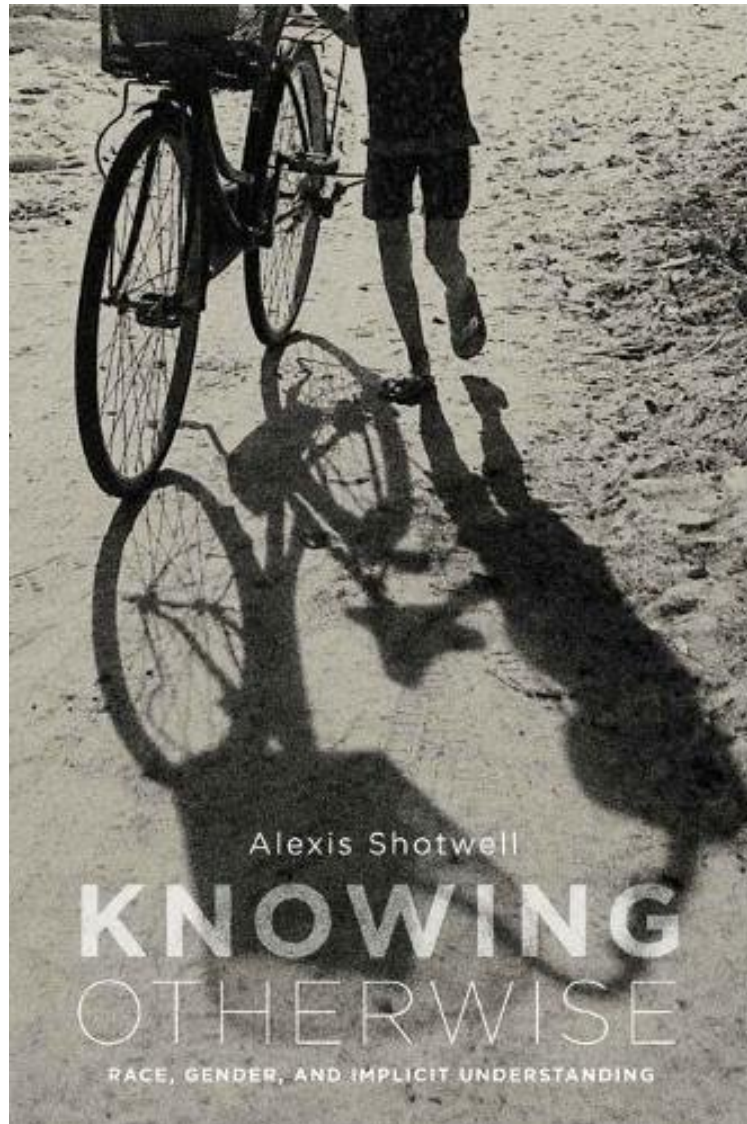


(Read now) Knowing Otherwise: Race, Gender, and Implicit Understanding

Knowing Otherwise: Race, Gender, and Implicit Understanding

Alexis Shotwell

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Alexis Shotwell : Knowing Otherwise: Race, Gender, and Implicit Understanding before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Knowing Otherwise: Race, Gender, and Implicit Understanding:

Prejudice is often not a conscious attitude: because of ingrained habits in relating to the world, one may act in

prejudiced ways toward others without explicitly understanding the meaning of one's actions. Similarly, one may know how to do certain things, like ride a bicycle, without being able to articulate in words what that knowledge is. These are examples of what Alexis Shotwell discusses in *Knowing Otherwise* as phenomena of implicit understanding. Presenting a systematic analysis of this concept, she highlights how this kind of understanding may be used to ground positive political and social change, such as combating racism in its less overt and more deep-rooted forms. Shotwell begins by distinguishing four basic types of implicit understanding: nonpropositional, skill-based, or practical knowledge; embodied knowledge; potentially propositional knowledge; and affective knowledge. She then develops the notion of a racialized and gendered common sense, drawing on Gramsci and critical race theorists, and clarifies the idea of embodied knowledge by showing how it operates in the realm of aesthetics. She also examines the role that both negative affects, like shame, and positive affects, like sympathy, can play in moving us away from racism and toward political solidarity and social justice. Finally, Shotwell looks at the politicized experience of one's body in feminist and transgender theories of liberation in order to elucidate the role of situated sensuous knowledge in bringing about social change and political transformation.

With its original interpretations of the importance of tacit knowledge to race and (trans)gender, *Knowing Otherwise* makes a significant contribution to social and political philosophy, epistemology, and especially feminist philosophy and critical philosophy of race. This book examines implicit knowledge to show how affective, emotional, and bodily understandings can contribute to political transformation. Shotwell convincingly demonstrates how the unspoken, and perhaps the unspeakable, frames the explicit knowledge that undergirds political activity. Shannon Sullivan, The Pennsylvania State University Exploring sensuous knowing that resists explicit formalization but is crucial to the possibility of a critical grasp of the world and the possibility of change, Alexis Shotwell investigates socially embedded, bodily, affective praxis that both registers and opens up truly knowing otherwise. Looking for sites of rupture of settled feeling and common sense, she explores the workings of shame that can move subjects beyond ineffective antiracist and antisexist guilt and asks how transformative social change may yet be possible. Her grasp of intersectional feminist philosophy, critical theory in the Marxist tradition, critical race theory, trans cultures and scholarship, philosophical approaches informed by Buddhist thought, and aesthetic theory after Kant is deep and creative. *Knowing Otherwise* is a wonderful, thoughtful, moving book. Donna Haraway, University of California, Santa Cruz Alexis Shotwell's *Knowing Otherwise* draws on eclectic literatures and ideas across political theory, cultural studies, aesthetics, and feminist and critical race theory to expand our vision of epistemology. Outlining the various forms of nonpropositional knowledge, she takes up their possibilities for personal and political transformation. Many of us have long been dissatisfied with philosophy's emphasis on the spoken word but lacked a framework for grasping how extralinguistic knowledge can really be understood and especially for grasping its political import. Shotwell fills this gap. This is a courageous and ambitious book, and anyone who can meaningfully connect the likes of John Searle and Michael Polanyi with Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Audre Lorde, and Avery Gordon deserves to be named Young Philosopher of the Year. The writing is clear as a bell, while the argument is profoundly heterodox and original. Shotwell shatters conventional thinking about forms of knowledge without sacrificing nuance and while remaining true to her radical political intuitions. This is honest and attentive philosophy, rich at the level of example and responsible to political practice. It will be useful to analytic epistemologists, cognitive scientists, political theorists, feminist and critical race scholars, and anyone wanting to understand how knowing otherwise shapes participation in race and gender politics. Cressida J. Heyes, University of Alberta Western philosophy has mostly been reluctant to acknowledge what many Eastern philosophers have found obvious, which is that bodily experience can constitute a source of radical insight. The suggestion that the body thinks has roots in Marxist thinking and in the work of some feminists, but Alexis Shotwell's engaging exploration, defense, and illustration of this idea goes well beyond any previous consideration in European and North American philosophy. *Knowing Otherwise* will certainly benefit philosophers and will provide philosophical strength and inspiration to activists for social justice. Susan Babbitt, Queens University In *Knowing Otherwise*, Alexis Shotwell intervenes at the overlap of epistemology and social, political, moral, and anti-oppression philosophy to present a sustained consideration of how implicit understanding shapes possibilities for both oppressing and acting against oppression. . . . [This book] stands out for its adamant awareness of claims in a remarkable array of fields of scholarship, within epistemology and without. Ami Harbi, PhaenEx In *Knowing Otherwise*, Alexis Shotwell intervenes at the overlap of epistemology and social, political, moral, and anti-oppression philosophy to present a sustained consideration of how implicit understanding shapes possibilities for both oppressing and acting against oppression. . . . [The book] stands out for its adamant awareness of claims in a remarkable array of fields of scholarship, within epistemology and without. It bridges and brings into conversation theorists across diverse traditions. . . . The style of the text is natural and intellectually honest as Shotwell starts conversations among these diverse thinkers, then shows how such conversations helped generate her analysis. . . . One of the accomplishments of the book will be in granting theorists and moral, social, and political philosophers not positioned as epistemologists more access to questions of how knowledge conditions, motivates, and sustains action toward justice. Ami Harbin, PhaenEx Shotwell teases out connections among the implicit understandings that might be

negotiated and transformed in one's habitus. She also addresses ways these understandings might pave paths toward responsible solidarity and, ultimately, social transformation. C. L. Lalonde, *Choice* Alexis Shotwell's book presents a complex account of the workings of our minds that are largely or even completely outside our awareness. Anne Jaap Jacobson, *Philosophical About the Author* Alexis Shotwell is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Laurentian University in Ontario, Canada.