

Call for Papers
EMBODIED MEDIA & MEDIATIZED BODIES
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It is through our bodies that we sense and experience life – and are sensed, experienced, and categorised by others. Our bodies are instruments of communication through which we can express ourselves. Following Merleau-Ponty, we can understand bodies as ‘lived media’: our subjective experiences – that are shaped by our gender, sexuality, age, race, ethnicity, class, etc. – are inscribed into our bodies and expressed through them. Being situated (Haraway 1988), our bodies express what is understood as normal, yet they can also disrupt norms and display alternative ideas through the ways we present, (dis-)form, communicate and perform them. In the co-production of technology and society (e.g., Singer 2003), genetics and biotechnologies are shaping our idea of healthy and able bodies, as well as gender relations and sexuality. And these ideas are constantly accompanied, evaluated, discussed, and presented in media representations. As such, bodies are also always connected to agency.

Dualistic ideas about mind and body, rationality and emotions, nature, and culture, male and female permeate Western thinking. Feminist theory explores the interconnectedness between our bodies, bodily experiences, subjectivity, and forms of knowledge. We sense and create knowledge through our situated bodies in interplay with media representations of bodies in the public discourse. The public sphere is co-created through bodies (for instance, in the context of public history, sub- and pop culture, art, class affiliation, classification, ...) and simultaneously through media representations and related ideas of gender, cultural and countercultural norms of expression.

In this issue, we want to explore related narratives and ideas. Topics of interest include but are not limited to three overlapping areas of interest: (1) the body as a medium; (2) the body in the media; and (3) media in and on the body. We invite original contributions on these topics, including theoretical and methodological considerations and case studies from communication, media studies and beyond, and are particularly interested in feminist, queer, and intersectional perspectives on current and historical cases. We want to bring together ‘classic’ and novel perspectives and thus specifically invite new considerations of these topics.

(1) The body as a medium

- Research on the situated body as a medium in which social inequalities are inscribed and through which they are expressed, communicated, (re-)produced, and traded through time. How are experiences and history inscribed into the body? What narratives of power, privilege, and inequality can we find in and through our bodies? How is corporeal reality expressed at specific points in time and in specific contexts? What notions of resistance can we find in the way bodies are construed?
- Women’s bodies have been used throughout history to symbolise ideas of motherhood and maidenhood, nature, desire, and innocence. Through such symbolism, we find ideas of women's socially assigned place. How are innocence and desire, risk, control, discipline, and responsibility communicated through the display of bodies? What ideas of gender and social norms can we derive from such portrayals, and how have these changed over time or in different contexts? What communicative narratives or strategies, for instance, about concepts such as "beauty" versus "ugliness", “young” versus “old”, have functioned and continue to function as mechanisms for social order and control? Which representations point to empowerment? In this context, what symbols can be read as feminist resistance – from narratives about witches to heroines – and how have these symbols changed?

- To whom do acts of power over one's own body and one's own physical appearance belong? In what way did and do these acts of agency become powerful? Which individuals, institutions and normative instances claim agency over bodies in the private and the public sphere?

(2) The body in the media

- Through the way bodies are portrayed in the media – from art to subculture to mass and social media – we can identify ideas of norms and normality, as well as resistance and counterculture. How have individuals and groups used their bodies to express resistance and belonging? What is the role of clothing and body jewellery such as piercings, tattoos, brandings, or surgical procedures as an expression to change the perception of the body, gender, and belonging to specific groups – and what insights can be derived from the changes and developments of such expressions?
- Our bodies are inevitably connected to ideas of subjectivity and objectivity, nature, and culture. We are both a lived body and one that is perceived as an object by others. Through the lens of different portrayals, a subject may be transferred and reduced to an object. How are bodies gazed at in the media? Which gendered, racialised, and classed production techniques prevail to represent bodies? What developments can be identified in this regard? What role do legacy media and newer forms of communication play in the visual representation of the body? Which visual representations of bodies can we find in mass media like film, TV, and print, which in social media or AI-generated content? What developments can be identified, especially comparatively, over longer periods of time?
- The body is a 'living medium' that is co-produced through media, technology, and society, it is subject to change, and it is situated in its temporality and locality. How has media communication about bodies changed? What changes in body culture, perception and communication can be observed? Which media narratives and discourses about bodies and body parts can be observed? What political and ideological implications come to light?
- Our bodies can be understood as intertextual: they communicate and are simultaneously communicated through the media. What are the effects of this interplay between the body and other media? What do we find when ideas from science fiction become reality?
- Which intentional or unintentional experiences are inscribed in the body as signs of belonging or exclusion – be it in the sense of a cult of veterans, group membership through injuries such as duelling scars, etc.? How is identity construction communicated through the body, be it gender identity, cultural and subcultural affiliation, etc.?
- What methodological approaches and research processes are needed to holistically research body representation in media, e.g., to capture intersectionality? How can we research our bodily experiences of media, communication, and embodied sensemaking? What are the approaches to understand the role of emotions?

(3) Media in and on the body

- Biotechnologies and other technical artefacts, as parts of our bodies, tell stories of healthy and fragile bodies. What narratives of gender relations can we derive from genetic and reproductive technologies? How are technologies such as implants, sensors, prostheses and other medical devices in and on the body related to ideas of health, ageing, and wellbeing?
- Technologies such as X-ray or ultrasound change the way we perceive bodies and bodily experiences (e.g., the experience of pregnancy, Duden 1993). How has technology shaped our understanding and narratives of corporeal experiences?
- Novel technologies can enhance our abilities to perceive and experience. Which ideas, fears, and hopes are intertwined with enhanced bodies (e.g., Cyborgs)?

Submissions are welcome in English or German. Submitted abstracts (no more than 500 words and a meaningful title) outlining a prospective contribution will be reviewed by the issue editors. On this basis, authors will be invited to submit full papers (max. 7,000 words including title, abstract, tables, figures and bibliography). All full papers will undergo a double-blind peer-review. In a possible revision phase after the review, authors can extend the length of the article to a maximum of 8,000 words, taking into account the suggestions of the reviewers and editors. *medien & zeit* is fully open access and does not charge its authors any fees for editing the articles (no apc).

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Please send submissions by email: cfp@medienundzeit.at