

Title: Vulnus Femininum: The Abject in Feminist Theory and Anorexia

Abstract: This autotheoretical piece of creative nonfiction concerns abjection and women's bodies, integrating the works of Julia Kristeva (*Powers of Horror*) and Luce Irigaray (*This Sex Which is Not One*) into lyrics, literature, and personal commentary on the relationship of a woman to herself in recovery from anorexia nervosa. It utilizes poetic devices and first-person voice with full quotations and references throughout footnotes to flow in an evocation of journal entries and sub-rosa contemplation on the meaning of the feminine body under phallogocentrism. The feminine subject's carving out of identity within psychoanalytic theory's desire-as-lack is exemplified in the abjection of anorexia; self-denial of sustenance takes center stage as the body collapses in on itself.

In search of liberation in the face of atrophy, an embrace of the uncomfortable through this cry of pain is advocated for. The piece begins with a moment of body-checking, a compulsive behavior all too familiar to those who have experienced disordered eating. It weaves itself through theory, trauma, release, relapse, and recovery, oscillating between a more analytical engagement with philosophy and an emotional engagement with art. Existing as (a) woman requires speaking in the tongue of the phallocratic order—woman has no voice of her “own,” as she has no language of her own, no body of her own.

The vacillating hesitancy of doubt, horror, and self-inflicted suffering is the embodied subjectivity of its speaker. This work is an example of *écriture féminine* in its combined appropriation of psychoanalytic diagnostics and resistance to “traditional” (read: phallogocentric) philosophical structures.

Bio: Jillian Stefferud (*she/they*) is a philosopher and writer who earned her BA in philosophy and psychology from the University of Denver in 2025. Their work concerns feminine embodiment and objectification, primarily through post-lacanian feminist psychoanalysis and deconstructive perspectives. The interdisciplinary nature of her work aims to speak as (a) woman, finding alternate pathways through theory that are recalcitrant to the phallocratic order. They are currently in a gap year, and will be continuing their studies in the fall 2026 semester, with offers pending.

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