

## *Missing bodies – experiencing lack of touch during pandemic times*

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The body has become a topic of interest for the social sciences increasingly, in our days especially. My interest in comprehending how different bodies operate and express in different life situations they live, focusing on lack of social interaction, loss of touch and its embodied experience. Pandemic forced us to constrain our bodies into private spaces and avoid other bodies; through social distance. It also created a sense of being apart from the flock, keeping our bodies safely out of reach but still wanting to remain in touch with others. Because communal sharing is an essential type of social relationship in which members implicitly assume that their bodies share a common substance that binds them together, which can be real, imagined, or implied (Fiske 2004), new technologies came to sustain our communal sharing. Nevertheless, the lack of touch and physical interaction has caused a disconnect between desired and actual levels of social interaction (Arbuckle 2018). This talk will draw from Experiences of Social Distancing during the COVID-19 Pandemic project, and anonymous subjective reports of the effects of social distancing on people's experiences of self, others, and the world, their experiences of isolation and lockdown, how it affects interpersonal relationships. COVID-19 is the catalyst for speeding up the embodiment and (dis)embodiment of bodily lived experience in these unusual times of the pandemic. Thus, touching and being touched may render people more willing to share resources and cope with loneliness in times of crisis.