

# Body in the 21st century essay

[Sociology](#), [Identity](#)



## Body in the 21st Century<sup>1</sup>.

How is knowledge mediated by the body in the following quotes by Assia

Djebar and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht?

Knowledge is mediated by the

body in both quotes through the existential reality into which each narrator finds themselves in. Essentially, the body is split and analysed in terms of its relation with knowledge. In this sense, it is not a purely physical form.

Rather, it is a product of the cognitive and the perceptual. For example, in the case of Assia, the body is given as a vessel used while sleeping, a metaphor usually twinned with death or dreaming.

However, in this narrative, the dreams are encapsulated as bodily

phenomena. Further, the body is not objectified, but rather seen in terms of a cognitive process or function relating to the gap between experience and knowledge.

All sense of being in terms of the past, present and

future are undermined by the memory and the experience, which are

brought about by the body in both narratives. The access to knowledge

stored by the memory is given to the experience during being in the second

example. The way in which the knowledge manifests in the second

paragraph reveals the way that direct physical experience generates

knowledge in the experience of the presence and gives it a rationale for wanting to act in the present.

That is to say that the act of the present is driven by a nostalgic desire to

replicate a memory of the experience of the bodily function of the past. 2.

How is the meeting of two bodies transgressive – or not – in the following

passages from Bataille and Pettman?

The bodies transgress in the

narrative as they are transcended from individual form into a biological morph in which experience is the key descriptive prose.

This is done primarily through the denial of the union of two bodies due to the implication of two individual forms. Rather, an experiential form is created from two biological entities acting in terms of a process, the abstraction of which is the prose. For example, whereby two bodies would be separate, a unification would have to be undergone so as to make into one. However, there is no union between two bodies. This is clear in the narrative as it tells us that the moment is 'not made up of two discontinuous beings drawing close together uniting in a current of momentary continuity'.

This is extended into the existential in the second paragraph in which the body, or at least biological essence to being, is never fulfilled and so the pleasure is matched to the experience rather than any state of being. Essentially, the linguistic form of the orgasm reached by two parties transgresses the point of bodily being and are shown to be a part of a mutual experience, somewhat akin to an art piece. Essentially, the linguistic notion of the sexual bodily form is in passing or is in the process of experiencing / coming into sexual being.

However, at no point is the body in essence or seen as belonging to an individual and so no biological essentialism is, or can be, made. 3. Describe the implications resulting from the changes in embodiment in the characters of Cleopatra in *Freaks* and the narrator in Imre Kertész's *Fatelessness*.

The embodiment in the first narrative clearly takes on a form of something as distinct from the form of the body itself. The

“I”, in this sense, has transcended the physical form so that it is addressed as entirely distinct from the subjective “I”.

The observing author is then freed from their physical essence that is usually assumed as an essential part of any identity or autonomous agent. For example, there is no question in the narrator’s mind that they are fully alive and of being. However, the body is merely an object before their vision and subject to their gaze. Nevertheless, the life giving capacity of the body is implied in the flicker of life that it gives.

In the second scene, an objectification of the body is entertained replacing the more existential distancing of the body found in the former paragraph.

The body is given as a definitive of life itself and a valid label to identify a person’s being and form. This is given in the phrasing of the narrative as a ‘they’, being a definition based entirely upon physical deformity and one that distances itself from the person of the more generic form. This implies that the body is definitive and that people can be typed on the basis of the image and form of their body type.

In essence, it constitutes an ideal body form. This essentialism is indicative of the stereotyping that often dominated in the notions of the body at the time of Freaks (Browning, 1932). BibliographyBrowning, T., (1932) Freaks Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer