

# Practice and Process Studies Research Hub: Reading group on bodily matters

## Understanding The Body, Lived Body, and Embodiment in a Digitalised World

The Practice and Process Studies Research Hub recently concluded its thought-provoking Bodily Matters reading group, facilitated by Professor Jorgen Sandberg. This four-session series invited researchers to think about embodiment in academic inquiry. Held over several weeks, the group brought together scholars from diverse disciplines to explore questions such as: Why bring the body into research?

Through rich discussion and shared reflection, participants examined how embodiment shapes the research process—not just as a theoretical concern, but as a lived, felt experience. The sessions delved into the complexities of agency, emotion, and physical presence in fieldwork, challenging the traditional notion of the researcher as a detached observer.

Key themes included the emotional dimensions of research and the importance of acknowledging one's own bodily responses. Rather than suppressing emotion in pursuit of objectivity, the

group considered how acknowledging physical and emotional cues can deepen understanding and foster more empathetic research. Participants reflected on power dynamics in data collection, and how voice, gestures, and presence can influence interactions.

The reading group also explored how bodies are shaped by social and cultural forces, drawing on gender theory and critiques of bodily discipline. Discussions highlighted how expectations around gender, race, and ability inform not only how researchers move through the world, but also how they are perceived and received in research contexts.

The group discussed the entanglements of bodies and technology, especially in light of the growing influence of artificial intelligence.

The Bodily Matters reading group offered a space for researchers to reflect on their own embodied practices and to consider how greater attention to the body might enrich their work.



For more insights into this topic, the reading list is below:

## Meeting 1: The Body, Lived Body, and Embodiment: An Overview

- Blackman, Lisa (2021). Introduction: Thinking through the body. In L. Blackman, *The body. The key concepts*. 2nd edition. Routledge: 1-18.
- Howson, A. & Inglis, D. (2001). The body in sociology: Tensions inside and outside sociological thought. *The Sociological Review*, 49: 297-317.
- Lawrence, T. B., Schlindwein, E., Jalan, R. & Heapy, E. D. (2023). Organizational body work: Efforts to shape human bodies in organizations. *Academy of Management Annals*, 17: 37-73.

## Meeting 2: The Body and the Lived Body

- Blackman, L. (2021). Lived bodies. In L. Blackman, *The body. The key concepts*. 2nd edition. Routledge: 92-119.
- Dall'Alba, G., Sandberg, J., & Sidhu, R.K. (2018). Embodying skilful performance: Co-constituting body and world in biotechnology. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 50 (3): 270-286
- Crossley, Nick (1995). Merleau-Ponty, the elusive body and carnal sociology. *Body & Society*, 1: 43-63.

## Meeting 3: Embodiment

- Chadwick, R. (2017). Embodied methodologies: Challenges, reflections and strategies. *Qualitative Research*, 17: 54-74.
- de Rond, M., Holeman, I. and Howard-Grenville, J. (2019). Sensemaking from the body: An enactive ethnography of rowing the Amazon. *Academy of Management Journal*, 62: 1961-88.
- Pink, S. (2011) From embodiment to emplacement: Re-thinking competing bodies, senses and spatialities. *Sport, Education and Society*, 16 (3): 343-355
- Wacquant, L. (2005). Carnal connections: On embodiment, apprenticeship, and membership. *Qualitative Sociology*, 28: 445-474.