Proposed symposium titled: Phenomenology, embodiment and physical education

Proposed symposium members:
(1) Dr Steven Stolz (La Trobe University, Australia) & Chair of symposium;
(2) Dr Malcolm Thorburn (University of Edinburgh, UK);
(3) Dr Jonas Holst (San Jorge University, Spain);
(4) Dr Joris Vlieghe (University of Aberdeen, UK); &,
(5) Discussant: Dr James MacAllister (University of Edinburgh, UK)

Proposed symposium abstract:
Since the rise of phenomenology in the Continental tradition in philosophy, physical education and sports pedagogy as a discipline area, or field has some ad hoc examples to call on that claim to use a phenomenological approach; however, from a philosophical point of view most of these accounts could be argued to be insufficient and unsatisfactory. Taking into consideration the tendency in physical education and sports pedagogy to objectify the body as a thing to study seems rather odd, and ignores what it means to have a worldly body (Körper) and be a lived-body (Leib) which reveals itself from within. As such, this symposium explores the conceptually rich space of phenomenology and embodiment in physical education and/or sport.

Author: Dr Jonas Holst (San Jorge University, Spain)

Title: Embodied learning through play: a phenomenological approach

Abstract: This paper presents a phenomenological study of play as a paradigmatic example of embodied learning. In recent years the term “embodied learning” has gained in popularity among researchers and practitioners in the field of physical activity and education; however, in physical education programs, embodiment still plays only a minor role, or it plays no role at all (Stolz, 2014). This paper focuses on the lived experience of being a body and argues that ludic activities offer rich and diverse experiences of embodied learning which in itself contains elements of play, because embodiment entails vital aspects of being a body in dynamic movement and in continuous contact with the world through testing, experimenting, and thereby learning (Holst, 2017). Combined with examples of the interrelationship between playfulness and embodied learning, this paper draws critically on Hans-Georg Gadamer’s condensed analysis of play as an on-going movement of to and fro (Gadamer, 2004) and on Helmuth Plessner’s anthropological investigations of what it means to have a body (Körper) and be a body (Leib) (Plessner, 2003).

Bibliography