one takes up in the world' (p. 93) and 'fat' is the 'way' a 'woman' can 'express her separateness and her space' (p. 93) – fat is 'her' boundary and so its 'loss' is a 'loss of fixed boundaries of the self'.

Whilst there appears to be a claim for the certainty of the existence of 'boundaries of the self' when they are 'fixed', this is not certain at all because they are lost. The question of '[h]ow can I be without border' remains.

8 Sara Ahmed on Disgust

The relationship between disgust reactions and the transformation of borders into objects is unclear. On the one hand, it is the transformation of borders into objects that is sickening (like the skin that forms on milk). On the other, the border is transformed into an object precisely as an effect of disgust (spitting/vomiting). Perhaps the ambiguity relates to the necessity of the designation of that which is threatening: borders need to be threatened in order to be maintained, or even to appear as borders, and part of the process of 'maintenance-through-transgression' is the appearance of border objects. Border objects are hence disgusting, whilst disgust engenders border objects.⁴³

Ahmed claims there is a 'relationship between disgust reactions and the transformation of borders into objects', but whilst this 'relationship' is not questioned in terms of its existence – there is always a 'relationship' between these things, and there is only one 'relationship'; it is *the* 'relationship' – what this 'relationship' is, is 'unclear'. From this perspective, therefore, there is a claim to know something – that there is a 'relationship' - but also a claim that this cannot be known clearly; there is a limit to the knowing.

'[D]isgust' and 'borders' do not have a 'relationship'. '[D]isgust' is present in its 'reactions' – there is more than one reaction to 'disgust' - and it is these 'reactions' which have an 'unclear' 'relationship' with 'the transformation of borders into objects'. Whilst 'the transformation of borders into objects' is certain, *when* the 'transformation' takes place is not; it is not claimed that 'disgust reactions' cause 'the transformation of borders into objects'. The 'relationship' is between 'disgust reactions and the transformation of borders into objects' and so the implication is that this 'transformation' has an end; the 'borders'

⁴³ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), p. 87. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

become 'objects'. The 'disgust reactions', therefore, are not with the 'objects' but with the 'transformation'; it is this movement from one thing to another, the becoming of something different which has this 'relationship' with 'disgust reactions'. 'The relationship' is 'between' these things; this in-between, which is neither 'disgust reactions' or 'the transformation of borders into objects' is there, it is definite, but it is also indefinite by this claim for it to be *not* something – it is not clear. There is then, a claim to clarity; it is possible to have a clear 'relationship', but not here, not 'between disgust reactions and the transformation of borders into objects'.

The 'relationship' is not 'between' 'disgust' and 'the transformation of borders into objects'. It is the 'reactions' which have this 'relationship'. In addition to this, 'the border is transformed into an object precisely as an effect of disgust (spitting/vomiting)', and so here again it is not 'disgust' but something associated with it – its 'effect' – in which 'the border is transformed into an object'. '[D]isgust' has 'reactions' and 'an effect'.

'On the one hand' – there is a movement or a change from being 'between' to being '[o]n'. 'On' this 'one hand' is 'it' – 'it' is the 'relationship between disgust reactions and the transformations of borders into objects' - so when 'it' is '[o]n the one hand', this 'relationship' is not 'unclear'; this is what 'it is'. This 'relationship' is 'sickening (like the skin that forms on milk)', so whilst it is clear in what 'it is', it is also not 'the skin that forms on milk' – it is 'like' it. There is still uncertainty, therefore, since being 'like' something is not being the thing itself; 'it' is therefore still 'unclear'.

Since 'the transformation of borders into objects' is 'sickening (like the skin that forms on milk)' here, then there is a claim to 'transformation' being what 'forms' – the 'skin' 'on milk'. '[M]ilk' does not always have 'skin', therefore; it is a change, but not of 'milk' itself, which remains, but of an addition to it, of something that is 'on milk'. '[S]kin' is not 'milk', being 'on' it, it covers but is separate and yet there is a claim to it being part of 'milk' in its formation 'on' it. '[S]kin' is and is not 'milk'; 'milk' can be without 'skin' before it 'forms', but 'skin' cannot be without 'milk'.

There are 'borders' to 'milk' which are not 'objects'. The 'skin that forms on milk' is not still a 'border', but neither is it yet 'an object': it 'forms' as 'transformation' and therefore sickens. '[M]ilk' ends in a 'border' which is not 'skin' until it is 'an object', and so 'milk' does not transform; it is its 'border' which has a 'transformation' and so is not 'milk'.

There is no question about what is 'sickening'; it is both 'the transformation of borders into objects' when these are '[o]n the one hand', and it is 'the skin that forms on milk'. This is what makes these things 'like'; they are both 'sickening'. '[B]orders' are not in themselves 'sickening'; it is their 'transformation' 'into objects' which is so. '[O]bjects', therefore *are* 'sickening', but only when they have been transformed from being 'borders'. Is there, then, the possibility of 'objects' that have not been 'borders' or of 'borders' that do not become 'objects'? I do read this, in the claim that there are 'border objects', since there is therefore an implication of 'objects' which are not 'border objects'. If so, there is a claim that there is a difference between 'objects' which have not been 'borders' and 'objects' which have been, and that it is possible for the perspective to know which is which and therefore which 'objects' are 'sickening'.

Are 'objects' 'sickening' though, once they are transformed? It is the 'transformation of borders into objects that is sickening', so when the 'transformation' is complete, 'objects' might no longer be 'sickening'. They are 'like the skin that forms on milk', however, and this is always 'sickening', so transformed 'objects', too, remain 'sickening'. Since the things that are 'sickening' are not open to question, there is also knowledge of what 'sickening' is; it is always the same and always experienced. There is no 'skin that forms on milk' which does not sicken. Whilst '[t]he relationship between disgust reactions and the transformation of borders into objects' is always 'unclear', the claim of what is 'sickening' is not. It is, then the difference between '[o]n the one hand' and '[o]n the other' which makes this 'unclear'; the claim is for this 'relationship' to be two things, 'one' and 'the other'.

There is 'disgust' and there is 'transformation of borders into objects'. The 'unclear' 'relationship', the thing that is '[o]n the one hand' and also '[o]n the other', is the question

of what comes first. There is a claim that one precedes the 'other', that one causes the 'other'.

'On the other, the border is transformed into an object precisely as an effect of disgust (spitting/vomiting).' There is an 'other' which is different to the 'it' (which is 'the transformation of borders into objects that is sickening'), but, whilst still being a transforming of 'the border' into 'an object', is constructed here as occurring as an 'effect of disgust (spitting/vomiting)'. There is only 'the border' – no other 'borders' exist – but this 'border' is 'transformed into an object' and therefore there is the possibility of other 'objects'.

Here 'disgust' precedes 'the border' 'transformed into an object'. The 'transformation' is an 'effect', it comes after, and is caused by, the 'disgust' which here is 'disgust (spitting/vomiting)'. This might be a claim for 'disgust' to be '(spitting/vomiting)', being perhaps examples of what is an 'effect of disgust', and so being what causes the 'border' to be 'transformed into an object'. The marks of '(' and ')' around 'spitting/vomiting', though, also claims that '(spitting/vomiting)' is *not* part of 'disgust'; it is a claim to separate or set apart 'disgust' from '(spitting/vomiting)' in that this is not 'disgust' 'spitting/vomiting'.

If '(spitting/vomiting)' is part of 'disgust', then 'spitting' and 'vomiting' are the same in being this, as here, the '(' before, and the ')' after 'spitting/vomiting' claims a connection between them (and does so whether it is, or is not, a part of 'an effect of disgust'). These claims are also here in '/', where 'spitting' is not 'vomiting' and yet is also associated with it; '/' splits and connects.

There are here, therefore, claims to similarity and difference; for claims for connections which also separate. The absence of clarity about the 'relationship between disgust reactions and the transformation of borders into objects' is here a claim of uncertainty as to what belongs where, of what is *with* what.

There might, though, be a claim that '(spitting/vomiting)' is not an 'effect of disgust', but that this is, (or these are), the 'object'. Here '(spitting/vomiting)' is *not* part of 'an effect of disgust', but is the 'transformed' 'border' which has become 'an object'. What transforms 'spitting' and 'vomiting' is 'disgust'; without this, they are 'borders', but by the 'effect of disgust' they become 'an object'. This would raise the possibility that '(spitting/vomiting)' is in itself (in themselves), not disgusting; the 'disgust' is elsewhere. There is uncertainty, therefore as to what the 'object' is; whether it is '(spitting/vomiting)' or whether it is something that follows on from this, that is 'transformed' by it.

There is no claim for it to be anything other than 'an effect of disgust' which transforms 'the border' into 'an object'; it is 'precisely' this – nothing else could transform 'the border' in such a way other than 'an effect of disgust (spitting/vomiting)'. There is, too, no uncertainty that 'it is the transformation of borders into objects that is sickening'. To transform 'borders into objects' is known to be both 'sickening' and 'an effect of disgust'. It is also known that there is a 'relationship between disgust reactions and the transformation of borders into objects'. All these things are claimed as certain, and yet this is still 'unclear', there is still 'ambiguity'.

Whilst 'the transformation of borders into objects' is 'sickening (like the skin that forms on milk)', the 'border' which is 'transformed into an object precisely as an effect of disgust (spitting/vomiting)' is not 'sickening (like the skin that forms on milk)'. Transformations of 'borders into objects' are different, therefore, depending on when they happen. In some cases, it is the 'transformation' which is 'sickening (like the skin that forms on milk)', in others it is the 'effect of disgust (spitting/vomiting)' which causes the 'transformation'. What is 'unclear', therefore, is not that there is 'transformation' and that there are 'disgust reactions', but whether there is an order to these things, whether the 'transformation' is before what is 'sickening (like the skin that forms on milk)' or whether the 'disgust (spitting/vomiting)' is before the 'transformation'.

This claims a connection between what is 'sickening (like the skin that forms on milk)' and 'disgust (spitting/vomiting)'. These things are not the same and yet share the claim to a 'relationship' with 'the transformation of borders into objects', both being 'disgust reactions'.

'Perhaps the ambiguity relates to the necessity of the designation of that which is threatening'. The 'ambiguity' is between what is '[o]n the one hand' and '[o]n the other'; it is known, therefore, that there is a difference between 'one hand' and 'the other', whilst being uncertain as to what it 'relates' to. The '[p]erhaps' is uncertain, but the presence of 'ambiguity' is not; the '[p]erhaps' refers to what this 'ambiguity' might relate to, not whether there is 'ambiguity'.

If the '[p]erhaps' is concerned with what 'the ambiguity relates to', there is no '[p]erhaps' about 'the necessity of the designation of that which is threatening'. The claim is that there is a 'necessity' to designate 'that which is threatening'. As there is 'that which is threatening', there is also that which is 'threatened', which are 'borders'. Something threatens 'borders' and there is 'the necessity' to designate what this is.

Although it is a 'necessity' to designate 'that which is threatening', by being still 'the necessity' there is a claim that this has not yet happened. Something threatens that must be designated and yet is not; it remains undesignated.

There is also a claim that 'borders need to be threatened in order to be maintained, or even to appear as borders, and part of the process of "maintenance-through-transgression" is the appearance of border objects'. The ':' between this claim and the claim to there being 'the necessity of the designation of that which is threatening' implies an equivalence to these claims; the 'designation of that which is threatening' is through the 'borders' that 'need to be threatened' – the knowledge is of what is 'threatened' not 'that which is threatening', which is never designated. The threat is present only in what is

'threatened' and only known through this - it is, perhaps, this uncertainty over the undesignated threat which is ambiguous.

'[B]orders' 'need to be threatened in order to be maintained'. It is known, therefore, that 'borders' must be 'maintained'. Whilst there may be 'borders' that are not 'maintained' these do not 'appear as borders'; to be 'borders' there must be maintenance.

There are, then, 'borders' that are not 'threatened' and therefore not 'maintained', but these 'borders' will still 'need'; the 'need' is always there. If 'borders' are not 'threatened' and therefore not 'maintained' they are still 'borders', but do not 'appear as borders'. There is a split, therefore between the 'borders' which 'appear as borders' and the 'borders' which are not 'threatened' or 'maintained' and do not 'appear'.

Are these 'threatened' 'borders' that 'appear as borders', though, 'borders' at all, or do they only 'appear' to be 'borders'? It may be that this 'appear' is claiming something as apparently a 'border' whilst being something else, a claim to a difference between what appears to be something and what it *is*.

The 'as', however, might be a claim that these *are* 'borders'; it is this appearing which manifests them 'as borders', in a way that 'borders' that do not 'appear' are not. If so, then there is a difference between 'borders' which are 'threatened', and are 'maintained' and 'appear as borders', and 'borders' which are not 'threatened', so although they are still 'borders', are not 'maintained' and do not 'appear as borders'.

This is not the '[p]erhaps', though. The perspective's question of 'ambiguity' is about what 'relates to the necessity of the designation of that which is threatening', not this question of whether 'borders' which are 'threatened' are claimed as 'borders' or as that which 'appear as borders'. My uncertainty about the appearance of 'borders' is not to claim that the perspective shares this uncertainty.

The '[p]erhaps', then, does not ask a question, but answers it. What follows '[p]erhaps' is not uncertain, but is a claim to clarify the 'ambiguity' over what is 'unclear' about '[t]he

relationship between disgust reactions and the transformation of borders into objects'. There is no 'designation of that which is threatening' despite its 'necessity', but there is a claim to a knowledge of what is 'threatened' which leads to a knowledge of how 'borders' are 'maintained' and what they 'appear as'.

'[A]nd part of the process of "maintenance-through-transgression" is the appearance of border objects'. Since this is 'and', this is an addition to the 'borders' that 'need to be threatened in order to be maintained, or even to appear as borders'; it continues. Here, it is the 'border objects' which have an 'appearance', and this 'appearance' is part of 'the process of "maintenance-through-transgression"'. Again, there is uncertainty; these might be 'border objects' which have now appeared, or it might be something that has the 'appearance of border objects' – which are not, therefore, 'border objects'. '[B]order objects' are claimed as present and yet are both here and not here in their 'appearance'.

"[M]aintenance-through-transgression" is present and yet is claimed as also elsewhere; the apostrophes claiming a reading by the perspective of an origin outside the text, a quoting of something that did not begin in this reading of 'the process of "maintenance-through-transgression"'. Since 'borders need to be threatened in order to be maintained', this "maintenance-through-transgression" comes about through a threat to 'borders'; 'borders' are 'maintained' because of "transgression", or, rather, 'through' it. "[M]aintenance" cannot happen without "transgression" and 'borders' cannot be 'maintained' without being 'threatened'. To have 'borders' which are 'maintained' and 'appear as borders', they must be 'threatened'; must they also, then, be transgressed? If this is so, then a 'border' which is not transgressed is also not 'maintained' and does not 'appear as' a 'border'.

There is a connection, therefore, between what threatens and what transgresses. Is *this* the 'designation of that which is threatening', a 'designation of that which is threatening' as being that which transgresses?

'[B]orders' are uncertain; they are claimed as known and yet might only 'appear' to be 'borders', being, therefore, what are not 'borders'. Or, by appearing as 'borders', there are then other 'borders' which do not 'appear'. If 'borders' are claimed as bordering something, there must also be that which is not bordered; which is outside the 'border'. '[B]orders' are between what is inside the 'borders' and what is outside them. What is outside, though, is also inside, through "transgression"; there can be no bordering of something outside which is 'threatening', since this must transgress 'the border' in order for 'borders' 'to be maintained, or even appear as borders'.

There might be 'border objects' before "maintenance-through-transgression", but it is after this that there is an 'appearance' of them. They are 'hence disgusting' – are they then not 'disgusting' before they 'appear'? Their 'appearance' is part of 'the process of "maintenance-through-transgression"'; their 'appearance' is 'disgusting'. What is not 'disgusting', therefore, is what does not 'appear'.

'Border objects are hence disgusting, whilst disgust engenders border objects'. There are no 'border objects' which have appeared that are not 'disgusting'. There is, though, 'disgust' before 'border objects' since 'disgust engenders border objects'. Since 'border objects' are 'disgusting' and 'disgust engenders border objects', the 'border objects' are implicated in their own engendering. They 'appear' as 'part of the process of "maintenance-through-transgression"' but are engendered through their own 'disgust'.

When 'the border is transformed into an object precisely as an effect of disgust (spitting/vomiting)', there is first 'the border', then 'an object'; the 'border' is now 'an object'. Here, there are 'border objects', neither 'border' nor 'object'. It is 'border objects' that are 'part of the process of "maintenance-through-transgression"' by their 'appearance'; 'border objects' are the "transgression", or 'border objects' transgress.

If what is 'disgusting' is 'border objects' and there is a 'relationship between disgust reactions and the transformation of borders into objects', then there is a claim that what is

'disgusting' must be an 'object' – either one that has been 'transformed into an object' or a 'border object'. '[B]orders', therefore, are not necessarily 'disgusting' or 'sickening' or 'an effect of disgust', whilst 'objects' always are at least one of these things. It is the 'transformation of borders into objects' which has a 'relationship' with 'disgust reactions' and which 'is sickening'. It is 'border objects' which are 'disgusting'. It is the materiality – the object-ness - of things which 'disgust'. '[B]orders' alone do not 'disgust' because they are not claimed as 'objects'.

9 Liposuction Surgery

The screenshot shows a website page for 'Liposuction Surgery'. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'COSMETIC SURGERY FOR WOMEN', 'COSMETIC SURGERY FOR MEN', 'TREATMENTS', 'SHOP', 'PRICING', 'CONDITIONS', 'OUR CLINICS', 'WHY CHOOSE US', and 'EXPERTS & SURGEONS'. Below the menu, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'COSMETIC SURGERY FOR WOMEN > THE BODY > LIPOSUCTION SURGERY'. The main content area is titled 'ABOUT LIPOSUCTION SURGERY'. It contains the following text:

For a lot of people losing weight, toning up and achieving the figure they want requires a combination of healthy eating and regular exercise, but some can be left with stubborn pockets of fat that no amount of exercise or dieting can shift.

Liposuction surgery, also known as fat removal surgery, is designed to help remove these areas of fat and reshape particular areas of the body* – remember it is not designed to be a quick weight loss tool!

Typical problem areas that can be treated with liposuction surgery include:

- Arms
- Inner and Outer Thighs
- Stomach (or Abdomen)
- Hips
- Knees
- Chin

Liposuction surgery can be performed on any area of the body and the technique is often used as part of other cosmetic surgery procedures such as the tummy tuck, breast reduction and male chest reduction.

At The Harley Medical Group we always aim to ensure that our patients get the right procedure for them which is why we offer traditional Liposuction, Vaser Liposuction and Laser Liposuction.

There is a 'BOOK YOUR FREE CONSULTATION' button at the bottom of the main content area. To the right, there is a 'BOOK A CONSULTATION' form with fields for 'Full name', 'Email address', 'Phone number', and 'Postcode'. Below the form is a 'BOOK MY FREE CONSULTATION' button. Further down, there are buttons for 'CALL ME BACK' and 'REQUEST A BROCHURE'. At the bottom of the page, there is a search bar and a 'RELATED SERVICES' section with links for 'Liposuction Surgery' and 'Vaser Liposuction'.

I am reading part of a web page from The Harley Medical Group, accessed from the home page by choosing 'COSMETIC SURGERY FOR WOMEN' and then 'LIPOSUCTION SURGERY'⁴⁴.

'Liposuction surgery can be performed on any area of the body and the technique is often used as part of other cosmetic surgery procedures such as the tummy tuck, breast reduction and male chest reduction'. 'Liposuction' exists before the action, so it is the performance of it that produces difference and makes it a 'technique'. 'Liposuction surgery' exists prior to 'the body' it performs 'on', and, when considering this performance in terms of Judith Butler's work on performative acts, my reading of 'Liposuction surgery' connects it to her reading of 'social action' when she writes that 'social action requires a

⁴⁴ The Harley Medical Group, <http://web.archive.org/web/20150321163714/https://www.harleymedical.co.uk/cosmetic-surgery-for-women/the-body/liposuction-surgery>.

performance which is *repeated*. This repetition is at once a reenactment and reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established; it is the mundane and ritualized form of their legitimation⁴⁵.

Liposuction surgery's performance is always 'on' 'the body', and so is not part of 'the body'; this separation means that it 'can be performed on any area of the body'. 'Liposuction surgery' is therefore repeatable. What exists as 'Liposuction surgery' is constituted as the same in its performance on the 'body', a 'reenactment and reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established' (Butler, p. 526). What is 'socially established' here, in my reading of the claims that are being made around 'Liposuction surgery' is the claim to legitimacy – this is an acceptable 'surgery' for society. The 'legitimation' is sited in the claim to being a 'help' to 'people' to achieve 'the figure they want', which is less than they have at the moment. 'Liposuction surgery' is pre-existing and legitimate because 'losing weight, toning up and achieving the figure they want' is also pre-existing and legitimate.

The 'body' is fragmented, being divided into areas, it is passive, being 'performed on' but not performing itself, and it is excessive. The 'cosmetic surgery procedures' make these areas less by tucking and reducing what is too much, the 'tummy', the 'breast' and the 'male chest'.

What is at stake for 'the body' that is performed 'on' but does not itself perform? It becomes the site of performance where it is the 'Liposuction surgery' which performs, whilst 'the body' is passive. '[T]he body' is reduced by this performance; areas are tucked and reduced by a 'technique' which is separate from the 'area of the body'. This 'body' is not 'the figure they want', it is the thing that has 'the figure they want' imposed on it. There are, then, claims to another 'body' being present after 'surgery', but this 'body' is only a possibility; it never exists but is always deferred, together with 'the figure they want'. Butler

⁴⁵ Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40 (4), (1988), p. 526.

claims that '[t]he formulation of the body as a mode of dramatizing or enacting possibilities offers a way to understand how a cultural convention is embodied and enacted' (p. 525). If 'the body' is formulated as 'a mode of dramatizing or enacting possibilities', then 'Liposuction surgery' is the performance 'on' it that enables this. It is not the 'losing weight, toning up and achieving the figure they want' which this is about, but the performance of 'Liposuction surgery' 'on' 'the body'; it is this enactment which matters, claiming to create the 'cultural convention' of 'the figure they want'.

Claims to gendering are here. 'WOMEN' and 'MEN' both have 'COSMETIC SURGERY' 'FOR' them, but not in the same way; this 'COSMETIC SURGERY' is gendered. Whilst 'TREATMENTS' or 'EXPERTS AND SURGEONS', are not defined by whether they are 'FOR' 'WOMEN' or 'MEN', 'male chest reduction' is gendered, it is the 'and' to the 'tummy tuck, breast reduction', but still located in this page which is 'COSMETIC SURGERY FOR WOMEN'. This is a claim to be both inside and outside; it is, and is not, 'COSMETIC SURGERY FOR WOMEN' in its claim to maleness. The claim that 'COSMETIC SURGERY' is 'FOR' a particular gender, is then troubled by the introduction of another, the male. 'Liposuction surgery' is claimed as part of 'COSMETIC SURGERY FOR WOMEN' but is also 'part of' 'male chest reduction'. 'Liposuction surgery' therefore can be accessed through 'COSMETIC SURGERY FOR WOMEN' and claimed as 'SURGERY FOR WOMEN' but might also be part of 'COSMETIC SURGERY FOR MEN'. The claim here is that 'COSMETIC SURGERY' is 'FOR' a specific gender, but also that it is not. This is a perspective that claims 'Liposuction surgery' and 'cosmetic surgery procedures' is 'FOR' 'WOMEN' and 'MEN', but then separates what is for both – 'Liposuction surgery' - into genders. What I tentatively read here is a perspective that genders what is not always claimed as gendered in order to imply that 'surgery' for 'WOMEN' and 'MEN' is different to each other, and therefore to claim 'WOMEN' and 'MEN' as different.

'BOOK YOUR FREE CONSULTATION' and 'BOOK MY FREE CONSULTATION'. Under this, is the text 'Consultations are FREE and you are under no obligation'. This web

page, then, might claim to be 'ABOUT LIPOSUCTION SURGERY', but this is also about what is 'FREE', which is not the 'surgery' but the 'CONSULTATION'. Despite the repetition of 'FREE', there is here also what is not 'FREE'; that which is not 'a CONSULTATION'. There is a box at the top of the page containing 'PRICING', so there is a cost elsewhere, but this is not what the page is 'ABOUT'.

The 'PRICING' web page includes a 'finance calculator' which allows you to 'choose your treatment' and includes a sliding bar which changes the 'A.P.R.' and the 'monthly payment' depending on the 'term' selected⁴⁶. The text reads 'We understand finance availability can sometimes be a barrier to undergoing a Cosmetic Surgery procedure or committing to a course of Laser & Skin Treatments, so hope, with manageable payments, we can provide a feasible solution to suits [sic] your needs'. As it is the '[w]e' that provides 'a feasible solution', it is you which has the problem with 'payments' that cannot be managed. '[Y]our needs', though, are about paying for '[s]urgery', not the need to have '[s]urgery'.

The claim here is that the '[w]e' understands the possible 'barrier' to meeting 'your needs', which is 'finance availability'. So, this 'barrier' is between 'a Cosmetic Surgery procedure' or 'Laser & Skin Treatments' and something else, possibly 'your needs'. These procedures are 'needs', therefore, the question is not whether the procedures are necessary, but rather of how they can be afforded. The 'hope' is that there is a 'feasible solution', although this depends on 'status', including being a 'UK resident for a minimum of 3 years', being 'Employed Full/Part time' and being '21 or over', so there is not a 'feasible solution' for everyone.

The web pages ask that you 'Please contact one of our Client Service Advisors on 0800 288 4110 or discuss your financial options with one of our nurses during your consultation at your local clinic'. There is no description on the website about what a 'consultation'

⁴⁶ <https://www.harleymedical.co.uk/pricing-offers>.

might be, except that it includes the opportunity to ‘discuss your financial options with one of our nurses’. Here, ‘nurses’ are not medical, their function is their ability to ‘discuss your financial options’.

‘Consultations are FREE and you are under no obligation’, but this therefore produces an ‘obligation’, although ‘you’ are not ‘under’ it. This ‘obligation’, then, could be about what is not ‘FREE’; the ‘obligation’ is not the ‘CONSULTATION’. For ‘you’, therefore, there is a ‘FREE CONSULTATION’, but also an implication of something which is not here, which is not ‘FREE’ for ‘you’. In addition, when ‘you’ ‘BOOK A CONSULTATION’, the site states ‘Our consultations are no-obligation and free however to secure your consultation we will take a **fully refundable** £25 deposit at the time of booking⁴⁷. ‘[C]onsultations’ are only ‘FREE’, therefore, with a ‘£25 deposit’. There is no indication of when or how the ‘**fully refundable** £25’ might be refunded, so what is ‘FREE’ has a cost.

In the ‘website terms and conditions’⁴⁸ the ‘you’ is defined as ‘the user or viewer of our website’ whilst “us” or “we” refers to the owner of the website’. There are different aspects to ownership here. On the ‘LIPOSUCTION SURGERY’ page, the ‘MY’ owns ‘CONSULTATION’ in ‘BOOK MY FREE CONSULTATION’, as does the ‘YOUR’ in ‘BOOK YOUR FREE CONSULTATION’. The ‘MY’ is the ‘you’ which uses or views ‘the website’, not the “us” or “we” that own it. The conferring of ownership, therefore, is “us” and “we” who are claiming a separateness from the ‘website’, unlike the ‘MY’ and ‘you’ which are part of it.

In the repetition of ‘FREE’, I read not only a presence of what is not ‘FREE’, but also a claim to freedom and choice; ‘YOUR FREE CONSULTATION’ could be arranged by clicking the black rectangle or the blue rectangle, by completing the white boxes under ‘Talk to one of our friendly advisers’ and choosing the circled arrow by ‘BOOK MY FREE CONSULTATION’, or by clicking the telephone icon to ‘CALL ME BACK’ or the brochure

⁴⁷ <https://www.harleymedical.co.uk/contact-us/book-your-free-consultation>.

⁴⁸ <https://www.harleymedical.co.uk/terms-conditions>.

icon to 'REQUEST A BROCHURE'. This claim to there being a choice, then, is a choice of different ways to 'BOOK' a 'CONSULTATION'; there is no freedom to choose not to 'BOOK'. In 'you are under no obligation' there is also a claim to freedom; despite my reading that 'obligation' is a possibility of cost, this is not stated; 'you are under no obligation' regarding anything. There is still 'obligation', however. The claim is not that 'you' will never be 'under' any 'obligation'.

There is a claim to an 'our' and a 'YOUR', a 'you', a 'MY' and a 'me' here and it is the 'YOUR' and the 'MY' who are advised (by 'we?') to book the 'FREE CONSULTATION' and talk to 'our friendly advisers'. The 'YOUR' has not yet booked a 'CONSULTATION', then, and so has not yet undergone 'Liposuction surgery', but I do not read 'our friendly advisers' as necessarily having had 'Liposuction surgery' either; it is the provision of knowledge 'ABOUT LIPOSUCTION SURGERY' which differentiates the 'YOUR' and 'our friendly advisers' here rather than 'Liposuction surgery' itself. There is a before and after 'surgery', and this web page is concerned with the before; 'our patients' are not 'you' because, for them, something has already happened, whilst for 'you' this is yet to come.

'[L]osing weight, toning up and achieving the figure they want' are different but are also connected; they are what 'requires a combination of healthy eating and regular exercise'. This is the case '[f]or a lot of people', so there are other 'people' for whom 'losing weight, toning up and achieving the figure they want' is not gained through 'healthy eating and regular exercise'. If these things are connected, then to lose 'weight' alone would not achieve 'the figure they want', the loss alone is insufficient. '[L]osing weight'; the loss implies a remainder; the 'people' have lost 'weight' and what remains is toned 'up', so there is a raising of what remains, which leads to achieving 'the figure they want'. This is a perspective on what 'people' 'want' which is not a claim to be 'people'. My reading here is that there are 'a lot of people' who 'achieve the figure they want' through 'healthy eating and regular exercise', and there are 'some' who do this but are 'left with stubborn pockets of fat', but there are no 'people' who do not 'want' a 'figure'; the 'want' is universal.

The pose in the picture. I tentatively read this as female gendered, since this figure is present within the 'COSMETIC SURGERY FOR WOMEN' page, but remembering 'male chest reduction' I am also concerned by this claim; it is not as simple as reading this figure as 'WOMEN'. The figure's legs and stomach are turned away from the text, her head and shoulder turned towards it, whilst her gaze is away from the text. 'Typical problem areas that can be treated with liposuction surgery include' '[a]rms', '[i]nner and [o]uter [t]highs', '[s]tomach (or [a]bdomen)', '[h]ips', '[k]nees' and '[c]hin'. The figure has these body parts, so I might read a claim that this woman is constituted by this list, and yet other areas are also shown, the figure is more than 'problem areas'. If the figure in the picture is being claimed at least as being connected to these body parts it might be possible to read the picture as showing '[t]ypical problem areas' despite the addition of what are not 'problem areas'. If I look at the figure's arms, though, I find it difficult to locate the 'stubborn pockets of fat' that are claimed to be removable by 'Liposuction surgery'. This figure is therefore not the body that has 'problem areas'. Might this figure instead be 'the figure they want'?

For a lot of people losing weight, toning up and achieving the figure they want requires a combination of healthy eating and regular exercise, but some can be left with stubborn pockets of fat that no amount of exercise or dieting can shift. Liposuction surgery, also known as fat removal surgery, is designed to help remove these areas of fat and reshape particular areas of the body* - remember it is not designed to be a quick weight loss tool!

The '*' leads to 'terms and conditions'⁴⁹ at the bottom of the page. When accessed, the 'terms and conditions' web page includes 'terms and conditions' for an 'Easter Egg Hunt – 20% off all treatments', and '[t]he Harley Medical Group competition in conjunction with Glamour magazine, Main prize: One laser or skin treatment course up to the value of £600 (Laser Hair Removal, Acne treatment or Stretch mark & Scar Revision) Runner-up

⁴⁹ <http://web.archive.org/web/20150321182009/https://www.harleymedical.co.uk/terms-conditions>.

prizes: One of Five The Harley Medical Group Skin Glow packages'. There is also an option to 'SHARE YOUR STORY'. Here, '[p]atients who wish to enter the monthly prize draw for "Share My Story" must submit their story by the date stated within the relevant month' and then '[e]ach monthly winner will be rewarded with a £50 Laser & Skin treatment'.

The prizes offer reductions on treatments, but from this perspective, there will always be more treatments needed (and the cost of these treatments are not usually fully met by the 'prize'. There is no end, either to the money being spent by '[p]atients' or to the treatments.

'[A]chieving the figure they want'. '[A] lot of people' do not have 'the figure they want' since it is here still a 'want'. The 'figure' is not 'a lot of people'; it is their 'want' but it is not them. I am reading a seeing here from the perspective; 'the figure' is a seeing of people's 'want', and I am connecting this with the picture by the text as a claim to being 'the figure they want'. '[P]eople', therefore, may have a 'figure', but it is not the one 'they want' and it is not seen here. The figure in the picture, then, is not 'they', it is not 'a lot of people' and it is not those who are 'left with stubborn pockets of fat'.

Even after 'a combination of healthy eating and regular exercise', 'some' will not have 'the figure they want' because they are 'left with stubborn pockets of fat that no amount of exercise or dieting can shift'. '[T]he figure they want', then, has no 'stubborn pockets of fat', this remains with the 'people'. For 'some', there is no possibility of 'achieving the figure they want' through 'healthy eating and regular exercise', but this does not diminish the 'want'; it is always there, even after the 'people' have been 'left'. This wanting, then, is constant; it will never be fulfilled because 'no amount of exercise or dieting can shift' these 'stubborn pockets of fat'.

There is a claim that '[f]or a lot of people...achieving the figure they want requires a combination of healthy eating and regular exercise', but I do not read that the 'you' here

is part of 'a lot of people'; rather that the 'you' is 'some' 'people' who has been 'left with stubborn pockets of fat'. Even for 'a lot of people', anyway, the process of 'achieving the figure they want' is ongoing; they are 'toning' and 'losing' and 'achieving'. For me, here, no-one has achieved 'the figure they want'; it is always deferred.

'[S]tubborn pockets of fat'; to whom are these 'pockets' 'stubborn'? These 'stubborn pockets' are not the 'some' who are 'with' them; there is a separation between the 'some' and the 'pockets'. The 'some' and the 'stubborn pockets' though are together in that they are both 'left'; it is those who are 'achieving the figure they want' through 'healthy eating and regular exercise' who have 'left'. The stubbornness, then, is directed to the 'some'; it is a refusal to 'shift' no matter how much 'exercise or dieting' there is.

From this perspective, there is always a desire from 'people' to achieve 'the figure they want'. If they are 'left' with 'stubborn pockets of fat' then these can be removed with 'Liposuction surgery' which 'is designed to help remove these areas of fat and reshape particular areas of the body'; there is no possibility of not wanting to remove 'these areas of fat'. 'Liposuction surgery' is 'also known as fat removal surgery', so the 'fat' is removed from something; here the 'fat' is not 'left'. What is desired then is to not be 'with' 'fat', and particularly 'these areas of fat' – these 'stubborn pockets', but whether through 'healthy eating and regular exercise' or 'Liposuction surgery', the 'fat' must not be 'with' 'the figure' or it will not be 'the figure they want'.

'Liposuction surgery' though, is only 'designed to help remove these areas of fat', so it does not 'remove these areas of fat' on its own, it follows 'healthy eating and regular exercise' but does not replace them. I read a claim here though, that whilst the perspective knows what 'people' need to do to achieve 'the figure they want', 'they' are not so certain, and need to have this explained '- remember, it is not designed to be a quick weight loss tool!' There are those who need to be reminded of this, who have forgotten, and therefore believe that 'Liposuction surgery' *is* 'designed to be a quick

weight loss tool'. My reading, though, is that it is the lack of quickness which must be remembered, not that there is a claim that this is not a 'weight loss tool' at all.

It is not 'Liposuction surgery' though, which designs or performs, or the 'body' which is 'performed' 'on'. There is then, something which is not these things, but which enacts the performing and the designing. 'Liposuction surgery' is also a 'technique' which is 'often used as part of other cosmetic surgery procedures' and so there is also a using here which again is by something else, implied but not present, and it is this which is claimed to do what 'some' 'people' cannot. In 'designed' I read a designer of 'Liposuction surgery', which leads to an implication of a purpose – this is what 'Liposuction surgery' is *for*; to 'help remove these areas of fat and reshape particular areas of the body', but also a design which excludes; 'Liposuction surgery' being 'not designed to be a quick weight loss tool!' What is not excluded, however, is the possibility of 'Liposuction surgery' being used as 'a quick weight loss tool', of it being used in a way it was not 'designed' for. Perhaps it is the '!' which causes me to read this as a claim that whilst it is not 'designed to be a quick weight loss tool' this is not to claim that could not be a possibility.

The 'weight' that is lost, then, is 'fat', which is lost through 'removal'. This 'loss' is effected by 'surgery', not by 'exercise or dieting'; 'fat' is surgically removed, and so whilst 'losing weight, toning up and achieving the figure they want' has been something 'people' do, this 'surgery' is done to 'people'. '[S]ome' 'people' on their own, therefore are not able to achieve 'the figure they want', but what is outside them, 'Liposuction surgery', is 'designed to help' what cannot be done by 'people' alone.

'At The Harley Medical Group we always aim to ensure that our patients get the right procedure for them'. '[W]e', then, 'aim to ensure' but are not claimed to perform the 'procedure'. The ensuring, too, is not certain; it is aimed at by the 'Harley Medical Group' without necessarily being carried out. From the perspective of the 'we', therefore, there is a separation from what the 'we' does, which is aiming, and ensuring; the getting, which is by 'our patients', and the 'right procedure', which is *not* done by the 'we' or 'our

patients'. There is the possibility that 'our patients' get the *wrong* 'procedure', but not a possibility that 'our patients' would get no 'procedure' at all. This 'procedure' will be 'Liposuction'; it is the difference which is what depends on the 'procedure' being 'right' or not, either 'traditional Liposuction', 'Vasar Liposuction' or 'Laser Liposuction'. Some form of 'Liposuction' therefore is always the 'right procedure'.

'Liposuction surgery' is 'performed'; it is an act. This performance is sited 'on' 'the body', making 'the body' the place of performance. The performance takes place on 'any area of the body', splitting 'the body' into what is 'area', each of which can be the site of performance. It is 'Liposuction surgery', then, that frames 'the body' as that which can be 'performed' 'on'. Whilst 'people' and 'you' are already split from 'the figure they want', this now makes a claim for 'the body' not being 'you' either. The 'body' is not your 'body', but something that is already there and known as this site of performance.

10 Samantha Murray on 'Banded Bodies'

Medical narratives surrounding the apparent threat posed by the alleged Western 'obesity epidemic' have attempted to shift dominant responses to fatness from a cultural aesthetic objection to fat flesh, to a more 'neutral' politically correct concern with 'health' and 'fitness'. It could, however, be argued that the discourse of 'health' is an effective and authoritative 'disguise' for generalised social anxieties over excessive bodies and non-normative modes of (gendered) embodiment.⁵⁰

'Medical narratives' are claimed to surround the 'apparent threat', rather than being the 'threat' itself, or even to be about this 'threat'. These 'narratives' are '[m]edical', there may be other 'narratives' which surround and are not '[m]edical', but it is what is '[m]edical' that matters here. Here, there is an about-ness also in their 'surrounding'; they are not what they surround, and this separates them from 'the apparent threat'. 'Medical narratives' are not 'the apparent threat', a 'threat' which is both obvious and present in its 'apparent'-ness - it has been made 'apparent' and so can be seen - but it is also missing; 'the apparent threat' is not there as a 'threat' at all, it merely *appears* to be. In 'apparent threat' then, I read a claim to visibility of a 'threat' that, whilst it can be seen, may not, according to this perspective, be *real*, may not be a 'threat' at all except to the '[m]edical narratives' who, by 'surrounding' it, are identifying it as such.

The question of 'posed'; there is an 'apparent threat' which is claimed as 'posed by the alleged Western "obesity epidemic"' - these '[m]edical narratives' surround the 'apparent threat' because of this 'alleged Western "obesity epidemic"' which poses. There is a

⁵⁰ Samantha Murray, "'Banded Bodies': The Somatechnics of Gastric Banding' *Somatechnics: Queering the Technologisation of Bodies*, ed. by Samantha Murray and Nikki Sullivan, (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 153. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

placing in this posing, a positioning of 'the apparent threat' by a perspective which is not the '[m]edical narratives surrounding' it, but who knows what these 'narratives' do not – that the 'threat' is 'apparent', that there is a posing of this 'threat'. It is this perspective which surrounds "obesity epidemic" in quotes, producing not a claim to an obesity epidemic without quotes, but something else, a claim to know what '[m]edical narratives' do not about this "obesity epidemic".

The '[m]edical narratives' do not claim the 'threat' as 'apparent' or the 'Western "obesity epidemic"' as 'alleged', it is the perspective on these 'narratives' which does this. 'Medical narratives' and the 'apparent threat posed by the alleged Western "obesity epidemic"' produce each other in a connection which the perspective identifies but claims to be separate from.

It is the 'alleged Western "obesity epidemic"' which poses this 'threat', and I am reading the possibility of a prior-ness of this 'threat' before the '[m]edical narratives', which are 'surrounding' something which is claimed as being already there *before* being surrounded by '[m]edical narratives'. Even before the 'apparent threat' is the 'alleged Western "obesity epidemic"' which was there already to pose this 'threat'. Again, there is a claim to a relationship between the '[m]edical narratives' and what they surround; if the posing is done by or for them, this raises the question for me about whether '[m]edical narratives' do follow this 'apparent threat posed by the alleged Western "obesity epidemic"', or whether the 'surrounding' itself is what produces it?

In being 'posed' there is not only that which poses, but perhaps something that is 'posed' *to*. Similarly, the 'apparent threat' is threatening something. There is something else here, not '[m]edical narratives', not 'the alleged Western "obesity epidemic"' which is being threatened.

If there is uncertainty over the 'apparent threat', there is further ambiguity raised from the 'alleged Western "obesity epidemic"'. This perspective claims something else has

'alleged' that there is a 'Western "obesity epidemic"' that the perspective reads. Here, "'obesity epidemic'", with quote marks claims another perspective which does not put this in quotes. This further claim to doubt "'obesity epidemic'", however, does not include the 'Western' which describes it. There is, therefore, no uncertainty as to what 'Western' is; it is known and accepted in a way that "'obesity epidemic'" is not.

'Medical narratives' are what have 'attempted to shift dominant responses to fatness'. This 'shift' is not necessarily complete or successful; there has only been an attempt at shifting. I read a claim that there must be a response to 'fatness' on the part of '[m]edical narratives'; their attempt is to 'shift dominant responses to fatness', not to have no response. I do not read a claim to separation between the perspective and '[m]edical narratives' in this acceptance that 'fatness' engenders 'responses'; for me, the perspective accepts the connection between 'fatness' and 'responses', and the state of 'fatness' itself, unlike the doubts I read from the perspective surrounding 'alleged Western "obesity epidemic"'.

It is not 'fatness' itself which must 'shift', but the 'responses' 'to' it. Not only must there be a response to 'fatness', there is also more than one response; 'fatness' engenders 'responses', some of which – the 'dominant responses' - are where the attempting to 'shift' occurs. '[R]esponses' to 'fatness' which are *not* 'dominant', therefore, may still exist but '[m]edical narratives' do not attempt to 'shift' them. In '[m]edical narratives', therefore, I read an assumption or a positioning of *power* – these 'narratives', it is claimed, are able to attempt to 'shift' the 'dominant responses'. Whether or not they are successful is not at stake at first so much as the claim that '[m]edical narratives' are *entitled* to attempt to do so.

I read '[m]edical narratives' as something claimed as constructed or created by something that is not the perspective. This perspective, therefore, identifies what '[m]edical narratives' are attempting to do, whilst not being part of these 'narratives' – it reads, but is not part of them. In this identifying, though, I also read a claim that this

perspective is not necessarily part of 'dominant responses', because those 'responses' are not '[m]edical narratives'.

There is a claim of an outsidership by the perspective which reads the '[m]edical narratives' and which identifies the 'threat' as 'apparent' and the 'Western "obesity" epidemic' as 'alleged' *because* of this claim of not being part of this discourse, of not being one of the 'dominant responses to fatness', whilst knowing what they are. What matters here is that it is the claim to outsidership which produces this claim to knowledge. An understanding of what is happening with these '[m]edical narratives' and their attempt to 'shift dominant responses to fatness' can only be achieved through the perspective's claim to *not* being either '[m]edical narratives' or 'dominant responses'.

The attempt to 'shift dominant responses to fatness' is 'from a cultural aesthetic objection to fat flesh, to a more "neutral" politically correct concern with "health" and "fitness"'. '[F]atness', therefore, is 'fat flesh' when it is sited within 'a cultural aesthetic', the 'cultural aesthetic' objects to 'fatness' as 'fat flesh'. '[F]lesh', therefore, can be something other than 'fat', but this would not be objected to by the 'cultural aesthetic'. The 'dominant responses' are part of the 'cultural aesthetic' (or this is part of them). What dominates is an 'objection to fat flesh' from the perspective of what is claimed as 'cultural' and 'aesthetic'.

The 'objection' is not to 'fatness', therefore, and there will always be 'dominant responses to fatness' whether or not there is a 'cultural aesthetic objection'. The 'cultural aesthetic' does not object to 'fatness' until it is 'fat flesh', so 'flesh' is 'cultural' and 'aesthetic', whilst 'fatness' without 'flesh' is not.

The attempt to 'shift dominant responses' is 'from a cultural aesthetic objection to fat flesh, to a more "neutral" politically correct concern with "health" and "fitness"'. 'Medical narratives', it is claimed, when attempting to 'shift', already know where these 'dominant responses' should be shifted *to* – this already exists.

If the attempt is to 'shift' to a 'more "neutral" politically correct concern', then what is "neutral" (and what is not) must be known. '[P]olitically correct' is 'more "neutral" than a 'cultural aesthetic objection' – so 'a cultural aesthetic objection to fat flesh' therefore is less "neutral". What is "neutral" then is known enough to be compared, to be 'more' than, but it is not defined, and in these quotation marks I read a reservation about the word from the perspective. These marks call into question "neutral" with and without marks; 'neutral' exists as not-here, as something that, (according to this perspective) is the thing that is *really* 'neutral'.

"[H]ealth" and "fitness" are not the same – they are separated by quotation marks and 'and', but they share the same characteristics of being 'more "neutral" and 'politically correct' than 'a cultural aesthetic objection to fat flesh' and are both things that '[m]edical narratives' 'have attempted to shift dominant responses to fatness' to. Being 'more "neutral"', however, only makes them 'more' than 'a cultural aesthetic objection to fat flesh' – it does not make them "neutral" and certainly not neutral. Like "obesity epidemic", I read a claim to distance in these quotations, a claim that these words come from outside the perspective. "[N]eutral", then, is claimed as not 'neutral', "health" and "fitness" are not 'health' and 'fitness'. '[P]olitically correct concern', however, does not have this claim through quotation marks; it is claimed as understood or owned by the perspective, not being open to question or uncertainty.

I read 'politically correct concern' as something claiming to be concerned with a wider scope than a single manifest body. I also read 'cultural aesthetic' as claiming an extent beyond the body, as does the 'Western "obesity epidemic"'. This 'shift' therefore is not a move from the singular to the plural, from one body to a society, but as 'responses' to 'fatness' which always construct the body and 'flesh' as part of something else. What is at stake here, therefore, is a positioning of 'fatness' and therefore the 'fat' body as something that is political, that is 'cultural', that is part of 'Western', and therefore, that is not one 'fat' body that does not have significance beyond itself. '[F]atness' is, it is claimed, a 'concern'

for society. I do not read the reservation of the marks around “obesity epidemic” as necessarily reading against this; whilst there are doubts claimed over the term “obesity epidemic”, there are no doubts over ‘politically correct’, ‘cultural aesthetic’ and ‘Western’. Whilst there are issues raised in the way some terms are set apart, therefore, there is no issue with the idea that ‘fatness’ is part of a discourse which reaches beyond a ‘fat’ body.

It could, however, be argued that the discourse of ‘health’ is an effective and authoritative ‘disguise’ for generalised social anxieties over excessive bodies and non-normative modes of (gendered) embodiment. (p. 153)

I have read uncertainty or reservation in Murray’s perspective on ‘[m]edical narratives’ attempt ‘to shift dominant responses to fatness’. Here, in the ‘however’, I read a turn which further troubles the claim that concerns for “health” are ‘more “neutral” and ‘politically correct’. If ‘[i]t could, however, be argued’, though, then who is arguing? I do not read this as an argument by ‘[m]edical narratives’; this, in its ‘however’, is an argument *against* these. I read instead a claim that this is Murray’s perspective, that it is she who argues, whilst claiming that this is not her argument – this is not *I argue* – and therefore that this argument is available to others; it is already there. I read Murray’s perspective, therefore, as firstly identifying the claims of ‘[m]edical narratives’ as troubling by claiming a separation of some of them by marks and so denying these as Murray’s perspective, but in addition to this problematising of ‘[m]edical narratives’, now focusing on the ‘discourse of “health”’ as equally problematic.

Does this, then, mean that Murray claims to know what is problematic about what is “neutral”/neutral about “health”? I read that it does; that Murray, after setting “health” within quotation marks as troubling, then argues for what the ‘discourse of “health”’ is – ‘an effective and authoritative “disguise” for generalised social anxieties over excessive bodies and non-normative modes of (gendered) embodiment.’ It is not that Murray calls into question ‘politically correct’ – there are no marks around it – but that her reading of “health” is that it is not ‘politically correct’ at all. This is a perspective which problematises

the claim from '[m]edical narratives' that the response to 'fatness' is more 'politically correct' when it is constructed as a 'concern with "health" and "fitness"' because it questions the claim that this is 'more "neutral"'.

Is 'the discourse of "health"' "neutral" rather than neutral, because of the possibility of an argument that it is a "disguise"? As the 'discourse of "health"' is described as 'effective and authoritative' I read again a claim to power or entitlement – that those who control this 'discourse' have the authority to do so. The 'discourse of "health"' then, controls 'generalised social anxieties over excessive bodies and non-normative modes of (gendered) embodiment' through "disguise". The 'generalised social anxieties', however, are recognised by the perspective – the "disguise" has failed as far as the perspective is concerned; it is not 'effective' for Murray, who can identify the "disguise". By describing it as 'effective', though, this perspective identifies others (those who are not the perspective) for whom 'the discourse of "health"' is 'effective', who therefore do not see it is a "disguise". If it is not 'effective' for Murray, is it therefore also not 'authoritative' from this perspective? If so, its entitlement to control the 'discourse of "health"' comes into question. Although I read identification of authority, therefore, I do not necessarily read an acceptance of legitimacy of this authority in Murray's perspective on those that control the 'discourse of "health"' as a "disguise".

I have read that there are those who control or construct the 'discourse of "health"' in order to make it a "disguise". It is difficult, though, to read who it is that controls. I read that there is a claim to something else being present; that '[m]edical narratives' have something behind them, that 'the discourse of "health"' is constructed as a "disguise". There is, therefore, something which controls (the '[m]edical narratives', the 'discourse of "health"') and something that these are for, or about, but that this perspective claims to be neither of these.

It is the 'social anxieties' which are disguised, not the 'excessive bodies and non-normative modes of (gendered) embodiment'. As these 'bodies' and 'modes' are not in

“disguise” – are they, therefore, claimed as without “disguise”, and, if so, might that be a claim to be present in a way that ‘social anxieties’ are not?

The ‘discourse of “health”’ is not concerned with disguising ‘excessive bodies’, but with disguising ‘generalised social anxieties’ about these ‘bodies’. In “disguise” I do not read an attempt to deny these ‘anxieties’; they remain but with an addition, something that covers or hides, but does not remove them. The ‘social anxieties’, though, are described as ‘over’ the ‘excessive bodies’ – they cover these ‘bodies’, so these ‘bodies’ and ‘modes’ are not necessarily present without disguised ‘social anxieties’ being ‘over’ them. There is no claim, therefore, that ‘generalised social anxieties’ could ever not be present; ‘excessive bodies and non-normative modes of (gendered) embodiment’ *will always* cause anxiety; all that can be done by ‘the discourse of “health”’ is to “disguise” it – to present it as something else, and yet in the quotation marks which surround it, the effectiveness of this disguising is called into question.


In ‘excessive’, I read ‘bodies’ that are somehow too much, that are in addition, that are extra. Murray therefore produces an idea of ‘bodies’ which are *not* ‘excessive’. These ‘bodies’ do not generate ‘social anxieties’ and are not disguised. What is ‘excessive’ is therefore *known* by this perspective, as is what is ‘non-normative’. Unlike “obesity epidemic” (or “neutral”, “health”, “fitness” and “disguise”), ‘excessive’ and ‘non-normative’ do not have marks around them in Murray’s text, and in this I do not read a questioning from the perspective over what ‘excessive bodies’ are. ‘[B]odies’ are first known, in order to be then constructed as ‘excessive’, and this claim to a prior knowing is not questioned.

‘[N]on-normative modes of (gendered) embodiment’, in addition to producing the normative body, also allows for ‘non-normative modes’ that are not ‘(gendered)’. It is ‘(gendered) embodiment’, though, which is of ‘concern’ here, which causes ‘generalised social anxieties’. Whilst ‘excessive bodies’ and ‘non-normative modes of (gendered) embodiment’ are not the same, they are connected – I am reading that it is the

excessiveness of a body that is producing it as 'non-normative' in its '(gendered) embodiment'. A normative mode of '(gendered) embodiment' then, is not 'excessive'. Murray's claim to problematise the 'dominant responses' to 'fat' and 'fatness' is therefore complicated by her own unquestioning acceptance of what 'bodies' are, whether in 'excessive' or non-excessive states, and what gender is, whether in a normative or 'non-normative' state.

10.1 Gastric Banding

Before I consider the section of Murray's text which considers bariatric surgery, I want to read further from The Harley Medical Group's website⁵¹ following my reading of their Liposuction pages. This page is on gastric banding, a form of bariatric surgery.



Gastric Band

Managing excess weight can increase self-esteem, improve mobility, reduce weight related health risks including diabetes and improve overall quality of life.

Read more >

The text/image: this might be a claim to be an image of someone who has already managed 'excess weight', increased 'self-esteem', reduced 'weight related health risks

⁵¹ <https://www.harleymedical.co.uk/cosmetic-surgery-for-women/the-body/gastric-band>.

including diabetes' and therefore improved 'overall quality of life'. There is no claim that this *will* happen, however; it is only that these things 'can' happen, and so the claim that this image is of what has happened is problematised. Indeed, there is no claim that the two are connected, they appear so because of 'Gastric Band', itself a band encroaching and therefore connecting the upper and lower parts of the text/image.

The claim is that it is this 'Gastric Band' which connects the image to '[m]anaging excess weight can increase self-esteem, improve mobility, reduce weight related health risks including diabetes and improve overall quality of life'. When I 'Read more >', I read that 'Gastric Band' is '[t]he most popular private weight loss procedure in the UK', which is 'safe and effective' and a 'relatively quick procedure taking just over 30 minutes. It's done under a general anaesthetic with over 90% treated as day cases'. The claims are for popularity, safety, effectiveness and speed. The 'Gastric Band' is a 'relatively quick procedure taking just over 30 minutes', whilst the 'general anaesthetic' results in 'day cases', at least for 'over 90% treated'. Quickness is therefore both 'just over 30 minutes' and a 'day'.

Being 'relatively quick', though, is a 'day' for 'over 90%' and therefore not 'quick' for up to 10% of 'cases treated'. These 10% appear as an absence, denied as being part of the 'quick procedure' and yet still present through this denial. The quickness is only relative to something that is not the 'Gastric Band' which must therefore be not as 'quick'. There are claims to a relation between what is, and is not the 'Gastric Band', however, and so what is not as 'quick' is still something to do with issues of 'weight'.

The claims about the 'Gastric Band' are about its desirability compared to what is not 'popular', 'safe', 'effective' and 'quick'. Whatever this is, however, is still something about '[m]anaging excess weight', so this is a claim that there are other ways of '[m]anaging excess weight'; it is not a claim that 'weight' might not need '[m]anaging', only that these ways do not manage 'excess weight' as well as the 'Gastric Band'.

This tension that marks public attitudes towards these surgeries demonstrates the lingering construction of obesity as being a self-inflicted 'problem' that the individual is responsible for creating, and therefore, resolving. Bariatric surgeries, then, have been conceptualised by many as a 'quick fix' option and a way out of living as a fat body in a culture that abhors fat flesh. (p. 160)

Here, Samantha Murray also reads claims of quickness. 'Bariatric surgeries, then, have been conceptualised by many as a "quick fix" option'. 'Bariatric surgeries' are not only 'quick' here, they are also a 'fix', therefore making a claim to there being the possibility of an ending, that once '[b]ariatric surgeries' have taken place, the "quick fix" option' will have happened; there will be completion. There is no end, however. Like The Harley Medical Group website which makes claims about '[m]anaging excess weight', and so leaving always 'weight' to be managed, the "quick fix" option' has not happened, it is only present as a concept by the 'many'; it is a 'way out of living as a fat body', which, by being always 'a way out', leaves the one 'living as a fat body' always in this 'body'.

It is also interesting to wonder about the implications of this 'way out'. What is it that has the possibility of this 'way out'? To be no longer 'living as a fat body' claims that it is the 'fat body' itself that has the 'way out'. The 'way out', then would mean that the 'fat body' is no longer 'living', but no other form of 'living' replaces this. This is a 'way out of living as a fat body in a culture that abhors fat flesh', but I do not read an implication that the 'fat body' might live outside this 'culture that abhors fat flesh' after '[b]ariatric surgeries'. The 'culture' is inescapable, but the 'way out' leaves the 'fat body' not 'living' in it.

What '[b]ariatric surgeries' 'fix' is 'the lingering construction of obesity as being a self-inflicted "problem" that the individual is responsible for creating, and therefore, resolving'. Here the claims are made by the 'many' who are not Murray who notes that the "quick fix" is problematised by this claim to resolution and that '[b]ariatric surgeries' are not an ending. 'What is emphasised to patients is the minor intervention at the time of surgery,

rather than the major (and ongoing) physiological, behavioural, social and psychic impacts' (p. 158).



Above is the 'LIPOSUCTION image from the 'Before and After photos' on The Harley Medical Group site⁵². My reading of this image is that the left of the line claims to be the 'Before', whilst the 'After' is on the right. Here again, there is a claim to quickness, that 'LIPOSUCTION' is so quick that there is only 'Before' and 'After'. I am reading a claim to difference between the two 'photos'; the clothes are different, the skin is different, the shape is different. There is a claim to similarity, however, that this claims to be the 'Before and After' of the same thing – the same body? On the website, the line at the centre of the image can be moved back and forward to get a full picture of the 'Before' or 'After', an instant transformation from 'Before' to 'After' with a click of a mouse. The text above the 'photos' says that 'we know that our patients want to understand everything, from the surgical process to the recovery time, but most importantly the results they can expect. This is why we have compiled some before and after photos of our patients to help you with your decision'. This 'after' photo is therefore more important than 'the surgical process' or 'the recovery time' which the 'patients want to understand', but which 'we' do

⁵² <https://www.harleymedical.co.uk/cosmetic-surgery-for-women/the-body/liposuction-surgery>.

not 'help' with. 'Liposuction' may not be, as was claimed in my previous chapter, 'designed to be a quick weight loss tool!', but the claims for instant transformation remain.

Murray also reads 'before-and-after' images in her work on gastric banding.

The ubiquitous 'before-and-after' photographs that accompany the promotion of weight loss via bariatric surgeries and the controlled eating practices that are required post-operatively suggest a relatively simple linear transmission to better 'health' and normative appearance. (p. 155)

It is the 'photographs' that 'suggest' this 'relatively simple linear transmission', so this is only a suggestion, and only 'simple' in relation to something that is not 'weight loss via bariatric surgeries'. There is, then, no claim that these 'surgeries' are 'simple' or 'linear'; it is the showing of only the "before-and-after" which does this by claiming there is nothing *but* "before-and-after"; this is instantaneous.

Both The Harley Medical Group and Murray have a perspective on 'Gastric Banding' and '[b]ariatric surgeries' which is concerned with the quickness of the 'procedure'. For The Harley Medical Group it is the 'procedure' which is 'relatively quick', but Murray's concern is with the "quick fix" and the recognition that 'the time of surgery' is separate from the 'ongoing' 'impacts', and so queries the notion of quickness, and whether 'surgery' is 'quick' at all. My reading for both, however, is that whether the claims about 'surgery' for weight loss are constructed as beneficial or problematic, the knowledge of what weight loss is, how it is successful, what it means to have lost weight remains uncontested in these narratives. For Murray, the 'objection to fat flesh' or 'social anxieties over excessive bodies' are read as problematic, but the existence of, and knowledge about, what 'fat flesh' or 'excessive bodies' are, is not.

11 David Bainbridge *Curvology*

It had been suspected for some time that women with eating disorders exhibit more negative emotions when standing in front of a mirror, or have trouble interpreting social cues from the people around them, but we can now watch these responses taking place in real time, inside living brains.⁵³

The claim about 'eating disorders' here is that they have an existence that precedes the text itself; what 'eating disorders' are, is already known and already present. Since the question of what defines 'eating disorders' has been answered, what is therefore also known is 'eating' without disorder; what is simply 'eating'. There is orderliness to 'eating' which has been disrupted by 'women' who are 'with eating disorders'. '[W]omen' and 'eating' are brought together in disorderliness; there are no *women with orderly eating*; it is being 'with' the 'women' that 'disorders' 'eating'. '[E]ating disorders' are therefore gendered; they are women's disorder.

The suspicion that had been present 'for some time' is over; 'It' is no longer 'suspected'. If there is an end to suspicion here, there is also a claim to a beginning since '[i]t had been suspected for some time'. There was, then, a time before this suspicion where '[i]t' was *not* 'suspected' that 'women with eating disorders exhibit more negative emotions when standing in front of a mirror, or have trouble interpreting social cues from the people around them'. There is no claim, though, that 'women with eating disorders' have a beginning, that there was a time where 'women' did not have 'eating disorders'. It is the suspicion about them which is time bound, which had been going on 'for some time', not the 'eating disorders' themselves. What has changed therefore is the end of suspicion about them, the claim that now what had only been 'suspected' has become known.

⁵³ David Bainbridge, *Curvology: The Origins and Power of Female Body Shape* (London: Portobello Books, 2015), p. 133. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

Who is suspecting here? 'It had been suspected' does not imply a claim to identify anyone who suspects; it may indeed be the 'women with eating disorders' themselves who 'suspected'. The 'we' of 'we can now watch these responses taking place in real time, inside living brains', however, leads me to read a claim of 'women' not being a part of this 'we' because their 'responses' are being watched, which implies the watching is being done by someone who is not 'women with eating disorders'. I read this watching 'we' as the same 'we' who has been suspecting; of the suspecting, therefore, being done by a 'we' who is not 'women with eating disorders'. '[W]omen with eating disorders' are outside the 'we', and therefore they are not known in the way that the 'we' is known, because their emotions have 'for some time' been only 'suspected'. Since 'we' are not these 'women', 'we' have only been able to suspect about what their emotions 'when standing in front of a mirror' might be. '[W]omen with eating disorders' are therefore already separate from what 'we' are; they are the other to our 'we'.

There are 'women with eating disorders' and therefore the possibility of 'women' without 'eating disorders', or of men with or without 'eating disorders'. '[W]omen' though, are different to men because they can be 'with' these 'eating disorders', and it is this being 'with' that had made them objects of suspicion and is why their 'responses' are now watched. Bainbridge does note that men get eating disorders:

'Although different studies vary in their estimates of how common eating disorders are, they all agree on one thing: they are approximately ten times more common in women than men. The fact that some men do get these disorders is helpful in our attempts to understand them, but the existence of this sex-skew in a species with such an unusual body shape is suspicious, to say the least'. (p. 126)

Here again is suspicion, this time directed towards the 'sex-skew in a species with such an unusual body shape'; more than suspicion, since this is the 'least' that can be said of it. '[S]tudies' look at 'eating disorders', but Bainbridge genders 'eating disorders' to

marginalise men with ‘these disorders’ as only being ‘helpful’ in attempting to ‘understand’ ‘eating disorders’, which remain primarily associated with ‘women’.

The constructions of ‘women’ and ‘men’ are secure within the claims regarding ‘eating disorders’. The claim of ‘sex-skew’ is only possible if there is an already-present knowledge of what constructs ‘sex’, or of what ‘women’ and ‘men’ are. ‘[E]ating disorders’ are less secure; ‘studies vary’ in claims of how ‘common’ they are, they are ‘*approximately* ten times more common in women than men’, ‘*some* men’ get these ‘disorders’ (all my italics) – these claims are not as sure as the knowledge of what is, and is not, ‘women’ and ‘men’. This certainty includes Bainbridge’s definition of his gender: ‘I am a forty-something Caucasian male. I am not sure if this makes me the ideal person to write a book about human female body shape’ (p. 3). This implies an otherness to ‘women’; they are known by the perspective but are not the perspective; they are the object of study, separate from the perspective which writes ‘about’ their ‘shape’. Again this implies a claim of otherness – a ‘forty-something Caucasian male’ does not claim to have a ‘human female body shape’ - but despite not being ‘sure’ whether he is ‘the ideal person’ to write about this, specifically because of his *not* being this, his doubts have been overcome and he has already written it.

This separation of ‘women with eating disorders’ from those who are not ‘women with eating disorders’ leads to suspicion, since their emotions are claimed as not then known by the perspective which has separated itself from ‘women with eating disorders’. This lack of knowledge is not confined to Bainbridge; ‘[i]t had been suspected’ implies a general suspicion. ‘[W]omen with eating disorders’, therefore, either were not part of the perspective which had suspicions about them or did not know their own emotions. If so, this implies that ‘women’ and their ‘negative emotions’ are divided and constructed as separate.

Despite this suspicion about the ‘emotions’ of ‘women with eating disorders’, there is also a claim to a knowledge about them which is not so uncertain. If they ‘exhibit more

negative emotions when standing in front of a mirror', then there is already a claim that 'women with eating disorders' exhibit 'negative emotions' regardless of whether or not they are 'standing in front of a mirror'. There is excess here, something that goes beyond 'negative emotions' (which are implied as already known) and becomes the exhibition of 'more' which is not known, only suspected. It is the exhibition itself which is 'more'; the implication is that 'negative emotions' which are not exhibited are not considered. What is at stake, therefore, is a claim that what matters is the exhibiting of 'negative emotions' rather than the 'emotions' themselves; it is the showing of what others can see, rather than the experience of 'women' which matters. '[N]egative emotions' as exhibition, are external both to the perspective that identifies 'women with eating disorders', but also to 'women with eating disorders' themselves. Their 'negative emotions' are not part of them; 'women with eating disorders' are separated from their 'negative emotions' by this exhibition.

The increase in the exhibition of 'negative emotions' is as a result of 'standing in front of a mirror'. I am reading an implication here that by 'standing' there are other ways of being 'in front of a mirror' – there is a positioning here of 'women' and 'mirror', which in this placing leads to the exhibition of 'more negative emotions'. This is a posing of 'women with eating disorders' and the 'front of a mirror' by which 'more negative emotions' might be exhibited. Where 'standing in front of a mirror' could imply a looking by the 'women' at the 'mirror', the exhibiting implies an outwardness, an exhibiting *to*. Here again, I read a claim to a separation of 'women', both from their 'emotions' and now from what is in the 'mirror'. It is the 'mirror' which does this; the 'standing' which causes 'women' to 'exhibit' *even to themselves*. Bainbridge here, I think, is claiming exactly this; he does not imply that anyone is watching this exhibition other than the 'women with eating disorders' themselves. There is a double uncertainty, then; the suspicion of those who are not 'women with eating disorders' about these women's 'emotions', but also the uncertainty of the 'women' who are separated from themselves in the 'mirror'.

There are, however, no 'women' 'standing in front of a mirror'. Even if there were, not all 'women with eating disorders' could have been seen in front of their mirrors exhibiting 'more negative emotions'. The claim is based on a presumption of knowledge about 'women with eating disorders' through the idea that all these 'women' are the *same* and therefore can be known. '[W]omen with eating disorders' are a group that has no difference; to know one is to know them all.

The perspective here is not 'women with eating disorders', and the externality of the perspective to the 'women' arises from this assertion of being outside them. The initial lack of knowledge is because of this; this perspective could only suspect which 'emotions' were produced by 'standing in front of a mirror', because of his claim to be not 'women with eating disorders'. This is not Bainbridge's perspective now, however; his perspective is not one that still suspects. Bainbridge is part of the 'we' who removed the suspicion through watching what happens 'inside'.

'[I]nside' can be watched 'now'; something has changed from when 'inside living brains' could not be watched. This watching, being 'inside living brains', implies an outside which was insufficient because it did not give enough information to those who 'watch', about the 'suspected' 'negative emotions' or the trouble 'women with eating disorders' had with 'interpreting social cues'. This led to these things only being 'suspected'; it is the watching 'inside' that makes 'women with eating disorders' knowable in a way that they were not known before. There is a privileging here, then, of the 'inside' over the outside; what can be understood by observing what is outside does not give the same knowledge as being able to 'watch' 'inside living brains'.

This 'inside', being 'inside living brains' is claimed as 'now', being something new and this newness is connected to the watching of '*living* brains' (my italics). There is, then, an implication that 'brains' that were not 'living' might have been watched 'inside', but that this, like the knowledge that could be gained by being outside 'living brains' was insufficient. Equally, 'responses' that might be watched in something other than 'real

time' are also insufficient compared to what happens 'now' – it is the 'living' 'now' which is privileged over other forms of watching.

I read a claim of concealment, or at least of something hidden from the perspective, in this suspicion which surrounds 'women with eating disorders'; that 'women with eating disorders' were not only experiencing 'emotions' that were unknown to those who were not these 'women', but that these 'emotions' should not be hidden. Only suspecting what 'women with eating disorders' are exhibiting or interpreting is insufficient; what is at stake is the ownership not only of a knowledge of gender and 'eating disorders', which are already unproblematic to this 'forty-something Caucasian male' (p. 3), but what was previously unknown, only 'suspected'. It is this implication that what could not be seen is what *should* be seen which leads to the claim of resolution; that now these things are known because they can be watched, as 'we can now watch these responses taking place in real time, inside living brains'.

It is not only the 'negative emotions' exhibited by 'women with eating disorders' that have produced suspicion, there was also suspicion that they 'have trouble interpreting social cues from the people around them'. '[T]he people around them' therefore, do not have 'trouble', or, at least, if they do it is not of concern here; the suspicion is not about them. '[W]omen with eating disorders' could themselves be part of 'the people', but it is their 'trouble' when they are not 'the people' which is the focus of suspicion. Again, it is not precisely the 'trouble interpreting social cues' which matters; it is the lack of certainty by the perspective that this is what is happening.

'[S]ocial cues' do not come from 'women with eating disorders', but from 'the people around them'. '[S]ocial cues' need 'interpreting'; there is a prior knowledge required, a claim to an already present which in itself is insufficient until it is interpreted. '[C]ues' here are 'social', so there may be other 'cues' that 'women with eating disorders' 'have trouble interpreting', but these are not considered; it is the 'social' which is relevant. What is at stake, therefore, is the importance of 'the people' *and* 'women with eating disorders'

being able to interpret 'social cues' and the ability of the 'we' to be able to 'watch' this interpretation (or lack of it). If the 'social' is what matters, if being part of 'the people' is a requirement for the 'social', then this is why knowledge of these 'responses' is privileged over a suspicion of what might be going on, because then there can be certainty whether 'women with eating disorders' are like 'the people', both 'inside' and outside. Suspicion of what might be happening is insufficient, and this has come about as a result of not being able to see 'inside' – something that 'we' are now able to do. There is, though, no claim that watching 'these responses' changes them, they are watched but not altered. What watching *is*, what comprises watching, is uncertain; it is the watching itself that matters. Bainbridge writes that he 'could be argued to be a dispassionate observer or a biased voyeur, depending on one's point of view' (p. 3). What signifies is that there is watching, which is how Bainbridge claims himself apart from 'women', not just as a 'forty-something Caucasian male' who knows how men think; 'one thing I do know is that men think about women's body shapes a great deal' (p. 3) - but also as a watcher of women's bodies, whether as an 'observer' or a 'voyeur'. If Bainbridge, as a 'male', watches, it is 'women' that are watched, both outside and within.

For example, the amygdala, a region involved in fear and disgust, seems to be more active in women with anorexia. (p. 3)

The 'example' here is claimed as one of the 'responses taking place in real time, inside living brains', so the 'amygdala' is 'inside' these 'living brains'; it is part of what 'we can now watch'. It is a 'region', so it is not all of the brain, and it is 'involved in fear and disgust', so it is not 'fear and disgust' themselves. The implication is that 'women with anorexia' experience 'more' 'fear and disgust' than those who are not 'women with anorexia', because of an increase in activity in 'the amygdala' with 'women with anorexia', where the 'more active' 'amygdala' produces more 'fear and disgust'. Whilst the definition of 'women with anorexia' is secure, the activity of 'the amygdala' is not; it *seems* to be more active' (my italics). Although 'we can now watch these responses taking place in real

time, inside living brains', this only leads to a conclusion that 'the amygdala' is seemingly 'more active'; watching 'inside' has therefore still not produced the certainty which was apparently necessary to clearly see what had only before been 'suspected'.

This again splits the 'we' who 'watch' from 'women', this time 'women with anorexia'. There is an equivalence between seeing 'inside living brains' and knowing the 'women'; for Bainbridge, who identifies as 'we', to 'watch' what happens 'inside living brains' is to enable the 'we' to know 'women' by knowing what is happening to their 'brains', and yet this knowledge still eludes. The 'we' cannot know whether there is more 'fear and disgust' in 'women with anorexia' even when 'inside' their 'brains'. In this 'seems to be', then, I read a perspective that desires both to claim a separation from 'women with eating disorders' and 'women with anorexia' – to be *not* these things by claiming to know no more than what 'seems to be' - but also a desire to know them, by seeing 'inside' them, because being outside, as they 'exhibit', is insufficient.

What is this insufficiency, though? Why does it matter whether 'women with eating disorders' are known? Bainbridge does not claim that watching what is going on 'inside living brains' results in the discovery of the cause of 'eating disorders'; 'despite many striking neurological findings we have discovered no single brain abnormality which *causes* anorexia or bulimia' (p. 133). My reading of Bainbridge is that what is at stake here is not a desire for knowledge of 'eating disorders' but of 'women', of whom 'women with eating disorders' are a part. To understand 'women with eating disorders' is to lead to an understanding of 'women' through an understanding of 'the human female body shape' (p. 3) and this is important because of its power; 'The ages-old power of female body shape is strong, it lies deep within us all, and taming its power will be the ultimate test of human self-determination' (p. 207). This 'power', then, despite being 'deep within us all', comes from 'female body shape' and Bainbridge has already excluded himself from this by identifying as a 'forty-something Caucasian male' (p. 3). What makes 'female body shape' problematic for Bainbridge is its 'power' and the strength of this 'power'

which therefore must be tamed because of what it excludes - this 'forty-something Caucasian male'.

We now know how men assess women's bodies, as they watch them from the outside, but what is it like to inhabit one of those bodies?

Over half the human brains in existence just happen to have found themselves lodged inside a female body, but does this accident of birth make those brains think differently – feel differently? And does being inside a woman's body *make* someone a woman? (p. 84)

Here again is a claim to a time-bounded knowledge; that something is 'now' known by the '[w]e' that was not known before, and this claims a progression, the '[w]e' is moving from a lack of knowledge to what '[w]e now know'. The knowledge here is centred on the 'how'; it is not that 'men' did not 'assess women's bodies' before, it is that 'we now know how' this is done. The '[w]e', then, is not 'men' or 'women'; it claims a separateness engendered by this knowledge. '[M]en' 'assess women's bodies', but they do not necessarily know 'how' they do this. '[W]omen' do not 'know' how their 'bodies' are assessed. The gendering of the 'men' that 'assess' and the 'women' whose 'bodies' are assessed does not include this '[w]e' that knows 'now' 'how' this is done.

To 'assess' implies a hierarchy or judgement by 'men' of 'women's bodies', and therefore 'women's bodies' are potentially not all the same, except in their condition of being assessed.⁵⁴ The assessing is a watching of 'women's bodies' and so produces a visual judgement 'from the outside'. What, though, is 'the outside'? Is this implied as a watching of the 'outside' of 'women's' bodies'? If so, for me this is connected to the claim of

⁵⁴ This is an assessment only by men on women and is, Bainbridge claims, because 'men like looking at beautiful female bodies, and studies show that men are especially keen to date women whose bodies have already been endorsed as attractive by other men. In more scientific terms: visual assessment is a major determinant of the initial stages of mate choice by male humans' (Bainbridge, p. 61). This seems to imply that firstly, this assessment is only carried out on women by men, but also that this assessment is somehow shared in order to produce a consensus on which 'women's bodies' are most desirable for men to 'mate' with.

knowledge by the '[w]e'; that whilst 'men' can only 'watch' the 'outside' of 'women's bodies', the 'we' can 'watch' 'negative emotions' 'inside living brains' (p. 133). The 'we' can claim additional or new knowledge compared to 'men' because '[w]e' see 'inside'. I read a claim, therefore, that to 'know' requires a knowing of both 'inside' and 'outside'; that watching something from the 'outside' is not the same as watching what is going on 'inside'. There is a difference claimed about knowing, which is related to what is watched. When there was no watching 'inside' there was incomplete knowledge of 'women', and I wonder if here Bainbridge is again dividing 'women' into parts, this time their 'outside' that is watched by 'men' and their 'inside' (or the 'inside' of 'women with eating disorders') which was subject to question but is now known by being watched, at least by the '[w]e'. Despite being able to 'watch' women's 'responses' going on 'inside living brains', though, what it is like to 'inhabit one of those bodies' remains unanswered. Watching 'responses' of a brain 'lodged inside a female body' is not the same as knowing what it is like for these 'human brains' which are inhabiting one and there is therefore still a lack, the quest to 'know' is still incomplete.

There is, then, a claim that 'bodies' are gendered, (or, at least, 'women's bodies' are gendered), but not necessarily that 'human brains' are. To 'inhabit' a 'body' is not to *be* that 'body'; the implication is that there is a 'someone' 'inside' the 'body', which is not yet gendered, given that the question must be asked, 'does being inside a woman's body *make* someone a woman?' I find this uncertainty interesting, given the certainty of what constructs 'women' and 'men' throughout this book. '[W]omen's bodies' are not open to question, but here the gendering of 'brains' and the 'someone' does appear to be.

'[H]uman brains' have a separate 'existence' to 'female bodies' since they can find themselves 'lodged' in one. It is as if this is a surprise to these 'brains'; that this just happened – it is an 'accident'. There is no choice implied here; the chapter's title is 'Trapped in a vessel of flesh' (p. 84). 'Over half the human brains in existence' find themselves 'lodged inside a female body' (and so less than 'half' find themselves –

where?) as a result of an 'accident of birth'. '[B]irth' then, causes some 'human brains' to find themselves inside 'a female body'. It is the experience of 'birth' that lodges the 'brains' in the 'female body', which raises the question of whether Bainbridge is claiming a pre-existence before this lodging occurs; of an existence of 'human brains' that have not yet 'found themselves lodged inside a female body' and therefore are not yet gendered by it.

My reading here, then, infers that for Bainbridge the 'human brains' are the subject - they are the 'someone' - whilst the 'female body' is not. The subject exists before gender, because it is the 'body' which genders (and therefore itself exists before the lodging of the brain inside it). To 'inhabit' a 'female body' is not to be 'a female body', but this inhabiting might affect the 'brains' 'inside' them - might 'make' them 'think differently - feel differently'. There is, therefore, thinking and feeling prior to this 'differently', which raises the question - thinking and feeling 'differently' from what? It is the 'female body' which causes this difference, but there are no similar claims to how, or even whether, 'brains' find themselves 'lodged inside' a male 'body'. Is the contention here that the making different of a brain is not the inhabiting of a 'body', but inhabiting 'a female body', of there being, then, no difference made to a brain if it were to find itself in a male 'body'?

A 'female body', then, is more than a lodge for a brain, since it might 'make' the brain 'feel' and 'think' 'differently'. It has power to compel difference in a way that 'human brains' do not - they do not make 'female bodies' different or alter themselves when they are not 'inside a woman's body'. To have 'found' oneself suggests discovery; Bainbridge notes that '[h]ow the mind actually "finds itself" in that body has received a great deal of neuroscientific attention in recent years' (p. 87), and this, for me, is more than the 'accident of birth', it is a process, or a 'how', by which the brain "'finds itself"' through a gendered 'body'.

'And does being inside a woman's body *make* someone a woman?' (p. 84). The issue here is that 'body' is already 'a woman's'; it belongs to 'woman'. There is a making of 'someone' into 'a woman' by a 'body' which is 'woman' *before* the 'someone' is made into

one by being 'inside' it. I read a difference here between 'a female body' which is a 'body' gendered, and 'a woman's body' which implies 'a woman' which is not a 'body', owning this 'body'. Women and females are already present through their relationship with the 'body'; they are defined through their gendered 'bodies', but in the claim of 'a woman's body' there is an implication of a pre-existing 'woman' to her 'body', and therefore of this 'woman' not being constructed by a 'body' because she exists prior to it. When Judith Butler argues that 'gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self'⁵⁵, she is claiming 'gender' as a construction, something produced through performative expressions of 'gender', arguing against claims of 'reified and naturalized conceptions of gender' (p. 520). Bainbridge, though, is claiming a prior gendered 'body', even prior to the brain within it; 'gender' 'reified' (Butler) firstly as the 'body' and then as the brain separated from the 'body'. Gender is produced through a 'body' which is already gendered, but then genders what is 'inside', making the 'inside' 'a woman'. At the same time, however, I read a claim to an already-there 'woman', before the 'body', a 'woman' that owns the 'body' which can 'make someone a woman'. '[W]oman', then, is always deferred; what constitutes an explanation or definition of 'a woman' can never be produced, as it can only refer back to something else that makes 'a woman'.

'[T]he mind' (Bainbridge, p. 87) is split here; it is both 'itself' and able to find 'itself'. '[H]uman brains' too, have 'found themselves'. There is an implication here that the 'mind' and the brain were already present 'inside a female body', but it is not until there is this finding of 'itself' or 'themselves' that the possibility of difference occurs. It is this consciousness or an awareness of finding 'themselves' 'inside a woman's body' that might 'make someone a woman', rather than the situation of being 'inside'. Bainbridge argues

⁵⁵ Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40, (4), (December 1988), p. 519.

that, for the brain, 'its self-awareness can only ever be expressed via the body' (p. 84). Here is a control by a dominating 'body' over a reluctant brain, '[t]rapped in a vessel of flesh' (p. 84), unable to express its 'self-awareness' in any way other than 'via the body'. This brain-body split situates the 'us' in the brain – 'many of us still believe that the true "us" resides in our brains' (pp. 84-85). This is a *residence* of the 'true "us"', which does not necessarily imply coercion; it is the brain which is 'imprisoned inside a bony box, borne on top of a fleshy vehicle' (p. 85) and 'the mind' which 'simply cannot escape the body.' (p. 85). The brain, then, is the prisoner of 'the body', it is '[t]rapped' by 'the body', it cannot express its 'self-awareness' other than through 'the body', it is made to 'think' and 'feel' 'differently' by 'the body', it is made 'a woman' by 'the body'.

The brain, though, does have 'self-awareness' and it can 'think' and 'feel'. There is a claim for what is gendered – 'a female body', which imprisons, and a brain which is not gendered and which is imprisoned and which contains the 'true "us"' residing in it. As Bainbridge argues that the 'ages-old power of female body shape is strong, it lies deep within us all, and taming its power will be the ultimate test of human self-determination' (p. 207), my reading is that this is a call for the 'taming' of 'a woman's body', which imprisons and traps "us". This can be done through knowledge of what is 'inside' – the non-gendered human brain – which is the 'true "us"'. The 'body' is not the 'true "us"'; it is an inescapable 'vessel of flesh'. To be 'a woman', therefore, by having 'a woman's body', is also not to be 'the true "us"'.

12 Weight Watchers

I am reading a text from the back of the 2015 Weight Watchers handbook.⁵⁶

At the top of the page are the words 'WEIGHT Watchers your way'. 'WEIGHT', has 'Watchers' and I am reading this watching as a claim to a seeing; it is possible to see 'WEIGHT'. This watching is being done by more than one person; the '[w]atchers'. These '[w]atchers' are watching one thing, 'WEIGHT', and so there is similarity; all '[w]atchers' here are watching 'WEIGHT'.

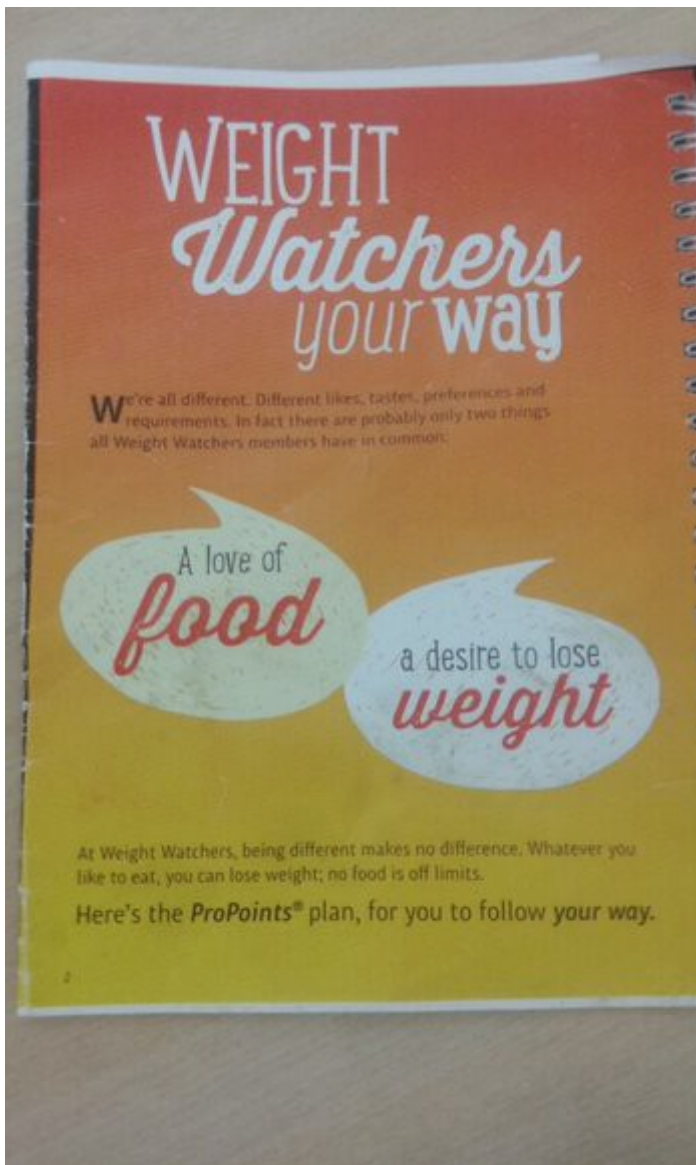


Because these are '[w]atchers', I do not read an idea of completion or finishing, but of an ongoing watching. This watching is something that is apart from 'WEIGHT'; because it is seen by '[w]atchers'; it separates them from 'WEIGHT'.

There is a 'way' of watching 'WEIGHT'; it is something that can be done in a particular 'way' by you, and it is owned by you, being 'your way'. The perspective is not you but knows what 'your way' is. There are, then, other ways of 'WEIGHT' watching. This 'way' belongs to you, but is defined as such by the perspective that is not you, that is different to you, and it is the perspective, not the you which defines 'your way'. This complicates

⁵⁶ Weightwatchers, <https://www.weightwatchers.com/uk/healthy-living>.

the idea of a 'way' that belongs to you, it is only yours from the perspective which is not you.



The claim to know 'you' continues in 'Here's the **ProPoints®** plan, for you to follow **your way**' at the bottom of the page. Here '**your way**' involves following a 'plan' that comes from outside 'you'; it already exists. '**[Y]our way**' is circumscribed by 'the **ProPoints® plan**'. It is the following that is '**your way**' here, not the 'plan' which is not yours but belongs to '**ProPoints®**'. There is a possibility of difference here; that '**your way**' of following 'the **ProPoints® plan**' could be different to others' '**way**' of following, and therefore a claim to 'you' having a choice because 'you' are different. The choice is limited,

however, because ‘the **ProPoints®** plan’ is there for you to ‘follow’; ‘**your way**’ cannot be to *not* ‘follow’ the ‘plan’.

The ‘**ProPoints®** plan’ is there ‘for you to follow’; it is claimed as prior to ‘you’. It is ‘here’, so ‘you’ are not, ‘you’ are not in the right place.

Why is this not ‘WEIGHT *watching* *your way*’? Further down the page are the words ‘Weight Watchers’ and in these capitals I read a claim to a name, ‘Weight Watchers’ as an entity. At the top, ‘WEIGHT’ is capitalised and ‘Watchers’ has a capital first letter, whilst ‘your’ and ‘way’ are not, so here too, I am reading ‘WEIGHT Watchers’ as a name. If so, ‘**your way**’ is connected to ‘WEIGHT Watchers’ and ‘Weight Watchers’, this is not about ‘**your way**’ of ‘WEIGHT’ watching, but about a ‘way’ which is associated with the name ‘Weight Watchers’.

I find reading ‘We’re all different’ problematic; if we *are* ‘all different’, then does that then make us all the same in that we are all one thing? The perspective now is part of the we of ‘[w]e’re’, so the claim is that the perspective is also ‘different’ – there can be nobody who is not ‘different’, but is also the same by being in the ‘[w]e’re’. Reading the text ‘WEIGHT Watchers *your way*’, there are similarities as well as differences in the shape and thickness of the words; ‘WEIGHT’ and ‘your’ are both thinner than ‘Watchers’ and ‘way’, ‘Watchers’ and ‘your’ have letters sloping to one side, whilst ‘WEIGHT’ and ‘way’ are more upright. The ‘W’ of ‘WEIGHT’ and ‘way’ are both straight lines with lines extended from the top of the letter and the ‘y’ of ‘your’ and ‘way’ both have a deep curve and a tail shorter than this curve. Whilst there is difference I can read here, there is also commonality.

What is ‘different’ is ‘[d]ifferent likes, tastes, preferences and requirements’. Difference is limited therefore to these things in the claim that ‘[w]e’re all different’. There is a claim that these things are not the same; ‘likes’ are not ‘tastes’, ‘preferences’ or ‘requirements’. These things are also not the same as *themselves* though; ‘likes’, for example, means

that there is more than one *like*. The claim is that '[w]e're all different. Different likes, tastes preferences and requirements', but, again, this claim to 'all' is a similarity not a difference in that *we all* have 'likes, tastes, preferences and requirements'.

If '[w]e're all different', then what are we different *from*? Are we 'all different' from that which is not we? If so, what could be *not* we if *we all* are part of the we? If I read the we as being an 'all' that is everyone, the difference must be within the we – we are 'different' from each other; there is no other that is not we, that we are 'different' from. However, the text then reads 'In fact there are probably only two things all Weight Watchers members have in common'. The we of '[w]e're all different' could therefore refer to 'all Weight Watchers members' – it is they that are 'all different', since as they 'probably' have only 'two things' 'in common', then all the other 'things' are 'probably' not 'in common' and therefore 'different'. This confirms the difference as sited within the we and as connected to 'Weight Watchers'. 'We're all different' therefore cannot refer only to non-'Weight Watchers members'. I can only read '[w]e're all different' as either being 'all' 'Weight Watchers' *and* non-Weight Watchers, or 'all' as 'Weight Watchers'.

What this does is to make 'Weight Watchers' part of a group, something that is confirmed in the reference to 'all Weight Watchers members'. 'We're all different', then, might mean that it is 'all Weight Watchers members' who are 'different' to each other. I find this assumption, that '[w]e're all different' as relating only to 'Weight Watchers members', difficult though. The claim is '[w]e're all different', not that 'all Weight Watchers members' are 'different'. Whilst the text goes on to claim that 'In fact there are probably only two things all Weight Watchers members have in common', I do not read the '[w]e're all different' as yet referring specifically to 'Weight Watchers members'. Similarly, 'WEIGHT Watchers *your way*', for me, refers to a '*your*' that is not *necessarily* a 'Weight Watchers' member. I am reading 'your' and '[w]e're all different' then as possibly not referring to 'Weight Watchers members' – or at least, not exclusively to 'Weight Watchers members'.

We who are 'all different' have similarities; being 'different', having 'likes, tastes, preferences and requirements'. 'Weight Watchers members' also have these similarities, and two others; a 'love of food' and a 'desire to lose weight'. 'Weight Watchers members', then, have *more* 'in common' than the we who are not (yet) 'Weight Watchers members'. Being a 'Weight Watchers' member makes you less, not more 'different'. Any claim to difference is abandoned in the claim '[a]t Weight Watchers, being different makes no difference'.

'[B]eing different' would make a 'difference' though. To not have a 'love of food' or a 'desire to lose weight' would make such a 'difference' as to make it impossible to be a 'Weight Watchers' member since 'all Weight Watchers members' have this 'in common'. My reading of 'Weight Watchers', then, is that it claims to be a place for people who are 'different' whilst *at the same time* claiming to be for people who have so much 'in common' that there is 'no difference'.

The 'two things' 'all Weight Watchers' 'probably' 'have in common' are a 'love of food' and 'desire to lose weight'. These words appear in two overlapping shapes which I read as speech bubbles. Here, then, speaking is something that is seen; a claim to a speaking by 'Weight Watchers'. '[A]ll Weight Watchers', therefore, do not only have a 'love of food' and a 'desire to lose weight' 'in common'; they also speak about these things.



The speech bubbles overlap each other, with 'A love of food' in front of 'a desire to lose weight', connecting these bubbles. 'A love of food' is also slightly higher up the page than 'a desire to lose weight' and the 'A' of 'A love of food' is a capital, which I read as a claim to speaking first – 'A love of food' comes before 'a desire to lose weight'.

Within the speech bubbles, 'food' and 'weight' are larger than 'A love of' and 'a desire to lose' and are the only words in the text that are in red. '[F]ood' and 'weight' are important here, therefore, and also connected. I also read a similarity between 'food', 'weight' and the 'Watchers' at the top of the page, which is also written in cursive. This connection between 'Watchers' and 'food' and 'weight' is reinforced by the two O's of food, which have two dots inside their circle at the lower right. I might read these dots as eyes, whose direction is turned towards 'a desire to lose weight'. I am reading that 'Watchers', 'food' and 'weight' are connected, and in the reading of the O's as eyes, a claim to watching the other bubble.

'Weight Watchers' are watching 'weight', but they are not watched here; it is their words which are seen. If it is the not-yet 'Weight' Watcher who is being addressed, if it is the 'your' who is being spoken to, then this 'your' is not yet watching, or at least, not yet watching the 'Weight Watchers members' who are claimed to speak - what they are seen as here is their speech.

Until this point, this is all 'Weight' has been defined as – something that is watched, but here it becomes something else as well – it is something that 'Weight Watchers members' have a 'desire to lose'. As there is 'a desire to lose weight' then 'weight' is already present; what constitutes 'Weight Watchers members' is the 'desire' to 'lose weight', not the loss of 'weight'. If the 'desire' was fulfilled, and the 'weight' was lost, then a person losing the 'weight' would no longer be a 'Weight Watchers' member as they would no longer have this 'in common'.

Because '[a]t Weight Watchers' is where 'being different makes no difference', there is a place which is not '[a]t Weight Watchers' where 'being different' *does* make a 'difference'. Again, there is a claim that 'being different' makes 'Weight Watchers' the same, having *more* 'in common' than when they are not 'members', since here 'being different makes no difference'. So 'members' do not become 'different' by being 'members'; their difference was already there. What has changed is that this now 'makes no difference'. This 'difference' - 'different likes, tastes, preferences and requirements' which is also 'no difference', is now connected to eating, since '[a]t Weight Watchers, being different makes no difference. Whatever you like to eat, you can lose weight'. This is only true for those '[a]t Weight Watchers' though, so when 'you' are not '[a]t Weight Watchers' 'you' cannot 'eat' '[w]hatever you 'like to eat' and 'lose weight'. I read a perspective on eating 'whatever you like to eat' which connects it to excess 'weight'; eating outside 'Weight Watchers' is what creates 'a desire to lose weight'. This 'desire' is therefore present before becoming a 'Weight Watchers' member; and is what is 'in common'; it is a criterion for being a member.

There is a connection between 'love' and 'food', and with 'like' and eating. '[A]ll Weight Watchers' have a 'love of food', and '[a]t Weight Watchers' 'you' can 'eat' '[w]hatever you like to eat'. There is also a connection, though, between a 'love of food' and 'a desire to lose weight' – it is a 'love of food' which creates too much 'weight' in 'Weight Watchers members' who cannot 'love' 'food' without also desiring to 'lose weight'. This is another similarity in 'Weight Watchers members', which is not necessarily true of non-members – there may be those who are not 'Weight Watchers members' because they have '[a] love of food' but no 'desire to lose weight' – or the other way round.

'At Weight Watchers' are 'members' who have '[a] love of food' and 'a desire to lose weight'. 'At Weight Watchers', though, 'you can lose weight' so the connection between the 'love of food' and the 'desire to lose weight' is seemingly broken, and yet 'all Weight Watchers members' have this 'in common', the 'desire' remains. These claims seem

incompatible. Perhaps losing 'weight', therefore, does not remove the 'desire to lose weight' for 'Weight Watchers members'? If losing and desiring are not connected, then this is why one does not affect the other. This reading, though, assumes that 'Weight Watchers members' *are* losing 'weight', when the claim is 'you can lose weight': there is no claim that Weight Watchers members do 'lose weight'.

'[F]ood' and eating are always connected to either losing or not losing 'weight', inside or outside 'Weight Watchers'. What is 'different' at 'Weight Watchers', is that '[w]hatever you like to eat, you can lose weight; no food is off limits'. When 'you' are not 'at Weight Watchers', then, there are foods that would be 'off limits' if 'you' want to 'lose weight'. I am connecting the 'food' that is '[w]hatever you like to eat' with this limiting outside 'Weight Watchers'. I read a claim that 'food' must be controlled, being something that is loved, but which connects to a 'weight' that is watched. Outside 'Weight Watchers', 'food' is controlled through its 'limits', with 'food' that does not make 'you' 'lose weight' being 'off limits'. Within 'Weight Watchers' 'no food is off limits', but instead there is a 'plan' 'to follow', it is this 'plan' that means that 'no food is off limits'.

Inside or outside 'Weight Watchers', therefore, 'food' is controlled, through 'limits' or by following a 'plan', the danger of too much 'weight' is always there, but more than this – the excess 'weight' is always there too despite the 'limits' and the 'plan', the 'desire to lose weight' and the claim that 'you can lose weight' show that the failure to control 'weight' has already taken place and will always be there. This returns me again to the idea of watching. 'Weight Watchers' watch 'weight' but this is not losing 'weight'. Whilst the claim here is that it 'can' lead to 'weight' loss through a 'plan' 'to follow', there is no claim that it *does*, or that 'a desire to lose weight' is ever satisfied.

13 Obesity, Neoliberalism and Healthy Eating

My readings about the body have often led to a reading of a question about the body - 'what makes us fat'? For some texts, the 'answer' is situated within the 'I' that is trying (and, because this is trying, is therefore always failing) to lose weight. There might be claims of a solution to this (known and known as unwanted) 'fat' body that the perspective has but the 'I' does not; that a certain diet or psychological approach will result in weight loss, not for the perspective claiming to answer this question, but for the 'I' that is claimed to want to lose weight. In these approaches to weight loss, 'you' can lose weight by changing something about yourself - eating⁵⁷, exercising, restraining⁵⁸ – a slimmer body is claimed to be achievable through what begins from the 'inside', from the 'I'. The difficulty here is that this is a perspective on the 'I' that wants to lose weight, it is not the 'I' itself, but is a perspective that knows what 'I' want and what 'you' should do – even if this approach to weight loss is constructed as being from 'you'.

There are also, however, claims that there is something 'outside' the 'I' that 'makes' us fat. Here, the fat body is produced by something external to 'you' – the environment⁵⁹, society, politics⁶⁰, past experiences⁶¹ – these are the things which are claimed to 'cause' obesity. In these texts it is not 'I' that causes 'my body' to become obese, but rather it is something outside both 'body' and 'I' that 'makes' it this way.

In both claims, there are separations between the 'I' and 'my body', although this separation is not always recognised in the texts that produce it. Whether 'what makes us

⁵⁷ NHS Eat Well, <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>, p. 1.

⁵⁸ Weightwatchers, https://www.weightwatchers.com/uk/healthy-living_

⁵⁹ See, for example, the Government Office for Science Report on the Obesogenic Environment, (2007), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/295681/07-735-obesogenic-environments-review.pdf.

⁶⁰ Ted Schrecker and Clare Bamba, 'Obesity: How Politics makes us Fat', *How Politics Makes Us Sick: Neoliberal Epidemics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), pp. 23-41.

⁶¹ Susie Orbach, *Fat is a Feminist Issue* (London: Random House, 1988).

'fat' is claimed to be produced from what is 'outside' or 'inside', there is always a divide between the 'my' and 'body' – what is 'I' is not 'my body'.

The 'fat' body, therefore, is the site of conflict between what is 'I' and what is not the 'I', and so becomes both and neither. This body, then, will be 'fat' or 'obese' always because of something outside it, whether that is the 'I' or 'not-I'.

What is also always present is this knowledge of 'inside' and 'outside' which produces these claims of 'what makes us fat'. There is always that which is claimed as 'inside', which might be 'me' or 'I' – often this is a claim that this is the 'real' me, inside a body which is therefore not 'me' but belongs to me as 'my body'. Then, too, there is what is 'outside me' or what is, therefore, not 'I'. These ideas of 'inside' and 'outside' are always problematic when relating to the body because, despite the certainty of what is constructed as 'inside' or 'outside', the attempt to situate the body as being one or the other always fails and must always fail. The question of what is inside or outside a body produces a previous, known body, and yet, as I have read elsewhere, this body is always a construction, read within a perspective; there is no 'real' body. I explore this further throughout this thesis, but here my reading is about claims of 'what makes us fat' and how these always return to this idea of the 'outside' and 'inside', this time relating to an origin of the causes of obesity.

I am reading three texts which claim to know what obesity is and how it is caused. Ted Schrecker and Claire Bamba's *How Politics Makes Us Sick: Neoliberal Epidemics* claims it is something outside 'you' which causes obesity, which is neoliberal society. For them, the obese body is a site of control and power; this power is over 'you' by what is not 'you' through the control of the body. When I read the NHS text 'Eat Well', however, there are claims made that it is 'you' who are responsible for your weight and health because 'you' do not 'Eat Well'. Here, the cause of 'what makes us fat' is claimed as controllable by 'you', but not without advice from the NHS website which claims to explain what 'you' would not otherwise know. Isabelle Bray's text focusses on positive body image and obesity in

children from a psychological and public health approach and makes claims about 'sociocultural' causes of obesity.

There is, in each reading, a claim that some things can be known 'outside' the text, a residual 'real' such as obesity or the body, even before the obese body. These are claimed as already present before the writing on the causes of obesity and are therefore not examined in the way that causes of obesity are because of this claim to pre-existence. These things are claimed as already known and unproblematic, so, for these texts, examining the causes of obesity is not the same as reading the obese body. These texts might differ in their claims over the causes of obesity and who experiences obesity, but they are all claims to examine causes of something that was already there, prior to the problem; the obese body.

13.1 Ted Schrecker and Claire Bamba on Obesity and Neoliberalism

We do not ascribe rapid increases in obesity solely to neoliberalism [...] rather we argue that neoliberalism is a critical upstream influence, magnifying trends that are present to some extent throughout the high-income world.⁶²

From this perspective, 'obesity' was present before these 'rapid increases', and it is these 'rapid increases' which are, or are not ascribed to 'neoliberalism', rather than 'obesity' itself. It is the '[w]e' who ascribes, there is a writing of the 'rapid increases in obesity' which both ascribes and denies 'neoliberalism' as being the cause of these 'rapid increases'. The '[w]e' that ascribes these 'rapid increases', then, does so in other ways, but claims a difference between them and 'neoliberalism' because of its presence here.

⁶² Ted Shrecker and Claire Bamba, 'Obesity: How Politics makes us Fat' in *How Politics makes us Sick: Neoliberal Epidemics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), p. 32. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

'Rather we argue'; there is an alternative that is denied ('neoliberalism' as the sole reason for 'rapid increases in obesity'), and this denial is presented as being argued, that there is, therefore, the possibility of an argument with something that is not '[w]e'. For the '[w]e', 'rapid increases in obesity' being not 'solely' ascribed 'to neoliberalism' claims that there is, at least, some ascribing of 'neoliberalism' to these 'rapid increases in obesity', which here is claimed as 'a critical upstream influence, magnifying trends that are present to some extent throughout the high-income world'.

Since this 'influence' is 'upstream', there is a stream before this, a presence already of these 'rapid increases in obesity' that, through 'neoliberalism' is 'magnifying trends that are present to some extent throughout the high-income world'. There was already a presence of 'trends', but only to 'some extent' because they were not yet magnified. This magnification is not a claim to either make these 'trends' present to a full 'extent' or that the 'magnifying' produces 'trends' of the *right* size. My reading of 'magnifying' is that it is an enlargement of 'trends' that might still only be 'present to some extent'.

The chapter title, 'Obesity: How politics makes us fat' claims causation between 'politics' and 'fat', and so therefore 'neoliberalism' is not 'politics', or not solely 'politics' because it does not make us 'fat', although there is a connection between 'fat' and '[o]besity' through this title. Even with this connection, 'neoliberalism' is also not 'politics' since 'politics makes us fat' – the claim is only 'politics' does this - whilst 'rapid increases in obesity' are not 'solely' ascribed to 'neoliberalism'.

Since these 'trends' are already 'present to some extent', there is a claim to a pre-existence of these 'trends', before they were magnified by neoliberalism's 'upstream influence'. Here again it is not 'neoliberalism' itself that is the cause of the 'rapid increases in obesity'; the claim is of an influencing and a 'magnifying' of what is already 'present'; 'neoliberalism' does not cause or create; it affects what is already there.

These 'trends' are 'present to some extent throughout the high-income world'. The 'trends' therefore, are situated, being in 'the high-income world'. There is, then, a 'world' which is not 'high-income' and may not have these 'trends' 'present'. The 'high-income world' is not the neoliberal 'world', rather 'neoliberalism' influences and magnifies 'trends' that are claimed to already exist within this 'world'.

Is the claim, therefore that 'neoliberalism' is only 'present' within the 'high-income world'? I do not necessarily read this, but rather that it is its criticality within this 'world' that is at stake here; that without 'neoliberalism', 'trends' that are 'present to some extent throughout the high-income world' would not be magnified through its 'critical upstream influence'. What matters here is 'obesity' and the 'high-income world'; it is this which is the focus for the '[w]e'.

For Schrecker and Bamba '[p]erhaps the most basic issue involves economic and social policies that mean many people cannot afford a healthy and balanced diet' (p. 41). From this perspective, 'a healthy and balanced diet' is not achievable specifically because of its affordability for 'many people'. Whilst there are therefore some 'people' that could 'afford a healthy and balanced diet', it is because of 'economic and social policies' that 'many' cannot.

This problem obviously becomes much more serious in circumstances when people lose jobs, are forced to take lower-paid jobs, or face cuts in income supports such as jobless or disability benefits. All these, as we show in later chapters, are defining features of neoliberalism. (p. 32)

The claim is that the unaffordability of 'a healthy and balanced diet' is already 'present' because of these 'economic and social policies' but is then made worse because of 'the defining features of neoliberalism'. 'This problem' is the 'economic and social policies that mean many people cannot afford a healthy and balanced diet'. The 'problem' is already 'present', but is 'much more serious' when 'people lose jobs, are forced to take lower-paid

jobs, or face cuts in income supports such as jobless or disability benefits'. What is 'much more serious' is therefore related to 'jobs' – losing them, taking 'lower-paid jobs' or through 'cuts in income supports such as jobless or disability benefits'. This does not necessarily claim that those who have 'jobs' that are not 'lower-paid' or who do not have 'cuts' in 'benefits' do not have a 'problem'; 'economic and social policies' still mean that 'many people cannot afford a healthy and balanced diet'.

There is a definition of the 'features of neoliberalism', not necessarily by the 'we', but that the 'we' will 'show in later chapters', so these 'later chapters' already exist whilst not yet shown. The 'problem' which is 'much more serious in circumstances when people lose jobs, are forced to take lower-paid jobs, or face cuts in income supports such as jobless or disability benefits' is present both here and in these 'later chapters', but are not shown to be 'defining features of neoliberalism' until these 'later chapters'; they are claimed as being there before the 'defining features of neoliberalism'. What matters here, then, is what is shown 'later'; it is this showing that is claimed to have not yet happened which changes 'these' into 'defining features of neoliberalism'.

The claim is that there is a connection between 'a healthy and balanced diet' and 'obesity' which is 'present' before a connection is claimed between 'economic and social policies' and 'obesity', or between 'neoliberalism' and 'obesity'. What is known here, therefore, is what 'a healthy and balanced diet' is. There is a perspective that claims a knowledge which is uncertain in some places ('[p]erhaps the most basic issue involves economic and social policies') and certain in others (the 'problem obviously becomes much more serious'), but the constitution of 'a healthy and balanced diet' is not subject to uncertainty.

This certainty does not apply to the definition of 'obesity'. In 'Box 2.1 Definitions of obesity and overweight' (p. 26) the text is framed by a black line around it; this is a claim to a difference, an inside and an outside of what is and is not in 'Box 2.1'. These definitions are separated from what is outside; they are not the same as this.

What 'obesity' is defined as is different to 'overweight' – there is more than one definition, which are 'of' these, which belong to them. However, 'among adults, obesity and overweight are usually defined with reference to the BMI' (p. 26), so what is usual for both is the same definition in its 'reference to the BMI'. There are 'adults' therefore that are not usual because they do not have 'obesity and overweight' 'defined with reference to the BMI'. They may be 'defined' as obese or 'overweight', but their 'reference' is different.

As well as the 'adults' who are not 'defined with reference to the BMI', there are also 'children' for whom 'measurement is more complicated because of the need to adjust for changing body mass as children grow' (p. 26). Children's 'obesity and overweight' might still be 'defined' through 'reference to the BMI', but this is 'complicated' in a way that the adult's definition is not. Children's growing is different to 'adults' growing; when their 'body mass' changes, there needs to be an adjustment, whilst when an adult's 'body mass' changes, there is no adjustment. What is known, therefore is what an adult or child is, and when a 'body' is adult or child, and adjustments are made or not made accordingly.

There are further separations between what is 'usually defined with reference to the BMI' and what is not. 'BMI is somewhat contentious because of the possibility that it does not allow for normal differences in body mass among ethnic groups and may not be relevant to certain sub-populations such as professional athletes' (p. 26). What 'BMI' might not 'allow for' is only a 'possibility', but this is sufficient to make it 'somewhat contentious' – so not completely 'contentious'. In this 'possibility' it is not definite whether there is an allowing at all, and, in addition, it 'may not be relevant' even if it does 'allow for normal differences in body mass among ethnic groups'.

This uncertainty is only present in the case of those whose 'obesity and overweight' is 'defined with reference to the BMI' and are claimed as different to the 'adults' who are also 'defined with reference to the BMI', which are 'children', 'ethnic groups' and 'certain sub-populations such as professional athletes'. This difference makes 'BMI' 'contentious', but does not stop the referencing.

The uncertainty over '[d]efinitions' does not, however, lead to an uncertainty over 'obesity and overweight'. These are always present; it is their '[d]efinitions' that are subject to question. Since 'obesity and overweight' are known, therefore, their '[d]efinitions' are separated from them. Whilst '[d]efinitions' are 'complicated' or 'contentious' because of those who are not 'adults' who can be 'defined with reference to the BMI', this does not affect the presence of 'obesity and overweight'.

There are claims, therefore, about the '[d]efinitions of obesity and overweight' being 'contentious' and 'complicated' but there is no contention around the question of definition itself. What matters here is the question of how or what is used to define 'obesity and overweight' - *this* is problematic within the perspective, not the question of why or whether there is definition.

There is 'obesity and overweight' and '[f]at' present here, before the 'rapid increases in obesity'. Since '[p]erhaps the most basic issue involves economic and social policies that mean many people cannot afford a healthy and balanced diet', these 'increases' are connected to what prevents 'people' affording 'a healthy and balanced diet'. What is at stake here is a claim that there is something external to 'many people' who prevents them from affording 'a healthy and balanced diet', and so in this reading the preventing is not by 'many people' but by 'social and economic policies', made worse by 'defining features of neoliberalism'.

Now, in my reading of the NHS 'Eat Well' website, I want to consider the claims made around 'a healthy and balanced diet' from another perspective.

13.2 NHS - Eat well

A healthy and balanced diet by eating well

Eating a balanced diet

Eating a healthy, balanced diet is an important part of maintaining good health, and can help you feel your best.

This means eating a wide variety of foods in the right proportions, and consuming the right amount of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.⁶³

This is a perspective on a 'diet' which is 'healthy' and 'balanced'; there are therefore other diets which are not these things. What is 'healthy' and 'balanced' is already present before the 'eating', but it is through the 'eating' that 'diet is an important part of maintaining good health, and can help you feel your best'. In order to do this, a 'diet' must be both 'healthy' and 'balanced'; this 'and' claims 'healthy' and 'balanced' as different; what is 'balanced' is a supplement to what is 'healthy'.

This is knowledge of what 'healthy' and 'balanced' are, whilst also being knowledge of 'you', who does not necessarily know what 'a healthy, balanced diet' is. It is this 'you' that can 'feel your best', not the perspective, so this is also a knowledge of feelings that are not those of the perspective, but are what 'you' 'feel'.

'Eating a healthy, balanced diet' is not enough on its own to maintain 'good health' since it is a 'part' of this. There are other parts that maintain 'good health', and they too might be 'important', but in this text they are not as 'important', since it is only this 'healthy, balanced diet' which is present.

'[M]aintaining good health' claims 'good health' as being already present and which is now maintained. 'Eating a healthy, balanced diet' only maintains, and 'good health' is not achieved through '[e]ating a healthy, balanced diet'. '[C]onsuming the right amount of food

⁶³ NHS Eat Well, <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>, p. 1. Further page numbers are given in parentheses within the text.

and drink', however, is what will '*achieve* and maintain a healthy body weight' (my italics); it is 'consuming' which achieves.

There is a claim, therefore, that there is an ongoing maintenance related to 'eating' and 'consuming' food, which leads to 'a healthy body weight' – this is the achievement.

'Eating a healthy, balanced diet' is 'part' of what 'can help you feel your best'. Whether 'you' will 'feel your best', then, is uncertain – this '[e]ating' is only a 'help', and perhaps not always a 'help' since it 'can help you feel your best' – and therefore also might not.

This is a perspective on 'you' that knows that there is a 'best' that can be felt by 'you', and that 'you' need 'help' to 'feel' this. What is 'best' is 'your best', so 'best' is specific to 'you'. There might then be other bests which 'you' do not 'feel' - the claim is not that 'you feel' *best*.

To 'feel your best' is not the same as to *be* 'your best'. What is 'your best' is produced only through what you 'feel', it is the feeling of being 'your best' which is helped by '[e]ating a healthy, balanced diet', not being 'best' itself.

Here 'best' is owned by 'you', being 'your best', so since 'you' can 'feel your best', what is 'best' is not 'you'. There is a separation of the 'you' and the feeling that 'you' have.

Feeling 'your best' is not the same as 'maintaining good health', it is an addition to this, and so what feeling 'your best' is, is claimed as already known; both 'you' and the perspective that is not 'you' knows what it means to be feeling 'your best'.

What 'you' do not know is what this 'means'. The perspective does know, however. 'This means eating a wide variety of foods in the right proportions, and consuming the right amount of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight'. 'This means eating' and so '[t]his' is '[e]ating a healthy, balanced diet' – it is '[t]his' that has meaning here, not what it means to 'feel your best'.

'[A] wide variety of foods in the right proportions, and consuming the right amount of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight' is what '[e]ating a healthy, balanced diet' 'means'. To 'achieve' this, 'eating' 'foods' is not sufficient; it must be a 'wide variety of foods'. '[F]oods' can be varied, therefore, but even then 'eating' a 'variety' of 'foods' is insufficient; this 'variety' must also be 'wide'. This is also insufficient, however, unless it is in the 'right proportions'; it would be possible to eat a 'wide variety of foods' which would still not be the meaning of a 'healthy, balanced diet' if the 'proportions' are wrong.

'Eating a healthy, balanced diet' also 'means' 'consuming the right amount of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight'. Here, again, the 'and' differentiates and supplements; this time between 'consuming' and 'eating'. 'Eating a healthy, balanced diet' has a meaning which is this 'consuming', so 'consuming' follows 'eating'. Whilst 'eating' and 'consuming' are different, they both have a connection with what is 'right'. It is therefore possible not to be 'eating' the 'right proportions' of 'food' or to be 'consuming' the 'right amount of food and drink'; simply 'eating' and 'consuming' is not enough. In this claim to what is 'right' there is an implication of something that is wrong, and so what is claimed here is that 'you' are not doing this 'right', and so that 'you' do not 'feel your best' because of this wrongness of 'consuming' and 'eating'.

Whilst there is a perspective here that is not 'you' and knows what 'the right proportions' and 'the right amount of food and drink' are, this is not a claim that the perspective is doing these things. What is 'right' to eat is focused on 'you', the 'eating' is not done by the perspective, in which the meaning of what is 'right' resides, without being a participant in the 'eating' and 'consuming'.

What 'you' need to do is 'achieve and maintain a healthy body weight'. Since the perspective knows what the meaning of 'a healthy, balanced diet' is, but 'you' do not and therefore 'you' are not '[e]ating a healthy, balanced diet' and are not claimed as having 'a

healthy body weight' – this is still to be achieved. Further, even if this is achieved, there is more needed; 'a healthy body weight' must then be maintained.

A 'body' weighs, but this 'weight' is not always 'healthy'. What is or is not 'healthy' though, is not the 'body' but its 'weight', the 'body' is only present here through its 'weight'.

'Fruit and Vegetables: are you getting your 5 A day?' (p. 2). The perspective does not know whether 'you' are 'getting your 5 A day', but claims this as a possibility - 'you' might get 'your 5 A day'. This '5 A day' concerns 'Fruit and Vegetables', but not with their eating; it is the 'getting' which is asked about here. In this question there seems to be the possibility of an answer from 'you', but this is not a claim that 'you' do answer.

It is 'you' who is, or is not, 'getting', but this is also a claim to responsibility; 'you' *should* be 'getting your 5 A day', it is up to 'you' to get this and so are also answerable if 'you' do not – unlike the perspective that only asks and does not answer.

'It's advised that we eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day' (p. 2). Here, however, it is the 'we' who is 'advised that we eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day', so there is possibly now a claim that the split between the 'you' that is asked and the not-you that asks has gone, that now there is only 'we'. Whilst there is a claim to a 'we', though, there is still the perspective that has knowledge and the addressed who do not. The perspective is not claiming to advise, but does know that '[i]t's advised', whilst 'you' do not – this is a claim to advisement being outside the perspective which still retains the knowledge of what is 'advised'.

There is not a 'getting' which is subject to advisement, but an eating of 'at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day'. '5 portions' is the 'least' that 'we' should 'eat'; this is a minimum without there being a limit on the most 'we' should 'eat'. This 'least' though is a claim to an expectation which would not be quite sufficient – the question is not 'are you getting' *'at least'* 'your 5 A day?' (my italics). The responsibility 'you' have,

then, is to 'eat' these '5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day', but even then 'you' will only be eating the 'least' you should, this is a claim that this is not enough.

The advice is to 'eat' a 'variety of fruit and vegetables'. This is a supplement to the question of whether you are 'getting your 5 A day'; it is not claimed as insufficient to get '5 A day' that are the same, but it is to 'eat' '5 portions', which must be 'a variety'.

The 'fruit and vegetables' are in 'portions' and so, like 'foods' which should be eaten as 'a wide variety' and 'in the right proportions', there is a way of 'eating' them. There is a 'right' way of 'eating' 'foods' and 'fruit and vegetables' which is measured; 'eating' only one type is not 'right', unlimited 'eating' is not 'right'. '[G]etting your 5 A day', then, cannot lead to 'good health', or feeling 'your best', or 'maintaining' 'a healthy body weight' without 'variety', 'proportions' and 'portions'.

This leads to a claim that '[e]ating 5 portions is not as hard as it sounds. Just 1 apple, banana, pear or similar sized fruit is 1 portion (80g)' (p. 2). This denial of 'not' sounding 'hard' produces a claim that it *is* 'hard', or at least that it 'sounds' as if it is. Since it 'is not as hard as it sounds', it does sound 'hard' to 'you' who are known by the perspective – 'you' will always find that '[e]ating 5 portions' will sound 'hard' and therefore, it is claimed, believe that it is 'hard'. This perspective excludes themselves from this because they know that this only 'sounds' 'hard'.

'Just 1 apple, banana, pear or similar-sized fruit is 1 portion (80g)'. This '[j]ust' is a claim to a limitation, and therefore produces the possibility of more, of 'fruit' that is not '1' or '1 portion' or '(80g)' and so would not be part of 'maintaining good health' because it would not be 'the right amount of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight'. It is not 'fruit' that 'you' need to be 'getting', but the 'right amount' of 'fruit' – the correct size which constitutes a 'portion'.

Since '[e]ating 5 portions is not as hard as it sounds', this is then a claim that '[e]ating 5 portions' is not as 'hard' as the sound of '[e]ating 5 portions' is. There is still hardness,

there is a scale of hardness, so the claim is not that through '[e]ating' the hardness is no longer present, but that it is 'not as hard as it sounds'. There is no reduction in either hardness or the sound of how 'hard' it is. From this perspective the knowledge of what was 'hard' was not constructed through its sound, but for 'you' it both was, and still is. What is not open to question, however, is the claim of hardness in '[e]ating 5 portions'. Within this perspective it always 'sounds' 'hard' to eat '5 portions'.

This is also a perspective on the idea of 'hard' being undesirable. 'Eating 5 portions' should not sound 'hard', or be 'hard'; it is this perception of hardness which causes the question around whether 'you' are 'getting your 5 A day'. What is at stake here is a perspective on 'you' which is other than the perspective, but at the same time is known by the perspective. Here, the claim that being 'hard' is problematic, but only for 'you' – it is the 'you' that cannot access what is 'hard'. 'Having a sliced banana with your morning cereal is a quick way to get 1 portion' (p. 2). There is a 'way' of getting '1 portion' which will then be 'not as hard as it sounds' - this 'way' is 'quick'. There are, then, other ways of 'getting' '1 portion' which are not 'quick' and so still sound 'hard'.

The 'food' you have is 'morning cereal', but this is not '1 portion' without 'a sliced banana'. The claim is that 'morning cereal' is what 'you' 'eat' – everyone has 'morning cereal' and so therefore can access the 'way' of 'getting' '1 portion'. 'Having a 'banana' for breakfast without 'morning cereal' or a 'banana' that is not 'sliced' is not 'a quick way to get 1 portion'.

'[Y]ou' can also 'swap your mid-morning biscuit for a tangerine and add a side salad to your lunch'. '[Y]ou' always have a 'mid-morning biscuit', therefore. This is not a claim to a 'we'; the perspective does not necessarily have 'morning cereal' or a 'mid-morning biscuit' or 'lunch', but knows that 'you' do, and has the knowledge of how 'you' should change these to allow 'you' to have a 'quick way to get 1 portion'.

This is a perspective that claims a 'you' that does not 'eat' a 'healthy, balanced diet' because this 'eating' 'sounds' 'hard' and is not 'quick'. The NHS 'Eat Well' text does not

claim that 'you' could eat healthily by 'eating' what is 'hard' or slow. In order for 'you' to 'eat' healthily there must be a change in your perception, an understanding that a 'healthy, balanced diet' is quick and easy. This separates 'you' from the perspective that holds this knowledge, therefore, because without NHS 'Eat Well', this would not be possible.

Jan Wright describes 'biopedagogies' as 'those disciplinary and regulatory strategies that enable the governing of bodies in the name of health and life'.⁶⁴ My reading of the NHS 'Eat Well' document is that it employs 'disciplinary and regulatory strategies', not only in its perspective on what 'you' should 'eat' ('[e]ating a healthy, balanced diet is an important part of maintaining good health'), but also in its perspective on itself as a holder of a knowledge which 'you' do not have. This perspective both knows what 'you' should 'eat', but also what you 'eat' now – 'morning cereal', 'mid-morning biscuit', 'lunch' without a 'side-salad' – and knows that this 'eating' is insufficient to 'achieve' 'good health'.

These 'strategies' of 'getting your 5 A day' and '[e]ating a healthy, balanced diet', discipline through a construction of 'good health', feeling 'your best' and 'maintaining' 'a healthy body weight', which claims not only that 'you' do not have these things but that 'you' *should*, and that if 'you' do not, there will be consequences. By not 'getting your 5 A day', 'you' will not 'feel your best', have 'good health' and a 'healthy body weight' and, since '[t]here's evidence that people who eat a least 5 portions a day have a lower risk of heart disease, stroke and some cancers' (p. 3), 'you' will also 'risk' these things. If 'you' do have 'heart disease, stroke and some cancers', therefore, this is 'your' fault for not lowering your 'risk'; responsibility for not getting these things lies with 'you'.

If it is the perspective which, in Wright's phrase, constructs 'disciplinary and regulatory strategies that enable the governing of bodies in the name of health and life', it is the 'you' in the NHS text who is claimed as responsible for 'health and life' through '[e]ating a healthy, balanced diet'. This responsibility is problematic, however, when read from the

⁶⁴ Jan Wright, 'Biopower, Biopedagogies and the Obesity Epidemic' in *Biopolitics and the 'Obesity Epidemic': governing bodies*, ed. Jan Wright and Valerie Harwood (New York: Routledge, 2009), p.14.

perspective of 'bodies' that are governed, because I then read a question of whether the claim that '[e]ating a healthy, balanced diet' and 'maintaining good health' is made, not only because it enables 'you' to 'feel your best', but because it is a strategy that enables 'the governing of bodies in the name of health and life'. In this reading, 'health and life' are claimed as present in 'name' only, whilst the 'governing' is not named; indeed, there is no 'governing' claimed here; the responsibility for 'your' 'health' lies with 'you'.

13.3 Isabelle Bray on Positive Body Image

Promoting positive body image and tackling overweight/obesity in children and adolescents: A combined health psychology and public health approach.⁶⁵

'Promoting' is happening now, and yet this is my reading of a text that is already written; the '[p]romoting' and 'tackling' have happened, but the claim is that they are continuing; there is no completion. Since 'body image' is promoted as 'positive', there is another 'body image' which is not 'positive', and for this 'body image' there is no '[p]romoting'. '[B]ody image' here is claimed both as not being 'positive' before its promotion, but also as something that should be.

This is not the promotion of a 'positive body', but of its 'image'; the 'body' is absent. What matters here is the body's 'image', and so this claims something that has a 'body image', which is 'children and adolescents'. '[C]hildren and adolescents' also are connected to 'overweight/obesity', since it is this 'in' them which undergoes the 'tackling'. '[O]verweight/obesity' is not 'children and adolescents' but is 'in' them; there is a claim to an inside, a difference between 'overweight/obesity' and the 'children and adolescents' through this.

I am reading a connection between '[p]romoting positive body image' and 'overweight/obesity in children and adolescents'. The 'overweight/obesity', which is already there, is not therefore a 'positive body image' for 'children and adolescents' or there would be no '[p]romoting'. This is not a promotion of a 'positive body image' in 'children and adolescents' who are 'overweight' or obese since these also need 'tackling'.

⁶⁵ Isabelle Bray and others, 'Promoting positive body image and tackling overweight/obesity in children and adolescents: A combined health psychology and public health approach' in *Preventative Medicine*, 116 (2018), 219-221. Further page numbers are given in parenthesis within the text.

The 'approach' to '[p]romoting' and 'tackling' is from a 'combined health psychology and public health'. '[H]ealth' is connected to two things; 'psychology' and 'public', and these are different, even as they are both '[p]romoting positive body image and tackling overweight/obesity in children and adolescents'. What is 'health' therefore is not 'children and adolescents' but can 'approach' their 'body image' and 'overweight/obesity'.

Whilst 'overweight/obesity in children and adolescents' is being tackled and 'positive body image' promoted in 'children and adolescents', this is not being done by the 'children and adolescents' themselves. Rather, this is something outside them that does this; 'health psychology and public health'. Those that 'approach' and promote and tackle are not 'children and adolescents' and so do not have 'overweight/obesity' 'in' them.

While there are many frameworks for understanding the development of body dissatisfaction, the dominant model is one of sociocultural influences in which sociocultural pressures (e.g., appearance-focused messages from the media, peer and familial pressures) to conform to societal appearance ideals increase body dissatisfaction and symptoms of disordered eating. (p. 219)

The 'frameworks' 'are' already existing, known to the perspective as being 'many'; their purpose, which is 'understanding the development of body dissatisfaction', also known. The 'frameworks' are not 'the development of body dissatisfaction' since they are 'for understanding' them, so there can be no 'understanding' without them. The 'development of body dissatisfaction' can be understood through these 'frameworks', but this 'development' is separate; it is present without the 'frameworks'.

Who uses these 'frameworks' to understand? There is not necessarily a claim that there is anyone who understands 'the development of body dissatisfaction', only that the 'frameworks' are there to do so. What is not open to question is that there is 'development of body dissatisfaction'. This is separate from what might understand it through these

'frameworks'; 'understanding' does not erase 'the development of body satisfaction'. What matters here, then, is that 'the development of body dissatisfaction' is understood.

Who has 'body dissatisfaction'? It is not necessarily those who use the 'frameworks' to understand 'the development of body dissatisfaction' - there may be no-one who understands, but there is always 'body dissatisfaction'. The 'body' does not understand its 'dissatisfaction'. The 'understanding', if there is 'understanding', is done by what is not the 'body'.

'[T]he dominant model is one of sociocultural influences'. One 'model' dominates the rest, who are acknowledged through the '[w]hile', but by not being 'sociocultural influences', are not at stake here. When there is 'many', there are 'frameworks', but when there is 'one', this is a 'model'. The 'model' of 'sociocultural influences' dominates the 'frameworks', but not the 'development of body dissatisfaction'; these 'sociocultural influences' do not cause 'body dissatisfaction', they are part of what understands it since it exists before 'sociocultural influences'.

These are claims about what things 'are', and yet these are always explained by something else; the 'dominant model' is 'of sociocultural influences', but these 'influences' have something 'in' them, which are 'sociocultural pressures', which are then described as '(e.g., appearance-focused messages from the media, peer and familial pressures)'. Since these are 'e.g.', there are other 'sociocultural pressures' which are not here; what the 'dominant model' 'is', is always deferred.

These are 'appearance-focused messages from the media, peer and familial pressures'. My reading here is that these 'appearance-focused messages' are from the 'media', and the 'pressures' are from peers and family. There is a connection between the two, an 'and' and brackets which connect them as the 'e.g.' of 'sociocultural pressures'. The 'media', however, whilst being part of 'sociocultural pressures' does not provide 'pressures' in the way peers and family do; its pressure is 'appearance-focused messages'. Peers and

family, therefore, do not give 'appearance-focused messages'; their 'pressures' are different.

What is 'sociocultural' can both influence and pressure, but there is no claim to an identification of what is pressured or influenced. '[M]edia', 'peer' and family also pressure within this 'sociocultural', so they too pressure rather than being pressured. This is, therefore, a perspective on something that has peers and family and receives 'appearance-focused messages from the media', but is only present through 'body dissatisfaction'.

There is, then, a claim to an existence of an outside or an otherness, which claims that what are 'pressures' and what is pressured are separate. The perspective knows the 'pressures' whilst what is pressured does not; the pressured is other to the perspective, but also other to 'media', 'peer' and family.

The 'sociocultural pressures' are 'to conform to societal appearance ideals'. These 'ideals' do not pressure, they are separate from the 'pressures', but their existence results in 'pressures' only through conforming; it is this which causes pressure. If 'societal appearance ideals' were present without a need to 'conform' to them, then there would be no pressure.

These 'societal appearance ideals' are claimed as pre-existing. It is not the perspective that defines these 'ideals' but society. The perspective is, therefore, not society, but claims to know what society's 'appearance ideals' are.

The 'sociocultural' does not pressure itself to 'conform to societal appearance ideals'. The perspective reads 'sociocultural' as separate from that which is pressured. The 'media', peers and family are also separate from what is pressured, but these things are part of the 'sociocultural pressures'. This is a pre-existence of 'sociocultural pressures'; they are not open to question, and therefore neither are 'societal appearance ideals'. The difficulty for me when reading these claims is the apparent absence of what is pressured

to 'conform'. The perspective knows these 'pressures', but does not claim to feel this pressure to 'conform' to them, whilst claiming that the pressure to 'conform' is there. What is claimed to have an 'understanding' of 'the development of body dissatisfaction', therefore, is not what is pressured.

What increases 'body dissatisfaction and symptoms of disordered eating' is not the 'societal appearance ideals', but the pressure to 'conform' to them. By conforming 'to societal appearance ideals' there will be an 'increase' in 'body dissatisfaction and symptoms of disordered eating'. The claim is that this 'increase' is understood through one framework, which is the 'dominant model', and therefore is not necessarily the only 'model' which could understand 'body dissatisfaction' despite being the 'dominant' one.

These 'sociocultural pressures' also 'increase' 'symptoms of disordered eating'. These 'symptoms' are not 'body dissatisfaction', but are the 'and' to them; they are connected but not the same. '[E]ating' can be ordered, but this is not the case here because of 'sociocultural pressures'. '[D]isordered eating' is only present through its 'symptoms' – it is therefore not 'disordered eating' itself which increases because of the 'sociocultural pressures'.

There are other 'frameworks for understanding the development of body dissatisfaction' in which 'sociocultural influences in which sociocultural pressures (e.g., appearance-focused messages from the media, peer and familial pressures) to conform to societal appearance ideals' are not included. These things are not definite, they are only one framework out of 'many'. There is always 'body dissatisfaction', however, it is always present, irrespective of which framework is used.

Body dissatisfaction, disordered eating and eating disorders are significant public health concerns given their wide-ranging and serious health and psychological consequences such as self-esteem ([Tiggemann, 2005](#)), depression ([Brausch and Gutierrez, 2009](#)), drug and alcohol use

([Holderness et al., 1994](#)), unsafe sexual behaviours ([Schooler, 2013](#)), smoking onset ([Kaufman and Augustson, 2008](#)), reduced physical activity ([Neumark-Sztainer et al., 2006](#)), and overweight and obesity ([Haines et al., 2010](#)). (p. 219)

There is a connection between '[b]ody dissatisfaction, disordered eating and eating disorders' because they are all 'significant public health concerns'. They are different though, and 'disordered eating' is not the same as 'eating disorders'. Since they 'are significant public health concerns', there is something of concern about disorder; from this perspective, 'eating' *should* be ordered and there should be satisfaction with the '[b]ody'.

As there is a claim to a connection between '[b]ody dissatisfaction, disordered eating and eating disorders' because they give rise to 'significant public health concerns', is there also a claim to a causality between them, that '[b]ody dissatisfaction' causes or is caused by 'disordered eating' for example, that one precedes the other? Later in the text, Bray writes that '[b]ody dissatisfaction is recognised as a consistent and robust risk factor for the development of dieting behaviours, disordered eating, and eating disorders' (p. 219), so there is a claim that '[b]ody dissatisfaction' is prior to 'disordered eating and eating disorders'. It is not the 'disordered eating, and eating disorders' which causes the '[b]ody dissatisfaction', they are a result of this, although, even then, are not certain to follow because whilst '[b]ody dissatisfaction' is a 'consistent and robust risk factor' in their 'development' this does not ensure there will be 'disordered eating, and eating disorders', only that there is a 'consistent and robust risk'.

This perspective claims that this 'risk factor' 'is recognised', so something recognises '[b]ody dissatisfaction' without necessarily being the one who has '[b]ody dissatisfaction'. The recognising is separate, both from the perspective which knows there is recognition, and from the one who has '[b]ody dissatisfaction'. The claim is for a pre-existence of '[b]ody dissatisfaction'; it is present before 'disordered eating, and eating disorders', but it is also necessarily there to be 'recognised'; it is known again.

These ‘concerns’ might be for ‘public health’; it is not the one with ‘[b]ody dissatisfaction, disordered eating and eating disorders’ that is of concern, but what is ‘public’ - ‘health’ itself is not concerning unless it is ‘public’.

Possibly, though, it is ‘public health’ that has ‘concerns’ with ‘[b]ody dissatisfaction, disordered eating and eating disorders’, somehow these things threaten ‘public health’. They are concerning because of ‘their wide-ranging and serious health and psychological consequences’. Bray describes these as; ‘self-esteem ([Tiggemann, 2005](#)), depression ([Brausch and Gutierrez, 2009](#)), drug and alcohol use ([Holderness et al., 1994](#)), unsafe sexual behaviours ([Schooler, 2013](#)), smoking onset ([Kaufman and Augustson, 2008](#)), reduced physical activity ([Neumark-Sztainer et al., 2006](#)), and overweight and obesity ([Haines et al., 2010](#))’. These ‘wide-ranging and serious health and psychological consequences’ are claimed not to be from Bray, but from what is within brackets, what is claimed as separate from the text. ‘[S]elf-esteem’ therefore, without brackets, is different to ‘([Tiggemann, 2005](#))’ within brackets because the claim is that ‘self-esteem’ is part of the text in a way that the text in brackets is not. What is in brackets claims an outside-text authority. ‘([Tiggemann, 2005](#))’ is who knows that ‘self-esteem’ is a result of ‘[b]ody dissatisfaction, disordered eating and eating disorders’. Without ‘([Tiggemann, 2005](#))’, Bray would not make claims about this connection.

‘([Tiggemann, 2005](#))’ is a link within Bray’s text that leads to a study which claims that ‘[t]he aim of the study was to investigate prospectively the direction of the relationship between adolescent girls’ body dissatisfaction and self-esteem. Participants were 242 female high school students who completed questionnaires at two points in time, separated by 2 years’.⁶⁶ Here, ‘self-esteem’ is not ‘wide-ranging and serious health and psychological consequences’ but is in a ‘relationship’ with ‘adolescent girls’ body dissatisfaction’. ‘[A]dolescent girls’ are ‘242 female high school students’. There is a

⁶⁶ Marika Tiggemann, ‘Body Dissatisfaction and Adolescent Self-esteem: Prospective findings’, *Body Image* (2005), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2005.03.006>.

claim, then, that all 'adolescent girls' are the same as '242 female high school students'. This then leads to the claim that 'self-esteem' which is a 'wide-ranging and serious health and psychological' consequence arising from '[b]ody dissatisfaction, disordered eating and eating disorders' arises from '242 female high school students'. Tiggemann continues, '[t]here is a large amount of evidence that many women and girls in Western societies experience considerable dissatisfaction with their body size and shape, with a particular wish to be thinner' (p. 129). The 'wide-ranging and serious health and psychological' consequence of 'self-esteem' is sited in '242 female high school students' who are associated with 'Western societies'.

Bray's perspective on '[b]ody dissatisfaction, disordered eating and eating disorders' knows that they are 'significant public health concerns', and also who is claiming their connection with each of the 'wide-ranging and serious health and psychological consequences'. It is Bray, however, who claims them as 'concerns' and who lists them as such. There is a claim to connection between Tiggemann and 'self-esteem' but not to Tiggemann and 'smoking onset'. Bray, therefore, knows what Tiggemann does not, that there are more 'wide-ranging and serious health and psychological consequences' than 'self-esteem'.

Since these are 'wide-ranging and serious health and psychological consequences', 'health' 'consequences' are not 'psychological consequences'. What is given as examples of these, however, is not separated in this way. Is 'self-esteem' a 'health' consequence or a 'psychological' consequence?

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