

Beyond mutual constitution: the property framework for intersectionality studies

Marta Jorba (University of the Basque Country, UPV/EHU)
Maria Rodó-de-Zárate (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)

Forthcoming in *Signs. Journal of Women in Culture and Society*

Abstract. Within feminist theory and a wide range of social sciences, intersectionality has been a relevant focus of research. It has been argued that intersectionality allowed an analytic shift from considering gender, race, class or sexuality as separate and added to each other to considering them as interconnected. This has led most authors to assume mutual constitution as the pertinent model, most times without much scrutiny. In this paper we review the main senses of ‘mutual constitution’ in the literature, critically examine them and present what we take to be a problematic assumption: the problem of reification. This is to be understood as the conceptualization of social categories as entities or objects, in a broad sense, and not as properties of them. We then present the property framework, together with the emergent experience view, which conceptualizes categories and social systems in a way that maintains their ontological specificity while allowing for their being deeply affected by each other.

Keywords: intersectionality, feminism, social category, social system, mutual constitution, postcolonial, social ontology.

1. Introduction

Within feminist theory and a wide range of social sciences, intersectionality is a relevant focus of research and perhaps the most important theoretical contribution to date of feminism (McCall 2005, 1771). Intersectionality, as a concept that apprehends the multiplicity of social categories and their interactions, has been seen as a theory or framework that is able to recognize the complex way in which inequalities are enmeshed. Politically, it has appeared as a sound theory to displace the standard subject of feminism, and it has also been useful to analyze several dimensions of inequality in lived experience. There has been a huge amount of work that has highlighted its

potentialities, shown its limitations and analyzed the theoretical and empirical work on it (Bilge 2010; Garry 2011; Carastathis 2014). Choo and Feree (2010, 131, our emphasis) define one of the signifiers of intersectionality as “an *analytic shift* from addition of multiple independent strands of inequality toward a multiplication and thus transformation of their main effects into interaction”. Cho, Crenshaw and McCall (2013: 787) mention the discussion between “the additive and autonomous versus interactive and mutually constituting nature of the race/gender/class/sexuality/nation nexus” as one of the main questions that have been raised on intersectionality studies. As we see it, this shift from the additive to the more complex understanding of intersectionality (see also hooks 1984[2000] and Collins 1990) has lead most authors to assume *mutual constitution* as the bearer of this analytic shift.

Mutual constitution has become a central concept in intersectionality, but from our point of view, the expression itself, its meanings and metaphysical underpinnings have not yet been carefully and systematically examined. As we will see, there are multiple meanings of mutual constitution, with different implications, which lead to there being diverse kinds of relations being assumed under the same label. This contributes to confusion and vagueness in intersectionality theory. We analyze and critically examine the different uses and conceptualizations trying to disentangle the different meanings and implications. In doing so, we present a new way of understanding the ontological character of systems and social categories that goes beyond the debates on ‘mutual constitution’. We argue that there is a problematic assumption that underlies most of the conceptualizations that materialize this analytic shift, which is the *reification* of the elements that are related. As an alternative, we propose to conceptualize social categories and social systems as *properties*, in a way to be specified below. This proposal has relevant implications for the question of the relation between categories and for intersectionality theory in general, as it allows the maintenance of the ontological character of each category or social system while allowing for their being deeply affected or “constituted” by each other.

2. From additive to mutual constitution models

The term ‘intersectionality’ is generally attributed to Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), as she was the first to publicly coin it. However, it is important to note that ideas on intersectionality, or what Hancock (2016) calls ‘intersectionality-like thought’, were already present in the United States as part of black feminism’s political and intellectual

tradition before Crenshaw coined the term (see Hancock, 2012, 2016; May, 2015; Collins and Bilge, 2016). Numerous works (see Alexander-Floyd 2012; Hancock, 2016; Carastathis, 2016) have identified a movement attempting to marginalize race-related discrimination in works dealing with intersectionality. An attempt to both ‘disappear’ black women and silence their voices has also been noted in studies on intersectionality. Hancock (2016) engages with the debate on “whether intersectionality is an intellectual property in need of conservation or a meme that has gone viral”, noting that, on one side, there are authors that defend that intersectionality loses its analytical and rhetorical power when it is not focused on US black women experiences (Jordan-Zachery 2007) and that its roots must be situated in black feminism (May 2015). And, on the other side, that there are authors such as Puar (2012) that suggest that when the genealogy of intersectionality is only focused on US black women, other women of color that are not black or American are ‘othered’. In this later sense other examples of ‘intersectionality-like thought’ that took place in other contexts, both in academia and social movements, could be included (see Moraga and Anzaldúa 1983; Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1983, 1992; Viveros Vigoya, 2016).

Situating the debate in the US, Black feminists put forward the need to account for the experiences of black women, given that single accounts of gender and race were not able to accommodate them: “The intersection of racism and sexism factors into Black women's lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking at the race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately” (Crenshaw, 1991: 1244). ‘Intersectionality’ was coined then to show how different oppressions couldn’t be analyzed as being neither mutually exclusive nor separate from each other: “problems of exclusion cannot be solved simply by including Black women within an already established analytical structure. Because the *intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism*, any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated” (Crenshaw 1989, 58, our emphasis). Moreover, the idea is that sexism and racism are not properly conceptualized if one assumes its mutual exclusion. In general, additive models were then rejected for not being able to account for the experiences of those who suffer from different systems of oppression. The additive model advocates a view that ranks difference, making some oppressions more relevant than others, thus producing primary and secondary struggles. The categories “added” would tend to be viewed as a secondary form of oppression compared to the main one.

Moreover, this model precludes the analysis of privilege at the same level as oppression (Choo and Feree, 2010): any model of intersectionality must be able to take into account oppression as well as privilege, following a majority-inclusive approach (Staunæs, 2003), where the unmarked categories are also considered.

Black feminist perspectives, in their willingness to move away from the additive model, developed several concepts to show that different systems of oppression do not act independently of each other but that they are parts of a more general system of oppression, the ‘matrix of oppression’ (Collins 1990) or the ‘white supremacist capitalist patriarchy’ (hooks 1984[2000]). The authors see different systems of oppression as ‘interrelated’ (hooks 1984[2000]), ‘articulated’ or ‘interlocked’ (Collins 1990) and ‘intersected’ (Crenshaw 1991). The relation that is established between systems can be interpreted as different systems being *interconnected parts* of other systems. While ‘interrelated’ and ‘articulated’ seem just to be ways of expressing the complex interaction of categories, ‘interlocked’ and ‘intersected’ have more specific implications. ‘Interlocking’ systems entails a view in which the “nature” of each system doesn’t seem to be changed by this interrelation (Garry 2011, 838) and ‘intersected’ suggests a view in which there is a “meeting point” between different oppressions. All these approaches have been criticized for the danger of (empirically and conceptually) separating categories, resulting in “an unhelpful additive notion of oppression” (Choo and Feree 2010, Nash 2008 and Sayer 1997, in Brown 2011, 543). The metaphor of an intersection (or crossroad) may lead to a view in which identities or social categories are seen as involving a set of separate features, which ‘then’ are crossed with others, with the risk of building the image of an additive nature (Yuval-Davis 2006; Rodó-de-Zárate and Jorba, ms). Even if these conceptualizations point toward a relevant feature of the relations (they are interconnected parts) and set the ground for future development in intersectionality theory, the nature of such relations is not further specified.

The interconnected parts approach paved the way to what can be seen as the current paradigm of intersectionality theory: the model of *mutual constitution*. The idea behind this kind of relation is that intersecting categories constitute each other (Crenshaw 1991; Brah and Phoenix 2004; McCall 2005; Phoenix and Pattynama 2006; Lutz *et al* 2011; Davis 2008; Garry 2011; Yuval-Davis 2011; Carastathis 2014). Davis (2008), for example, says that “intersectionality seemed ideally suited to the task of exploring how categories of race, class and gender are intertwined and mutually constitutive, giving centrality to questions like how race is ‘gendered’ and how gender

is ‘racialized’, and how both are linked to the continuities and transformations of social class” (Davis 2008, 71); Garry states that “mutually constituted and fused oppressions explain the inseparability of oppressions” (Garry 2011, 837), or in an article by Carastathis (2014, 307), she claims that “in contrast to unitary or additive approaches to theorizing oppression, which privilege a foundational category and either ignore or merely ‘add’ others to it, intersectionality insists that multiple, co-constituting analytic categories are operative and equally salient in constructing institutionalized practices and lived experiences”. Therefore, as it can be seen, most theorists view the relation of mutual constitution as *the* alternative (and the definite article is relevant here) to the additive relation when it comes to characterizing intersectional relations.

The problem, however, is that the mutually constitutive relation is simply assumed in most cases, after acknowledging that the additive model must be abandoned. As Bilge notes, “a good number of texts make do with a statement in principle, reducing intersectionality and the idea of co-constitutive difference categories to a simple formula bereft of substance” (Bilge 2010, 63). Disentangling what ‘mutual constitution’ means and how it is used may avoid mere repetitions and the danger of building intersectional studies on fuzzy grounds.

3. Uses of ‘Mutual Constitution’

A first important point we want to note is that under the label ‘mutual constitution’ we find several distinct associated uses and meanings that move in a gradation from recognizing that different categories have a separate ontological character to recognizing that they are changed by the interaction and can even fuse one with another one¹. One use of ‘mutual constitution’ is that categories are “*affected by and affect each other*” (Anthias 2012, 13). Anthias interprets this in a dialogical way retaining the existence of the categories themselves without being reductionist or engaging in deconstructionist approaches. ‘Dialogical’ is defined as follows: “in concrete or embodied social practices, social categories operate in the context of each other and articulate in terms of their constitution and effects in relation to given places (i.e. in terms of their spatiality) and times (in terms of their temporality) but in a

¹ The expression ‘mutual constitution’ has been widely used in different scientific fields to understand different social processes of discrimination and oppression (for relations between race and law, see Harris 1993 and Gomez 2010; for the mutual constitution of identity and difference, see Ludvig 2006, among others). Here we are interested in specifically examining the uses of ‘mutual constitution’ with respect to the relation among social categories within intersectionality studies.

variable way” (Anthias 2012, 9-10). And importantly for our purposes here, she continues saying that “whereas social categories themselves can be seen as analytically distinct (...), concrete social divisions are constitutive in relation to each other and broader social processes but not in a priori fashion or in the same way” (Anthias 2012, 10).²

Curiously enough, Anthias’ sense of mutual constitution is very close to a proposal Walby *et al* (2012) have for the intersectional relation and one that they see as an alternative to the mutual constitution model. In Walby *et al*’s words: “‘Mutual shaping’ is a better concept than that of ‘mutual constitution’ since it enables the retention of naming of each relevant inequality or project while simultaneously recognizing that it is affected by engagement with the others. It acknowledges the way that systems of social relations change each other at the point of intersection, but do not become something totally different.” (Walby *et al.* 2012, 235). It is important to note here that what shapes each other in this account is a whole system of social relations, not categories themselves or concrete social divisions.

A third use of ‘mutual constitution’ we find in the literature claims that the interaction among categories *changes the nature of the categories*, so that when, for example, we consider gender and race, their interaction changes the nature of gender, and also of race. This is congenial to Crenshaw’s idea that racism and sexism cannot be properly theorized if their non-intersection is assumed. This is endorsed by Garry (2011) and also by Ken (2008) when she presents intersectionality through the metaphor of sugar mixing with different other ingredients (meant to refer to categories): “Sugar’s structure is changed by the context of butter. These ingredients, like sugar and butter, *change each other*” (Ken 2008, 162, our emphasis).

After reviewing these three uses, we find it useful to consider *affecting* as a broader kind of relation that encompasses both *mutually shaping* and *changing nature*. For mutually shaping each other and changing their nature in the interaction is a way of generally affecting each other. As far as we can see, the affecting relation is more

² Under the general concept of ‘affect’, we could also place the work of Ken (2008) and her metaphor of sugar, in which the most used expressions are ‘transform each other’, ‘change’, ‘shape’, ‘affect’ or ‘intermingle’. We interpret that one fundamental sense of mutual constitution here would fall under the ‘affecting’ category, sometimes referring to mutually shaping and others to changing nature (explained below): “The ingredients affect each other. And when these ingredients come together, they transform each other. No ingredient in the resultant cookie has the same smell, the same texture, the same look or feel as it did before it went into the bowl. This illustrates very nicely the race-class-gender theory premise of “mutual constitution” (Ken 2008, 162).

unspecific and general than the other two. With respect to *mutually shaping*, it should be noted that it is the result of Walby *et al*'s (2012) interpreting 'mutual constitution' in a way that implies the formation or creation of new categories in the process of this constitution (see below), and this is the reason why they prefer 'mutually shaping'. However, 'mutual constitution' allows for interpretations in which there is no new formation, as when it only affects or changes the nature of categories, as we have seen. With respect to the changing nature sense, we can say that categories that change each other is a way for categories to affect each other, but not all affects involve changing the nature of categories. Similarly, to say that categories mutually shape each other does not imply that they change their nature in this process. Thus, we think we have good reasons for clearly distinguishing mutually shaping and changing nature and placing them under the broader notion of affecting.

Yet a fourth characterization of mutually constitutive, as used by Hancock (2007), involves the idea that the interaction between, say, gender and race, involves the *creation of a new category*: 'black women' cannot be understood as the mere addition of 'women' and 'black', but it is rather a distinctive category. In Walby *et al*'s (2012) words, for Hancock, "[a]pproaches that adopt 'mutual constitution' treat the original entities that intersect as transformed into something new, which is not the same as either of the originating forms". She prefers to focus on the result of the interaction than on the prior components. Hancock's proposal to overcome additive models consists in claiming that new categories are produced as a result of the interaction. Notice that the creation of a new category was not something that the first two uses of 'mutually constitutive' were assuming: categories can change their nature, affect or shape each other when they interact without creating new categories in the process.

A similar fifth kind of relation that has been claimed to hold among categories is the sense of 'mutual constitution' as *fusion*. Lugones (2007) is one of the main defenders of this view, which is rooted in the analysis of the interaction between colonialism and patriarchy. Lugones sees their interaction as a fusion, having the consequence that there are several genders – the gender of colonized women is different from the gender of colonizer's women: "colonialism did not impose precolonial, European gender arrangements on the colonized. It imposed a new gender system that created very different arrangements for colonized males and females than for white bourgeois colonizers. Thus introduced many genders and gender itself as a colonial concept and mode of organization of relations of production, property relations, of

cosmologies and ways of knowing” (Lugones, 2007, 186).³ Hancock’s definition of ‘mutual constitution’ would have in common with Lugones’ (2007) notion of fusion the fact that something is created from the interaction, and thus they would fall under the general category *new formation* within mutual constitution. The difference, though, is that Hancock (2007) interprets that *black woman* is a distinctive category while Lugones (2007) thinks that the interaction between patriarchy and colonialism creates several genders.

In summary, there seems to be two different underpinning intersectional relations at stake when ‘mutual constitution’ is used – visualized in Figure 1: 1) *constitution as affecting* and 2) *constitution as new formation*. For the (1) *constitution as affecting* interpretation, categories are affected by and affect each other (Anthias 2012) without creating new categories and without fusing or disappearing. Within this category, we find then two subgroups: (a) categories are shaped by and shape each other (Walby *et al* 2012;) or (b) the interrelation of categories changes the nature of them (Garry 2011). In the (2) *constitution as new formation* interpretation, we also find two subgroups: (c) when categories interrelate, new categories are formed (black women) (Hancock 2007) or (d) categories are fused (Lugones 2007).⁴

Figure 1

Mutual Constitution			
Affecting		New Formation	
Mutually Shaping	Changing Nature	New Category	Fusion
Affection between concrete social relations and/or systems.	Interaction between categories changes the nature of categories themselves.	Relations between categories involve the creation of a new category (“black woman”)	Interaction between categories involves proliferation (“several genders”)
Ken (2008); Walby <i>et al</i> (2012); Anthias (2013):	Ken (2008); Garry (2011)	Hancock (2007)	Lugones (2007)

³ It should be noted that Lugones develops a much more complex view on the interaction of social categories than the one presented here –see for instance her account on Yoruba society (based on Oyeronke Oyewumi’s work) and the new gender categories imposed by colonizers (Lugones, 2010). The author also draws on the mestiza tradition of Gloria Anzaldúa and others (see Anzaldúa 1987). Anzaldúa’s notion of the ‘mestiza consciousness’ could be interpreted as an instance of the category ‘fusion’.

⁴ Although the use of ‘mutual constitution’ is widely extended, we only refer to the authors that associate and develop a certain specific meaning to the expression in the context of the question of the relation among categories in intersectionality theory.

4. Questioning Mutual Constitution models

As we have seen, ‘mutual constitution’ is being used in different ways and with different meanings. Besides these concrete interpretations, what does ‘mutual constitution’ mean in general terms? If we take one standard interpretation of ‘constitution’ in philosophy, its meaning conveys ‘what something is made of’, normally asking about the nature of the object or the relation between the parts it is made of. In this sense, a statue is constituted by a chunk of marble. But, what is it, in particular, to say that race, for instance, is constituted by age? Or vice versa? It would imply that the nature of race is (also) “made of” age, namely, what it is to be black is “partly made of” being old or young. It is clear that a young black person will have different experiences of oppression/ privilege than an old black person, so different configurations of race and age produce different experiences. But does this fact mean that the specific experience of blackness itself “is made of” the age this person is? Looking at it from another side, are discourses on whiteness differently constituted by age? And are the discourses on whiteness for every age constituted at the same time by sexuality and by every other category? Focusing on the *affecting* interpretation clarified above, could we say that white privilege is constituted by age, so that white privilege ‘changes its nature because of’ or ‘is shaped by’ age, sexuality, gender, class? And what about race, if its nature is constituted by all other categories and in all possible configurations? While the affecting sense has its intuitive relevance when it comes to certain categories, it is not clear whether its application can be among all categories and in different contexts.

In relation to 2) constitution as new formation, we distinguished between *new category* and *fusion*. The notion of new category seems to have as a consequence a proliferation of categories each time there is an interaction. It can be intuitive when we consider gender and race and the particular case of black women, but consider sexuality and age: is there a new category for old lesbians different from young lesbians? And are there other new ones for every configuration with race and class? Similarly, the fusion reading implies a proliferation of categories, in this case of genders, as it does seem possible to have an infinite number of genders insofar as different interactions with other categories are made. Moreover, to our mind, constitution as new formation poses more questions than it tends to solve. As Garry (2008, p.6) notes, “the individual axes must have at least a minimal degree of stable meaning for the analysis to work. If every

intersection produced a new gender or a new race (or both!), there would be no way to make sense of the ways in which ethnicity affects one's gendered experience...". In this sense, fusion prevents us from accounting for the cases in which women that do not share other identities may suffer similar gender oppressive effects in certain circumstances, and this would have politically relevant implications. The fusion relation would be difficult to apply to all other categories, as Lugones' view is specifically formulated for the functioning of gender in the process of colonization. If it only applies to this case, fusion cannot be suitable for a general account of intersectionality. And if it applies to all other categories, how could fusion possibly operate in different directions?

In this section we have critically assessed the prospects of using the different senses of 'mutual constitution'. We have firstly noted that 'constitution' in the sense of 'being made of' is quite difficult to apply to many interactions among social categories and may not be in fact what intersectionality theorists are after. The affecting sense seems to find resistance in applications to certain social categories and interactions. And the new formation and fusion sense are difficult to apply generally as the kind of relation or effect produced by the interaction between different categories; they are also problematic if we understand that keeping a distinctive ontological character for every category is a desirable requirement (more on this below).

In the next section we will show where we identify a possible common problem among the examined uses of 'mutual constitution', the reification of categories, and will present the property framework as more suitable for conceptualizing intersectional relations.

4.1 The problem of reification

The analytic shift from additive to mutual constitutive models and the different senses of 'mutual constitution' used in the literature make visible the fact that the question of the relations among categories is one of the central issues in intersectionality. In Stoetzler's (2017: 457) words, the question is "whether the intersecting divisions are 'mutually constitutive' or ontologically independent from each other". These two aspects can be expressed in a slightly different manner (avoiding the 'mutual constitution' expression) in the following way: (i) acknowledging the complex and "deep" interaction among categories and (ii) maintaining the ontological specificity of each category. The first requirement is what models of mutual constitution precisely aim at accomplishing. The second requirement – the preservation of the ontological

specificity or character – is a contested desideratum within intersectionality research. Some scholars (Lugones 2007, 2010, Carastathis 2016) consider intersectionality as a critique of received categories and adopt what McCall (2005) calls the anticategorical approach to complexity. This perspective rejects the use of social categories on the grounds that they originated out of relations of dominance and oppression and their use would maintain such genealogy. Although this is a general discussion and an in-depth treatment goes beyond the scope of this work, we acknowledge the risks that there are in using categories. However, we think it is important to maintain them, as they continue to affect oppressed people in their everyday existence (Ludvig 2006, Yuval-Davis 2006), and so it might be necessary to use them to detect their functioning and their interrelations and to be able to subsequently address inequalities. We concur with Hancock (2007, 66) when she says that “intersectionality argues for new conceptualizations of categories and their role in politics, rather than seeking an abolition of categories themselves”. Our contribution is precisely to conceptualize categories in a way such that some problems related to their use (essentialization, non-changeability) can be avoided while allowing to detect them in their everyday function in oppressing (and privileging) people.

The two requirements mentioned here are presented by Walby et al (2006, 237) in the form of a dilemma: “how to address the preference for the visibility of each inequality in the context of an emerging hegemonic conceptualization of intersectionality as ‘mutual constitution’” (see also Anthias (2012, 13) for a similar framing). There thus seems to be two main driving forces in the debate on intersectional relations. The different views presented take different stances towards them, and so we can classify the specifications of ‘mutual constitution’ according to the degree to which they can accommodate (i) and (ii). Additive models deny (i) while preserving (ii), and strong senses of mutual constitution preserve (i) but can’t allow (ii). Specifically, on the one hand, mutual constitution as affecting has a different behaviour depending on the subgroup we focus on: the mutually shaping relation preserves (ii) and dilutes the deep interaction character into the shaping relation, thus making requirement (i) difficult to assess⁵; the changing nature sense of affecting, on the other hand, accommodates (i) in a way in which it is not entirely clear that the ontological specificity is satisfied (ii), given that the nature of each category is changed. With respect to the new formation senses of

⁵ Mutually shaping recognizes a certain influence among categories, but the kind of relation itself is not further specified so it is not clear what is in fact the interaction between categories that it proposes.

‘mutual constitution’, their position regarding (i) and (ii) also differs. In the case of formation of a distinct new category (black woman), it seems that (i) is satisfied, given that the interaction between categories produces a new category, although it is not further developed what is involved in this process. Similarly, it appears that it also accomplishes (ii), because at least superficially both *black* and *woman* are “present” in the new category *black woman*, but it is not entirely clear whether this new category preserves the ontological specificity of each of them or it is rather a distinct construct that dilutes their previous respective specificities. In the fusion sense, (i) is satisfied at the expenses of abandoning (ii): the fused categories are not ontologically specific anymore. In this way, we see how these two requirements help to structure the positions in the current literature and may eventually help to situate other proposals to come too.

Nevertheless, none of the extant proposals seems to easily satisfy both requirements, as we have seen, thus presenting them as competing or contradictory⁶. We claim that the reason behind this fact is that there’s an implicit conceptual feature that makes these two requirements opposed to each other: the *reification* of the social categories or systems, that is, considering systems and socials relations as *objects* that intersect. ‘Reification’ has already been used in the literature on intersectionality in two ways: reification as giving priority to objects or things over relations and reification as rendering processes invisible (see Gunnarsson 2015, 6-9). Regarding the former, Gunnarsson considers Barad’s thingification problem, the “turning of relations into “things” (Barad in Gunnarsson 2015: 6), stressing the ontological priority of relations over the entities they produce. With respect to the latter, the author claims that “intersectional theorists often take issue with more conventional modes of discrimination analysis, which tend to reify categories like ‘Black’ and ‘woman’ in a way that ignores how they are (co-)constituted through historically formed processes of power” (Gunnarson 2015, 9). Beyond intersectionality, the problem of reification can still refer to a third fact, namely, the process of making structures made by human beings resistant to change (Sartre in Young 1995).

While acknowledging that all these senses of reification shed light into relevant dynamics in intersectionality theory (and beyond), we want to highlight *another* sense

⁶ In Walby et al’s (2012, 234) words: “Writers that appear to prioritize the ‘mutual constitution’ approach to intersectionality nevertheless often also argue for separate naming; which might appear somewhat inconsistent (Crenshaw, 1991; Hancock, 2007)”.

of reification that, in our view, is taking place around the debates on the relation between categories. There is, thus, a fourth kind of problem, which we call the reification in the sense of being an *object versus a property* – the fact that categories are thought of as physical objects and not as properties of objects. ‘Objects’ have to be understood formally and broadly—as also encompassing processes, events or relations, but *crucially* in contrast with properties (note that processes, events and relations also have properties). The relevant point is that reifying categories in this sense seems to be implicitly assumed when trying to relate categories as if they were different “things”. This implicit tendency can be seen when examining the kinds of metaphors of intersectionality that have been proposed: a crossroad (Crenshaw 1989), gels under different lights (Haslanger 2012), a marble cake (Jordan-Zachery 2007), egg’s yolk and white (Lugones 2007), Rubik’s cube (Romero, 2018), to mention a few. The proposed metaphors try to visualize in complex ways how the different things in each of them relate to each other, but after all, in the visual imaginary, they remain being *things*.⁷

In sum, the reification problem gives raise to the tension of either mixing categories in such strong ways as to make their ontological specificity difficult to maintain, or separating them to keep their ontological specificity on pain of not recognizing the complexity of their interaction. In what follows we will argue that if we get rid of reification in this sense we find a way to preserve the two requirements presented for a theory of intersectionality.

5. The property framework

5.1. Objects versus properties

The property framework proposes to conceptualize categories as properties of something, not as objects by themselves. Think about an apple. It’s sweet, red, hard and cold. Flavour, toughness, color and temperature would be the criteria that are mentioned in this characterization and they all have their own ontological character –we measure them through different elements and make classifications based on different features, for example. But if we focus on the apple, these properties are related one to another in

⁷ Moreover, intersectionality is generally visualized as different lines that intersect or figures that overlap (see Dhamoon, 2011), reinforcing the reification problem. In Carbado and Gulati’s (2013, 71) words: “[t]he notion that two things “intersect” brings readily to mind a Venn diagram within which each thing exists both inside and outside of the intersection. (...) Although the metaphor of intersectionality conveys this idea, the fuller theory of intersectionality, and Crenshaw’s conceptualization of this theory, rejects it. Fundamental to Intersectionality Theory is the understanding that race and gender are interconnected, and as a result they do not exist as disaggregated identities. In other words, there are no nonintersecting areas in the diagram”.

a way that they may change the nature of the apple or deeply affect each other. If we introduce the apple into the oven, a higher temperature will make the apple become softer and sweeter. In this sense, we can say that the temperature ‘affects’ and ‘changes the nature’ of the apple’s toughness. The color of the apple might be closely related to its ripeness, in a way that the ripeness changes the color of the apple from green to brown, for instance. And all these characteristics constitute the apple. Analogously, we propose to conceive social categories as properties of individuals: being woman, white and lesbian are three different properties of someone. These properties have certain *effects* in the person’s experience when placed in certain contexts. What is ‘changed’ in different situations is the overall experience of someone, so there are different effects in different situations.

The object to which we can attribute different properties can be differently defined depending on the level we focus on, as we will see. In fact, the question of the different levels of analysis that should be differentiated for explaining social phenomena has also been a focus of research in intersectionality theory: “what is at the heart of the debate is conflation or separation of the different analytic levels in which intersectionality is located, rather than just a debate on the relationship of the divisions themselves” (Yuval-Davis 2006: 195). Different proposals have been made that distinguish or define different levels. Collins (1990) distinguishes between personal biography, group or community and systemic level of social institutions; Winkler and Degele (2011) distinguish constructions of identity, symbolic representations and power structures (Winker and Degele, 2011), and Anthias (2012) differentiates among concrete social relations, discursive practices and social ontologies (Anthias, 2012). In these different approaches to the question of the levels of analysis, we can note that, apart from a symbolic aspect of representation and the discursive element, there are at least *two* main levels that most authors mention, which could be simplified by referring to a level of *individual experience* and a level of *social structures or systems* (Young 1990; Haslanger 2015) It is in these two levels that we will focus on here, understanding that this is not an exhaustive map but rather a simplification.

In the first level, as we have already mentioned, social categories are seen as properties of individuals whose interaction produce experiences of a certain sort. In this sense, experience would be considered as constituted by the effects of gender, race or

class⁸. Following this line, being black may deeply affect the way one experiences gender oppression, for instance, and vice-versa. However, what gender is as a social category is something that is not affected. That is, *gender* and *race* as criteria of social differentiation maintain their ontological character – their specificity as single categories. The criteria for defining the property do not change in the interaction (it can change throughout time), what is changed is the ‘object’ that is constituted by them (individual’s experience).

The second level where the “object” should be identified is that of systems. In the literature we find a debate around the question of whether social systems have to be understood as several interacting systems or as just one system with different subdivisions (Stoetzer, 2017). We contend that with the property framework this debate appears under a new light. Patriarchy, racism and white supremacy, capitalism, ageism, etc., would be seen as properties of a whole system, which can be construed as the system of power. The shift in conceptualization proposed here presents a framework that considers systems as ‘adjectives’ and not as ‘nouns’. That is, the whole system of power is patriarchal, capitalist and racist – these three properties are its features. So far the proposal resembles Collins’ and hook’s conceptualization of a whole system that contains the others, but we add an important specification of how we can understand their ontological character more concretely, that is, as an object that is a whole system with its different properties or characteristics (capitalism, heterosexism, racism, etc.). In this sense, it would be not adequate to say that it is a system with different subdivisions, but rather with different properties or characteristics.⁹ Through this framework, social systems can maintain their distinctiveness (patriarchy would be a way of a hierarchical organization to be based on gender constructs and capitalism to be based on social class¹⁰) without denying that they are related and their effects *constitute* the whole

⁸ Conceiving of categories as properties and woman, black, etc., as positions within those criteria does not imply a *static* conception of categories but can recognise “historically formed processes of power” (Gunnarsson 2015: 9) in which a category can cease to be a relevant category to take into account for certain purposes and other may become salient and important. In this sense, the proposal here can encompass both a certain stability and a certain fluidity that may allow for empirical analysis as well as for the recognition of change (Walby et al 2012: 228).

⁹ Our proposal doesn’t make an a priori hierarchy among systems and places all them as contributing to the whole system of power, contrary to most Marxian views in which capitalism is the foundational system, for instance.

¹⁰ We acknowledge that our definitions are simplistic and that there are important debates on how to conceptualize them.

system of power.¹¹ Similarly for the individual level, categories are conceived as properties of individuals and as such they are *not separable* from those individuals, even if they can be *distinguished* in thought and theory and *named* separately. From this perspective, the framework maintains (ii), the ontological specificity, which *just* involves *characterizing* social categories independently of each other. As Yuval-Davis (2006: 201, our emphasis) explains:

“*class* divisions are grounded in relation to the economic processes of production and consumption; *gender* should be understood not as a ‘real’ social difference between men and women, but as a mode of discourse that relates to groups of subjects whose social roles are defined by their sexual/biological difference while *sexuality* is yet another related discourse, relating to constructions of the body, sexual pleasure and sexual intercourse. *Ethnic* and *racial* divisions relate to discourses of collectivities constructed around exclusionary/inclusionary boundaries (Barth, 1969) that can be constructed as permeable and mutable to different extents and that divide people into ‘us’ and ‘them’. (...) ‘*Ability*’ or, rather, ‘*disability*’ involves (...) discourses of ‘normality’ from which all disabled people are excluded. Age represents the dimension of time and the life cycle”.¹²

Obviously this is only one possible way of characterizing social divisions or categories, as one could also conceive of gender as a set of reiterative acts within a rigid heterosexual regulatory frame (Butler 1990) or as the “socially imposed division of the sexes” (Rubin 1975: 179), among other proposals.¹³ Each of these ‘divisions’ could be seen as criteria for social differentiation and hierarchical organization that amounts to a property of someone (such as flavour or color in the apple)¹⁴. In this new ontological perspective, social categories as properties maintain their ontological specificity and thus satisfy (ii). As we see it, the property framework paves the way for an approach to

¹¹ For reasons of exposition, from now on we will focus on the level of experience/individual, although the proposal applies to the systemic one.

¹² We think Yuval-Davis already conceives of social divisions as a kind of criteria of social differentiation without reifying them, but it is still the case that many authors that talk of mutual constitution implicitly conceptualize these criteria as things. This fact is manifest in their struggle for finding complex ways and terms for expressing the relations among them. Once we think of categories as properties, we see that they are already together in a certain configuration from the start.

¹³ It is important to note that the specific content of those indicators *is not predetermined* by the model proposed here, so the framework is compatible with various accounts of what gender, race, etc., are.

¹⁴ The property framework can include as many categories as needed in the analysis – which ones will be the relevant ones is in empirical question to be determined differently in different researches (see also Hancock 2013).

the relations among categories that also satisfies (i) – we explain how this is so in the next section.

5.2. The relation question

Once the property framework has been presented both for the level of individual's experience and social systems, we should note that the question of intersectional relations doesn't lose its meaning by being situated in the properties framework, but rather needs to be redefined. Through this framework, the *central constitutive* relation is among properties and an a subject. However, as we have already mentioned, properties have *effects* in individual's experience. We will claim that these effects can relate in a variety of ways. Before that, though, we propose to understand the relation between the properties and the whole experience as an *emergence* relation: the whole experience is an *emergent entity* that results from the interaction among the properties. The emergent entity has certain emergent properties that are produced out of the interaction and configuration of certain properties (gender, race, sexuality, etc). Examples of an emergent property might be being discriminated in a certain specific way or having an overall all privileged character, for instance. Interestingly, what emerges from the interaction cannot be predicted knowing the behavior of each category alone. In this sense, understanding the nature of single categories (gender, race, etc.) is not sufficient to capture the properties of the emergent experience. In our view, this is one main claim of intersectionality theory to which our proposal gives a specific content. Emergence has also been used in the context of examining intersectional approaches to psychology (Warner 2008) and in critical realist approaches to intersectionality (Martínez et al 2014). The first account considers *white lesbian* as an emergent property, and the second approach considers *mysogynoir* (hatred of black women and girls) as an emergent property. In our proposal, these wouldn't be emergent properties as they are not properties *of* the whole emergent entity, the place where we propose to examine the effects of the interaction among properties.

Within this framework, we are in a position to give an answer to the question of the relation among categories in a way that satisfies (i): categories relate to each other through their effects in the emergent experiences in multiple ways. To say that gender oppression is being intensified by class in the case of abortion (see also below) means that the *overall experience of oppression* of someone is intensified when one is both a woman and poor in the context of the right to abortion in countries where it is illegal. It

is not gender, per se, what changes, but the whole experience when gender and class interact in specific ways. If we want to know the specific *kind* of relation between certain categories, we will have to look at the given context or situation, as different relations might be described for different contexts¹⁵ In this way, several of the described senses of ‘mutual constitution’ could be taken as relevant (even if partial) and always understood in their joint contribution to experience. The mutually shaping and changing nature sense of mutual constitution could fit our proposal, even if understood against the background of the whole experience. However, with the sense of new formation, we are inclined to deny that this is a viable way to conceptualize some kind of relation among categories, given that in our proposal properties maintain their ontological specificity. Moreover, we argue that categories may affect each other but there is the possibility of them not affecting each other at all. In this sense, our proposal is a *plural* approach – because it recognizes a variety of possible relations among categories – and a *contextual* one – because it recognizes the importance of the context in order to identify the kind of relation, which we also see as an empirical matter (see also Hancock 2013).

From this plural perspective we argue that there is a wide range of other possible relations that might provide a more nuanced examination of cases. We will provide some specific examples. One interesting relation is that of *intensity*, in the sense of intensification and mitigation. In the case of intensification (Verloo 2009; Khader 2013; Rodó-de-Zárate 2014), the idea is that when there are (at least) two oppressive categories, one intensifies the *effects* of the other. As Khader (2013, 68) says, “the intensification thesis supposes that gender oppression subjects all women to qualitatively similar harms and that race and class oppression increase the severity of those harms”. As already mentioned, we could say that being poor intensifies the oppression for women in the case of the right to abortion. That is, in countries in which abortion is illegal or restricted, women with the economic resources to travel to another country would be better positioned than women with less economic resources to undergo such a process.

If we look in the other direction, we find a less examined kind of relation, namely, that of *mitigation* between *two oppressive* positions¹⁶ (Rodó-de-Zárate 2015). As Silva and Ornat (2015) argue in their article on *travesti* prostitution networks and

¹⁵ See Yuval-Davis 2006, Valentine 2007, Anthias 2012 and Rodó-de-Zárate 2014 for the importance of context in intersectionality.

¹⁶ Khader (2014) also problematizes the notion of intensification in this sense by focusing on the particular case of the moral acceptability of transnational commercial surrogacy.

their transnational mobility between Brazil and Spain, “the meanings that surround Brazilian nationality/raciality are used by *travestis*, who mobilize elements of *Brazilianness* to their advantage in the Spanish sex market” (Silva and Ornat 2015, 1082). Even if the Brazilian representations of women are loaded with colonial subordination elements, they negotiate with their (oppressive) cultural and racial identity in Spain to mitigate their class and sexual oppression, as they gain ‘erotic capital’ with their ethnicity, which improves their economic situation. Moreover, we regard the extreme case of mitigation as the possibility of *cancelation* of the oppressive effects of a category (Verloo 2009). In fact, Verloo (2009) presents strengthening and weakening as two possible kinds of the broader notion of ‘interference’.¹⁷

Notice, too, that neither intensification nor mitigation can explain *all* existing interrelations among categories. Consider, for instance, the specific case of the right to vote in the USA for African-Americans and women. Even if we acknowledge that African-American women had to deal with sexism, racism and the combination of both when struggling for their right to vote, they did not have ‘less’ or ‘more’ right to vote because of it being denied ‘twice’ (intensified). As a result of the double discrimination, they ‘*just*’ couldn’t vote. How being a black woman differs from being a white woman or a black man *in the case of the materialization of the right to vote* cannot be approached here as an intensification or mitigation relation.

Actually, the additive effect could also be possible in this property and emergent experience framework. The effects of different categories may be related in an additive way in some cases. For instance, Bowleg (2008: 313) describes that the household income of Black lesbians is relevantly lower than both Black married heterosexual couples and Black male same-sex couples.¹⁸ Actually, the author uses this example with the aim of showing how social hierarchies are mutually constructed in the lives of Black lesbians. However, as we see it, the annual median household income seems to decrease

¹⁷ This concept is not restricted to these two notions. As Verloo (2009) states, ‘interference’ should be regarded as an umbrella concept between inequalities under which different forms of relations among categories are possible. However, no further specification is provided as to what relations fall under this umbrella concept.

¹⁸ According to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force’s (NGLTF; Dang and Frazer 2004) analysis of Black same-sex household data from the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, Black same-sex couples reported an annual median household income (\$49,000) of \$2,000, lower than that of their Black married heterosexual counterparts (\$51,000). Black female same-sex couples however reported a median income of \$9,000 less than Black married heterosexual couples, \$7,000 less than Black male same-sex couples, and a stunning \$21,000 and \$29,000 less than White female and male same sex couples respectively, illustrating clearly how structural inequalities grounded in intersections of race, sex, and sexual orientation affect Black female same-sex couples adversely” (Bowleg 2008: 313).

with every oppression position added. This is not to say that Black lesbians' identity is additive but that the *effects* of their social position in relation to a specific indicator may be the result of an additive relation. We believe one could recognize this additive functioning in some particular cases *without* thereby endorsing an additive *model* of intersectionality, given that in our view there are a variety of possible kinds of relations in their effects in experience. By proposing this plural approach, the proposal is thus able to satisfy the requirement of the complex and "deep" interaction among categories (i), always understood in their relation to the whole experience.

As it has been seen through the examples, the property framework and the emergent experience view in intersectionality may have some relevant implications for social science research. First, the property framework allows the consideration that all categories are configuring the experience but at the same time that every category may be individuated for a specific analysis, in a research or for political motivations. Any study that focuses on discrimination should acknowledge that different power structures are taking place in the configuration of the situation analyzed, both in the form of oppression or privilege. The implication of this is that it is only in an analytical level that properties can be distinguished. A research on the discrimination faced by lesbians in the medical system should take into account that the situation for an eighteen-year-old lesbian will not be the same as for a seventy-year-old lesbian. It would also be different if she has access to the public health system or not, due to, for instance, her legal status. Being deaf, white, rich or a doctor herself may also have an impact on how she faces the discrimination. So, it is only at the analytical level that one can point at how homophobia specifically causes discrimination, but any lesbian in the medical system will face discrimination as an integral experience based on her specific configuration of age, origin, social class, etc. Not taking into account these other positions may imply a bias, as there is no 'neutral' situation where only sexual orientation or gender are on stake. The same would apply when elaborating a political campaign against lesbians' discrimination in the medical system. Making visible only a certain situation may obscure the situation of black, old, disabled or migrant lesbians.

Second, in order to understand the relation between different categories and their effects, context should be conceived as playing a central role in the configuration of a particular situation. This means that the kind of discrimination lesbians may face in the medical system could be very different in relation to housing, working conditions or access to public space. The specific power relations are situated in time/space, and this

configures the interactions among categories in a certain way. So being lesbian could be seen as ‘mitigating’ the effects of the gender division of labor in relation to care work, as many times there is no gender predetermined role between a lesbian couple. A home, a prison, a cinema or a forest (and social relations in them) may condition the way categories interact, so the role of place should be seen as constitutive and not only as the scenario where intersectionality occurs. The emergence experience view shows that through considering only one category (sexual orientation), or categories separately (sexual orientation + age + gender) one cannot predict their effects in a particular situation. Their interaction and the specific context where they materialize are central elements for understanding, predicting and therefore transforming a particular situation. As the property framework shows, empirical work is thus necessary to identify particular interactions among categories and, as it has been seen, the possibilities for finding multiple types of relations is open. It is important to note that considering multiple positions and the role of context has been done in multiple research in different disciplines – here we just provided a theoretical framework that may help systematizing isolated claims, understanding its importance and opening the possibilities for empirical research that identifies particular relations in particular contexts.

As Collins and Bilge (2016, 192) note, “intersectionality is best served by sustaining a creative tension that joins inquiry and praxis as distinctive, yet interdependent, dimensions”. Thus it is important to highlight the implications that our view has for political intersectionality and intersectional praxis. Through the property framework and the emergent experience view, it becomes clear that power dynamics and political struggles should not be seen in terms of opposition but rather compatibility. hooks (1984[2000], 40) develops this idea in the following way: “the struggle to end sexist oppression that focuses on destroying the cultural basis for such domination strengthens other liberation struggles. Individuals who fight for the eradication of sexism without struggles to end racism or classism undermine their own efforts. Individuals who fight for the eradication of racism or classism while supporting sexist oppression are helping to maintain the cultural basis of all forms of group oppression”. In this sense, looking at specific oppressions as properties that constitute one whole system (or experience) and not as separate objects or fused elements allows the articulation of particular struggles acknowledging that they are only a particular aspect of inequality in a more holistic system. It also implies that an action in one aspect of oppression might relevantly influence other aspects and the whole system of power—

feminism, as well as other struggles, can be seen as directed to the whole oppression, and not just as an appendix to another more fundamental cause. Moreover, our theoretical framework encourages to politically act in a way that recognizes the variability of kinds of experiences that emerge from the configuration of certain categories in a person or group of people, as well as having an open mind regarding potential new harms and oppressions that might emerge from new configurations of categories' effects in contexts and that have not been yet named or explored.

6. Concluding remarks

The question of the relation among social categories lies at the heart of intersectionality theory. The shift from additive to mutual constitutive models resulted in the adoption of the latter model without much scrutiny, leading to different conceptions and senses of 'mutual constitution'. We have reviewed the main uses of 'mutual constitution' in the literature and have classified them into two groups (Figure 1) – constitution as *affection* and constitution as *new formation*. On the one hand, constitution as affection includes in turn two sub-types: *mutually shaping* and *changing nature*. On the other hand, constitution as new formation includes *new category* and *fusion*. Besides some particular problematic aspects of these kinds of relations, we have mainly argued that these proposals face the dilemma of not being able to clearly and adequately accommodate two main desiderata for intersectionality theory: (i) the need to account for complex and “deep” ways in which social categories interact, and (ii) the need to maintain an ontological specificity. We have argued that they cannot accommodate both desiderata because of an implicit conceptualization common to additive and mutual constitutive models: the reification problem. This problem relies on the fact that authors tend to implicitly conceive of categories as objects (broadly construed) and not properties. Once we reject reification in this sense, we can conceptualize categories as properties – of an individual and of a system, respectively described for each level. The property framework paves the way to seeing the interaction among categories as producing the emergence of a new entity (the experience or system, respectively) with a certain overall character, which cannot be predicted a priori from the behavior of the categories involved. Within this framework, we have proposed a plural and contextual model that also follows from the partiality critiques previously raised.

In conclusion, we argue that the property model is more suitable for conceptualizing intersectional relations in a way that categories and social systems can maintain their own ontological character while allowing its effects to be deeply affected in their materialization. Shifting from conceiving categories as objects that intersect to conceiving them as properties which, arranged in a certain configuration, produce an emergent experience (or system at that level), may contribute to a better understanding of intersectional relations and may provide a fruitful framework for feminism and social sciences as well as for political action.

Acknowledgements

References

- Alexander-Floyd, N. 2012. Disappearing Acts: Reclaiming Intersectionality in the Social Sciences in a Post-Black Feminist Era. *Feminist Formations* 24 (1) 1-25.
- Anthias, F., and Yuval-Davis, N. 1983. Contextualizing Feminism: Gender, Ethnic and Class Divisions. *Feminist Review* 15: 62–75.
- Anthias, F., and Yuval-Davis, N. 1992. Racialized Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and Class and the Anti-racist Struggle. London: Routledge.
- Anthias, F. 2012. Intersectional What? Social Divisions, Intersectionality and Levels of Analysis. *Ethnicities* 13 (1): 3-1.
- Anzaldúa, G. 1987. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute.
- Baca Zinn, and Dill, B.T. 1996. Theorizing Difference from Multiracial Feminism. *Feminist Studies* 22: 321-31.
- Bilge, S. 2010. Recent Feminist Outlook on Intersectionality. *Diogenes* 225: 58–72.
- Brah, A., and A. Phoenix. 2004. ‘Ain’t I A Woman? Revisiting Intersectionality’ *Journal Of International Women’s Studies* 5(3): 75–86.
- Bowleg, L. 2008. ‘When Black + Lesbian + Woman ≠ Black Lesbian Woman: The Methodological Challenges of Qualitative and Quantitative Intersectionality Research’ *Sex Roles*. 59:312–325
- Brown, M. 2011. Gender And Sexuality I: Intersectional Anxieties. *Progress In Human Geography* 36 (4): 541-550.
- Carastathis, A. 2013. Basements and Intersections. *Hypatia* 28 (4): 698- 715.

- Carastathis, A. 2014. The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory. *Philosophy Compass*, 9: 304–314.
- Carastathis, A. 2016. *Intersectionality. Origins, contestations, horizons*. University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln
- Carbado, Devon W and Gulati, Mitu (2013) *Acting White? Rethinking Race in Post-Racial America*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Cho, S., Crenshaw, K., and McCall, L. 2013. Toward A Field Of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, And Praxis. *Signs* 38 (4): 785-810.
- Choo and Feree. 2010. Practising Intersectionality In Sociological Research: A Critical Analysis Of Inclusions, Interactions, And Institutions In The Study Of Inequalities. *Sociological Theory* 28 (2): 129-149.
- Collins, P. H. 1990. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Power And The Politics Of Empowerment*. Boston: Unwin Hyman.
- Collins, PH and Bilge, S. 2016. *Intersectionality*. Polity Press: Cambridge.
- Combahee River Collective. 1981. First Published 1977. A Black Feminist Statement. In C. Moraga And G. Anzaldúa (Eds.) *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings By Radical Women Of Color*. New York: Kitchen Table, Women Of Color Press, 210–18.
- Cooper, B. 2015. Intersectionality. *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory*. DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199328581.013.20
- Crenshaw, K. 1989. ‘Demarginalizing The Intersection Of Race And Sex: A Black Feminist Critique Of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, And Antiracist Politics. *The University Of Chicago Legal Forum*, 140: 139-167.
- Crenshaw, K. 1991. Mapping The Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, And Violence Against Women Of Colour. *Stanford Law Review* 43: 1241.
- Davis, K. 2008. Intersectionality As Buzzword: A Sociology Of Science Perspective On What Makes A Feminist Theory Successful. *Feminist Theory* 9 (1): 67-85.
- Dhamoon, R (2011) “Considerations on mainstreaming intersectionality” *Political Research Quarterly* 64 -81:230-243)
- Ehrenreich, N. 2004. “Subordination And Symbiosis: Mechanisms Of Mutual Support Between Subordinating Systems 71 *Umkc L. Rev.* 251: 258-62.
- Garry, A. 2008. “Intersections, Social Change, and ‘Engaged’ Theories: Implications for North American Feminism.” *Pacific and American Studies* (March), pp.99-111.

- Garry, A. 2011. Intersectionality, Metaphors, And The Multiplicity Of Gender” *Hypathia*. 24(4): 826-850.
- Hancock, A. 2007a. Intersectionality As A Normative And Empirical Paradigm. *Politics And Gender* 3 (2): 248–54.
- Hancock, A. 2007b. When Multiplication Doesn’t Equal Quick Addition. *Perspectives on Politics* 5(1): 63–79.
- Hancock, A. 2013. *Empirical Intersectionality: Two Approaches*. University of California, Irvine Law Review.
- Hancock, A. 2016 *Intersectionality, an intellectual history*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Haslanger, S. 2012. *Resisting Reality. Social Construction And Social Critique*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Haslanger, S. 2015. “Distinguished Lecture: Social Structure, Narrative and Explanation”, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 45(1): 1-15.
- hooks, B. 1984[2000]. *Feminist Theory. From Margin To Center*. 2nd edition. New York And Massachusetts: South End Press.
- Jordan-Zachery, J. 2007. “Am I a Black Woman or a Woman Who Is Black?: A Few Thoughts on the Meaning of Intersectionality.” *Politics & Gender* 3(2): 254–63.
- Khader, S.J. 2013. Intersectionality And The Ethics Of Transnational Commercial Surrogacy. *International Journal Of Feminist Approaches To Bioethics* 6 (1): 68-90
- Ken, I. 2008. Beyond The Intersection: A New Culinary Metaphor For Race-Class-Gender Studies. *Sociological Theory* 26 (2): 152-172.
- Lugones, M. 2007. Heterosexualism And The Colonial/Modern Gender System. *Hypatia* 22 (1): 186-209.
- Lutz, H, Herrera, Mt, Supik, L (Eds.). 2011. *Framing Intersectionality. Debates On A Multi-Faceted Concept In Gender Studies*. Ashgate.
- May, V. M. 2015. *Pursuing Intersectionality. Unsettling Dominant Imaginaries*. New York: Routledge.
- McCall, L. 2005. The Complexity Of Intersectionality. *Signs: Journal Of Women In Culture And Society* 30: 1771- 1800.
- Moraga, Ch., Anzaldúa, G. eds. 1983. *This Bridge Called My Back: Writing by Radical Women of Color*. Watertown, MA: Persephone Press.
- Phoenix, A and Pattynama, P. 2006. ‘Editorial’. *European Journal Of Women’s Studies*

13 (3): 187-92.

Puar, Jasbir 2012 'I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess'. Intersectionality, assemblage, and affective politics' *Philosophia* 2.1: 49-66.

Rodó-de-Zárate, Maria and Jorba, Marta (ms). "Metaphors and the Reification Problem in Intersectionality"

Rodó-de-Zárate, Maria (2015) "Young lesbians negotiating public space in Manresa: an intersectional approach through places" *Children's Geographies*. Vol. 13. Issue 4. p. 413-434

Rodó-de-Zárate, Maria (2014) "Developing geographies of intersectionality with *Relief Maps*: reflections from youth research in Manresa, Catalonia". *Gender, Place & Culture*, 2014, Vol.21, (8), p.925-944

Romero, Mary 2018. *Introducing Intersectionality*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Silva, J, and Ornat, M. 2015. Intersectionality And Transnational Mobility Between Brazil And Spain In Travesti Prostitution Networks. *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal Of Feminist Geography* 22 (8): 1073-1088.

Staunæs, D. 2003. Where Have All Subjects Gone? Bringing Together The Concepts Of Intersectionality And Subjectification, *Nora- Nordic Journal Of Feminist And Gender Research* 11 (2): 101-110.

Valentine, G. 2007. Theorizing And Researching Intersectionality: Challenge For Feminist Geography. *Professional Geographer* 59 (1): 10-21.

Verloo. M. 2009. Itersectionaliteit En Interferentie: Hoe Politiek En Beleid Ongelijkheid Behouden, Bestrijden En Veranderen [Intersectionality And Interference: How Politics And Policy Preserce, Fight And Change Inequality]. Inaugural Lecture, Radboud Universitei Nijmegen, September 18, Nijmegen.

Viveros Vigoya, M (2016) 'La interseccioanalidad: una aproximación situada a la dominación' *Debate Feminista* 52, 1-17.

Walby, S., Armstrong, J., Strid, S. 2012. Intersectionality: Multiple Inequalities In Social Theory' *Sociology* 46 (2): 224-240.

Young, I. M. 1990. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Yuval-Davis, N. 2006. Intersectionality and Feminist Politics. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13 (3): 193-209.

Yuval-Davis, N. 2011. *The Politics of Belonging. Intersectional Contestations*. London: SAGE Publications.

