

The central thematic of Body Studies—deliberated as far back as the Platonic dichotomy of spirit and flesh where the latter is the physical and of the earth, while the former belongs to the realm of heaven and consciousness (Finol 5)—decisively places the body at the centre of modern discursive practices. At the outset, Body Studies challenges the idea of body being relegated to the margins and subordinated to the “thinking” entity, that is, the mind (5). René Descartes, hailed as the forbearer of modern rational thought, enduringly privileges mind over body to advance his philosophy of dualism: “a thesis which supposes that man consists of two essentially distinct substance, body and soul, which separates at death” (Spicker 8). In this formulation, body is reduced to a vessel or a tool for the mind. It is perceived as an object of study—purely biological or physical, even pre-cultural—and the mind becomes the consciousness, the only way to understand or confirm body’s existence in the world. Elizabeth A. Grosz critiques in a similar manner when she writes that this “dichotomous thinking necessarily hierarchizes and ranks the two polarized terms so that one becomes the privileged term and the other its suppressed, subordinated, negative counterpart” (3).

Body Studies pursue a sustained critique of Cartesian dualism as developed in phenomenology and articulated in the thought of Maurice Merleau-Ponty who discounted any distinction between the thinking ‘I’ of the mind and the experiencing ‘I’ of the body (Morris 111). Life is made possible not only through the activity of the brain but also through body’s material existence. The two cannot be conceived separately since they are intermingled. Philosophical tendency of the twentieth century, therefore, insists on the idea of embodied experience where the body cannot be separated from the experience of the world itself. Drew Leder comments that the experience of the “lived body helps to constitute this world-as-experienced. [...] The lived body is not just one thing *in* the world, but a way in which the world comes to be” (25). In other words, the world is disclosed to the experiential domain of humans as a world that is constituted by way of embodied existence, which is to say, to be human is to be embodied.

Embodiment, moreover, extends the possibility of an intersubjective and intercorporeal experience insisting on the interactive nature of existence. The world is configured through “the manner in which bodies interact with each other, in the overall context of intersubjectivity” (Moran 286). Recognizing the presence of thought and experience of other bodies within space and time, a lived body assumes an intersubjective experience *per se*. The reciprocity between lived bodies is developed through intercorporeal functions of body in action towards other bodies, which is fundamental to sociality and has an important position in meaning-making of the world through perception, agency, and relations.

The first Issue of Volume 6 of *LLIDS* on Body Studies seeks to engage with how embodied experiences critique the duality of body and mind. Under the theme “Reconfiguring Corporeality in 21st Century,” Robert Preslar’s contribution titled “Embodied Knowledge and Impenetrable Subjectivities: Lowndes’s and Hitchcock’s, *The Lodger*” addresses this concern via its exploration of how ‘embodied knowledge’—which one may not be rationally aware of—plays out in the novel and its consequent adaptation. The paper traces the differences in the way Marie Belloc Lowndes’s novel and Alfred Hitchcock’s adaptation of *The Lodger* deal with the issue of embodiment through different media. The author shows how embodied experience becomes the primary source for the protagonist’s knowledge in the novel, whereas the film brings out the impenetrability of the characters’ subjectivities.

The Special Submissions Section consists of two research articles, the first of which is “Kinetics of Argument: Rhetorical Vorticity of Ethos within COVID-19 Vaccination Narratives” by Alexia Charoupa-Sapsis and Andreas Karatsolis. Grounded in exploring one of the key frames of rhetoric in contemporary times, it maps the dynamic mobilization of ethos employed in the context of COVID-19 vaccine drive in Israel and Greece to appeal and persuade their citizens for vaccination. Recognizing the to-and-fro movement of ethos from situated to kinetic, which the paper calls “rhetorical vorticity,” it presents a nuanced analysis of how the political leaders of the two countries used several tropes to persuade their citizens into desired action. The second paper in the Special Submissions, “‘The Shakespearean Moment’ in American Popular/Political Culture: Editorializing in the Age of Trump” by James S. Baumlin, picks up the news media’s editorializing to understand what is meant by “Shakespearean” with respect to current American politics. The paper discusses how Shakespeare becomes a critique of our times as we, the audience of this political theatre, become its active participants, and how the different archetypes of Shakespeare—Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth—characterise the Western self at various junctures of history. In particular, he argues that today’s politician lacks what Shakespeare’s characters had: a capacity for self-reflection.

In the Book Reviews Section of this Issue, Emre Keser’s review of Talal Asad’s *Secular Translations: Nation-State, Modern Self, and Calculative Reason* (2018) brings out how the concept of the secular has been delineated in the book as well as how it critiques the liberal secular understandings of language and translation. James Perez, in his review of *Indigenising Anthropology with Guattari and Deleuze* (2021) by Barbara Glowczewski, discusses how the book presents the author’s more-than-four decades of work with the Warlpiri community, to bring to light questions regarding representations and research methodologies in dealing with indigenous communities.

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