

# EMBODIED WAYS OF KNOWING

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**ABSTRACT** *In this article I present an argument for 'embodied ways of knowing' as an alternative epistemological strategy, drawing on feminist research and embodied experience. To present my argument, I begin by considering a number of problematic dualisms that are central to Western knowledge, such as the separation between mind and body and between knowledge and experience. In critique of mind/body dualism, feminists and phenomenologists claimed that Western understandings were based on a profound ignorance about and fear of the body. Mind/body dualism needed to be challenged and articulated differently, potentially through valuing and understanding 'embodiment'. In critique of the knowledge/experience dualism, feminists and phenomenologists have suggested that 'knowing' could be based on lived experience. From lived experience, knowledge could be constructed by individuals and communities, rather than being universal and resulting strictly from rational argument. Research on women's ways of knowing and on movement experience provided valuable insights into alternative ways of knowing. Just as lived experience and movement experience could be ways of knowing, I argue that 'embodied ways of knowing' could also contribute specifically to knowledge. The relevance of understanding 'embodied ways of knowing' for those involved in education and movement studies may be the further appreciation, development and advocacy for the role of movement experience in education.*

## INTRODUCTION

In this article, I argue that embodied ways of knowing can be an alternative epistemological strategy. I begin by exploring the research literature in search of relevant understandings of mind/body, embodiment, knowledge/experience and knowing in order to articulate an epistemological strategy that resonates with my own embodied experience.

In an earlier edition of this journal (Barbour, 2000), I reflected on my experiences as a doctoral student returning to University with a body of movement and life experience. I commented that I struggled to reconcile my life experiences with academic knowledge. Fortunately, I did recognise some of my own experiences in feminist writings and I was able to locate myself within a community of knowers for whom 'knowledge' could be experiential and personally relevant. Feminists such as Liz Stanley (1990) argued that 'knowledge' needed to be recreated as in-alienated, and grounded in individuals and their contexts. It seemed that knowledge needed to be reconstructed and multiple knowledges accepted (Davion, 1994; Jagger & Struhl, 1978; Stanley, 1990). On the basis of feminist arguments, I saw that exploration and articulation of my alternative lived experiences was especially important for me in understanding knowledge.

Through my research, I began to recognise and to critique the dominant epistemology and the dualisms on which Western knowledge seemed to be built. Being a dancer had given me an experiential basis from which to question the dualistic separation of mind and body, and knowledge and experience. I began to critique the acceptance of reasoning as the only way to 'knowledge' and the

'somatophobic' [fear of the body (Grosz, 1994)] privileging of mind and exclusion of body. I realised that I needed to become resistant to the practices in my knowing that worked to keep my mind and body disassociated (Barbour, 2000, 2002; Kellor, 1999).

This article theorises my experiences of embodied ways of knowing and can be seen as a companion to my earlier narrative writing (Barbour, 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2002). I begin by reviewing perspectives on mind/body dualism and the notion of embodiment before exploring knowledge/experience and the value of lived experiences.

## DUALISMS: MIND/BODY

Arguably, since Plato's writing the separation of mind and body has been an important dualistic separation in Western knowledge and culture. This separation was further theorised by philosopher Rene Descartes (Code, 1991; Grosz, 1994), and mind privileged over body in his philosophical statement "Cogito ergo sum: I think therefore I am" (Descartes, 1968, p. 53). Discussion of the body in the history of Western knowledge was generally limited to the fields of medicine and pathology and focussed around the corpse (Leder, 1998). The body in everyday life seemed to be taken for granted, regarded as unimportant or even 'absent' (Leder, 1998), something I personally struggled to understand.

Nevertheless, some theorists did contribute other understandings of the body. Phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1964) aimed to locate the lived body at the centre of individual experience. He argued that it was the body, not simply the mind, that understood and experienced the world. Mind and body were interfused or entwined – embodied. Therefore, embodiment was the existential condition of being in the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 1964). According to Merleau-Ponty (1962), the mind/body dualism of Descartes could be replaced with an understanding of the 'body-subject' which did not privilege mental activity and mind but expressed the relation of a person to his or her world. Merleau-Ponty's work was a useful reference for me to begin to theorise my experiences. For many feminists, his work inspired a focus on the body and provided a beginning point from which to create an alternative to mind/body dualism (Bigwood, 1991; Diprose, 1994/1995; Gatens, 1995; Grosz, 1994; Nettleton & Watson, 1998; Weiss, 1999). However, Merleau-Ponty was criticised for not recognising individual difference in his account of the body-subject and because he continued to use the male body as a model for all people (Grosz, 1994).

Feminist critiques of mind/body dualism and of the body-subject of Merleau-Ponty aimed to refigure the body at the centre of understandings of subjectivity and knowing (Grosz, 1994). Like Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1964), Elizabeth Grosz drew on phenomenology and worked with the notion of the lived body as opposed to the corpse. She argued that "philosophy has established itself on a profound somatophobia" (Grosz, 1994, p. 5) and aimed instead to develop an alternative figuration of bodily subjectivity. Developing an alternative and centralised figuration of bodily subjectivity resonated with my desire to understand mind and body differently.

Grosz began her theorising by commenting that bodies not only had "all the explanatory power of minds" but they also immediately drew attention to the question of gender and other markings like race and age (1994, p. vii). Grosz continued, "There are always only specific types of body, concrete in their determinations, with a particular sex, race, and physiognomy" (Grosz, 1994, p. 19).

From this perspective, the issues of difference were central to understanding individuals, something I had recognised intuitively and that I connected with immediately in Grosz' writing (1994). Difference related to both the corporeal aspects of an individual and the "manner in which culture marks bodies and creates specific conditions in which they live and recreate themselves" (Gatens, 1995, p. 71). While neither completely biologically nor socially determined, a body provided a sense of continuity as the intersection of biological, social and linguistic understandings (Braidotti, 1994). As Carol Bigwood described it, "we are always already situated in an intersubjective (and thereby already cultural), spatiotemporal, fleshy (and thereby already natural) world before we creatively adopt a personal position in it" (1991, p. 66). I appreciated that my body was continually both in the process of being shaped by social practices and, at the same time, the means by which I was able to express my resistance to socio-cultural and bodily norms. Grosz expressed this as, "bodies are not inert; they function interactively and productively" (1994, p. xi). Bodies function interactively within their specific socio-cultural context and also within their geographical environment. Moira Gatens took a further step and acknowledged the relationship between environment and individuals, arguing that by "drawing attention to the context in which bodies move and recreate themselves, we also draw attention to the complex dialectic between bodies and their environments" (1995, p. 69).

Detailed understandings of bodies in their specific instances revealed both the effects of cultural construction and of corporeality. However, a person still remained continually embodied (Albright, 1997), as I experienced. My body was culturally constructed to some extent but my embodied options were always limited by my individual history. Rosalyn Diprose made this point saying, "what you can become is limited by the social history of your body" (1994/1995, p. 15). I was neither simply culturally produced nor genetically pre-determined. Instead I am always in a process of becoming, rather than existing as a fixed, genetic object (Albright, 1997; Grosz, 1994; Weiss, 1999). Feminist understandings of the body provide a basis for my understandings of embodiment, as I discuss below.

## **EMBODIMENT**

Feminists, myself included, related to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1962) statement that every person was uniquely embodied and that embodiment was the existential condition of being a person (Braidotti, 1994; Grosz, 1994; Weiss, 1999). Feminist analyses revealed the futility of the attempt to separate the mind from the body. Quite simply, minds never existed without fleshy bodies. Consequently, I felt it was more relevant to develop an understanding of embodiment rather than of the body as distinct from the mind or as a 'house' for the mind.

Embodiment has been understood in a number of different ways. Rosi Braidotti (1994) expressed embodiment as a subject's existence at the point of overlap between the physical and the cultural. She stated that, "The body, or the embodiment, of the subject is to be understood as neither a biological or a sociological category, but rather as a point of overlapping between the physical, the symbolic, and the sociological" (Braidotti, 1994, p. 4). In this sense, 'embodiment' neither referred exclusively to nor privileged natural/corporeal or cultural/social understandings. This was an experientially grounded view of an embodied person, requiring recognition that a person necessarily was only able to exist and to know anything as a result of being embodied. I never encountered another person without a body, or knowledge existing without an embodied

knower (Flax, 1993). Everything that I have done myself required a body, from speaking and thinking and working to eating and sleeping and dancing (Nettleton & Watson, 1998). To some extent, though, even describing 'embodiment' as a point of overlap required an understanding of separate biological and cultural categories in some sort of relationship with each other.

From my perspective, 'embodiment' incorporated many things as one; a person's biological (somatic), intellectual, emotional, bodily, social, gendered, artistic and spiritual experience, within their cultural and geographical location. I want to emphasise now that embodiment is not arbitrary – it does include recognition of individual diversity in terms of race, gender, sexuality, ability, history and culture. Communities are made up of many specific embodied individuals and there is no 'one' universal body (Weiss, 1999). Embodiment thus indicates a holistic experiencing individual. I use the term 'embodiment' holistically in this sense to avoid the tendency to reinscribe the biological/cultural distinction, even if trying to theorise a relationship. I offer my understanding of embodiment as simultaneously and holistically cultural/biological/spiritual/artistic/intellectual/social/emotional, with recognition of difference in terms of race/gender/sexuality/ability/history/experience/environment. I move now to considering alternative ways of understanding knowledge and knowing to develop my argument for embodied ways of knowing as an alternative epistemological strategy.

### **EPISTEMOLOGY / WAYS OF KNOWING**

Within Western contexts, 'knowledge' was traditionally defined as that information gained through reason (Code, 1991): Recall Descartes reasoning: "I think therefore I am" (1968, p. 53). Typically, men were the only legitimate holders of knowledge, capable of discovering truth and reality through rational method. Impartiality, detachment and objectivity were the aim of those engaged in the pursuit of 'knowledge' (Goldberger et al., 1996). Obviously, as a feminist I had great difficulty in accepting this argument, as I had discovered knowledge for myself, through my own bodily methods and through my experience.

As I noted above, although this Cartesian thinking dominated the Western world, some theorists had attempted to present non-dualistic understandings that valued experience. In particular, Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962) asserted the relevance of lived experience in his phenomenological account of human perception (Grosz, 1994; Nettleton & Watson, 1998). Despite these phenomenological contributions, experience was not generally considered a valid or reliable way of knowing or basis from which to establish truth. I was searching for different perspectives on how we come to know.

Beginning from the premise that much of the work on ways of knowing did focus only on the experiences of white Western men, Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986) undertook extensive interviewing of many women to listen to their experiences and to understand their epistemological assumptions. From this research, the authors were able to articulate five epistemological positions that characterised the women in their study. They were careful to point out that the positions they outlined were not universal, fixed or exhaustive and, also, not necessarily exclusive to women (Belenky et al., 1986). They also acknowledged that these positions could not "adequately capture the complexities and uniqueness of an individual woman's thought and life" (Belenky et al., 1986, p.

15). Nevertheless, they offered five epistemological positions of great interest to my research, which can be summarised as follows:

1. silence – woman experiences herself as mindless and voiceless, dependent on external authority;
2. received knowledge – woman conceives of herself as capable of receiving and possibly reproducing knowledge from authority but not of creating her own;
3. subjective knowledge – woman conceives of truth and knowledge as personal, private and subjectively known or intuitive;
4. procedural knowledge – woman is learning and applying outside procedures for getting and communicating knowledge; and
5. constructed knowledge - woman views all knowledge as contextual and experiences herself as creator of knowledge, valuing both her own and objective strategies for knowing (Belenky et al., 1986).

Belenky et al. (1986) described the characteristics of each position and commented that the “quest for self and voice” (p. 133) was a central motivation women experienced in developing their ways of knowing. As a result, many feminists (Goldberger, 1996) have interpreted the epistemological positions as a developmental scheme, in which an individual might progress from silence through to constructed knowing, perhaps through the education system. (This interpretation is not without problems, as Code (1991) discussed.)

The articulation of constructed knowing (the fifth epistemological position) resonated with my own experience and generally with feminist and postmodern agendas (Belenky et al., 1986). Belenky et al. commented about the fifth epistemological position of constructed knowing, that those who attempted to integrate their own and other voices “had learned the profound lesson that even the most ordinary human being is engaged in the construction of knowledge” (1986, p. 133). Reading this research was pivotal for me in my search for a way to understand my own ways of knowing. Belenky et al. suggested that individuals came to constructed knowledge “as an effort to reclaim the self by attempting to integrate knowledge they felt intuitively was important with knowledge they had learned from others” (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 143). Such individuals were characterised by self-reflectiveness and self-awareness, a high tolerance for ambiguity, awareness of the inevitability of conflict, attempts to deal with the rich complexity of life as a whole and the desire to share their knowledge in their own way. Belenky et al. suggested that:

Once knowers assume the general relativity of knowledge, that their frame of reference matters and that they can construct and reconstruct frames of reference, they feel responsible for examining, questioning, and developing the systems that they will use for constructing knowledge. (1986, p. 138-139)

According to Goldberger et al., constructed knowing entailed “a flexibility in approaches to knowing, an ability to assess the appropriateness and utility of a particular way of knowing given the moment, situation, cultural and political imperatives, and relational and ethical ramifications” (1996, p. 356). As Goldberger et al. (1996) continued to argue, constructed knowing was flexible and multiple and, I think, more in line with a postmodern sensibility. Constructed

knowers became 'passionate' knowers, "weaving their passions and intellectual life" together (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 141). Constructed knowing thus provided a personal and strategic way for women to live their lives with passion.

I found some difficulties in accepting these epistemological positions at face value. Concerns I shared with other researchers focused on the need to avoid essentialising knowing, the potential misrepresentation of the multiplicity of women's knowing by white feminists, the potential slide into subjective relativism and the utility of the ways of knowing as a developmental scheme (Code, 1991; Goldberger et al., 1996). Some of these concerns were addressed by the authors, and I think they can be resolved through further attention to the importance of diversity and to an understanding of the ways of knowing as strategies available, rather than as positions into which each individual has to fit (Goldberger et al., 1996). Goldberger et al. extrapolated, "When context is factored into the study of knowing, one begins to see the advantages of thinking of five categories as strategies for knowing (rather than person types)" (1996, p. 362). It made sense to me that individuals might choose and use different strategies depending on their personal contextual requirements.

While I do not wish to generalise from the experiences of the women interviewed in the research (Belenky et al., 1986) to all people, there is nevertheless great value in recognising that there might be a variety of epistemological strategies that may be utilised by individuals, women and men. However, as Goldberger et al. (1996) pointed out, the focus of this initial research did not include consideration of and investigation into bodily ways of knowing.

Elizabeth Debold, Deborah Tolman and Lyn Brown (1996), and Nancy Goldberger (1996), considered some initial issues with bodily ways of knowing. They were interested in knowledge that was grounded in bodily experiences, sensations and bodily cues. Although such knowledge was rich and complex, Goldberger et al. (1996) and Debold et al. (1996) commented that bodily knowledge should not be mistaken for use of bodily metaphors, like 'knowing in my gut' (Goldberger, 1996). These bodily metaphors were likely to reflect current linguistic use "rather than a preferred heuristic, and deeply embodied knowledge perspective" (Goldberger et al., 1996, p. 355).

Although Debold et al. (1996) argued that knowing might be reconceptualised through the body, to avoid reinscribing the knowledge/experience and mind/body dualisms, this step was not taken further in the women's ways of knowing research (Belenky et al., 1986). This is the point at which I creatively moved beyond existing research in my quest to articulate epistemological strategies.

It seemed to me that bodily knowing could offer a way of knowing available either as part of the repertoire of constructed knowing strategies and, also, it might represent a new way of knowing (Goldberger, 1996). Either way, bodily knowing was an interesting area for exploration into alternative ways of knowing. In the next section I consider in more detail understandings of experience developed in phenomenology, before returning to bodily knowing.

## **EXPERIENCE**

Phenomenologist Iris Young (1980) drew on understandings from Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1964) and feminist Simone de Beauvoir (1972) to develop her understanding of women's lived bodily experience. Young (1980) wished to articulate the specifics of women's lived movement experience and embodiment,

something feminists had noted that Merleau-Ponty did not acknowledge (Grosz, 1994). While Young focussed on movement experiences aimed at achieving specific tasks, such as throwing a ball, she did outline some basic modalities of feminine body comportment (1980). Exploring Young's (1980) modalities I saw the application to movement in general, and considered the application to dance. She argued that a common experience of many Western women involved being both a subject for herself and object to herself. Women often tended to mediate their actions by imagining how they appeared as objects to others, at the same time that they also experienced their actions as intentional subjects (Weiss, 1999; Young, 1980). This experience meant a kind of discontinuity between intention as a subject undertaking a task and action as an object seen in the world from an external perspective. (I was immediately reminded of the paradoxical experiences I had as a dance student, being both constantly aware of my dancing image in the mirror, or in the eyes of a choreographer, while attempting to attend myself to the kinaesthetic experience of moving.) According to Young (1980), feminine bodily experience was: intentionally inhibited (by perception of inability to achieve the task undertaken); ambiguously transcendent (by concentrating action in one part of the body while the rest remained uninvolved); and had a discontinuous unity (by breaking the connection between intention and action, or between the possibility of and actual bodily achievement). In extending her earlier work, Young (1998) summarised her comments by stating that:

An essential part of the situation of being a woman is that of living with the ever-present possibility that one will be gazed upon as a mere body, as shape and flesh that presents itself as the potential object of another subject's intentions and manipulations, rather than as a living manifestation of action and intention. (1998, p. 270)

Young's (1980, 1998) work set the precedent for feminist study of women's movement experiences separately from men which I found encouraging in my own search.

Phenomenologist Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1999) contributed a great deal to understanding of bodily knowing and the experience of movement as knowledge. Sheets-Johnstone (1999) developed Merleau-Ponty's (1962, 1964) and Young's (1980) phenomenological work significantly, arguing for the primacy of movement over the primacy of perception. She commented that perception results from movement, and so acknowledged movement as "the originating ground of our sense-makings" (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999, p. 161). Sheets-Johnstone (1999) argued that humans learned about themselves and others initially through moving; by attending to bodily sensations of movement rather than by looking and seeing what was moving. Movement was experienced through the kinesthetic sense rather than through vision. The kinesthetic sense provided a person with information about space, time, movement and objects, and their relationship to these things (Stinson, 1995). In understanding these aspects through the kinesthetic sense, a person was able to develop an understanding of what constituted themselves, and others, and to develop concepts to understand the world (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999). In many discussions of the senses, the kinesthetic sense was left out but, as Sheets-Johnstone (1999) argued, it is fundamental to knowledge of what we are, to our basic knowledge of the world and our ability to move knowledgeably in the world.

Sheets-Johnstone articulated an embodied understanding I had had myself. She stated that movement was in itself a source of knowledge; movement was the condition of all forms of perception. From this perspective, movement experience was of profound epistemological significance (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999). At the foundation of 'knowledge' was experience of movement. Therefore, movement experience provided individuals with knowledge.

Following from the work of Sheets-Johnstone (1999), I argued that experience is as valid a method of gaining knowledge as rational knowing. And, therefore, by studying the movement experiences of individual people, I could learn about knowledge. I was exhilarated to discover that both Young's (1980, 1988) and Sheets-Johnstone's (1999) work provided validation for investigating lived movement experiences. Intimately tied to the study of experience is body. Drawing on my discussion above on embodiment and alternative ways of knowing, I now suggest embodied ways of knowing as an alternative epistemological strategy.

### **EMBODIED WAYS OF KNOWING**

Exploration of alternative understandings of the dualisms in dominant Western knowledge provided a beginning point from which I could research embodied ways of knowing. I was particularly interested in exploring embodied ways of knowing in my context of women's solo contemporary dance making (Barbour, 2001c, 2002). I was interested in articulating different ways of knowing based on dancers' experiences. I used the phrase 'embodied ways of knowing' to indicate my alternative understandings of 'knowledge' and 'body'. Embodied ways of knowing offer an alternative understanding of mind/body dualism, and of the knowledge/experience dualism (Barbour, 2002). Just as embodiment acknowledged diversity as a result of socio-cultural and corporeal aspects and location, an embodied way of knowing also incorporated individual difference in knowing (Barbour, 2002). An embodied strategy for knowing acknowledged explicitly the importance and influence of who a person is (Barbour, 2002). Individual differences were not denied in the pursuit of knowledge or the quest for self but brought to the forefront, and gender differences were a central part of personal differences.

Developing the work of Belenky et al. (1986), I now theorise a possible sixth epistemological strategy (Barbour, 2002, 2003).

6. embodied knowledge – person views all knowledge as contextual and embodied. The person experiences him/herself as creator of and as embodying knowledge, valuing her/his own experiential ways of knowing and reconciling these with other strategies for knowing as s/he lives out her/his life (Barbour, 2002).

As an individual using an embodied way of knowing, I attempt to understand knowledge as constructed and, further, as something that is embodied, experienced and lived. I attempt to integrate intuitively important knowledge with knowledge learned from others (Belenky et al., 1986) and with a conscious awareness of embodying these knowledges. Knowledges could be woven together with passion, experience and embodied individuality. For individuals like myself using an embodied knowledge strategy, living with alternative understandings to dominant knowledge creates challenges and tensions that will have to be resolved

personally. These challenges and tensions will be embodied, experienced and resolved throughout life. Resolutions will not come purely through rationalisation or through intuition but also through embodying and living out the possibilities. In living out the possibilities, individuals will experience and evaluate knowledge and sometimes even discard knowledge that they find is not relevant or liveable in their own lives.

Using an embodied knowing strategy, I theorise that an individual might creatively adapt personal beliefs and behaviours in order to resolve the tensions inherent in living in a Western context. This might well be a lifetime process. Interrogation of personal daily behaviour and movement, moral and political commitments, spiritual beliefs, artistic practice, employment choices, relationships with other individuals, with dominant Western culture and geographical environment, will need to be thorough and involve a high degree of sensitivity and scepticism. In this process, s/he will likely experience tensions (intellectual, spiritual, artistic, physical and emotional tensions) arising from alternative perspectives and practices within dominant culture. S/he will need to be articulate and compassionate in their embodied self-expression. And s/he will need extraordinary passion and commitment to live out the solutions! This, I suggest, is an embodied way of knowing.

### **RELEVANCE FOR EDUCATION**

I suggest that recognising the importance of movement experience for learners' understanding in their worlds indicates that greater value should be placed on movement in education. Whether physical education, health, outdoor recreation, dance, arts, or environmental studies is the curriculum area, embodied ways of knowing might be fostered within the curriculum. Movement and focussed reflection on movement experience can contribute significantly to our knowledge of ourselves, of each other and of the world around us. For example, improved kinaesthetic sensing gained through a focus on body awareness in movement activities might contribute to better understandings of self, such as sensitivity to personal health and fitness, body alignment and injury prevention, enhanced ability for changing movement habits/patterns in everyday life and in specialised movement. Movement experiences can develop better understandings of self in relation to others, such as improved group coordination in movement and team work, focussed observation of others moving and relevant feedback in coaching or creative work, and sensitivity and respect for other's diverse movement behaviours and expressions. Movement education may also develop better understandings of self in relation to the world; for example, awareness and sensitivity to the impact of environment and culture on self, and self on the environment and on culture. Whether running, playing the violin, creating dances, climbing rock faces, performing taiaha, playing competitive basketball, tramping or learning to breathe fully, movement experience can provide learning that might be transferred to other movement activities and to other areas of each individual's life.

In order to assist the development of embodied ways of knowing, engagement in a cycle of movement experience, reflection, formulation of alternative movement/ideas and further experimentation, as suggested by the experiential learning cycle (Jarvis, 1995; Kolb, 1984) and/or the creative process in the arts (Balkin, 1990), will assist individuals to reflect on and further value their movement learning. Recognising embodied ways of knowing and fostering them

in relevant curriculum areas may lead to greater transference of learning and knowledge, not just from movement activity to movement activity but throughout a learner's life.

## SUMMARY

I began this article by commenting on how I struggled to reconcile my lived experience with academic knowledge (Barbour, 2000, 2001c, 2003). With reference to a range of writers who have critiqued and deconstructed Western 'knowledge' and dualisms, and who have offered alternative understandings of 'knowledges', I have explored some attempts to understand ways of knowing and embodiment differently, as documented in research. My exploration led me to articulate the possibilities for understanding ways of knowing more broadly than as 'reasoning', reflecting the research of Belenky et al. (1986). In exploring understandings of mind/body dualism as embodiment, my interests turned to researching embodied ways of knowing, reflecting my reading of phenomenologists, specifically Iris Young (1980, 1998) and Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1999). With reference to the valuable work done by Belenky et al. (1986) and Goldberger et al. (1996) on women's ways of knowing and to the commentary offered on embodiment, I suggested what an embodied way of knowing might be (Barbour, 2002). I commented finally, on the value of recognising and fostering embodied ways of knowing within educational contexts.

In conclusion, inspired by my own embodied experiences, I drew together an understanding of constructed knowing strategies with recognition of embodied difference, and suggested the epistemological strategy of embodied ways of knowing. I theorised that embodied ways of knowing are invaluable, particularly to people focussed on movement and interested in attempting to recreate themselves throughout their lifetime.

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