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# **Embodying Culture: Body Pedagogics, Situated Encounters and Empirical Research.**

## **Abstract**

Contemporary research into the field of body pedagogics has produced a growing number of studies concerned with the embodied character of cultural transmission, experience, reproduction and change. This paper advances this sociological development by reinterpreting recent writings on situated epistemic relations (SER) and practical epistemological analysis (PEA) as complementary, methodological, techniques that can enhance these investigations. After outlining existing explorations into the body pedagogics of occupational, sporting, religious, educational and other cultures, I demonstrate how the interlinked approaches to learning made possible by systematising SER and PEA can be developed into a new approach that increases the effectiveness with which the theoretical and empirical concerns of studies into embodied acculturation are harnessed.

## **Keywords:**

Body pedagogics, embodied sociology, culture, empirical research, habits.

## **Introduction**

Reacting against sociology's traditional view that culture is reproduced primarily through the cognitive incorporation of symbolically meaningful norms and values (Parsons, 1968 [1937]), the field of body pedagogics is concerned with the *embodied* processes involved in the learning and teaching of those customs, habits, techniques, knowledge and beliefs central to the production and reproduction of cultures, social groups and societies (Shilling, 2016). The intellectual roots of body pedagogics can be traced to the often ignored 'underbelly' of classical sociological explorations that

engaged with issues of inter-corporeality across the cultural, material and affective environments in which social life is forged. These include Durkheim's (1995 [1912]) discussions of the ritually directed effervescent bodily basis of collective consciousness, for example, and Weber's (1991 [1904-05]) interest in the disciplinary corporeal habits promoted by and integral to the Protestant ethic. Other prominent, longstanding, sources of inspiration for body pedagogic research include Mauss's (1973 [1934]) groundbreaking explication of culturally taught 'techniques of the body', Merleau-Ponty's (1962) focus on the essential structures of embodied being involved in knowing, and the pragmatist interrogation of the embodied cycles of habit, crisis and creativity that characterize human learning (Dewey, 2002 [1922]). Most recently, it is also important to note that the rapid growth of this field constitutes part of, and has been affected by, the broader interdisciplinary concern with 'body studies' that accelerated from the 1980s, building particularly on Bourdieu's (1984) analysis of socially and culturally transmitted forms of embodiment and Foucault's (1988) writings on self-taught technologies of the self.

While this broader interdisciplinary field of body studies faced criticism for its overly theoretical nature and for failing to encourage actual research into the social significance of the 'lived body' (Nettleton and Watson, 1998), however, body pedagogic studies had an empirical intent. This was evident in research into the transmission of occupational (Aalton, 2007; Lande, 2007; O'Connor, 2007; Hockey, 2009); sporting (Wacquant, 2004; Hockey, 2006; Woodward, 2008; Spencer, 2011; Andersson et al., 2015; Nettleton, 2015; Andersson and Maivorsdotter, 2016), educational (Cliff and Wright, 2010; Evans et al., 2008; Rich, 2011; Andersson, Öhman and Garrison, 2016), religious (Mahmood, 2005; Watling, 2005; Mellor and Shilling, 2011; Shanneik, 2011; Wignall, 2016) and other culturally shaped institutional forms.

These body pedagogic studies employed a variety of mostly, though not exclusively, qualitative methods. Yet common to and defining of their central focus was

a concern to explore the interaction over time of those institutionalized social, technological and material *means* through which cultural practices are transmitted, the varied *experiences* of those involved in this learning, and the embodied *outcomes* of these processes (Shilling, 2007: 13; 2010). This concern devoted attention to cultural transmission, learning and knowing as institutional phenomena that involve the sensory and physical education of individuals (Crossley, 2007; 2015). It also promoted engagement with anthropological insights into how cultures 'enskill' people into their practices via the structuring of 'attention' and 'attunement' (Ingold, 1993, 2001), and a sensitivity to how individual-environment connections shape the self- and inter-corporeal body work involved in occupational and other culturally shaped practices (Twigg et al, 2011). In addition, this focus on the means, experiences and outcomes of body pedagogics explored how power relations became instantiated corporeally through the development of new habits within those implicated in social reproduction, conflict and change (Watkins, 2012; Andersson, Öhman and Garrison, 2016).

If body pedagogic studies have provided a range of empirically informed investigations into the transmission of cultural forms, however, this area remains in need of development. Of particular relevance to this paper, there is no consensus about the methodological approach best suited to guiding research. Body pedagogic analyses have been informed, for example, by corporeal realism, (auto)phenomenology and sociological phenomenology (Shilling, 2005; Hockey and Allen-Collinson, 2007; Allen-Collinson, 2011; Allen-Collinson and Hockey, 2011, 2015), with the advantages of quantitative methodological approaches also extolled in related writings on body techniques (Crossley, 2007: 92). While this provides options for those seeking to explore the embodiment of culture, it has not promoted consensus regarding the methodological framework that would allow for a rigorous comparison of studies, or for the reliable accumulation of knowledge.

Recent writings on the practical embodied dimensions of teaching and learning have, though, begun to be applied to body pedagogic research in an attempt to increase their cross-study consistency and empirical specificity (eg Wickman and Östman, 2002; Almqvist and Östman, 2006; Lidar, Lundqvist, and Ostman, 2006; Maivorsdotter and Wickman, 2011; Maivorsdotter and Quennerstedt, 2012; Andersson et al., 2015; Andersson and Östman 2015; Andersson, Öhman and Garrison, 2016). The particular contribution that these and related writings have made involves the development of 'practical epistemological analysis' (PEA) (Wickman and Östman, 2002; Maivorsdotter and Wickman, 2011) and the later identification of 'situated epistemic relations' (SER) in the learning process (Andersson and Östman, 2015).

While the principles of SER and PEA have begun to be applied to body pedagogic studies, neither their compatibility nor their precise relationship with these embodied explorations have yet been fully explicated or systematized, resulting in a lack of guidance regarding how to develop their potential. It is the purpose of this paper to contribute towards that task. As presented here, SER provides us with the potential to specify what is involved in the *institutional means* through which body pedagogics are transferred to initiates, while PEA provides a method for analyzing how *embodied experience* is structured during specific encounters with these organizational practices, customs and knowledge. Both SER and PEA, moreover, can also be used to provide insight into the formation and significance of *habits* - a key outcome of body pedagogics. SER and PEA can thus be examined as logical, methodological, extensions to empirical studies concerned with the embodiment of culturally shaped practice and knowledge.

Before analysing further how SER and PEA can clarify and extend methodologically the development of these studies, it is important to address the compatibility of their theoretical background with those sources to have guided body pedagogic research. The main sociological source of inspiration drawn on by Östman, Andersson, Garrison and others involved in explicating SER and PEA is Dewey's

pragmatism (Garrison, 2001, 2003). Dewey's writings are also prominent in body pedagogic writings on the embodied bases of habit, crisis and creativity, and the relationship between thought, reflexivity and other aspects of corporality (Shilling, 2008; 2016; Nettleton, et al. 2011). More importantly, Dewey's (1980 [1916]: 367) insistence that inquiry is a *physical undertaking* conducted by human organisms, and that reflection and communication are always grounded in our existence and experience as *embodied subjects* intentionally oriented towards our environment, is sympathetic with the fundamental assumptions underpinning a wide range of body pedagogic studies even when these draw on other theorists. To the extent it informs the methodological concerns of SER and PEA, then, Dewey's concerns with embodied teaching and learning can provide a pragmatic supplement that can extend the explanatory value of a range of other approaches.

### **Institutional Body Pedagogics**

The first analytical dimension common across body pedagogic studies involves engaging with the *institutional means* through which cultures are transmitted, including those customs, lessons, rituals and other forms of knowing and inhabiting the environment individuals must acquire to become members and potential exponents of particular ways of life. While body pedagogics studies have explored these institutional dimensions with the use of interviews and ethnographies, video, instruction manuals, coaching guides and other texts, the identification of SER enables us to specify what is most important to ascertain about these organized environs.

Clarifying our understanding of the institutional transmission of body pedagogics, SER stipulate that the real world contexts in which individuals are exposed to and initiated into cultures are always *situated* within specific material environments possessed of diverse elements, are always *epistemic* in involving the promotion of particular meanings and knowledge, and involve an identifiable *relation* between these

variables (Andersson et al., 2015). Indeed, this organized relationship always involves a *privileging* of certain variables and marginalization of others; a prioritisation that entails opening up and closing down certain learning environments (Wertsch, 1993).

The privileging of variables identified by SER is illustrated in Andersson et al's (2015) research into the body pedagogics of sailing; a situated practice that transfers participants from land to water and from an environment in which balance is usually taken for granted to one in which stability and movement are for novices problematized. Teaching individuals how to respond to this interruption of routine involves encouraging them to foreground, prioritise and respond to as meaningful and relevant certain conditions and apparatus, regarding others as irrelevant, if they are to stay afloat and avoid being hit by the boom. In creating practical relations between the meanings attached to this situation, sailing instruction thus identifies a pattern of variables that must be coordinated and managed in particular ways for success to be achieved (in the case of tacking or sailing upwind, this involves learning tiller movements in relation to the wind direction, boat direction and desired course).

A contrasting example of privileging involved in the SER of an institutionalised practice is Lande's (2007) research into military body pedagogics; a study that revisits Mauss's (1973 [1934]) recognition that even breathing is socially shaped. Among army cadets, breathing 'correctly' was highlighted within training situations directed towards forging cohesive fighting units. Incorrect techniques of breathing on punishing runs became associated with lagging behind, hyperventilating, and verbal humiliation. To combat this, ideals of squad efficiency were harnessed to exercises and instructions identified as meaningful through their foregrounding the collective management of individual bodies. These situations also utilized physical contact between instructor and cadet, in which pressure would be placed by the hands of the former on the back of the latter alongside orders to 'breath with me...pause...inhale, don't hold it!' (Lande, 2007: 104). The centrality of the body to this SER is again key: '*physical* contact is part of the

meaning of the utterance [since the] transmission of symbolic information is not enough for cadets to comprehend their activity' (Lande, 2007: 104-5).

Other examples of the coordinated privileging of SER variables are provided by Watling's (2005) ethnography of the body pedagogics central to the religious Alpha Course, the fifteen session evangelising programme designed by Holy Trinity Brompton, and Waquant's (2004) analysis of boxing. For Watling (2005) a classroom environment, characterized by formal education about the Holy Spirit, was combined with rituals involving the laying of hands on initiates in rituals and prayers promoting religious rebirth and embodying the Spirit within novices. Directed towards prioritising contact with the other-worldly, every element of this situation was saturated with transcendental meaning for the organisers. For Waquant (2004: 114), in contrast, the physically demanding equipment, exercises and culture of gym training were privileged as meaningful within a situation in which the regularity of three minute bursts on equipment and sparring in the ring (alongside the demand to work in synch with others) established the relations in which learning occurred.

In assessing these examples, it is important to note that while only Andersson and Ostman (2015) make explicit use of the SER formulation, the other studies also illustrate how applying this schema to body pedagogics can provide consistency and insight into what is searched for and analysed. Thus, the institutional means of cultural body pedagogics are clearer once we know details of the environment in which learning occurs and how initiates are situated within it. The material, interpersonal, symbolic and other features of this context are also in these cases considered epistemic in that they promote particular bodily meanings in relation to specific aims (be these formal educational goals, intended occupational outcomes, sporting or religious ideals). Each of these body pedagogic analyses also reveal how the relations forged between various situations and meanings privileges a particular life-world for participants, bringing



certain phenomena and challenges into view and excluding others from the field of significance.

Two further points should be made about this institutional dimension of body pedagogics. First, exploring the organised means through which individuals are exposed to body pedagogics via the identification of SERs enables us establish particular *indicators* of progress (Andersson and Ostman, 2015: 3). These refer to generally acknowledged staging points of progression towards incorporating the culture under discussion, and can be assessed institutionally through such means as examinations and tests.

The second additional point about this institutional level of analysis is a precautionary one. The transmission of institutional practices and values is in social theory sometimes equated with the acquisition of forms of *habitus*, those durable and 'permanent dispositions' operating 'beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny or control by the will' (Bourdieu, 1984: 466; 1993: 86). While the term *habitus* is sometimes used in body pedagogic studies (eg Wacquant, 2004; Spencer, 2011), more common is the recognition that the structurally differentiated character of modern societies has eroded those continuities that used to underpin the acquisition of stable orientations *across society* (Archer, 2012: 68-9). In this context, while most studies acknowledge that institutionalised body pedagogics promote particular sets of habits that can spill over into other areas of life - an issue to which we return - they also tend to allow for the fact that individuals are usually confronted with contrasting cultural expectations and the demand to develop flexible modes of responding to the forms they pass through in their daily lives.

Whether we choose to associate body pedagogics with a *habitus* or with more limited and diverse habits, however, it is vital not to assume that the institutional means through which cultures are promoted *inevitably* result in any specific outcome. To do so would be to conflate the attempted transmission of cultural practices, values and

knowledge with the outcome of these processes. Such an assumption would also, furthermore, marginalize a second key analytical dimension explored in body pedagogic studies; the *embodied experiences* of those immersed in these culturally inflected practices. Irrespective of the SERs characteristic of organised practices, there is no guarantee that they will promote embodied experiences among those involved conducive to indicators of progress. It is in considering this structuring of experience that the utility of practical epistemic analysis (PEA) becomes apparent.

### **Embodied Experiences of Body Pedagogics**

Distinguishing analytically the embodied experiences of body pedagogics from the institutional means through which they are conveyed shifts our attention to the interconnected issues of how individuals feel about, are physiologically affected by, and begin to orientate themselves to SERs (Shilling, 2010). These component parts of experience - common themes throughout various body pedagogic studies - are crucial to the issue of whether institutional practices, values and knowledge have the potential to be reproduced within each new generation. Positive experiences can help this process of embodiment, yet negative emotions can distance and alienate people from institutional cultures, raising the spectre of cultural change rather than reproduction.

These comments raise the question of how the embodied experiences of body pedagogics can be explored in empirical research. Johnson's (2007) engagement with Dewey's work is instructive here in insisting that experience is not merely private. Experience arises from the ongoing interactive flow of individuals engaging with the environment in which they live and is manifest through comments, exclamations, questions, reactions and changes in the musculoskeletal state manifest via alterations in expression and posture. As such, while experience is felt privately it also often extends simultaneously into public view (Andersson and Garrison, 2016). It is against this background that PEA stipulates five important variables that shape how people's

experiences are structured in relation to body pedagogics: *encounters*, *ends in view*, the extent to which individuals *stand fast* in their learning, how *gaps* emerge in this process, and the *connections/inquiries* that are made in bridging or avoiding these gaps (Andersson et al., 2015).<sup>1</sup>

What distinguishes the consideration of the first of these variables, *encounters*, from the situation component of SER is their episodic nature: we are concerned here not with the general institutional structuring of a body pedagogic situation but the specific, dynamic conditions within which an individual experiences this environment at a point in time. As the sociology of education has long argued, individuals from different class, ethnic, 'racial' and other backgrounds experience encounters in different ways depending on how these are framed and classified (Bernstein, 1971). Highlighting the importance of *specific* encounters, moreover, validates ethnographic and other research into the processual and shifting experiential dynamics to be found in the uniqueness of these meetings. As Wickman and Ostman (2002) note, every learning situation involves an unrepeatable encounter (irrespective of similarities with previous encounters or with future ones yet to be held) in which people, ideas and objects meet within a broader socio-historical context. The fundamental encounter within body pedagogics often involves a teacher, employer, coach or other figure embodying a power relationship (Watkins, 2012). Yet any such scenario also involves combinations of materials, information, guidance and instruction assembled together variously and exerting contrasting effects on experience (Latour, 2013).

Encounters within cultural body pedagogics also have particular *ends in view*; the idea being that individuals will move from their present position towards one constituting a greater degree of acculturation. Crucial to this second variable identified by PEA is the extent to which novices enter into the understandings, 'language games', and ways of life characteristic of the cultural encounters they engage in. Resonating with the more general SER concern with indicators of progress, *ends in view* are again more

local, concerned with the aims of *specific* encounters. It is here that Wickman and Ostman (2002) and others (eg Lidar, Lundqvist and Ostman, 2006) have drawn on Wittgenstein's (2001 [1953], 1969) analyses of knowledge and meaning and, in particular, the extent to which learners are able to *stand fast* in particular encounters (Wittgenstein, 1969: 144).

That which stands fast within an encounter, the third element of PEA, denotes the extent to which a novice can engage with a cultural phenomenon on the basis of *immanent understandings* and *taken for granted* assumptions; making the new familiar (if not completely known) in terms of what it resembles and differs from in relation to past experiences. Bernstein's (1970) conception of school knowledge as predicated on an elaborated code congruent with that used in middle-class families exemplifies this idea of how new knowledge can nevertheless stand fast in relation to previous understandings and practices (see Stroll, 1994). Standing fast does not, however, make automatic the acquisition of new cultural insight. As Wickman and Ostman (2002: 6) note in relation to the physical interactions, ways of seeing, and modes of acceptable description that characterize the science classroom, '[n]ew meaning is only slowly and gradually negotiated in these encounters.'

The capacity for individuals to stand fast in encounters with the new does not therefore imply stasis, but highlights the potential for past understanding and meaning to be imported and translated successfully into the acquisition of new understandings, skills, capacities and knowledge. Thus, even when descriptions from the past 'work' in understanding new phenomena, this encounter with the novel 'gives already-used words new or extended meaning' (Wickman and Ostman, 2002: 16). Furthermore, the very nature of learning within a distinct culture also entails encountering circumstances in which *gaps* arise from the inability of past experience to entirely understand and manage the present.

These gaps, the fourth variable of PEA, are empirically observable when novices ask questions, hesitate, and fail to connect efficiently with the materials and other variables at hand. Their illustration is one of the general features of body pedagogic studies (eg Wickman and Ostman, 2002; Evans, Wright and Davies, 2008; Hockey, 2009; Andersson and Maivorsdotter 2016). O'Connor (2007), for example, highlights the gaps shaping her experiences when describing the clumsiness involved in early attempts to succeed in the craft apprenticeship of glassblowing. Even more starkly, Wacquant's (2004: 66) account of boxing verges on the brutal in acknowledging the chasm between his early attempts at sparring and proficiency.

My lungs are about to explode; I don't have any legs or strength left. I follow him, jabbing in a fog of fatigue, sweat, and excitement. My fists are quickly growing too heavy, my arms numb... I'm losing my energy at lightening speed and my punches aren't snapping any more....' "Timeout!' ...I feel like I'm going to vomit up my lungs and pass out.

Whether or not these gaps can be filled is of course crucial to the reproduction of particular body pedagogics. This issue brings us to the fifth element of PEA - the question of what *connections* and *inquiries* are made by initiates in relation to the pedagogic and other resources available to them and the space that needs overcoming if they are to undergo successfully a process of acculturation.

Making connections becomes necessary when gaps emerge within body pedagogic encounters in which existing functional competencies are inadequate to the job at hand, and the disruptions confronted by individual seeking to survive and succeed in new circumstances demand problem solving behavior (Mousavi and Garrison, 2003). Existing understanding, techniques, ways of approaching and knowing the world need altering if new competencies are to be acquired, and a crucial point here is that the

experience of making connections can result in either negative aversions to body pedagogics or positive orientations resulting in processes of *inquiry*.

There is no guarantee that people's experiences of a body pedagogics will be positive; their evaluation of the institutional means on offer can involve making connections with undesirable events or identities. This is exemplified in educational studies that have long shown working-class lads rejecting academic work as a 'feminine' activity inappropriate for masculine identities (Willis, 1977). Connections involving experiences that validate institutional body pedagogics, in contrast, are associated with individuals undertaking inquiries. Inquiries involve positive attempts to overcome gaps in an attempt to transform an indeterminate situation into one sufficiently clear in its parameters and constituent parts for the individual to potentially construct a unified whole out of it in which they can function successfully (Dewey, 1986 [1938]: 108).

Now, inquiry does not guarantee that the gap between an individual's capacities and pedagogic demands will be filled appropriately, but it begins to make that possible. In explicating the conditions of this possibility, it is also important to emphasise that inquiry necessitates commitment and an ability to cope with insecurity. As Dewey (2012 [1910]: 26) notes, inquiry always 'involves a jump, a leap, going beyond what is surely known to something accepted on its warrant'. This commitment entails interest 'in the adequate embodiment of a meaning (suggestion, purpose, aim)' or other element of body pedagogy including 'the use of appropriate materials and appliances' and the willingness to deploy all senses as 'constant and alert' guides to action (Dewey, 2012 [1910]: 163, 190).

The conceptual toolbox of PEA - *encounters, ends in view, standing fast, how gaps emerge, and connections* that can result in *inquiry* – provides us with a useful means of exploring the structuring of experiences within body pedagogics. Explicating these experiences can involve a variety of methods, including interviews, ethnography and

film that reveals how specific individuals respond, but PEA guides us in terms of what to focus upon in addressing this issue.

Having mentioned the actual methods employed to undertake research into body pedagogics, it is important to note that these are justified and made sense of by the general importance attributed to Dewey by those who developed SER and PEA. Andersson et al's (2015) account of the body pedagogics of sailing and Andersson and Östman's (2015) analysis of the general principles underpinning this type of inquiry, for example, exemplify the relationship between these methods and Dewey's work. These papers suggest how ethnographic observation and video film provide excellent ways of identifying how embodied experience unfolds - in line with the variables identified in PEA - among individuals intentionally situated within particular environments, with interviews enabling participants to reflect on their actions. In so doing, they exemplify Dewey's (2012 [1910]) insistence that there exist intimate connections between verbal communication, deliberation and thought, on the one hand, and physical presence, on the other.

The reporting of talk in these papers is linked to embodied encounters through descriptions of what can be seen in video film, but Dewey's (2012 [1910]) work is used to suggest three other ways in which talk is not just a symbolic medium but is also connected more broadly to embodied experience. First, verbal instruction and communication between expert and novice begins to make sense because the objects, events or relationships to which they refer can at least be imagined as encountered (Shilling, 2016: 7). As Ingold (2001: 286) puts it, talk and thought here constitute an 'interweaving of experience born of practical perceptual activity'. Second, the toing and froing of questions and responses in the learning and teaching of body pedagogics illustrate Dewey's point that symbolic reflection develops in the context of *practical* situations (Garrison, 2015). Third, and relatedly, thought provoking interruptions that lead to further inquiries are for Dewey (2012 [1910]: 11) prompted by problems linked

to the human need to adapt to new or unexpected circumstances; a regular occurrence in the body pedagogics of sailing and, indeed, in any challenge that demands individuals cope with uncertainties (eg Hockey, 2009; Andersson et al, 2015; Nettleton, 2015). The more general point raised by Dewey's (1980 [1934]: 217) work - and illustrated by these and other body pedagogic studies - is that while talk, gesture, exclamations, or other types of communication may predominate in particular learning situations, it is vital to remember that any such activity is 'simply the outpost of total organic activity in which all organs... participate'. According to this perspective, any data explored in body pedagogic studies needs to be interpreted in this context of the embodied subject as a *whole*.

Shifting our attention to the matter of how individuals experience particular body pedagogics, PEA helps us investigate how these embodied experiences are structured by the properties of specific encounters. Given that PEA is also concerned with how individuals begin to respond to these body pedagogics, moreover, this methodological framework raises additional questions about the actual *outcomes* of these cultural practices.

### **The Embodied Outcomes of Body Pedagogics**

The process of experiencing cultural forms possesses a duration - from initial contact to either aversion and/or acclimatization - that can in its latter stages change the orientation of individuals as a consequence of the 'doing and undergoing' occurring 'as the organism and environment interact' (Dewey, 1980 [1934]: 212). This was evident in our discussion of how individuals could respond to the gaps that arose between their immanent knowledge and the novel pedagogics encountered by them. When this experience is dominated for sufficient periods by the sensation of the unsatisfactory, fractured, devitalising and frustrating, the outcome often involves aversion, with the extent and direction of change distancing individuals from the body pedagogics to which



they have been exposed. In these cases, the outcome of pedagogic institutional means and experiences can be seen as involving an alienation from, and a rejection of the cultural practices.

In contrast to this aversion, many individuals exposed to new cultural forms experience as more satisfying the subsequent intermingling of organism and environment. Here, a sense of participation and communication can result in a productive alignment between the individual and their cultural surroundings. From struggling with a task that appears alien, awkward and disconnected from the participant, a sense of immersion and ease or what psychologists refer to as 'flow' can emerge from the successful execution of a skilled technique. This is evident in the sociologist David Sudnow's (2002) account of learning to play jazz piano: tortured attempts to create music gradually gave way in the context of his commitment to this cultural practice to a capacity to improvise effectively. Such alignments, irrespective of the field in which they occur, constitute outcomes involving the consolidation and embodied carrying of body pedagogics into the future (Dewey, 1980 [1934]: 22).

Interrogating what has changed in these positive outcomes, Dewey and Bentley (1946: 541) argue that we are not simply witnessing an interaction (a term suggestive of sealed subjects or objects bumping into each other) but a *transaction* between an internal and external environment in which each is connected to the other in particular ways. Just as individual organisms live through such processes as breathing, eating, drinking - taking the external environment into their internal being - so too are people taking a particular body pedagogics into their muscle tensions, orientations, body schema and, crucially, habits (Dewey and Bentley, 1946: 541). In these cases, as Dewey (1980 [1934]: 60) notes, the junction of new and old is not a mere composition of forces, but a 'recreation in which the present impulsion gets form ... through having to meet a new situation'. As gaps are overcome, this alignment can be so successful that

congruence emerges between what Dewey discusses as anoetic sensations and competencies, and noetic knowledge.

Anoetic sensation (a pre-conscious and unorganized awareness of environmental stimuli), anoetic competence (a pre-conscious capacity to organize, respond to, and navigate a path through this environment) and noetic meanings (the conscious capacity to reflexively respond to and deliberate about one's emplacement within a specific environment) constitute an important part of Dewey's (1981 [1925]) concern with the embodied processes associated with acculturation (Dewey and Bentley, 1949; Garrison, 2003). Irrespective of the varied examples to be found across different types of body pedagogics, gaps between an individual and the body pedagogics to which they have been exposed inevitably constitute a break between anoetic sensation, competence, and noetic knowledge. When these gaps are filled, however, there is a growing alignment between them. The incoherent becomes coherent and organized, and individuals can control and expand their field of thought, sensing, and acting in line with the direction of the body pedagogics with which they are engaged. Once this level of competence is reached, moreover, their capacity to act and think in a certain way can become *habitual*.

Habits occupy an important status in assessing the outcomes of cultural body pedagogics, and this is partly because of their centrality to the condition of human being itself. As Dewey (1980 [1934]: 15) notes, habits allow people to function effectively by facilitating routinised joining to and management of their surroundings. Habits enable us to 'economise and simplify our actions' by storing 'the fruits of past experience' so action can occur without having to devote heightened consciousness to every element in our surroundings (James, 1950 [1890]: 114). Without habits, indeed, survival itself would be impossible given that the very structure of the relationship between humans and their environment requires a 'stability' in action is essential to the maintenance of life itself (Dewey, 1980 [1934]: 15).

While certain habits are required for the perpetuation of life, others are key to the reproduction of specific body pedagogics. The significance of habits here is that, once established, routine orientations and actions incorporate within themselves particular cultural expectations, tools and features of the wider environment. Cultural body pedagogic habits connect us to our surroundings in specific ways, embracing institutional privileging and the power relations with which they are associated, steering encounters and determining what stands fast within a new encounter.

The development of such habits in body pedagogic studies is evident, for example, in O'Connor's (2007) discussion of learning a craft, Lande's (2007) and Hockey's (2009) research into military cultures, Wacquant's (2004) depiction of boxing (see also Woodward, 2008), Andersson et al's (2015) study of the teaching and learning of sailing, Shanneik's (2011) study of religious conversion, Mahmood's (2005) analysis of the cultivation of embarrassment within the Egyptian piety movement, and Hockey's (2006), Hockey and Allen-Collinson's (2007), Allen-Collinson's (2011) and Allen-Collinson and Owton's (2015) explorations into the sensory acclimatisations involved in sporting cultures. In these studies we witness the establishment of new habitual bonds that facilitate assemblages involving individuals and the technologies, social relations, and this-worldly / other-worldly competencies central to the practices under discussion. Habits become tools enabling individuals to approach, understand and *shape* the world around them on the basis of the body pedagogics with which they are engaged. As Hickman (1992: 21) notes, for Dewey habits organize and reorganize experience and constitute 'a recommended method or course of action' through which to intervene in and steer the future.

If the transmission of body pedagogics can result in the formation and transformation of people's habitual behavior, with all the social consequences that entails, however, it is another matter entirely to conclude that this constitutes a transformation of the *habitus*. Discussions of the *habitus* can be traced back to

Aristotle's (2000) concern with *hexis* as an acquired overarching moral character able to direct an individual's feelings, desires and actions as a result of habituation. Translated into Latin as 'habitus' the term was later used in Christian and Islamic thought to refer to the *purposeful* overcoming of religiously unfaithful actions (Mellor and Shilling, 2014). With Bourdieu's (1984: 466; 1993: 86) enormously influential reformation of the term, it acquired associations with pre-conscious and 'durably incorporated' dispositions that operate beyond conscious control. Irrespective of the differences between these formulations, however, what they share in common is a sense that the habitus exerts a formative or transformative effect that is *totalizing* in terms of an individual's 'personality' conceptualized in its broadest terms.

The association of body pedagogics with such transformations in the habitus is not exceptional (eg Wacquant, 2004; Shanneik, 2011), yet the issue of whether it is reasonable to associate the institutional means and embodied experiences of these cultural forms with such seismic change is controversial. For Archer (2012), while it is judicious to associate pre-conscious dispositions and behavioural routines with *traditional* societies - in which social stasis predominated over social change - the rapid and mutually amplifying changes that characterize the economy, culture and society contemporarily necessitate a more deliberative, scrutinizing and reflexively oriented approach towards social life. Archer (2012) typifies this approach in terms of her concern with the 'internal conversation', an inner dialogue that scrutinises thoughts and feelings in light of an individual's changing aims and preferences. Elsewhere, Lahire (2011: 25) has suggested that body pedagogics develop situationally specific habits given their existence within socially differentiated societies in which individuals are increasingly 'placed, simultaneously or successively within a plurality of social worlds that are non-homogeneous'. Becoming a skilled hospital technician and at least a proficient sports person are not mutually exclusive, for example, yet require their own body pedagogics that can be drawn on in relevant contexts. In contrast, Iannaccone's

(1997) influential writings on religion argue that demanding, time-hungry pedagogics can actually increase the effectiveness of an institution because they impart an unusually high level of seriousness to its priorities, and exert a pervasive impact on the identities of individual members that can stretch across all aspects of their life.

The above arguments can be read as suggesting that we may have to choose theoretically between arguing for the totalising transformations associated with the habitus, the dismissal of it in favour of a cognitive view of human being, or making assumptions about the existence of situationally specific habits in socially differentiated societies. It may be more productive, however, to return to SER and PEA as methodological adjudicators that can help determine empirically the scope, pervasiveness and compatibility or incompatibility of that cultural body pedagogics with which individuals are engaged. Waquant's (2004) study, for example, illustrates what can happen when there is little continuity or standing fast between competing body pedagogics. In this case, it involved him confronting the prospect of having to renounce the boxing lifestyle to which he had become accustomed in order to return to the physically sedentary life of academia. The routines, excitements and strong *esprit de corps* associated with this sport left Waquant mourning the prospect of having to trade this pedagogy for one more suited to writing up a thesis.

The concern of SER with the contrasting situational environments in which institutional body pedagogics place individuals, the practical meanings these promote, and the privileging of certain variables over others enables us to raise important questions about complementarity, overlap and potential dissonance between how contrasting cultural practices seek to shape people's embodied being. These can be explored further with the toolkit associated with PEA in order to ascertain people's actual experiences. In both cases, the recognition that there are no guaranteed outcomes regarding the effects of institutionally validated body pedagogics enables us to use these

SER and PEA devices to explore empirically the structuring of embodied experiences within and the consequences of these cultural forms.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has sought to develop the field of body pedagogics by reinterpreting and representing the methodological concerns of situated epistemic relations (SER) and practical epistemological analysis (PEA) as complementary resources that can facilitate the growth of comparative studies and cumulative knowledge in this area. SER and PEA were developed to explore processes associated with teaching and learning but have begun to be applied within body pedagogic research. What I have undertaken in this analysis, however, is a systematic re-presentation of them - a re-presentation that avoids their conflationary tendencies and makes them compatible with each other - as suited for the explication of what is involved in analyzing the institutional means and the structuring of embodied experiences in body pedagogics. In so doing I have sought to show how they enable us to identify key elements of existing body pedagogic studies as well as highlight pertinent questions that can be explored empirically when it comes to assessing the embodied outcomes of these cultural forms.

## Notes:

1. In its original formulation, the fifth element in the PEA toolbox was 'relations' rather than connection/inquiry. However, maintaining relations as a focus of PEA risks replicating the analytical work undertaken in the identification of SER and could be interpreted as suggesting there exists a correspondence between the institutional level and the embodied experiences associated with body pedagogics. In order to avoid this, and to emphasise the distinctive levels of analysis that SER and PEA are directed toward in this paper, connection/inquiry describes more accurately what is involved for individuals when they have to

deal with gaps between past experience and present circumstances.

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