

# Body Utilization, Body Grief

LEAH DUDAK  
Ph.D Student  
ltdudak@syr.edu

Syracuse University  
School of Information Studies

## ABSTRACT

The study asks participants to complete a draw-and-write prompt, which allows for an explanation of the self beyond just the written or verbal. As the study focuses on the body both in drawing and words, the drawings will be added to this shawl to fully share the experiences and feelings. In having a tactile research output through the art of the shawl, readers and participants will be able to directly reckon with the drawings and the feeling of putting on the identities people assume while working at the public library.

“Moreover, studying embodiment, and not just constructions of the body, could progress only by adopting the vantage point of the embodied worker and listening to their accounts of workplace experience ‘from the inside’.”

-Bodies At Work Wolkowitz

## WHAT IS IT?

This interactive piece explores how the body is lost to different systems, especially public-facing, capitalist work systems. It is easy to lose oneself to those we serve. Please interact with this piece in an embodied way by wearing it. *It is an attempt to mimic the loss of self in work by covering the individual, who loses themselves to the piece.*

## PLEASE TRY ON THE SHAWL AND CONSIDER

- When you have the shawl on, are you only representing yourself?
- How are observers looking at you?
- What bodily sensations are you feeling?
  - Are any of these sensations familiar?
- What do you feel when you take the shawl off?

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do library workers view their bodies at work in a public library, in the context of the self, library, and community?
- What influences these views of worker’s bodies?

## POTENTIAL TAKEAWAYS

- Creating a baseline understanding of how library workers view their work in a new way.
- Understanding the boundaries of work and self
- Potential scaffolding for a deeper understanding of workplace trauma.
- Understanding how gender, sexuality, race, play out in the library workplace.

## INSPIRATION AND SCHOLARSHIP

- My grandmothers quilting and crochet
- Hochschild (1983). *The Managed Heart*
- Ettarh (2018) *Vocational Awe and Librarianship: The Lies We Tell Ourselves*
- Jenna Hartel’s 2014 & 2018 Draw and Write/iSquare studies
- *Application, reflection and ethics*
- Douglas & Carless (2013). *An Invitation to Performative Research*
- Østern et.al. (2023). *A performative paradigm for post-qualitative inquiry*

