

Chapter 4

The Affective, Social and Bodily Situation



Abstract This chapter deals with the affective, social and bodily situation of learning and teaching philosophy, starting with a discussion of the views articulated by both students and professional philosophers in the interviews and answers to the questionnaire on attitudes to studying philosophy. The discussions of women students’ “love” or “passion” for philosophy and of the dynamics of alienation from philosophy lead to an examination of the alienation related to students’ social class, race and sexual orientation. As we saw earlier, feminist pedagogy has typically tried to surpass the idea of reason that operates as separate from the feeling, sensing and moving body. In this chapter, I discuss the aspect of the senses and how they are and could be integrated in processes of learning more comprehensively. At the end of the chapter, I describe two summer schools. The first of these is the Icelandic one, Philosophy of the Body, which examined the possibility of teaching philosophy “through the body”. The second is the Danish summer school titled Feminist Political Philosophy.

4.1 Women Students’ Passion for and Alienation from Philosophy

How do women students and graduates experience the educational, collegial and institutional practices of philosophy? This section elucidates that experience on the basis of the background study conducted for the purposes of this book. To be sure, some of the concerns raised by women are also concerns of those who identify themselves as men or as belonging to a gender minority, and I return to this issue in the next section. For now, however, I focus on how women themselves interpret their feelings of belonging and not-belonging in the community of philosophers. Space is given to a plurality of views in the hope that together they help us draw some tentative conclusions of women’s experiences of alienation.

To start from the positive aspects related to philosophy by all genders, these include the idea of philosophy as a field of intellectual freedom. As we remember, Aristotle suggests that philosophic wisdom offers “pleasures marvellous for their purity and their enduringness”; for him, philosophical contemplation is the only activity that

“would seem to be loved for its own sake; for nothing arises from it apart from the contemplating, while from practical activities we gain more or less apart from the action” (*NE*; Aristotle 2001, X:7).

Not all philosophers entirely agree with Aristotle’s view: from Plato to Wollstonecraft and from Marx to Arendt and Franz Fanon, many philosophers see philosophy as a force for social transformation. Even so, it may not be misguided to claim that the core of the philosophical attitude consists of intellectual curiosity, the attitude of wonder and constant search (see Heinämaa 2000). The aim is a better understanding of things, pursued in a community of thinkers who share the ideals of intellectual humility and bravery. It is this particular kind of camaraderie that philosophy majors are supposed to enjoy so much that they are ready to make it the centrepiece of their lives. To be sure, at its best philosophical activity brings about a shared intellectual joy and a sense of belonging.

Yet there are considerable differences in how students experience their philosophical education. Some of these differences became explicit in the background research conducted for this book. This study consisted of a small survey about students’ attitudes to philosophy and a dozen interviews, most of them with philosophy majors, some with minors, and two with people who had a degree in philosophy but had left the field.¹ In the semi-structured interviews, interviewees could speak rather freely on the given theme, which here was their relationship to philosophy in general and the way they viewed gender in the context of philosophy. The interviewees and questionnaire respondents were from various countries (from Europe to the Americas and Asia), but due to my own affiliation with a Finnish university, Finns became the biggest group. Women formed the majority of the forty respondents and twelve interviewees. The goal was not to create a comprehensive empirical study of students’ attitudes but rather to listen to the diverse experiences related to studying philosophy in view of the goals of this volume. This limitation must be taken into account when the material from the survey and interviews is interpreted.

Perhaps expectedly, especially philosophy majors found studying philosophy rewarding, while some who had taken only a few courses in philosophy after upper secondary school even showed hostile attitudes. When the respondents and interviewees were asked about the things they enjoy most in philosophy, many of them mentioned its breadth, depth and intellectual rigour. A woman philosophy major gave the following list of enjoyable things in philosophy:

The issues discussed, the stringent mode of thinking and the dedication to really go to the bottom of things. The clarity of writing and use of words. The dedication to really be on point. The curiosity to really dig deep into fundamental questions. Philosophy has made me

¹ In the survey, most of the questions were open-ended, for instance: “What is it about philosophy that you like?” “What is it about philosophy that you do not like?” “Which, if any, are your favourite questions or themes in philosophy?” “Does a student’s gender play any role in studying philosophy, in a negative or positive manner? In which ways?” Among the multiple-choice questions the most interesting one dealt with the feelings inspired by philosophy. Almost all the respondents named joy as a feeling inspired by philosophy. The other alternatives were success, absorption, enthusiasm, control, irritation, failure and inadequacy.

see everyday things with new eyes. The tools you get to analyse, question and understand parts of the world.

Another woman respondent described her interest in philosophy in a similar way:

I like that it takes nothing for granted, and that no question is unaskable. One can keep being surprised and keep going on to delve deeper into a subject. So, the radical critical attitude, in the sense that philosophy wants to understand the roots of everything, is what interests me the most.

It was not rare that philosophy majors expressed what could be called a passionate relationship to philosophy. Many students felt that philosophy had radically changed their ways of seeing the world; it had changed their lives. Their praises of philosophy were not unreserved, however. One of my interviewees, Laura,² pointed out that she was first impressed by the fact that all parts of reality were potential topics of philosophical reflection. She also felt that philosophy did, indeed, give her tools for thinking, and helped her to satisfy her intellectual curiosity. This aspect of philosophy was rewarding for her. At the same time, she had great expectations for the interaction between philosophy students, anticipating discussions that would be conducted in a tolerant atmosphere and would be broad in content. Nevertheless, she felt that these expectations were not met. She found that especially in the beginning of her studies, the atmosphere in the discussions between students was competitive and even aggressive. Open dialogue was difficult, because, according to her, some male students had “a downright religious attitude” towards theory: they idealised a chosen theory and clung to it instead of engaging freely in a dialogue.

Here we return to the problem framed by Le Dœuff: the ownership of knowledge. It is certainly typical of philosophy that its practitioners find security and shelter in a tradition of thought they choose to represent. Even if you may not be able to provide your own ideas about specific philosophical questions, you can always refer to the solutions of earlier philosophers. It can be useful to try out how a problem would be approached through a particular philosophical framework, even if you did not subscribe to it. This allows us to see if that framework could be fruitful in elaborating the question we are interested in. It can also be argued that a studious emulation of a philosophical framework is a necessary step on the way to freer thinking. The peril of this approach is that your thinking may become engulfed by a conceptual framework to such an extent that you cannot really conceive of alternative modes of thought, or that your interpretation of reality dogmatically follows your chosen theory or the ideas of a specific thinker. I will not take a stance on how gendered such a tendency is; yet it is clear that a dedication to a theory allows you to present yourself as a possessor of knowledge, that is, living in the wealth of knowledge instead of moving between wealth and poverty, as Eros described by Diotima in Plato's *Symposium*.³

Yet the apparently self-purposeful accumulation of knowledge about a specific theory or approach can be an answer to the feelings of inadequacy philosophy majors

² The names of the interviewees have been changed.

³ About love and wonder as attitudes of philosophising and an analysis of *The Symposium*, see Heinämaa (2000, 2017).

may have in the beginning of their studies. The very same things that make philosophy so alluring, namely its breadth of history and topics, its depth and open-endedness, also make it very challenging to get a grasp of. Facing this challenge, students may overestimate the demands of the discipline, and underestimate their own abilities. One of the women respondents explained how her love for philosophy was overshadowed by feelings of inadequacy:

I love this subject and I have felt a strong feeling of privilege and happiness about being able to study this subject. But I also got depressed when writing my bachelor's thesis because (among other things) of not feeling good enough. I thought I would not manage to write the thesis, but then I got an A. It felt like a joke afterwards that I had gone through so much anguish about something that, as it turned out, I was really good at.

While these unwarranted feelings of inadequacy are not entirely gender-specific, several studies that do not specifically focus on philosophy show that it is more typical for male students (at school and university) to overestimate their performance and more typical for female students to underestimate theirs. It is also typical for male students to underestimate the performance of their female peers. (E.g. Bench et al. 2015; Cole et al. 1999; Grunspan et al. 2016). All in all, it seems that even if girls, as a group, tend to do better in upper secondary school (or high school) than boys, a significant proportion of women philosophy students are not ready to take up speaking space with the same confidence as men, nor do they trust their abilities in philosophy. What came up repeatedly in the interviews and questionnaires was that the image of the philosopher was quite gendered. The above-quoted woman student, who has a passionate relationship to philosophy, describes her alienation from it as follows:

I do not feel that I have been discriminated against. I feel, though, that being in a male majority context has at times made me more insecure. I also feel that I have a picture of the ideal philosopher being male, and that I have had a hard time seeing myself as a person who can do the sorts of things that philosophers do, and answer those types of questions they do.

On the surface, it seems that adopting an identity as a professional philosopher may come more easily to men than women. Some female students also feel that they get less attention and recognition than male students or that they have to work harder to be recognised by the faculty and their peers. Some also suggest that assertiveness and confrontation—attitudes more often linked with the traditional masculine virtues than the feminine ones—are overly appreciated in the philosophy class:

I think it is very easy for a philosophy class to turn into an environment that rewards rhetorical confidence and assertiveness over substance. Confrontation is sometimes overly rewarded as well. I think that the norms of femininity tend to clash with this environment and make women think “this is not for me”. But, even when women don't think that, the problem is that men think it is “for them”. That is to say, I have seen too many young men who seem to think they are naturally gifted in philosophy, with very little evidence. Their self-image seems to adhere to the discipline very easily. And this leads them to be very controlling in discussions, take up too much space and be often condescending towards women students. I feel the kind of young men who are in this category are (coincidentally or not) those most likely to not to treat their fellow women students as colleagues and not to be critical of current gendered norms and arrangements.

In contrast to this woman student's personal dissatisfaction with the behaviour of some men students, for most men students whom I interviewed or who answered to the questionnaire, the realisation that gender bias was possible always came through the complaints of women students. In other words, practices that generate inequality had remained hidden to them until women students had addressed the issue. As in the case of race, privilege is difficult to discern from the perspective of the privileged.

There may also be cultural and institutional differences in whether confrontational strategies are rewarded or not. Even within a specific institution the work culture evolves over time, depending, among other things, on the changes in the staff. Unfortunately, it may take only one person with a condescending attitude to cause a lot of resentment, especially if no one protests against the person's derogatory comments.

However, the complaints of women philosophy majors are mild in comparison to those of women in other fields. It is my impression—and further research would be needed to validate this—that many women from the outgroup find philosophers' way of interacting complacent and the discipline itself dry. In these cases, philosophers are seen as arrogant and uninterested in what really goes on in the world, indifferent to empirical evidence and unwilling to pay attention to the changes and new challenges in the society. Fields outside philosophy appear to these women as more appealing, more exciting, more up-to-date, and most importantly, less permeated by smugness and self-assertion.

Especially women with a background in gender studies voice these kinds of criticisms of philosophy, even though many of them also have a profound interest in the discipline.⁴ Emma, a gender studies major, pointed out that she found the teaching of the philosophy classes she had taken old-fashioned and violent in the sense that they reproduced old stereotypes about gender. According to another student of gender studies, philosophy encourages one to disdain the thoughts of others (non-philosophers) and involves a futile splitting of hairs. Yet others suggested that professional philosophers complicate philosophical discussion in order to be able to monopolise it, to keep non-professionals at bay.

Of course, one way to respond to such criticism—if it ever reaches the ears of philosophers—is to attribute it to the ignorance of laypersons. Even so, this criticism is parallel to those that all genders *within* the field engage in, as we will see in the next section. As for women's experienced distance from the field, this may have to do with the homosocial situation in which its norms are created, as I suggested earlier.

No matter how benevolent the male staff is towards female students, the dynamics between heterosexual male staff and students can be effortless in a way that is difficult to achieve with female students. For instance, the framework of one-on-one discussions with staff members can be quite different for male and female students. In her post on the *Women in Philosophy* website, a female graduate student points out the difference between her own attitude towards the possibility of sexual harassment and that of her boyfriend's, who was also a graduate student in philosophy. Unlike the

⁴ In the background study, after the philosophy majors and professionals, the second biggest group were women students in gender studies. This may be why the latter stand out as the critical ones.

boyfriend, she was always painfully aware of the possibility of sexual underpinnings and misunderstandings in one-on-one meetings:

whenever I have ever had a meeting with a male member of staff I am on some level worried that they might express interest in me, or that I will realise that they are interested in me, or that they will think that I am interested in them.⁵

This example shows how heteronormativity plays out at least for some women in a male-dominated setting. The necessity to make sure that the situation is not understood as sexually charged can make the relationship more awkward than it might be otherwise. Naturally the situation is even worse, if the student is treated primarily as a sexual object, which means that her value as a prospective colleague is diminished.

Similar situations may occur when the roles are reversed: hooks describes an incident between herself and a male student to whom she, without totally acknowledging it, had become attracted. In order to outweigh her erotic feelings, she treated the young man so dismissively that he finally complained about her behaviour (hooks 1994, 192).⁶ Given that philosophy faculty is predominantly male, it could be assumed that female students have more limited space than male students in their interactions with the staff.

In a small Finnish survey, a female respondent compares the situations of male and female students in the following manner:

In the beginning of my studies I noticed that male students also spent more of their free time with the department staff. I myself did not feel I knew anyone on the department staff, nor did I believe any of them would remember my name. I remember a discussion I had when I was writing my master's thesis. [One of the male students] stated that since his freshman year, he had spent time mainly with the faculty. Young men do not appear to question their knowledge and abilities so much. At the same time, young women communicate continuous uncertainty about their competence and skills. In my class the young, clearly talented women, who also did well in their studies, did not feel capable of becoming philosophers or doing philosophical research. I'm the only one in that group who continued in philosophy after the master's thesis⁷ (Halttunen-Riikonen 2014, 108).

Even if the close relationship to the faculty described by the male student were not all that common, this quotation sheds light on the sense of being adrift shared by many women students. The distance experienced by the woman respondent from the faculty did not prevent her from continuing to doctoral studies, but, in her interpretation, such was not the case with her female peers.

Even after entering the doctoral or postdoctoral phase, an individual can still experience the hierarchical structures of the department as alienating. One of my interviewees, Anna, who had left academic philosophy some years after obtaining her doctorate, found the hierarchical life at the philosophy department troubling, as it was in such a stark contrast to the what she considered to be the spirit of philosophy

⁵ <https://beingawomaninphilosophy.wordpress.com/category/relationships-with-students/>. Accessed 1 April 2022.

⁶ hooks's examples are not from a philosophy class, as she herself taught English and Ethnic Studies.

⁷ My translation.

itself. Emphasising that zeal for climbing the career ladder is not necessarily more typical of men than women, Anna suggested that women might be less interested in philosophy as an institution, and that many of them feel that there is a tension between philosophy as dialogue and as institution.

[A]dvancing in philosophy requires a specific integrity and independence, a critical use of reason [...] but I don't see that it wouldn't be equally possible for both women and men. Wanting to learn and wanting to conquer new areas of knowledge, a critical use of reason, and a courage to express this... this is a combination that can be found in both genders, but women [...] have less to lose.

Anna suggests that due to their historical situation outside or in the margins of academic philosophy, it may be easier for women to extend their philosophical wonder to the life of the institution itself. As she sees it, most male students are more inclined to experience the practice of philosophy as a unified, valuable whole, including its institutional aspects:

It is more important for men to be included in the institution. [The institution] is, in a way, a different thing than a community. When I think about the community of women [philosophers], I don't think about their positions in academia or about their career paths. But young men are very much aware of career paths. This is the difference. Women do philosophy for its content or in the framework of the intellectual community, [...] and men see its formal aspect, and are interested in it, because it is built by their forefathers. There is something more interesting in it for them. This was, again, exactly what pushed me away from it [...]. There are, of course, [...] many good sides to the institutionalisation as well [...], but the institution [of philosophy] wouldn't have to be quite like it is now [...]. It could be determined more by content and the community, and less by the structures. I find that this formal showing off may push women away, also other women than myself. It's uninteresting.

From Anna's perspective, the institutional aspect of philosophy should be questioned and rebuilt in such a way that the practice of thinking together comes first: philosophy is worthwhile in its connection to everyday life, or when the ethical, the practical and the theoretical form a seamless whole.

As we have seen, women's alienation from philosophy may have to do with how people respond to them. One of my interviewees, Lea, described her transition as a loss of privilege within the philosophical arena. When she had returned to her studies after a break, having entered the transition, she felt that her speaking space was no longer respected as it had been when she had occupied a man's role. Other students would talk out of turn and interrupt her in seminars, and even her physical space seemed reduced. People would no longer step aside to let her pass, and in public spaces, they would come much closer to her than used to be the case. Yet she had not shrunk physically, and refused to live her body in the inhibited manner that now appeared to be required of her:

I express myself very aggressively and clearly, I don't watch my mouth or move cautiously, [...] and the lecturers don't quite know how to react to that, how to respond. [...] But what is the boundary that I transgress here? Is the problem that I am a trans person or do they wonder why this woman is like this? Why do I jump over desks as a woman? But this is the way that I am accustomed to act and move, I'm not cautious about my environment [...] and I don't want to be because it would be dishonest towards myself, and I would concretely have to hide myself.

All in all, she felt that she had lost “the protective field of masculinity” that she once had. Being used to this protection and to being heard, she found the vanishing of her privilege disconcerting. Lea’s experience would then appear to confirm what is suspected by students who are cis women, namely that their gender makes their arguments less interesting.

To summarise, women’s alienation from philosophy appears to include, at least, the following aspects: (1) feeling of distance from the faculty, (2) the occasional gender-based role of underdog in classroom confrontations, (3) difficulties to identify oneself with the traditional masculine role of the philosopher, (4) the dominance of the all-knowing attitude over not-knowing, (5) underestimation of one’s abilities by oneself and others, (6) difficulty in acquiring speaking space and (7) frustration with academic philosophy as an institution. Instead of attributing all these aspects to the experiences of all women in philosophy, I would suggest that they form a pattern that is familiar in differing aspects to different women. All things considered, however, it would seem that many women students may need support from the teaching staff to be able to live up to their potential. Before examining potential ways to provide this support, I demonstrate how the problem of alienation extends far beyond the situation of women students.

4.2 Class, Race and Sexual Orientation

“Philosophy is not for black women. That is a white man’s game”. This is advice a career counsellor gave to the US philosopher Kristie Dotson’s younger sister, who had suggested that she too might want to become a professional philosopher. British philosopher Patricia Haynes, who has a Caribbean background, recalled her father’s reaction to her idea of making a career out of philosophy: “Philosophy is for posh white boys with trust funds” (Ratcliffe and Shaw 2015). At the moment of writing the article, Haynes identified herself as one of the three Black women philosophers in Great Britain. According to Charles W. Mills, the US-based author of *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race*, there are “so few recognized black philosophers that the term still has something of an oxymoronic ring to it” (1998, 2).

In these examples three characteristics are attributed to philosophy: Whiteness, maleness and affluence. Yet the class status of studying philosophy varies from one country to another. In the Nordic countries, where university education does not—as of yet—require a financial input from the parents, studying philosophy is not generally associated with a high socioeconomic status. In some other countries, such a status may be taken for granted among students, as a woman student describes:

Philosophy has a gender problem. But, at least in North America, it also seems to have a very big race and class problem. One very obvious way in which this manifests itself is the plain underrepresentation of students from diverse backgrounds in graduate programmes. It leads to the formation of a certain social “consensus”, of an imagined shared background that is distinctively affluent and “white” American. For example, I have felt quite alienated

from many informal social occasions among philosophers because of the level of wealth and the economic family background assumed in conversation. The gap is so big that I feel like I cannot relate to those people and I often withdraw from conversation altogether. This carries over to philosophical discussions where I am sometimes shocked by the lack of familiarity with other more disadvantaged economic situations (and also the explicit assumption that everyone in the room is unfamiliar with them).

It has been suggested that students from the Nordic countries also participate in an academic culture based on the lifestyle and values of the middle and upper classes. Sociological studies have shown that women students and researchers that come from a working-class background, may feel continuing insecurity within academia, not having immersed the middle- and upper-class values that produce the ability to discuss and analyse even minor issues at length, to speak out, take space and present arguments with self-confidence (e.g. Käyhkö 2014, 10–12) (Ibid., 13–14.). In their homes, they may have had to differentiate from values that present manual labour as more worthwhile and honest than academic work, which is “just studying” or even “wasting tax-payers’ money”. Despite their possible success in academia, many working-class students and researchers experience a constant need to prove themselves, a fear “being found out” as lacking, and a feeling of discomfort.

In his answer to the questionnaire about studying philosophy, a male student describes the impact of his working-class background as follows:

I come from a lower working-class background in which I was the first in my entire family to even graduate from high school.⁸ I do not come from a literary home. This means a lack of cultural background that is beneficial to studying a topic like philosophy and a great and persistent feeling of insecurity, inadequacy and being an “imposter” who is out of his element.

Despite the fact that he is able to articulate his thoughts in an eloquent manner, he still feels like “an imposter” and “out of his element” in philosophy.⁹ This feeling of incongruence or alienation is parallel to that of students with ties to a non-majority culture, women students, students of colour, and students with disabilities. At the same time these experiences of alienation and incongruence are not present in a uniform manner within or across these divisions: a White female student with an academic family background may feel more at ease in classroom debates than a White male student with a working-class background, whereas she may experience more feelings of discomfort in in some other parts of the student life, like male-dominated informal get-togethers. In other words, the experiences of alienation and incongruence have a somewhat fluctuating character: often they are born from exclusions from the White, Western, cis male, middle-class, heterosexual, able-bodied norm, but at

⁸ In the Nordic countries, the compulsory education lasts for nine years and consists of a primary school of six years and a middle school of three years, the latter equivalent to the lower grades of the American high school. After that one spends three more years in upper secondary education, either in a vocational or an academic school. The latter, again, is equivalent to the higher grades of the American high school. So, when the respondent says that he was the first in his family to graduate from high school, he means that he was the first to go through an academic upper secondary school that prepares its students for university studies.

⁹ About the “imposter syndrome”, see Sandra Lee Bartky (2003).

other times these exclusions are less apparent and can be compensated by privileges or “strengths” in other areas (upbringing in an academic home, cultural know-how, good self-confidence).

In “How Is This Paper Philosophy?” (2012), Dotson identifies within philosophy “a culture of justification” that prevents minority philosophers from feeling at ease within the field. By “culture of justification” she means a system which requires that all scholars justify their methods, topics and pedagogical choices with a “traditional” conception of philosophical engagement (Dotson 2012, 6). Analysing more specifically the situation of philosophers of colour, Dotson draws from the work of Gayle Salamon, according to whom justification as a method requires congruence and reconciliation of differences and is therefore particularly ill-suited to queer theory: “queerness as a method would proceed in the opposite way, by supposing a diversion or estrangement from the norm and using that divergence as a source of proliferation and multiplication with the aim of increasing the livability of those lives outside of the norm” (Salamon 2009, 229).¹⁰

Dotson suggests that to make philosophy more inclusive, philosophers should work towards a disciplinary culture where “incongruence becomes a site of creativity for ever-expanding ways of doing professional philosophy” and multiple canons are accepted as a point of departure for philosophy (2012, 16–17). She also argues that the view of philosophy as a fundamentally critical enterprise and the necessity to adjust to a fairly restricted set of questions may alienate minority practitioners from philosophy (ibid., 20–21).

Mills in turn sees the false universalism of mainstream philosophy as an important reason for the underrepresentation of Black people in the discipline. In his view, it is the theoretical or conceptual Whiteness of the discipline itself rather than the skin colour of philosophers that makes philosophy alienating for Black students. (Mills 1998, 2). He underlines that in the history of Western philosophy the situation of Black people, who are hardly ever mentioned, differs from that of women, who are continuously disparaged. The history of Black slavery and subordination do not figure in the abstractions and ideals formulated by White philosophers. From the viewpoint of Black students, a lot of moral philosophy seems to be “based on pretense, the claim that these were the principles that people strove to uphold, when in fact the real principles were the racially exclusivist ones” (Mills 1998, 4).

From this perspective, it does not seem that the basic reason for the underrepresentation of minority students in philosophy would be related to explicit discrimination. Yet discrimination does exist: in Finland, for instance, many secondary school students with an immigrant background feel pressured by guidance counsellors to

¹⁰ One could, perhaps, say that feminist philosophy in general, too, sees divergence as a resource and richness, not as something that needs justification. The goals of White feminists, however, have been criticised by Black feminists. In *Feminism is for Everybody* (hooks 2000), hooks argues that in the 1970s, White feminists wanted to “own” feminism and refused to see that their issues were not the most relevant ones for Black women. For instance, White feminists wanted to be included in the same work market of the men of their class, whereas Black women in low-paying jobs already were, and did not find their liberation in it. According to hooks, then, feminism as such is not necessarily inclusive or welcoming towards the diverse concerns of different minorities.

get a practical rather than a theoretical education (Airas et al. 2019, 68). Role models and family support help such students to see different career paths as possible for themselves (ibid., 75), but if we are to take Mills's words seriously, we will see that philosophy can seem insignificant from the viewpoint of minorities, not only because it is not a financially secure career option but because it ignores their history, experience and very existence.

Mills likewise argues that due to their racially privileged position, White students tend to interpret their own experiences as *human* rather than racial. This is why they understand also their relationship to the world as *the* relationship to the world rather than as one of racial privilege (Mills 1998, 10).

According to Mills, making White philosophy students aware of Black experience may require integrating elements from sociology and history in the teaching. Consequently, the philosophy class may seem "less like philosophy" from the viewpoint of White students, and they start to think of African-American philosophy as something that deviates from actual philosophy (See Mills 1998, 10). Raising awareness of the history of women or feminist approaches in philosophy classes may meet with similar resistance.

When the discipline of philosophy shows that it not only tolerates but appreciates the study of politically charged areas and the experience of minorities, minority students will feel more drawn towards philosophy. Pedagogically this means integrating courses that deal with such charged issues, and hiring lecturers from diverse backgrounds. Most crucially, the importance of the point of view should be acknowledged: we should be able to understand that often philosophical discussions of ethics and humanity reflect only the experience of the privileged class, race and gender. This is the most difficult step to take, because it involves a change in how White philosophers themselves understand philosophy. In practice, this change would involve discussing questions such as slavery, the colonial heritage of Europe or the position of disabled people routinely in our classes. Increasing sensitivity about the plurality of human experience is challenging, however, for it requires us to abandon the illusion of ourselves as the possessors of the universal point of view.

In a similar vein as Dotson and Mills, Carlos Sanchez has pointed out that mainstream philosophy, which in his view holds disembodiment, ahistoricity and universality as its ideals, does not allow a discussion of questions of marginality, and judges philosophies that are able to address them as falsely profound.¹¹ For a "homegrown" US Hispanic philosopher, then, to adapt oneself to the mainstream would require "looking away" from everything that makes one Hispanic (Sanchez 2011, 40; see also Dotson 2012, 14, and hooks 1994, 192). In Chapter Three, I suggested that rootedness in philosophy requires either an intuitive connection to some of the generally discussed themes in the field or working out one's own history as an embodied and gendered practitioner of philosophy. Such a requirement can leave minority practitioners without a rooted existence within philosophy. They can go through the motions of academic philosophy, but this exercise can remain void of meaning if

¹¹ For a discussion of disembodiment and embodiment in philosophical writing, see e.g. Thorgeirsdottir (2020) and Lehtinen (2007).

they cannot orient towards new ideas with the support of their personal history and ethnic background.

The question of embodiment in philosophy is not necessarily limited to the research interests of philosophers who are women or belong to other minorities, but it can be that their very presence as “different” bodies stirs up the status quo and makes embodiment in general explicit. Anna suggests that in philosophy the body represents incoherence and chaos, and that “women represent corporeality in a different way than men”.

Should it then be thought that the presence of, for instance, a woman or a homosexual man can at least at times interfere with the rules and routines of social interaction between heterosexual cis men and remind them of their own sexual and vulnerable bodies? Lea reflects upon the invisibility of homosexual men in the philosophical community in the following way:

In philosophy, there appear to be very few people from sexual minorities. Either people are extremely good at being silent about it or there are [hardly any]. [...] I believe it would be difficult for gay men to function within philosophy. I think that it is always easier for lesbian women than for gay men, because the more masculine a structure is, the more difficult it is precisely for gay men to come out. [...] Perhaps it can be seen here that when a discipline is male-dominated, and supported by male relationships, the position of gay men can become difficult, because they can also unbalance... well, what could be called a safe relation between men.

It is, of course, difficult to assess the situation of gay men in philosophy without an empirical study, but it does seem that despite the presence of many prominent lesbian and bisexual women philosophers and gay philosophers such as Michel Foucault at the philosophical scene, and despite the origins of European philosophy in a more or less “bisexually” organised community of men,¹² heterosexuality has long been taken for granted as far as men philosophers are concerned. This may change, as the more liberal ways in which younger generations understand gender and sexuality become predominant.

Incidentally, it is in feminist and queer philosophy that embodiment and sexuality are considered as relevant or even central topics for philosophy. Questions of topics and methods are certainly intertwined with philosophy’s problem of “disembodiment”. While some students declared that their love for philosophy had to do with precision and abstraction, others complained about the exclusively abstract and game-like character of mainstream philosophy. When students were asked “what is it about philosophy that you do not like?”, they most often pointed towards the overemphasis on reason and the alienation of philosophy from everyday life. This response, however, did not seem to be tied to the gender of respondents. For instance, one of the male students found it disturbing that “at times, [philosophy] can be very detached, academically self-centred and arrogant”. This critique concerns the relationship to other disciplines: that philosophy fails to acknowledge what other disciplines have to offer. Another male student described his grievances as follows:

¹² To use words “homosexual”, “bisexual” and “heterosexual” in the context of ancient Greece is, of course, anachronistic (see Foucault 1990).

I am less fond of philosophy as “puzzle solving”. I used to like that but it is not really that interesting to me any more. I am thinking of the wide-spread practices of conceptual analysis and definitions, and of thinking of abstract hypothetical problems or scenarios that others then try to think of equally hypothetical counter-examples to. I am also not fond of the tendencies in philosophy that mostly seem to be about making up new words and to critique texts and concepts that relate to other texts which refer back to yet other texts but never seem to have any relevance in the world outside those texts. Both are examples of abstract and purely theoretical philosophy that doesn’t actually try to understand the world but only creates a world of its own to play with.

In other words, the fact that students find philosophy to be alienated from the world produces at least in part their own alienation from philosophy. A woman student, in turn, points out that in philosophy “emotions are in the way (instead of being harnessed into energy for individuals and groups)”.

In this section we have come to see that embodiment has political and social implications and that for many students, philosophy is burdened by a forgetfulness of the body. In what follows, the consideration of embodiment is broadened to the senses and how these can be engaged in learning situations.

4.3 Further Reflections on Embodiment

When understood in the phenomenological sense, the word “bodily” adds little to the expression “bodily situation”. The body is then conceived as the body-subject that is both lived and materially present to itself and others. Consequently, all experienced situations are, in a way, bodily. All bodily situations are always permeated by social relationships and history, because we as body-subjects are social and historical beings. If we focus on the material–experiential reality of the body, however, we come to see how our bodies carry a lot of sedimented information that may not be directly available to our faculty of reasoning but is still sensed in specific situations.

If the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us anything, it is the significance of physical presence. It has made visible the importance of informal interaction before, during and after the class: when this is missing, in other words, when peer support is scarce, something very important seems to be lacking and learning acquires an indefinable heaviness. In online classes, some opt out from keeping their cameras on, and this makes it difficult for others to interpret their reactions. At the same time, it is challenging to be visually present to others and oneself through the camera and to process the information of the numerous faces on one’s screen. In some online seminars, however, the experience of the presence of others can be even more forceful than in on-campus courses, and an intimate, trusting atmosphere can be created within the group. The situation is complex, because individuals tend to experience camera presence in different ways, and what is the sine qua non of good interaction for some is off-putting for others.

Nevertheless, other variables related to our experiences of embodiment may contribute to overcoming the difficulties of remote learning. As a personal experience, I can relate how, in an online seminar, discussing a text on body memory and bringing up personal examples of the working of body memory were as such enough to activate lived, bodily located and sedimented experiences in us. Then again, in another situation and with another group, when the same text was discussed merely theoretically, the same experiential depth and intimacy between group members was not reached.

In the first case, it was possible to reach the different layers of bodily existence even without any specific exercises of “the body”. Yet, as I have suggested, there are other, more systematic ways of trying to surpass the one-dimensional way we tend to be present as bodies in academic learning and teaching. These involve a heightened interest in how we live our bodies and in the relevance of body position, movement, breathing or touch in the learning process. The challenge is to learn how to connect the philosophical content to a more multidimensional approach to embodiment. This connection is almost absent from such philosophical debates on embodiment and intersubjectivity in which the speakers shy from expressive body movements and fail to make eye contact with the audience, but also from experiments with movement or sound that take place merely for their own sake.

Yet another way to approach the question of embodiment in philosophy can be found in experiments that actually help the participants learn and analyse topics related to embodiment, such as perception, which they are studying. For instance, a “soundwalk” through chosen soundscapes can be taken with a facilitator, who has designed the route.¹³ The idea of a soundwalk is to silently walk the designed route, focusing most of one’s attention on what one hears in the environment, such as the sound of gravel underfoot, car tyres, seagulls, traffic lights. The inventors of soundwalk see it predominantly in terms of learning about the soundscape and participating in it, but it can also help us learn about the significance of focus in perception—how, with focus, what normally is experienced as “background noise” becomes a continuum of diverse and often intriguing sounds.

To be sure, lived experience is a more solid foundation for philosophical questioning than merely reading about the topic. It can also help students come up with ideas and questions that they address to the teaching staff, who in turn can use these as a basis for their teaching.

In assignments involving the senses, students can be asked to describe variations of touching, for instance, in the light of Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of the body. How do touching the surface of a table, a piece of velvet, water, one’s own hand or a dog’s paw differ from each other? Basically, learning about philosophies of perception and embodiment makes the integration of any number of sense-related

¹³ For instructions, see Hildegard Westerkamp’s webpages, <https://www.hildegardwesterkamp.ca/sound/installations/Nada/soundwalk/>. Accessed 21 April 2022. Westerkamp’s way of describing sound and its relationship with the body draw from mysticism rather than phenomenological philosophy, which has been my perspective here, but the practical instructions provided on the website are useful, whichever perspective we adopt. I am indebted to Janne Vanhanen for introducing the concept of soundwalk to me.

experiments possible. Students who already have some background in these fields can be asked to analyse different kinds of philosophical texts or academic practices from the viewpoint of embodiment.

It is evident that when choosing their methods of teaching and learning, lecturers are also choosing the kind of humanity they want to promote. The ancient schools of philosophy definitely also proposed ways of life to their students, and, as we saw for the Pythagoreans, practices related with mysticism. What remains for each of us to think through personally is this: is philosophy a way of life, and if so, should it openly involve other kinds of practices than seminar discussions and drinking parties, to help students develop as bodily subjects that are able to care for themselves and others? Or, is it rather the task of the lecturer to make students aware of the fact that while engaging in their intellectual activities, they are participating in a number of embodied practices that come to structure their everyday existence and that it is possible to either to accept them without questioning or to actively and reflectively participate in the recreation of such practices? How are these practices related to our experiences of being rooted in our lives and in philosophy?

In our summer schools, the questions of rootedness and embodiment were addressed in very different ways. The Jyväskylä Summer School attempted to bring about rootedness in philosophy through providing a history of women thinkers. The Aalborg Summer School gave a detailed method of practising philosophy, with the idea that the focus on the method rather than on the master–disciple relationship might emancipate the students. At the Oslo Summer School, again, the contextuality of ethical choices was emphasised in order to discuss the relationship between the subject of philosophy and the world in a non-reductionist manner. At the University of Iceland the very idea of philosophy as a purely reason-based practice was called into question, and a number of practices were introduced in order to create a new beginning for philosophising. The following section addresses the approach proposed by the Icelandic summer school.

4.4 The Reykjavík Summer School: Nature, Emotions and the Body

The experimental summer school on Philosophy of the Body, designed by Sigríður Þorgeirsdóttir, was held at the University of Iceland in Reykjavík. Again, the majority of the thirty participants came from the Nordic Erasmus+ partnership universities, but there were also participants from other European and North American universities. In all, 83% of the participants were women, and 17% were men.

The goal of the summer school was to challenge current academic practices as still based on a dualist conception of subjectivity and thereby incorporate an alienation from the lived body. According to the organisers, these practices are blind to the body's intertwining with the natural world. In their article "Reclaiming Nature by Reclaiming the Body" Guðbjörg R. Jóhannesdóttir and Þorgeirsdóttir argue that while the conception of nature as a place outside of us is limited, it is not a good alternative to abandon the concept of nature altogether as the so-called end-of-nature theorists have done. The place to start reconceptualising nature and its power to surprise us and to take hold of us is within ourselves, in our experience "of being nature ourselves, of being bodies, of connecting to the core of what it means to be a breathing, pulsating, sexuate human being", of the fact that "we *are* something before we start thinking and having ideas" (Jóhannesdóttir and Þorgeirsdóttir 2016, 41). This extended notion of the gendered body was thematised from both the phenomenological and social constructivist perspectives in the Reykjavík Summer School.¹⁴ The theoretical treatment of embodiment and gender formed a foundation for the more practical approach to embodied thinking introduced in the course.

In the end of their article, Jóhannesdóttir and Þorgeirsdóttir sketch a way of thinking that goes beyond the traditional Western rationalising, detached mode of thought:

we should try to think like water and sense like plants – sense closely and feel how we touch and shape and are shaped by the riverbank we are flowing in, and allow our thoughts to flow from our bodies rather than restricting them to what can be squeezed through the workings of the analytical mind (Jóhannesdóttir and Þorgeirsdóttir 2016, 47).

The mode of thinking outlined here was explicitly expressed in the pedagogical point of departure chosen for the Icelandic summer school. That point of departure was *focusing* or thinking through the body, as developed by the philosopher-psychologist Eugen T. Gendlin.¹⁵ His philosophy starts from the idea that a deep bodily awareness profoundly influences people's lives. He calls this awareness "a felt sense". Focusing consists of getting in touch with this felt sense: paying attention to what is obscurely experienced in the body, and by staying with the unclear

¹⁴ For a social constructivist discussion of gender and embodiment, see Sveinsdóttir (2015) and Witt (2011).

¹⁵ In another article, "The Torn Robe of Philosophy: Philosophy as a Woman in *The Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius" (Þorgeirsdóttir 2020), Þorgeirsdóttir discusses similar views on the practice of philosophy by a much earlier thinker, Boethius.

felt sense, going through different steps that produce a change in one's body and in one's way of understanding things (Gendlin 2007, 37).

Thomas Fuchs has discussed the "felt sense" of focusing in the context of body memory, emphasising the aspect of the lived body as historical. According to Fuchs, approaches such as focusing can help those who engage in them to "open the meaning cores of body memory and untangle their latent motives and feelings" (Fuchs 2012, 20).

Focusing requires turning towards the embodied self. Still, it allows for dwelling on specific problems, themes, words and concepts, getting in touch with their felt sense, discovering their felt meaning. Another central component of focusing is active listening, which requires that the listener makes space for truly hearing the other, and waits with a sense of wonder for how the other wants to fill that space. The listener should not give advice, interpret, judge or argue. The person being listened to should share only what feels right, and not be afraid to correct the listener, if the listener has not understood. In active listening, the focus is on listening and on the person being listened to, not on the listener (Gendlin 1996).

The course incorporated several practices of active listening. In one exercise students formed groups of three. One person spoke about their way of experiencing the lecture just given. Another was the listener, who focused on completely on the speaker, silently listening to them. Finally, the third person took notes about the speaker's account. When the speaker had ended their story, the notetaker read those notes aloud to them, and the speaker could comment on the notes, perhaps adding something or further specifying what was meant.

Together with Mary Hendricks, Gendlin also developed a novel method for philosophical thinking, "thinking at the edge" (2004). At the Icelandic summer school, the students were first familiarised with the basics of focusing, after which they were given practical "thinking at the edge" assignments by one of the lecturers, Donata Schoeller. "The edge" means a space in thinking in which one approaches the felt sense of the problem. Hesitation, faltering and struggling for words are interpreted as signs of entering the space of felt meaning. In one exercise, the lecturer facilitated the students' thinking process. While a student uses a method of association to rearticulate the central ideas of their project by replacing some of the key words by alternative ones, the facilitator listens, takes notes, and reflects back those parts in the student's speech that seem particularly meaningful, or "glowing", paying attention to the bodily, affective expressions of the student in reference to what they are discussing. The aim of this process is to facilitate a positive shift in the student's thinking in a way that does not shut out the embodied nature of human existence but embraces it as a resource for thinking (Gendlin 2017).

All in all, the course organisers wanted to experiment in and make room for experiential thinking, embodiment and emotions in philosophy. The lectures dealt with different philosophies of the body, bringing Gendlin's philosophy of the implicit, phenomenology of the body and social constructivism into contact with each other. As for spatial arrangements, the lectures took place in conventional classrooms, but for the group exercises students could freely use the different spaces in the university building. As a nature excursion was a part of the programme, Icelandic nature with

its mountains and hot springs was one of the learning spaces. The syllabus was quite varied, integrating lectures, panels, different kinds of exercises and feedback sessions, and ending with a theme-based research question seminar.

During the summer school, we noticed that introducing experimental practices such as focusing and thinking at the edge requires a lot of advance planning and preparation. It is pivotal to make sure that, from the first, all the participants are aware of what kind of learning process and content they are engaging with, for students of philosophy tend to have fairly fixed sets of expectations towards what a philosophy class should be like. The learning experiments of the Reykjavík Summer School required adopting a quite different attitude from the typical critical and argumentative stance of the philosophy student, namely one that incorporates openness and trustfulness. Students who are drawn towards exploring embodiment through diverse practices and are looking for a relief from what they see as the overly rationalist atmosphere in philosophy certainly find it easier to immerse themselves in the exercises than students who are not oriented in this way. Bringing focusing methods into the classroom requires a highly competent facilitator, not least because of the emotional component of the exercises.

In a meaningful way, this summer school demonstrated the lack of attentive listening in academic life: while academia purports to embrace dialogue, even in seminars one very often focuses more on one's next argument than on what the other is saying. Even if one does not engage in actual "active listening" or "thinking at the edge" exercises with students, it can be helpful for teaching staff to go through these or similar exercises to be able to relate attentively to their students, especially to those whose theses they supervise. An attentively listening supervisor is of value, not only for those who have difficulties getting their ideas expressed, but also for those who tend to take up a lot of speaking space, for the teaching staff always influence by example. Furthermore, while supervisors may often think of their work in terms of giving advice, it can be equally important to be the unintimidating and reliable listener, to whom students can articulate their ideas—in other words, to perform Socratic midwifery without a demonstration of superiority.

4.5 The Aalborg Summer School: Feminist Political Philosophy and Problem-Based Learning

The summer school titled *Feminist Political Philosophy: A Problem-Based Learning Approach*, designed by Antje Gimmmler, was held at Aalborg University. This summer school was somewhat smaller than the previous two had been, with twenty students, of which 70% were women. All except one of the students were from the Nordic countries.

As the title of the summer school tells us, the pedagogical point of departure of the course was problem-based learning (PBL). PBL is one of the manifestations of the pedagogical awakening that started in the 1960s and 1970s, and like feminist

pedagogy and critical pedagogy, it emphasises the meaning of collective formation of knowledge, transformation through learning,¹⁶ and student-centredness.

The motivation for using PBL in a feminist summer school was the potential of the approach to emancipate students by offering them a clear method of practising philosophy and doing research. This point of departure echoed some feminist philosophers' concerns about the vagueness of the philosophical method and the arbitrariness of the evaluations of philosophical work. Katrina Hutchison has pointed out that unlike the empirical sciences, philosophy cannot offer "data" as proof for the significance of the research, which makes identifying high standards in philosophy is difficult. She suggests that such an identification could happen through a thorough examination, articulation and teaching of methods. This would enhance the students' awareness of the different ways of approaching philosophical questions as well as their ability to see themselves as skilled practitioners (Hutchison 2013, 120).

In Aalborg University, students are encouraged to explore and experiment in their projects. However, as one of the Aalborg Summer School lecturers, Ole Ravn, put it, the method of research taught in Aalborg is not completely different from the usual research practice. Rather, the idea is to present that method very clearly and to check that the research process is working.

Even if PBL forms the pedagogical point of departure for all studies in Aalborg, there are still differences between the disciplines in how it is applied. For instance, project groups tend to be smaller in the humanities than in the natural sciences. Philosophy, of course, also differs from the natural sciences in the sense that its focus has always been on questions rather than answers. However, the idea that problems should be found "in the outside world" is different from how philosophy is often taught in universities; students are frequently encouraged to understand a problem already framed in philosophical discussions before them. The Aalborg University PBL model, which encourages students to find the problem in society, typically in the workplace, and to write their master's theses for companies and organisations, emphasises the role of applied philosophy and opens up avenues for students to find work outside academia. In this sense, Aalborg University has already responded to the need described by Robert Frodeman and Adam Briggles (2016), namely the need to introduce philosophy to a wider range of social environments.

One of the important influences on PBL, as it is currently practised at the University of Aalborg, is the work of a Danish theorist, Knud Illeris (1974). According to him, one should rather talk about *problem-oriented* than about *problem-based* learning, for the latter is easily associated with the idea that a problem is handed over to a student by the lecturer, whereas the students should be encouraged to formulate the problems themselves (1974). From Illeris's point of view, the problem is to be found outside the disciplines, in the society, rather than within the disciplines and their idiosyncrasies. Even so, the term "problem-based learning", already quite well known as such, has not been abandoned. Instead, the Aalborg model has been redefined as *project-oriented—problem-based learning* (PO-PBL) (see e.g. Hernandez et al. 2015).

¹⁶ About transformative learning, see Illeris (2014).

In Aalborg, students typically work on their projects in groups, which is quite different from the typical philosophical way of working. Hernandez, Ravn and Valero argue that group work enhances the students' abilities to co-operate (2015). In its commitment to collaborative student work, PBL resembles feminist pedagogies. Collaboration, on the other hand, differs from the emphasis on individual performance that is more common in philosophy classes. Despite the group work mode, however, students in Aalborg are assessed individually.

Due to the limited length of the Gender and Philosophy summer school as well as the dispersion of students in different countries and universities after it ended, the typical PO-PBL mode of learning of the University of Aalborg had to be modified. In other words, less time could be spent formulating problems and the student's work was more limited in scope. What is more, the written coursework was done in most cases individually, whereas group work was done mainly in discussions.

Well before the beginning of the course, the students were given access to the reading material, and they were asked to familiarise themselves with it. Some of the articles dealt with PBL while others highlighted the different aspects of feminist political philosophy: pragmatism, psychoanalysis, phenomenology, postmodernism and theory of intersectionality. Still other articles dealt with diverse topical issues in the context of gender: citizenship, torture, war, identity politics, capitalism and the Global South.

A typical day in the summer school started with a lecture, after which the students went on to discuss the reading material pertaining to the lecture in two-hour hands-on workshops. After that the students returned to the classroom to share the results of their workshop and to discuss the issues they were particularly interested in. At the end of each day, time was reserved for reflecting on the insights of that day.

During the first day of the summer school the students were initiated in PBL. The historical background of the method was discussed, as were the different phases of doing a research project. The lecturers also explained the role of one's own experience in formulating the research question: it is essential to start with one's experience, which is understood as an interaction with the environment, and to yet become aware of one's own viewpoint as limited and normative. In other words, recognition of and critical reflection on one's own viewpoint were integrated in the pedagogical approach.

After the first day, PBL remained present on the level of practice, while other topics became the explicit content of the lectures. From the second day on, feminist political philosophy was discussed from different perspectives: universalism and difference, psychoanalytic theories, violence and the perspectives of the Global South.

Before the beginning of the course the students were asked to write a short paper on their relation to feminist political philosophy. They were advised to start with their own position and to reflect upon what affects them as persons. After this they were requested to bring up one question in feminist political philosophy that they were particularly interested in and to describe the origins of their interest. They could also reflect on the ways in which the issue was present in the media and understood by the general public. In other words, the students were encouraged to reflect upon

their own experience and point of departure first, and only then think of the issue at a more general level.

This assignment formed a kind of background paper for the actual coursework, but the question discussed in the actual coursework did not have to be the same as in the initial paper. In their coursework, the students were to deal with “real” issues that troubled them and to use the lectures and theory to reshape the initial issue into a problem. It was emphasised that the thought process moves back and forth between experience and theory, and that it is quite possible that one is able to properly formulate the problem only after writing the paper. However, after first formulating the problem, the students were asked to think about the means through which they could solve it. With readiness to reformulate the problem, they were able to describe the initially elusive phenomenon.

As we can see, in this process the personal experience of the student is valued and the rootedness of learning in that personal experience is highlighted. Instead of presenting the student with an abstract task of reflecting upon a theory, theories are presented as possibilities for giving shape to meaningful, real-life issues. In short, the goal of PBL is not only to help students learn, but to allow a learning process that transforms the student and makes them more in control of their own resources as thinkers.

To work towards that goal, one can use more unconventional ways of learning philosophy, some of which were dealt with in the context of feminist pedagogy. As one of the exercises related to learning the gender theory of psychoanalysis, the students were asked to form groups and take one or more photographs with a gender content that could be interpreted from the viewpoint of psychoanalysis. These photos were taken on the campus and later discussed in classroom. Exercises such as these can be inspiring as students can approach an issue from a different angle, bypassing the argumentative and source-bound side of philosophy for a while and working in a more experimental and intuitive mode.

Irrespective of the pedagogical framework (whether it is PBL or something else), the use of images can add variety to the learning process. Students can be asked to describe with an image (e.g. a photo) their attitudes to their studies or their goals. Similarly, students can be asked to describe these or other issues by choosing flash-cards. The images provide a way of accessing the emotional side of their studies and generating informal discussion. Exercises of this kind, of course, require the lecturer to plan carefully beforehand not only what to teach but how to teach it, and to make decisions about the time given to and rhythm of different modes of learning during the class.

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