



The longing to just be – a belonging body in teacher education

Emilia Åkesson

To cite this article: Emilia Åkesson (09 Feb 2024): The longing to just be – a belonging body in teacher education, European Journal of Teacher Education, DOI: [10.1080/02619768.2024.2311709](https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2024.2311709)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2024.2311709>



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 09 Feb 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 146



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

The longing to just be – a belonging body in teacher education

Emilia Åkesson 

Department of Behavioural Science and Learning, Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden

ABSTRACT

This paper examines teacher education, with a focus on student experiences of comfort, discomfort, and sense of belonging or not belonging in the educational setting. The analysis is conducted with an intersectional corpomaterial perspective and based on 12 individual and two group interviews with student teachers, who identify as breaching norms within an intersectional power dynamic, or as interested in discussing such norms. The participants describe situations where they felt excluded and where they adjusted to try to fit their educational spaces. In contrast, some talk about a desirable, but rare, state of comfort, belonging or 'just being'. This state is intertwined with the spatiality and embodiment of class, racialisation, dis/ability and gender. The analysis challenges a dualistic understanding of comfort and discomfort in education, and shows how the participants' critique of teacher education could be formulated as a longing for, and a simultaneous production of, another kind of education.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 14 September 2022
Accepted 14 January 2024

KEYWORDS

Affect; belonging; higher education; intersectionality; teacher education

Introduction

The present paper focuses on the micro-processes involved in the ability of teacher education to make students feel comfortable or uncomfortable, and as if they belong or not. There might be various reasons why a person does or does not feel comfortable or at home in a given space, social situation, educational institution or classroom. Previous research has demonstrated that student teachers from under-represented groups struggle with various obstacles during their teacher education, such as a hostile social climate at campus, financial difficulties, and lack of cultural capital (Mc Daid, Keane, and Heinz 2023, 214–215). Here, the experiences of 12 Swedish student teachers are analysed through a theoretical perspective, where power structures, as well as embodiment, materiality and affect, are foregrounded.

In the analysis, I follow Strayhorn's definition of sense of belonging in higher education.

In terms of college, sense of belonging refers to students' perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, and the experience of mattering or feeling

CONTACT Emilia Åkesson  emilia.akesson@liu.se  Department of Behavioural Science and Learning, Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden

© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the campus community or others on campus such as faculty, staff, and peers. (Strayhorn 2019, 4)

Furthermore, I make use of Ahmed's understanding of comfort, where comfort relates to how bodies and objects fit each other: 'To be comfortable is to be so at ease with one's environment that it is hard to distinguish where one's body ends and the world begins' (Ahmed 2004, 148). That is to say, comfort and belonging are created in a process in which both human bodies, and also environment in the sense of materiality, are active.

Research shows that having a sense of belonging at university 'is linked to students' positive self-perceptions of social acceptance and scholastic competence' (Pittman and Richmond 2008, 354). For higher education students, a feeling of belonging at one's programme is closely related to success and achievement in academia, and students exposed to marginalisation might experience obstacles in the realisation of a sense of belonging (Garvey and Dolan 2021, 177). Previous research shows, for example, that first-year students of colour report less sense of belonging than white students (Johnson et al. 2007, 537), and that stereotypes perpetuate ideas about Black students as academically weak and not belonging at university (Morales 2021, 76). As a result of greater experience of discrimination and experience of being at risk, trans students' sense of belonging is in general lower than cisgender students (Garvey and Dolan 2021, 177), and students from a working-class background express less sense of belonging than students from a middle- or upper-class background (Bettencourt 2021). There is a significant body of work on how sense of belonging impacts students' 'achievement, adjustment, and plans to stay in college' (Strayhorn 2019, 3). Feelings of being socially connected with peers, university personnel and the campus environment, is shown to be directly related to students' tendencies to stay in college (Allen et al. 2008). For example, empirical research shows that Black men experience 'a number of mechanisms that enable their educational success including, but not limited to: campus clubs and organisations, fraternities, gospel choirs, peer mentoring programmes, and even positive in-class experiences' (Strayhorn 2019, 120). Other studies have shown how minoritised students, who did not receive encouragement from their families or support from educational institutions, maintain a strong individual commitment to their studies and continue to thrive in higher education, which could be interpreted as an experienced pressure to work harder in order to counteract obstacles they counter in terms of circumstances and expectations (Orupabo, Drange, and Abrahamsen 2020; Porter 2022).

Previous research on Swedish professional higher education has shown how female and racialised students were positioned as 'the Others' in medical training. This was experienced as draining for these students and made them feel less worthy as medical students (Kristoffersson 2021). Research on the topics of belonging, identity, norms and power in the context of Swedish teacher education is scarce. One recent study based on an analysis of documents, observations and interviews with teacher educators and students who were recruited for the programme because of their migration background shows that teacher education is saturated by a Swedish language norm, where students with Swedish as a second language are positioned as lacking and as 'the Other'. The study points out that even though the students were recruited because of their background (for example, multilingual competence), that same background was made into a problem (Wedin and Rosén 2021). Another study shows how societal processes of racialisation

affect non-white/racialised Swedish students, for example through discrimination and exclusion (Bayati 2014).

Apart from the above-mentioned examples, there has not been much knowledge produced in Sweden regarding how educators and the campus setting might affect minoritised students' educational processes, and what differences are to be found between student experiences. It is of particular relevance to examine belonging/non-belonging in teacher education, since, in terms of numbers, teacher education is Sweden's largest area of professional education (Swedish Higher Education Authority 2021) and can therefore be an interesting lens through which to look at society and change. Furthermore, teacher education is frequently debated and analysed, but there is a lack of research concerning issues specifically related to diversity in Swedish teacher education (Carlson and Rabo 2008, 17). Most previous research on this topic focuses on the establishment of the fact that certain minority groups face greater challenges during their education.

In this study, I focus on the embodied and material processes of dis/ability, class, racialisation, and gender that enable or impede feelings of comfort and belonging among students. The aim of the present paper is to contribute knowledge on inequalities and social justice in teacher education, from an intersectional corpomaterial point of view. The research questions guiding this paper are: How do student teachers describe their experiences of feeling comfortable or uncomfortable and feeling a sense of belonging or not belonging in teacher education? How can these experiences be comprehended through the theoretical notions of intersectionality, assemblage and affect? These questions are examined through interviews with 12 student teachers who themselves identified as having experiences of breaching norms related to an intersectional power dynamic, or had an interest in talking about such norms in their programmes.

Theoretical thinking technologies¹

According to Allhutter et al. (2020), the analysis of detailed everyday micro-processes must at the same time be aware of and address political macro-processes of economy and societal structures. In the present paper, I strive to achieve this by anchoring the analysis in a theoretical framework of both intersectional power structures and the micro-processes of corporeality and materiality. For this endeavour, I make use of the analytical concepts of intersectionality (Puar 2007), assemblage (Puar 2012), and affect (Clough 2008).

Yuval-Davis connects the social idea of belonging with an intersectional perspective on power when stating that 'belonging is always a dynamic process, not a reified fixity, which is only a naturalised construction of a particular hegemonic form of power relations' (Yuval-Davis 2006, 199). Intersectionality, as a theoretical framework focusing on power structures and processes of social privilege, is proposed by scholars as a tool for analysing higher education students' experiences of, for example, success (Garvey and Dolan 2021, 171), and embodied processes in education (Mirza 2018). Here, I make use of Puar's take on intersectional analysis, where categories such as sexuality, class, race and gender are understood as interlaced forces, rather than stable identity positions (Puar 2007, 213). Furthermore, Puar claims that intersectionality as an analytical tool must be accompanied by the idea of assemblage, which centres on connections between various forms of

bodies, human and non-human. In these assemblages, materiality, for example in the form of institutions and bodies, is an active force (Puar 2012, 57).

To comprehend how a sense of belonging and comfort are made possible or not, I give particular attention to embodiment, movement and materiality in the participants' narratives. Theories of affect may help to enable an understanding of the connection between the three. Probyn emphasises the multiple meanings of belonging and connects belonging with affect, while stating that [...] belonging is situated as threshold: both public and private, personal and common, this entails a very powerful mode of subjectification. It designates a profoundly affective manner of being, always performed with the experience of being within and inbetween sets of social relations. (Probyn 1996, 12–13). Here, these social relations are understood as both embodied and material; affect is what connects them. Watkins points out that affect should be viewed as a relational occurrence, and especially in analysis of pedagogy (Watkins 2010, 270). Massumi defines affect as the 'intensity' of a body's passage 'from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an argumentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, xvi). Affect is not merely about emotions or social relations, but something that is produced by bodies and materiality. Focusing on affect points 'to a dynamism immanent to bodily matter and matter generally – matter's capacity for self-organisation in being in-formational' (Clough 2008, 1).

The setting of Swedish teacher education

Swedish teacher education is a distinct context when it comes to intersectional analysis. No other academic education in Sweden has such low admission requirements. Student teachers have lower average ratings from high school compared to the general university student population (Berlin 2017). The majority of the students are women. In 2019, 90% of the applicants for preschool teacher education were women; for elementary education, the figure was 74%, and for subject teacher education, 50% (Swedish Council for Higher Education 2019). Since statistics relating to higher education are connected to the official state population records (which are limited to the juridical categorisation of women and men), there are no figures available regarding the proportion of trans people or individuals with trans experiences in teacher education.

There are no records when it comes to the number of students related to categorisations of racialisation or sexuality in Swedish higher education. Equally, there are no official statistics on the proportion of students with dis/abilities in higher education, though there are figures that show that amongst people aged 30 to 64 years with a disability,² 33% have post-secondary education. In the population without a disability, the number is 47% (Swedish Agency for Participation 2020). When it comes to defining students' social class, the only available information is parents' educational level, which might not be sufficient information (Bryntesson and Börjesson 2021, 11). Statistics show that in pre-school teacher training programmes, the number of students with at least one parent with at least three years post-secondary education was 19%, which is lower than the general population. When it comes to training programmes for elementary teachers and subject teachers, the numbers were 29% and 40%, respectively (Statistics Sweden 2020a). Thus, the majority of student teachers do not have parents with a higher education background, although this differs significantly between teacher training programmes.

For engineering, psychology, architecture and law degrees, the same statistic is about 60% (Statistics Sweden [2020a](#)).

Methodologies

With the aim to examine intersectional norms and corpomaterial aspects of teacher education from a student perspective, individual interviews with 12 student teachers were conducted in March and April 2020. The students participating in the study had either experiences of breaching norms within an intersectional power dynamic or had an interest in discussing such norms. The individual interviews were followed by two group interviews in December 2020, in which six of the students participated. The group interviews took excerpts from the individual interviews as a starting point and were organised as structured dialogues. The decision to employ individual and group interviews, and the number of participants engaged, reflect the study's aim of understanding student experiences (Braun and Clarke [2013](#), 45). All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 10 of the individual interviews and both group interviews took place online.

The participants were recruited through information posters, visits to universities, and posts in Facebook groups where the target group was likely to be active. Information was spread to groups gathering, for example, LGBTQ+ students at Swedish universities. At the campus visits, and in the posters and written information that was produced regarding the project, a definition and examples of limiting norms were presented.³

At the time of the interviews, the participating students were all studying in one of the lengthier Swedish teacher training programmes (lasting between four and five years, full time), i.e. training to become a preschool, elementary school or subject teacher, represented eight different universities, and described themselves variously as Deaf, able-bodied, bisexual, heterosexual, gay, polyamorous, middle class, working class, non-binary, transgender, cisgender, female, male, non-white, white, Afro-Swedish, immigrant, Jewish, atheist, wearing hijab. At the time of the first interview, the participants were between 22 and 52-years-old, where 10 were between 22 and 33-years-old, one was 40 and one was 52-years-old. At the time of the individual interviews all of the participants were studying between the second and the tenth semester of their programmes (three students at their second semester, two at their fourth, three at their sixth, one at their eighth, and three at their tenth). For two reasons, I have decided not to describe the participants individually in-depth in a list or table. First, in line with the study's theoretical approach, defining identity as unstable and changing (Puar [2007](#), 213), such a table entails a risk of reproducing an idea of identity as a stable formation. Secondly, and more importantly, for ethical reasons, I do not want to give detailed information of each participant, since it might risk their anonymity. Instead, the aspects of each participant's identity and experiences that are relevant for each excerpt, and the analysis in question, is presented related to when this excerpt is shared.

The analysis is based on both the individual and group interviews as a whole, and conducted using a theoretical thematic approach, guided by theoretical concepts (Braun and Clarke [2013](#), 175). Thematic analysis is a device for 'identifying, analysing and reporting patterns' (Braun and Clarke [2013](#), 178), where the researcher is creating the themes and sculpting the data. While analysing the empirical material, I realised that

a mere thematic analysis was not enough to achieve comprehension of what was going on in the participants' narratives. Hence, the method of identifying patterns through themes was accompanied by rhizomatic mapping (Strom 2014; 2015). Rhizomatic thinking as research methodology (Hickey-Moody 2013, 128) can contribute by highlighting connections between codes through a tuberous construction, as a complement to the more linear and well-framed themes, as well as contribute to an attentiveness to complexities (Hordvik, MacPhail, and Tore Ronglan 2019). In practice, this was followed through by first coding the empirical material with support from theoretical concepts, such as 'intersectionality'. Then, themes, such as 'masculinity norms' and 'class' were created. The connections between themes, that is, the rhizomatic mapping, allowed for a focus on details and complex processes, such as 'to just be', 'belonging', and 'comfort', which is in focus in the present paper.

In line with the project's overall aim is the ethical choice in favour of the participants' rights to self-identification (see Cavanagh 2010; Slater, Jones, and Procter 2018). This means that names, pronouns and words used to describe the participants were chosen or approved by the participants themselves. This is with respect to the idea of their lived experiences as central in the study. The participants signed informed consent forms, designed according to the recommendations of the Swedish Ethical Review Authority. The project was approved by the Swedish Ethical Review Authority.⁴

Findings – affective sense of belonging in teacher education

In the first section below, I elaborate on the affective aspects of being a working-class student, and the idea of middle-class students' ability to 'just be' in teacher education. In the second section follows an analysis of how teacher education makes men feel comfortable and at home. Finally, two examples are presented which focus on student experiences of feeling calm and comfortable in their educational setting, and the production of these states.

Affective materiality of the working-class-body

Throughout the interviews, the participants describe situations or processes where they have struggled and/or made adjustments to try to fit certain ideas about how to be in their programmes. Furthermore, they are questioning their teachers, educating their peers and standing up for their beliefs regarding equality and justice. In contrast, some participants talk about what seems to be, for them, a desirable but unattainable state of existing in the educational setting. This is what I have chosen to call the state of 'just being'. One example of this comes from Ian.

Ian describes himself as a first-generation higher education student, coming from a working-class family. Meanwhile, another participant, James, describes feeling a sense of instant belonging at the university: '[...] I am white, I am a man, I come from a pretty educated family. Of course I am going to be at the university. That is not a question for me' (James, Pos. 88). In contrast to James' narrative, Ian expresses that he has had to adapt significantly to 'become middle class'. This adjustment has meant, for example, changing how he speaks. In general, Ian feels as if his background has left its mark on him. He discusses how his campus is permeated by prestige and cultural capital, but he has a hard

time pinpointing exactly how these middle-class norms are expressed. At one point I ask Ian to compare his experience of the teacher education with how he imagines the experience of one of his middle-class peers (whose both parents are teachers).

I: So he is – well . . . I have a little need for control when I enter the classroom, because I have to like this, I have my notebook and then I sit and take notes and then I sit and listen and I have my water bottle and I have like my snuff and then so, and so I have it. But he, he sits down, and he has nothing that he takes notes on. So he just sits and listens [. . .] he's like the ideal student [Swe: *mönsterelev*] that you want in the sense that he asks questions no matter how stupid they are

E: Right

I: to understand. He has absolutely no fear of looking stupid or of appearing thick headed [Swe: *korkad*] since his goal is always to understand. [. . .] I know for myself, in this education, a lot has felt like it's about surviving, because it's about like I want to be a teacher, I want to have a job, I want to be able to provide for myself. So I want a profession, or kind of a bit like that. Ehm, but for him it feels like he – ah but this is me who kind of assumes what he thinks, but that he wants, that he wants to learn, that he thinks it's fun. (Ian, Pos. 209–212)

There are several things that seem significant about the spatial and bodily habits of the middle-class student-body, from Ian's perspective. Ian's friend doesn't take notes; he doesn't seem to need any habitual behaviours to control the external environment. This is a body that is able to just sit and listen; he just *is*. In contrast, Ian describes that when he arrives in the classroom space, there are several objects (snuff, water bottle and notebook) that become important for him. A possible interpretation of this is that these objects are matters that intra-act (Barad 2007, 170) with the student-body in the classroom assemblage, where the matter is affective and informational (Clough 2008, 4). To look a bit further into the symbolic and historical information inscribed to these objects, the notebook might represent an idea of academic identity, of 'being a good student', whereas the water bottle might be connected to an idea of wellness and health culture, related to a middle-class identity. When it comes to snuff, there is a historical connection between snuff, masculinity and working-class identity (Sundling 2003). These matters might also be related to creating a feeling of safety, to have something to distract yourself with, to make sure you don't run out of snuff, or to be able to take a sip of water if you get nervous and your mouth dries up.

When affects are defined as 'pre-individual bodily forces augmenting or diminishing a body's capacity to act' (Clough 2008, 1), the affectivity of the material actors (notebook, water bottle and snuff) could be interpreted as creating an ability for the student-body to act. In this case, this means to take notes and listen, and thus become student in the classroom assemblage. Furthermore, these materialities affectively intra-acting with the student-body might indicate a hybrid student identity when it comes to class, pointing in directions towards both working- and middle-class identity. Research on working-class students and sense of belonging has shown that belonging is not something that is provided by the educational institution, but rather something that students achieve for themselves (Bettencourt 2021, 776). Furthermore, one study on working-class students' experiences in higher education found that a majority of them did not fully adapt to the perceived hegemonic norm, but strived to 'manage multiple versions of themselves, moving in and out but locating themselves at the interface – in that liminal space'

(Crozier, Reay, and Clayton 2019, 934). Ian describes how he has had to adjust to the university milieu. Giving attention to this hybrid identity might attune to Morley's call for a widening discussion on class in higher education, moving away from a static understanding of the categorisations of working class and middle class (Morley 2021, 8), where student identities are more complex and multiple.

Ian describes his friend as an 'ideal student', since he asks questions no matter how stupid they are, and that he has no fear or worry about how he is being perceived; he is mainly there to learn, because it is fun. Ian connects the feeling of having fun at the programme with privilege: 'sure I think it's fun to learn in some cases but like I have to pass [Swe: få G], I cannot ... like, I cannot get a loan from my parents to pay the rent' (Ian, Pos. 214–215). For the working-class body, there is no financial safety net to lean back on, and the main goal of education is financial stability. The issue of working-class students' financial considerations is confirmed by other studies where, for example, striving to achieve a sense of belonging at university was given low priority in favour of more basic economic needs (Bettencourt 2021, 776). For Ahmed, the ability to find 'happy objects', in this case to find 'fun in learning', is linked to inhabiting 'the right kind of body' (Ahmed 2010b, 34), in this case, the middle-class-body. In a Swedish context, most⁵ students are privileged in the sense that they do not have to pay tuition fees, and they have access to student loans and grants; nevertheless, they must manage their studies to get access to these benefits. For Ian, even though learning can be fun, the need to pass the course is a source of ever-present stress.

The elevated male minority

Several of the students I speak to describe their programmes as female dominated, especially those training to teach younger children. Some of the participants describe how informal social groups are formed within their classes. Disa, who describes herself as a 52-year-old, middle-class, racialised as white, heterosexual woman, connects this phenomenon to student identities, and points out that it is probably a relatively unconscious process.

[...] the large mass in the education are girls, around 25 to 30. So that is the norm for the teacher education. Then there are guys. And they easily get into these girl groups, because they [the boys] are so small, and then they become pop, or do you understand, in numbers, and then they become popular. (Disa, Pos. 94)

What Disa is saying is confirmed by James' account of being a male student teacher. I was interested in understanding whether being one of the few male students in class also impacted the men attending, and therefore asked James, a white gay man:

E: [...] you said you're only two men in the education [...] it feels like a pretty common situation, when talking about younger ages and preschool. [...] [D]o you have any thoughts about it or reflections or, how is it something like that that has affected you during the education?

J: Ehm, no, uh. I am not, heard as [sic] something negative about being a man. On the contrary, in fact, during my school placement [Swe: VFU], my second school placement report, I had, I was in [European city], at my second school placement, so I did not have a common presentation but an interview with the school placement teacher, after I came

back. And, I had tears in my eyes, ehm sometimes when I told a thing. [...] And she said, yes but it's so good that you are like, as you feel, touched by it [...] you should keep it. Uh, during your career, quite simply. [...] And, that you can show your feelings, as a man, like being a male role model for children. [...] Will be important, and especially a male role model who can show emotion and, yes, who is not kind of afraid to cry in front of others. [...] So really it's like, it changes to an advantage. (James, Pos. 182–193)

James continues by saying that for male teachers, 'the bar is not so high'; that is, to be perceived as a good teacher. It becomes clear that what is elevated in teacher education is not always about frequency or what is most common.

Ebba, who describes herself as a bisexual 24-year-old woman, brings another perspective on how gender structures affect her experience of teacher education.

We talk a lot about this, to feel like you don't dare to take the same space as many guys automatically do. They just do, they just are kind of, while many, or I then feel, among other things, that I have to kind of think. Then, I have worked a lot on it, to just do, and I do it now, although it feels hard. And it has got a lot better, but it's a lot like, your voice is drowned out, very common. Drowned out at seminars and so on. (Group interview 2, Pos. 120)

For Ebba, gender and space intra-act when it comes to being able to talk in class and 'just be'. The men in Ebba's seminars seem to be bodies that just *are*. Ebba extrapolates this to a structural level, saying that this is something that she herself will have to deal with in the future, but also something that a lot of women and girls will have to deal with, i.e. how to 'take on a room'.

Disa's example shows how men in the programme become popular amongst the other students. In James' case, the student-teacher relationship is in focus, while for Ebba it is the comparison between her own discomfort in seminars and the boys who 'just do' and 'just are'. Several studies have pointed to a formulated need for more male teachers. A study on the views of parents and students in primary school found that both groups consider male teachers important, for both boys and girls, as, for example, role models and father figures (McGrath and Sinclair 2013). According to Nordberg, male staff in preschools are commonly expected to become role models for children, especially boys. From a heteronormative perspective, they are expected to fill the void of absent fathers. These discourses construct a notion of the male preschool teacher as being in the forefront of equality work, tied to ideas of change, where they are expected to bring something particular to the workplace (Nordberg 2005, 64–66). While some male teachers are happy to be viewed as role models (O'Keeffe 2016), others are not as comfortable with this, and experience that they have specific traits imposed on them (Skelton 2009). The idea of the male teacher as role model is also situated in a binary idea of gender, where men and women are comprehended as different from each other. There is a reproduced belief that teacher education is lacking what is perceived as masculine. At the same time, the existence of male teachers and preschool teachers challenges the stereotypical idea of men as not suited to work with or care for children (Jonsson 2008; O'Keeffe 2016).

Butler defines speaking as a 'bodily act', stating that '[i]t is a vocalisation; it requires the larynx, the lungs, the lips and the mouth' (Butler 2004, 172). Zooming in on the affectivity of the sound of male voices at seminars, drowning out female students,

enables an understanding of how embodiment and matter are active forces in these processes. The matter of the classroom contains everyday objects, but also language, since '[l]anguage is not opposed to matter, but rather is matter – among many matters' (Puar 2017, 27). Speaking in a seminar is thus both a material and an embodied act. Male bodies in teacher education seem to be bodies which, through the assemblages of both informal groups and the materialities of seminars, can be comfortable and 'just be'.

Displays of what are usually perceived as 'soft feelings', such as crying, are traditionally connected to femininity (Oransky and Marecek 2009), and therefore something that boys or men stereotypically should not do. However, Slatton and Spates state that '[s]ocially constructed definitions of masculinity differ by age, class, race, and sexual preference' (Slatton and Spates 2014, 3). Research on the representation of male student teachers has also been calling for an intersectional perspective in order to understand how gender matters in the programmes, and in the discourse on gender and teachers (Skelton 2009). Similarly, Heinz et al. (2021), with a focus on Irish initial teacher education, emphasise the need to understand the issue of male teachers through an intersectional perspective. Their study identified that many male student teachers were members of marginalised student populations; for example, more male than female student teachers identified as non-heterosexual, and more males had 'significantly lower prior academic performance' (Heinz, Keane, and Davison 2021, 13). Furthermore, the authors point to the need not for male teachers particularly, but for a diverse representation of masculinities amongst male teachers (Heinz, Keane, and Davison 2021). Applying an intersectional perspective, the materiality of tears in James' narrative appears in connection with multiple meanings and matters. James identifies as gay, and does not have Swedish as first language, but here it seems as if the particular situatedness of being white and from an educated family comes to the front and forms the assemblage that constitutes the affective forces in play. Also intra-acting (Barad 2007, 170) here is the teacher-body, which is affected by the materiality of the teacher programme, with its history of desire for male students, where James is one of the few male student-bodies, training for an occupation where male professionals are marked as important, and with a symbolic value as role models. In this particular assemblage, the materiality of the tears in James' eyes is perceived as something positive. The teacher's reaction not only normalises but celebrates the male student-body tears and enables male existence in the programme, and through the affective response of confirmation, the assemblage creates a comfortable space for male students.

To be calm and connected enough to learn

In contrast to the above examples from Ian and Ebba, where they describe how other students seem to be able to 'just be', there are some situations where the participants themselves describe having felt comfortable and a sense of belonging in their programmes, as if they can relax and just focus on learning. In this section, I focus on two examples of this.

The participants have differing experiences of social context in their programmes. Some of them say that they do not have social support at all in their programmes, but that they get this from their partner and families instead (Noura and Naima). Others claim that they have not had any issues finding social connections in class (Annelie and Ebba),

while some have found specific groups in class or at the university in which they can feel safe (Katrin and Ian). For Alva, a 26-year-old Deaf woman who attends teacher education with a sign language profile, the ability to be in a class where other students and the course coordinator use sign language has deeply impacted her experience of teacher education. Alva reports that the coordinator facilitates her communication with other teachers within the programme, for example when it comes to informing them about interpreters. She says: 'Then it's really nice. So we do not have to take that burden, but then we can let go of it and focus on the studies so they can take care of it instead'. (Alva, Pos. 150). Alva compares the feeling of being able to communicate in her first language in class with her experiences of not being able to do so.

[...] to be able to communicate in my first language, in sign language, directly becomes an easier communication, we have, we know what obstacles there are, we have similar identity, we have the same knowledge, and we can kind of confirm each other's experiences, and we can discuss around these things [...] different attitudes that exist, towards Deaf people. [...] And in such social contexts, I do not need any adjustment. And then in class or with the teacher or in other situations if you have an understanding of each other so, yes we try to adjust, I try to adjust myself, we try to find a good way to communicate, and for example if someone wants to learn sign language, then it shows that they want to meet me, and that we want to understand each other. And when I studied with others in [...] who do not know sign language, then it becomes like you have to try to find a person who seems to have a positive attitude, simply. But in that relationship, it's still like I'm teaching a lot about my culture and about my language and that is something like, yes it's absolutely important, um, if I'm going to get educated in this place, and I don't have someone else who knows sign language in the room, well then it will be the case that I will have to educate someone else at the same time. [...] (Group interview 2, Pos. 143)

According to a Swedish study, hard of hearing adults' experiences of belonging and social exclusion in work life, higher education and leisure time show that sense of belonging is strongly connected to communication. Participants shared how they, to be socially included in a group, had to educate hearing people on how to communicate with them. Refrain from doing this could cause loneliness. The authors suggest that occurring communication barriers for hard of hearing students might be a reason why they are underrepresented at universities (Olsson, Dag, and Kullberg 2021). Additionally, Alva's example demonstrates the unstable definition of 'disability'. As Puar argues: 'Disability [...] exists in relation to assemblages of capacity and debility, modulated across historical time, geopolitical space, institutional mandates, and discursive regimes' (Puar 2017, xiv). The educational assemblage consisting of a course coordinator and peers knowledgeable in sign language, and the identity and experiences of being Deaf or hard of hearing, affects Alva's student-body in a direction of possibility to discuss and think differently and to be able to focus on studying.

Another example of feeling comfortable is shared by Hanna, who describes herself as an Afro-Swedish woman. Hanna describes a situation involving a teacher whom she calls 'the monster teacher', who, as she puts it, made students 'feel like idiots'. The students whom this teacher approached in this way were described as girls with black hair and brown eyes, one girl in a veil, and in Hanna's words, 'immigrant chicks' [Swe: invandrarbrudar]. Hanna compares this teacher's behaviour with that of another teacher and says:

H: We also had another teacher, [...] who herself was a school leader from the beginning. Who came in with a completely different attitude. Like this, do you understand how important you are. You are going to be teachers; it is very difficult. [...] But you can lift people to the top. And that, she did herself, instead of razing someone to the bottom. [...] The same people that the monster teacher had totally dissed, made them almost start crying. It was exactly those people she, unknowingly, just 'God so good!' Like you know, stopped the whole class and just 'I have to show you, this person has made a perfect solution to this problem'. And they were like, 'what?' [...] 'Can I?' Like that. So that was, no but, it was pretty emotional [...]. Because she was damn awesome. And addressed all her own shortcomings. Uh, but 'this is how we solved that problem', brought her own cases sort of. Uh, 'I have this situation' sort of brought this situation, you know, like a hundred examples where you were allowed just to pick and choose. 'How do you solve this case?' Because this situation I had to solve when I was principal. It was really hard. [...] But it was like effective learning. But what the fuck [sic] wants to learn, it is not possible to learn if you think you are stupid. [...] And she really did not think that. She thought we all had this, damn good. (Hanna, Pos. 190–208)

Notable in the above examples are Alva and Hanna's abilities to recognise and describe their feelings of comfort and belonging. The feeling of comfort is commonly something that is hard to detect. This could be connected to Ahmed's idea of 'becoming a stranger'. Stranger experiences 'can teach us about how bodies come to feel at home through the work of inhabitation, how bodies can extend themselves into spaces creating contours of inhabitable space, as well as how spaces can be extensions of bodies' (Ahmed 2012, 3). It is when comfort is first disrupted, when one starts to feel uncomfortable, that the intra-acting (Barad 2007, 170) of how bodies and materiality create, or fail to create, comfort, comes to attention. Thus, the experience of feeling a sense of belonging, or not, arises in the affective assemblage where other experiences are present as historical or contemporary comparable narratives. In the cases of Alva and Hanna, their previous experiences of teacher education could be regarded as 'stranger experiences'. Alva compares her current programme, where her classmates and course coordinator know sign language, with an educational experience where she did not have the presence of others who shared her mother tongue. Hanna compares 'the monster teacher' with another lecturer who uplifted the same students that the first teacher had been belittling. These contrasting narratives show that these states of belonging and comfort are not normalised for the participants, but rather are rare occasions.

What both Alva and Hanna express further is that, when they feel as if they can relax in class, they can focus on the content of the course, on learning. In Alva's case, the presence of the materiality of sign language reduces administrative tasks and enables conversations with peers who share similar experiences and values. For Hanna, the close-to-practice cases and affirming words from an encouraging teacher, who shares her own mistakes with her students, creates engagement and feelings of competence. In these two cases, the various assemblages intra-act with the student-bodies in ways that affect them, at least temporarily, in a direction of belonging, of being able to relax and, as a result, to focus on learning.

Discussion – the longing to belong in teacher education

In the present paper, I have examined how student teachers describe their experiences of feeling comfortable or uncomfortable, and their sense of belonging or not belonging in

teacher education. Furthermore, I have analysed how these experiences can be comprehended through the theoretical notions of intersectionality, assemblage and affect. The main findings of the analysis demonstrate how educational assemblages allow or do not allow the affects of belonging and comfort, in relation to intersectional power dynamics, such as class, gender, dis/ability and racialisation, as well as bodies and materialities.

In this discussion I first nuance this analysis by foregrounding perspectives of the unstable characteristics of comfort and safety. Then I provide an elaboration on how students' articulation of a lack of sense of belonging in their programmes might be interpreted as a longing for something else, and as in itself producing another education.

The corpomaterial perspective applied above highlights how bodies and materialities are connected and dependent on each other in teacher education, through assemblages. That is not to say that these connections are not affected by inequalities (see Neimanis 2017). Here, the intersectional perspective provides an understanding of how the participants' narratives are situated within a complex interplay of power structures, how the materiality of the university norm of being a middle-class, white and able-bodied student and, in some respects, male, affects the student-bodies in directions of feeling a sense of belonging and comfort, and/or feeling uncomfortable and as if they do not belong. At the same time, it is important not to stabilise these positions as dichotomies or oppositions. Gunnarsson (2022) argues that an analysis centring affect might disrupt the ideas of safety and discomfort in pedagogy as opposed to each other. This resonates with the temporal and elusive construct of these states described in the present paper. In conducting an analysis using the concepts of affect and assemblage, it becomes evident how complex and sometimes unpredictable the interplays are between student-bodies, teacher-bodies and the presence or absence of certain materialities of these bodies. These interplays include, for example, the bodies' competence in sign language or the bodies' historical and structural reactions to certain materialities (tears, snuff, hair colour, eye colour; words of confirmation; use of close-to-practice cases; and students' and parents' financial situations). These matters affectively allow or do not allow temporary or more stable states of comfortability or sense of belonging in teacher education.

Another aspect of the participants' narratives is an interpretation of them as describing how something is lacking; that is, the educational programme's ability to provide a sense of belonging for students who do not conform to an able-bodied, white, middle-class, male norm. According to Yuval-Davis, the construction of belonging consists of desires to connect (Yuval-Davis 2006, 202). In my interpretation, the participants' descriptions of lack are also descriptions of what they desire in their education, i.e. having fun, not worrying about money, being calm, absence of extra work, to focus on learning, and to 'just be'. All of these desires point towards the main aim (desire) for student teachers: to finish their education and become a teacher, or even more important for some, to get a job. Ahmed points out how attention to injustice can 'give us an alternative set of imaginings of what might count as a good or better life' (Ahmed 2010a, 50). Similarly, Bargetz claims that '[...] longing for and anticipating an elsewhere and otherwise are also signs of dissatisfaction with the historical present and thus critiques of the here and now' (Bargetz 2019, 191). Thus, the participants' longing for comfort and belonging could be comprehended as a longing for elsewhere, another space than the existing one, a space where one can learn, relax and take up space. Just describes Deleuze's understanding of desire as productive and constructive, where 'desire produces reality' (Just 2011, 267). Combining

ideas from Deleuze and Grosz, Probyn suggests that '[t]he desire to belong propels, even as it rearranges, the relations into which it intervenes' (Probyn 1996, 13). Interpreting the participants' expressed desires as productive enhances an understanding of the formulation of their critique of their programmes as simultaneously producing something else. By their affective corporeal presence in their programmes, the participants embody and produce other ways of being a student teacher.

Implications

I agree with the conclusions of previous research on diversity in teacher education and the teaching profession, which state that 'a system-wide commitment to transform school and broader education cultures is essential in order to achieve and sustain a truly diverse, equitable and inclusive teaching profession' (Heinz, Keane, and Mc Daid 2023, 236). The main contribution of the present study is a certain perspective on Swedish teacher education, including factors involved in how embodiment and materiality might enhance an intersectional analysis. Hopefully, the analysis provides valuable insights for teacher educators, university organisations and policy makers regarding the importance of including an intersectional *and* corpomaterial perspective in an understanding of how to create possibilities for traditionally marginalised student teachers to feel a sense of belonging in their programmes.

Limitations and trustworthiness

Inspired by Braun and Clarke (2013), I follow their approach to reliability in qualitative research, saying that 'reliability is *not* an appropriate criterion for judging qualitative work and procedures such as calculating the 'inter-rater reliability' of qualitative coding are problematic (because of the assumption that coding can and *should* be objective)' (Braun and Clarke 2013, 279). Braun and Clarke suggest instead that qualitative research should apply the idea of 'trustworthiness', which contains, for example, a checklist of criteria for a good thematic analysis (see Braun and Clarke 2013, 287). Examples of criteria are "The data have been transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts have been checked against the tapes for 'accuracy', and 'The researcher is positioned as *active* in the research process; themes do not just 'emerge'" (Braun and Clarke 2013, 287, italics in original). This checklist has been used as a guiding tool in the present study.

In line with dominant ideas within qualitative research, the process of sampling was in this study *purposive* (Braun and Clarke 2013, 56), where participants were chosen with regards to the interest of collecting rich empirical material, which contributed to the focus of the study. Hence, the search for participants was based on the participants' experiences of and interest in talking about breaching norms in teacher education. The empirical material was considered rich and sufficient for the study at hand (Braun and Clarke 2013, 55). When researching participants' experiences, the size of sample should, according to Braun and Clarke, be '[s]mall/moderate (large enough to convincingly demonstrate patterns across a date [sic] set; small enough to retain a focus on the experiences of individual participants)' (Braun and Clarke 2013, 45).

In another study, dimensions related to participants' ages and which semester they are currently studying, could have been interesting to compare with students' experiences of

belonging and comfort in their programmes. In this study, as previously mentioned, the focus is on dis/ability, class, racialisation, and gender when analysing student experiences.

One potential limitation of the study is that the empirical material could potentially have been enriched by more extensive ethnographic methods for collecting material. The reasons for not doing this were the study's concern with student experiences, and the difficulties in examining these experiences through the interpretations of a researcher.

Notes

1. 'Thinking technologies' is a notion introduced by Donna Haraway in an interview by Nina Lykke, Randi Markussen and Finn Olesen (Haraway 2004).
2. The definition of disability here is: 'visual impairment; hearing loss; impaired mobility; severe symptoms of asthma and/or allergies; severe symptoms of anxiety, worry or distress; greatly reduced activity ability; significant problems due to dyslexia and/or dyscalculia; neuropsychiatric diagnosis' (Statistics Sweden 2020b).
3. The text on the poster read: 'Limiting norms in this project might refer to minor everyday actions that could be experienced as precluding and excluding; normative treatment from teachers or other students; unbalanced representation in teaching material; limiting physical spaces or lectures where stereotypical images or narratives occur'. [my translation].
4. Swedish Ethical Review Authority (Ref. No. 2019-05,252).
5. A student has a right to this support from the age of 20 to 60. For students from countries other than Sweden, there are certain requirements; students, for example, usually need to have a permanent visa if they are not a citizen of EU/EES or Switzerland (The Swedish Board of Student Finance CSN 2021).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributor

Emilia Åkesson has a PhD in education and teaches in teacher education at the Department of Behavioural Science and Learning, Linköping University. Emilia has a teacher degree from Södertörn University and a master's degree in gender studies from Linköping University.

ORCID

Emilia Åkesson  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1091-7678>

References

- Ahmed, S. 2004. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Ahmed, S. 2010a. "Happy Objects." In *The Affect Theory Reader*, edited by M. Gregg and G. J. Seigworth, 29–51. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.
- Ahmed, S. 2010b. *The Promise of Happiness*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.
- Ahmed, S. 2012. *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.

- Allen, J., S. B. Robbins, A. Casillas, and I.-S. Oh. 2008. "Third-Year College Retention and Transfer: Effects of Academic Performance, Motivation, and Social Connectedness." *Research in Higher Education* 49 (7): 647–664. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-008-9098-3>.
- Allhutter, D., B. Bargetz, H. Meißner, and K. Thiele. 2020. "Materiality-Critique-Transformation: Challenging the Political in Feminist New Materialisms." *Feminist Theory* 21 (4): 403–411. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700120967289>.
- Barad, K. M. 2007. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.
- Bargetz, B. 2019. "Longing for Agency: New materialisms' Wrestling with Despair." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 26 (2): 181–194. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506818802474>.
- Bayati, Z. 2014. "'den Andre' i lärarutbildningen: en studie om den rasifierade svenska studentens villkor i globaliseringens tid." PhD Diss., Gothenburg University. <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/35328>.
- Berlin, D. 2017. *Aktuella frågor angående lärarutbildningen. En översikt av den offentliga debatten*. Gothenburg University: Enheten för utredning och lärarutbildning. https://medarbetarportalen.gu.se/digitalAssets/1710/1710141_aktuella_fragor_om_lararutbildningen.pdf.
- Bettencourt, G. M. 2021. "'I Belong Because It Wasn't Made for Me': Understanding Working-Class Students' Sense of Belonging on Campus." *The Journal of Higher Education* 92 (5): 760–783. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2021.1872288>.
- Braun, V., and V. Clarke. 2013. *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. 1st ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Bryntesson, A., and M. Börjesson. 2021. *Forskning om rekrytering till högre utbildning i de nordiska länderna, 2010–2021. En kunskapsöversikt*. Uppsala universitet: Rapport från Universitetskanslersämbetet.
- Butler, J. 2004. *Undoing Gender*. New York: Routledge.
- Carlson, M., and A. Rabo, ed. 2008. *Uppdrag mångfald: lärarutbildning i omvandling*. 1st ed. Umeå: Borea.
- Cavanagh, S. L. 2010. *Queering Bathrooms: Gender, Sexuality, and the Hygienic Imagination*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Clough, P. T. 2008. "The Affective Turn: Political Economy, Biomedicine and Bodies." *Theory Culture Society* 25 (1): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276407085156>.
- Crozier, G., D. Reay, and J. Clayton. 2019. "Working the Borderlands: Working-Class Students Constructing Hybrid Identities and Asserting Their Place in Higher Education." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 40 (7): 922–937. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2019.1623013>.
- Deleuze, G., and F. Guattari. 1987. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Garvey, J. C., and C. V. Dolan. 2021. "Queer and Trans College Student Success: A Comprehensive Review and Call to Action." In *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*, edited by L. W. Perna, 161–206. New York: Springer Nature.
- Gunnarsson, K. 2022. "Ambiguous Engagements: Exploring Affective Qualities within the Teaching of Norms and Equality." *Pedagogy Culture & Society* 30 (2): 185–199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2020.1793380>.
- Haraway, D. 2004. *The Haraway Reader*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Heinz, M., E. Keane, and K. Davison. 2021. "Gender in Initial Teacher Education: Entry Patterns, Intersectionality and a Dialectic Rationale for Diverse Masculinities in Schooling." *European Journal of Teacher Education* 46 (1): 134–153. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2021.1890709>.
- Heinz, M., E. Keane, and R. Mc Daid. 2023. "Charting Pathways Towards a More Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Teaching Profession." In *Diversifying the Teaching Profession – Dimensions, Dilemmas and Directions for the Future*, edited by E. Keane, M. Heinz, and R. Mc Daid, 226–240. London and New York: Routledge.
- Hickey-Moody, A. 2013. "Affect as Method: Feelings, Aesthetics and Affective Pedagogy." In *Deleuze and Research Methodologies*, edited by R. Coleman and J. Ringrose, 79–95. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

- Hordvik, M., A. MacPhail, and L. Tore Ronglan. 2019. "Negotiating the Complexity of Teaching: A Rhizomatic Consideration of Pre-Service teachers' School Placement Experiences." *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy* 24 (5): 447–462. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17408989.2019.1623189>.
- Johnson, D. R., M. Soldner, J. Brown Leonard, P. Alvarez, K. Kurotsuchi Inkelas, H. T. Rowan-Kenyon, and S. D. Longerbeam. 2007. "Examining Sense of Belonging Among First-Year Undergraduates from Different Racial/Ethnic Groups." *Journal of College Student Development* 48 (5): 525–542. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2007.0054>.
- Jonsson, R. 2008. "När skolan längtar efter män. Genusperspektiv på rekrytering av fler män till lärarutbildningen." In *Uppdrag mångfald: lärarutbildning i omvandling*, edited by M. Carlson and A. Rabo, 161–180. Umeå: Borea.
- Just, E. 2011. "If Writing Has to Do with Desire, What 'Kind' of Desire is That? Between Jacques Lacan and Gilles Deleuze." In *Theories and Methodologies in Postgraduate Feminist Research: Researching Differently*, edited by R. Buikemae, G. Griffin, and N. Lykke, 261–272. New York, London: Routledge.
- Kristoffersson, E. 2021. "Är det bara jag? Om sexism och rasism i läkarutbildningens vardag. Erfarenheter, förklaringar och strategier bland läkarstudenter." PhD diss., Umeå University.
- Mc Daid, R., E. Keane, and M. Heinz. 2023. "Diversifying the Teaching Profession: Mapping Learning and Interrogating Tensions." In *Diversifying the Teaching Profession – Dimensions, Dilemmas and Directions for the Future*, edited by E. Keane, M. Heinz, and R. Mc Daid, 211–225. London and New York: Routledge.
- McGrath, K., and M. Sinclair. 2013. "More Male Primary-School Teachers? Social Benefits for Boys And Girls." *Gender and Education* 25 (5): 531–547. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2013.796342>.
- Mirza, H. S. 2018. "Black Bodies 'Out of Place' in Academic Spaces: Gender, Race, Faith and Culture in Post-Race Times." In *Dismantling Race in Higher Education*, edited by J. Arday and H. S. Mirza, 175–193. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Morales, E. 2021. "'Beasting' at the Battleground: Black Students Responding to Racial Microaggressions in Higher Education." *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* 14 (1): 72–83. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000168>.
- Morley, L. 2021. "Does Class Still Matter? Conversations About Power, Privilege and Persistent Inequalities in Higher Education." *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 42 (1): 5–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2020.1855565>.
- Neimanis, A. 2017. *Bodies of Water: Posthuman Feminist Phenomenology*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Nordberg, M. 2005. "Jämställdhetens spjutspets?: manliga arbetstagare i kvinnoyrken, jämställdhet, maskulinitet, femininitet och heteronormativitet." PhD Diss., Gothenburg University.
- O'Keeffe, S. 2016. "What are Male teachers' Understandings of Masculinities?—An Exploration of Sex, Gender and Bodies in Irish Primary Schools." *Palgrave Communications* 2 (1): 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palcomms.2016.7>.
- Olsson, S., M. Dag, and C. Kullberg. 2021. "Hard of Hearing Adults' Interpersonal Interactions and Relationships in Daily Life." *Disabilities* 1 (2): 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.3390/disabilities1020007>.
- Oransky, M., and J. Marecek. 2009. "'I'm Not Going to Be a Girl': Masculinity and Emotions in Boys' Friendships and Peer Groups." *Journal of Adolescent Research* 24 (2): 218–241. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558408329951>.
- Orupabo, J., I. Drange, and B. Abrahamsen. 2020. "Multiple Frames of Success: How Second-Generation Immigrants Experience Educational Support and Belonging in Higher Education." *Higher Education* 79 (5): 921–937. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00447-8>.
- Pittman, L. D., and A. Richmond. 2008. "University Belonging, Friendship Quality, and Psychological Adjustment During the Transition to College." *The Journal of Experimental Education* 76 (4): 343–362. <https://doi.org/10.3200/JEXE.76.4.343-362>.
- Porter, C. J. 2022. "(Re)imagining Belonging: Black Women Want More Than Survival in Predominantly White Institutions." *Journal of College Student Development* 63 (1): 106–110. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2022.0002>.
- Probyn, E. 1996. *Outside Belongings: Disciplines, Nations and the Place of Sex*. London: Routledge.
- Puar, J. K. 2007. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham: Duke University Press.

- Puar, J. K. 2012. "'I Would Rather Be a Cyborg Than a goddess': Becoming-Intersectional in Assemblage Theory." *PhiloSOPHIA Project Muse* 2 (1): 49–66. <https://doi.org/10.1353/phi.2012.a486621>.
- Puar, J. K. 2017. *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Skelton, C. 2009. "Failing to Get Men into Primary Teaching: A Feminist Critique." *Journal of Education Policy* 24 (1): 39–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930802412677>.
- Slater, J., C. Jones, and L. Procter. 2018. "School Toilets: Queer, Disabled Bodies and Gendered Lessons of Embodiment." *Gender & Education* 30 (8): 951–965. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2016.1270421>.
- Slatton, B. C., and K. Spates. 2014. *Hyper Sexual, Hyper Masculine?: Gender, Race and Sexuality in the Identities of Contemporary Black Men*. London: Routledge.
- Statistics Sweden. 2020a. "Higher Education. Level of Parental Education Among University Entrants 2019/20 and New Doctoral Students 2018/19." <https://www.uka.se/download/18.6b0a273d17646546ace1d8/1607522830287/SM2002-nyborjare-efter-foraldrars-utbildningsniva.pdf>.
- Statistics Sweden. 2020b. "Statistik om personer med funktionsnedsättning, tabeller 2018–2019." <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/statistik-efter-amne/levnadsforhallanden/levnadsforhallanden/undersokningarna-av-levnadsforhallanden-ulf-silc/pong/tabell-och-diagram/statistik-om-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning/tabeller-20182019/>.
- Strayhorn, T. L. 2019. *College students' Sense of Belonging: A Key to Educational Success for All Students*. New York: Routledge.
- Strom, K. 2014. "Becoming-Teacher: The Negotiation of Teaching Practice of First-Year Secondary Science Teachers Prepared in a Hybrid Urban Teacher Education Program." PhD Diss., Montclair State University.
- Strom, K. J. 2015. "Teaching as Assemblage: Negotiating Learning and Practice in the First Year of Teaching." *Journal of Teacher Education* 66 (4), 321–333. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002248711558999>.
- Sundling, J. 2003. *Snus*. Stockholm: Atlas.
- Swedish Agency for Participation. 2020. "Utbildning." <https://www.mfd.se/resultat-och-uppfoljning/kunskapsunderlag/utbildning/>.
- The Swedish Board of Student Finance (CSN). 2021. <https://www.csn.se/languages/english.html#TheRighttoSwedishstudentfinanceforforeigncitizenswhowanttostudyinoroutsideofSweden>.
- Swedish Council for Higher Education. 2019. Antagning till högre utbildning höstterminen 2019. *Statistik i samband med sista anmälningssdag ht*. https://www.uhr.se/globalassets/_uhr.se/publikationer/2019/snabbrapport-ht-2019-sist-anm-dag-190424.pdf.
- Swedish Higher Education Authority. 2021. "Nybörjare och examinerade på lärarutbildningarna: stabila nybörjarnivåer och fler examinerade 2019/20." <https://www.uka.se/download/18.233a99f01784aaa5f55740e/1617698391032/statistisk-analys-2021-04-06-nyborjare-och-examinerade-pa-lararutbildningarna.pdf>.
- Watkins, M. 2010. "Desiring Recognition, Accumulating Affect." In *The Affect Theory Reader*, edited by M. Gregg and G. J. Seigworth, 269–285. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.
- Wedin, Å., and J. Rosén. 2021. "Språkliga normer i förskollärarutbildning: Ett kritiskt perspektiv." *Acta Didactica Norden* 15 (2): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.5617/adno.8361>.
- Yuval-Davis, N. 2006. "Belonging and the Politics of Belonging." *Patterns of Prejudice* 40 (3): 197–214. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220600769331>.