



## este cuerpo

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este cuerpo me nutre, se nutre, nutre  
este cuerpo da placer, siente placer  
este cuerpo sostiene, se sostiene, me sostiene  
este cuerpo sana, es sanado, me sana  
este cuerpo estrecha, me estrecha y se estrecha  
este cuerpo diside  
este cuerpo refleja, me refleja, se refleja, es reflejo  
este cuerpo ubica, es ubicado, me ubica  
este cuerpo lucha  
este cuerpo mira, me mira, es mirado  
este cuerpo conecta, me conecta y es conectado  
este cuerpo se estremece, me estremece  
este cuerpo relaciona, me relaciona, se relaciona, es relacionado  
este cuerpo problematiza  
este cuerpo ama, es amado  
este cuerpo construye, me construye, es construido  
este cuerpo empatiza  
este cuerpo supera, se supera  
este cuerpo escucha, me escucha, es escuchado  
este cuerpo agradece  
este cuerpo mantiene, se mantiene  
este cuerpo es refugio, me refugia, refugia  
este cuerpo resiste, me resiste  
este cuerpo fluye  
este cuerpo abraza, me abraza, se deja abrazar  
este cuerpo cuida, me cuida, se cuida

English translation follows.

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this body nourishes me, nourishes others, gets nourished  
this body gives pleasure, feels pleasure  
this body is sustained, sustains others, sustains me  
this body heals, heals me  
this body tightens, tightens me and gets tightened  
this body dissents  
this body reflects others, reflects me, reflects itself, is a reflection  
this body situates, is situated, situates me  
this body strives  
this body gazes, gazes at me, is gazed at  
this body connects with others, connects me, is connected  
this body tingles, tingles me  
this body relates, relates me, relates to others, is related  
this body questions  
this body loves, is loved  
this body builds, builds me, is built  
this body empathizes  
this body overcomes, overcomes itself  
this body listens, listens to me, is listened to  
this body is thankful  
this body upholds, upholds itself  
this body is a shelter, it shelters me, it shelters others  
this body resists, resists me  
this body flows  
this body embraces, embraces me, lets itself be embraced  
this body takes care of others, takes care of me, takes care of itself

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### **Critical commentary**

The hatred that I have had for my body since I was eight often emerges from the shadows of the marketing strategies, which are allegedly based on "loving our bodies". While the body positivity movement celebrates all bodies that do not fit the waist size of what is currently *acceptable* (what is supposed to be "beautiful, healthy and normal" following the white and Western norm), it does not clarify or address the reasons why so many people have such bitter and violent relationships with their bodies to begin with. They just expect that by recognizing their bodies as beautiful these relationships may mend and heal themselves.

By skipping 'awkward' conversations about the everyday experiences of being a fat person in this world and jumping right into the friendly hashtag (with people detailing their own journeys to inner beauty), the body positivity movement encourages people to put all their

efforts into feeling better about themselves. With this, the mandate of loving their bodies is put on the shoulders of the people who inhabit them.

The reasons why so many people hate their bodies may be based on decades of sexism and voracious capitalism, but for many of us the reasons feel real as they were taught to us since we were little, they are part of us as those ideas have constructed an expectancy of being someone of value in society. Therefore, the impact of body positivity on people who know there are instrumentalized reasons (like turning bodies into a commodity product ) why they've been on a diet since they were eight years old, creates a duality. On the one hand, you are told to love yourself, and on the other hand, people and certain health professionals in public spaces, on dating apps and in the world of fashion, continue to say otherwise. The effect, then, is a feeling of isolation and a twofold guilt: guilt for living in a body that does not fit in the standard as well as for not being able to change or love such body.

Studying body theory has allowed me to see my own corporeal reality beyond the victimist approach of what it is and means in a societal structure<sup>1</sup>, to what it can actually *do, perform and transcend*.

The understanding that the way we perceive our self and our bodies is performative and gendered (Butler, 1985) has lead me to fully grasp and embrace my body through *embodiment* as a ground of culture emphasizing its potential, intentional, inter-subjective, active and relational dimension (Luz Esteban, 2004). Through this understanding, I could start *caring* for my body following what Mari Luz Esteban calls “corporal itineraries”, which are “individual life processes [...] that always refer us to a collective, that occur within specific social structures and in which we give all the centrality to the social actions of the subjects, understood as bodily practices” (Poot Campos, 2008, p. 202). It was through incorporating bodily practices in my everyday routine (such as stretching, staying still, floating on water, meditating, cooking and enjoying the process, dancing and so on) that I found a place where caring for my body came from recognizing its capabilities, function, and potential not just to survive but to thrive as well. It was through these “corporal itineraries” that I could take care of myself, stop self-harming and work on my eating disorders. Caring comes easily when being constantly reminded that my body serves a purpose and has a meaning. Care becomes the sole conducting thread into a life worth living.

This poem is proof of that.

## References

- Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of sex*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Chrisler, J. C., & Johnston-Robledo, I. (2018). *Woman's embodied self: Feminist perspectives on identity and image*. Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Luz Esteban, M. (2004). Antropología encarnada. *Antropología desde una misma. Papeles del CEIC*, 2004 (12), pp.1-21.

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<sup>1</sup> For further reference you may read: *Woman's embodied self: feminist perspectives on identity and image*, by J.C. Chrisler and I. Johnston-Robledo.



Poot Campos, G.G. (2008). Reseña de 'Antropología del cuerpo. Género, itinerarios corporales, identidad y cambio' de Mari Luz Esteban. *alteridades*, 18, pp. 201-204.