Sociology of the Body (SOCY 79.6)
MWF 11:15-12:20
Silsby 119

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Office Hours M 12:30-1:30, F 10-11, or by appointment

Course Description
Can social life exist without bodies? How can attention to the body influence our understanding of social processes of subjectivity, interaction, and practice? While the body has long been an "absent presence" in sociology, multiple approaches to theorizing and researching the body have emerged in recent decades. A sociological approach to the body and embodiment provides an opportunity to bridge the gap between everyday experience and analyses of broad social structures which can seem disconnected from daily life. In this course, we will examine the processes by which individual bodies are shaped by and, in turn, shape social life. Key questions to be explored include: how are bodies regulated by social forces; how do individuals perform the body and how does interactional context influence this performance; what is the meaning of the body in social life; and is there a "right" body?

Course Requirements
This is primarily a reading seminar. All required readings will be available on Blackboard. Some readings may change over the course of the quarter. All changes will be announced in class and on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to check Blackboard for course related announcements. Students are expected to attend each class meeting and should come to each class prepared to discuss the material in depth.

Class time will include full and small group discussions. I will rarely lecture during class meetings. Fridays will include either small group discussions of visual media or research group meetings (see Field Journal section below). Missing more than 2 classes will result in a drop of one letter grade for each missed class.

Late work will not be accepted. All work should be turned in as a hard copy. If a technical malfunction occurs, please turn in your paper via email by the start of class and turn in a hard copy as soon as possible. I expect that all electronic devices will be turned off for the duration of the course. The only exception to this is using a laptop or other device to access reading materials. Please download and save course readings prior to class time. Please refrain from internet use during class meetings.

Grading
The following assignments will constitute your final grade for the class. Detailed descriptions follow.
Response Papers 15%
Field Journal 15%
Making Sense Paper 30%
Final Paper 40%

**Response Papers**
During the first half of the course, students will turn in short (1-2 page) weekly response papers. Given that not all students are able to verbally engage in every class session, these responses are a chance to voice unsaid questions and comments. The objective of these response papers is to help you keep track of questions, critiques, and other comments in order to prepare for the making sense paper.

**Making Sense Paper**
You will write one 5 page paper that provides your analysis of at least 3 articles from Part I of the course. Your analysis should place the articles in conversation with each other. Where do they complement each other and/or where do they critique each other? What are the key contributions of these pieces and what do they leave out? In what direction might these chosen readings send future research and theorizing? You are not to do any outside reading for this paper. In other words, I want your independent critique, not a critique that other scholars have written.

**Field Journal**
In the second half of the course, reading journals will be replaced by field journals. Students should have an idea for their research project (see below) and use the field journal to begin recording observations and connections to course readings, and to develop research questions. These will be turned in every two weeks to facilitate feedback between student and instructor. Additionally, students will be grouped by project topics to encourage peer feedback. We will devote portions of class time to small group workshops. In these groups students will discuss the types of research questions they studied, their methods, and some of the ups and downs of research. These groups may also be used as mini writing workshops to assist in the completion of the final research paper. As such, I will assign components of the paper to be written ahead of the final due date and work-shopped in class.

**Research Project**
Students will complete a quarter long "body project," that is a sociological study of some aspect of the body. These extended projects are an opportunity to bring the readings and course discussions to bear on everyday life, cultural artifacts (a movie, a computer game, etc), a public controversy or any other aspect of the body that interests you. These papers should cover observations, analysis of these observations, and raising questions for further research. Possible topics might include: analysis of recent airport body scan controversies, body practices in public bathrooms, (dis)embodiment on Facebook, food cultures (kosher, vegan, paleo, localvore etc). Your field journal will contain pieces of the information necessary for completing this research project.
Student Feedback
Any course is only as good as the individuals involved make it. Throughout the course I will provide regular opportunities for anonymous feedback on the course (this includes the design, the readings, the discussions, etc). While most courses ask for evaluations at the end, I would prefer to have open communication while there is still an opportunity to make changes to benefit learning and engagement. I am also always open to your comments, concerns, and constructive criticism regarding the course via email or meetings. Each student will meet with me at least once during Part II to discuss progress with the research project.

Dartmouth College Honor Principle
All students are expected to adhere to the Dartmouth College Honor Principle and to engage in practices of good scholarship. All work must be cited in a consistent and recognized style (e.g. MLA, Chicago Manual of Style, etc). Scholarship is a collective enterprise. You are encouraged to peer edit the work of your fellow students, but take care to ensure that your ideas are your own and do not come from another student. Any ideas or quotations derived from published material must be cited. When in doubt, cite the source. If you are conflicted about discussing ideas with another student and how to translate this into your written work, please consult me two days prior to the due date.

Students with Disabilities
If you have a documented disability that requires any adjustments to the requirements of this course, please speak with me as soon as possible and no later than the end of the second week of the term. This discussion will remain confidential, but I may consult the Student Disabilities Coordinator to verify documentation or to help meet any needs you may have.

Religious Observances
If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in this course (e.g. observance occurs on a class meeting day or due date for an assignment) please set up a meeting with me by the end of the second week of the quarter so that we can together make arrangements.

Readings
All readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Week 1: Theorizing the Body (overview of relevant concepts)
Monday 3/24
Course overview

Wednesday 3/26

**Friday 3/28**

**Week 2: Bodies in the Field (conducting embodied research)**
**Monday 3/31**

**Wednesday 4/2**

**Friday 4/4**

**Week 3: Gendered Bodies**
**Monday 4/7**

**Wednesday 4/9**
R.W Connell. 2005. Men's Bodies. in Masculinities. Pp:45-56 ***The pdf includes additional chapters. Only indicated pages are required

Friday 4/11

Week 4: Racialized Bodies

Monday 4/14

Wednesday 4/16

Friday 4/18

Part II
The second half of the class focuses on topical issues in the study of the body which incorporate the theoretical and methodological concerns addressed in Part I.

Week 5: Introduction to Part II
*****Complete mid-term course evaluation*****

Monday (intro to health and medicine) 4/21
**Wednesday (intro to sport) 4/23**

**Friday (aesthetics and integrity) 4/25**

****SWITCH TO FIELD JOURNALS AND SCHEDULE MEETING TO DISCUSS PROGRESS****

**Week 6: "Healthy Bodies"****

****Making Sense Papers Due Monday in class****

**Monday 4/28**

**Wednesday 4/30**

**Friday 5/2**
Laura Backstrom. 2012. From the freak show to the living room: cultural representations of dwarfism and obesity. Sociological Forum27(3): 682- 707

**Week 7: Bodies in Motion**

**Monday 5/5**

**Wednesday 5/7**
Niall Richardson 2010. 'Wow Dude! You're a Monster!' The Politics of Bigorexia. in *Transgressive Bodies*. pp: 37-58

**Friday 5/9**

**Week 8: Bodily Integrity /Surgical Interventions**

**Monday 5/12**

**Wednesday 5/14**

**Friday 5/16**

**Week 9: Aesthetic Modifications (non-surgical)**
Monday 5/19

Wednesday 5/21

Friday 5/23

Week 10: At Body's End

Monday 5/26
No class, Memorial Day

Wednesday 5/28