

(Body) Politics

The special issue on politics of this journal wants to explore different dimensions of Body Politics. What is political in bodies, how do they constitute the political and what is the role of the body within different types of political power?

The concept body politics has different meanings. It is used especially within political theory in order to denominate the power structure in medieval societies. Foucault shifted its meaning with his concept of biopolitics. For him the state 'uses' the multiplicity of individual bodies as in the idea of the population in order to establish political power. But when we look at contemporary societies and the ways in which reproduction of bodies is managed and secured we see not only the state as a major player but also individual demands and the private sector that enhance bio- and reproductive technologies. Rabinow has coined the concept biosociality in order to grasp the role of biopolitics within contemporary societies. Agamben and Mbembe also followed up on the concept and have presented different understandings of biopolitics and the relevance of the body and its vulnerability for political power, domination and sovereignty.

However, body politics is also a term widely used and re-interpreted by the new social movements of the 1960s onwards, primarily the women's movement in North America and Western Europe. Feminism's central slogan – *The Personal is Political* – aims at transforming the traditional and gendered understanding of the political and to show how gender, sexuality, and their attribution to the private realm has eminent political effects (as in the campaign for choice for example). Together with other social movements (queer movements, disability rights movements etc.) feminism understood the body and sexuality as political things and also used the body as a means within political protest.

The projected special issue on body politics and the politization of bodies wants so collect studies and papers, which analyse body politics at different times and/or spaces, with relation to special policies, its function within discourses and practices. We welcome contributions, which analyse how bodies are embedded within political processes or how they resist against this. From a body theoretical and body historical point of view papers should highlight the way in which the political has also to be understood as somatic. Potential topics could include bodies and/or the role of affect within different social movements; debates and public discourses around the body; body and border politics, and other related topics.

We strongly invite proposals that present a systematic, empirical and/or historical perspective on the subject of body politics. Please send your proposals (one page, maximum 500 words) to: i.schmincke@lmu.de. Deadline is the 15th of January 2019.