

Jessica Lombard

Questioning the body: from philosophical dualism to sensible embodiment.

This presentation examines the tension between technologies and corporeity, which challenges our definition of personal liberty and human condition; and rethinks the body as a tool of major value, entitled to its own biotechnological modification.

To this end, our approach brings together both phenomenology and the philosophy of technology.

I will first claim that our understanding of the body needs to be reconsidered to go beyond the traditional dualism which makes it the dual element of "another thing" of greater value.

From this post-dualistic perspective, I will mainly argue that biotechnological modifications of the body can be a display of individual freedom.

To this end, I investigate how one's relationship to his body differs from his relationship to other artefacts. The body connects with, no matter how it appears (disabled, enhanced...).

As such, embodiment is essential but also entirely transparent, which makes it negotiable; there are multiple ways to be embodied and new research fields explore the question of substrate choices.

Design, art, politics and philosophy can present the human body as our first and most natural tool, our "biocultural capital" (Miah 2013).

Therefore, this presentation discusses the self-disposition of the body itself, along with the right to modify it. The human is related to artificiality as an informational and mutable environment, so that the matter that constitutes him affirms itself positively as an instrumental structure and as a personal property. As such, technology is embedded in the flesh of individuals and defines their political conception of themselves.