

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

Alexandra Howson and David Inglis. 2001. "The body in sociology: tensions inside and outside sociological thought." *The Sociological Review*. 297-317.

Chris Shilling. 2007. "Sociology and the body: classic traditions and new agendas". *The Sociological Review* 55(1): 1-18

Friday 3/28

Sarah Nettleton and Jonathan Watson. 1998. "The body in everyday life: An Introduction." in Sarah Nettleton and Jonathan Watson (eds.) *The Body in Everyday Life*.
Bryan S. Turner. 2008. Sociology and the Body. in *Body and Society*. pp: 33-56

Week 2: Bodies in the Field (conducting embodied research)

Monday 3/31

Judith Okley. 2007. Fieldwork embodied. in Chris Shilling (ed). *Embodying Sociology: Retrospect, Progress, and Prospects*. Oxford: Blackwell pp.65-79
Nick Crossley. 2007. Researching embodiment by way of 'body techniques'. *The Sociological Review*. 55(s1):80-94

Wednesday 4/2

Nick Crossley . 1995. Merleau-Ponty, the Elusive Body and Carnal Sociology. *Body & Society* 1(1):43-63.
Loic Wacquant. 2011. Habitus as Topic and Tool: Reflections on becoming a prizefighter. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*. 8(1): 81-92.

Friday 4/4

Katherine Irwin. 2006. Into the Dark Heart of Ethnography: The Lived Ethics and Inequality of Intimate Field Relationships. *Qualitative Sociology*. 29: 155-175.
Erich Goode. 2002. Sexual Involvement and Social Research in a Fat Civil Rights Organization. *Qualitative Sociology*. 25(4): 501-534

Week 3: Gendered Bodies

Monday 4/7

Anne Witz. 2000. "Whose Body Matters? Feminist Sociology and the Corporeal Turn in Sociology and Feminism." *Body & Society*. 6(1): 1-24.
Crawley, Sara L.; Lara J. Foley; and Constance L. Shehan. 2008. Chapter 2 "Doing 'Woman'/Doing 'Man': Gender Performances that produce 'reality' " pp: 37-80 in *Gendering Bodies*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Wednesday 4/9

Anne Witz and Barbara L. Marshall. 2003. "The quality of manhood: masculinity and embodiment in the sociological tradition." *The Sociological Review*. 340-356.
Todd W. Reeser. 2010. "Chapter: 4 Theorizing the Male Body." in *Masculinities in Theory: An Introduction*. pp:91- 118. Wiley-Blackwell. Oxford, UK. ***The pdf includes additional chapters. Only indicated pages are required

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

Henry Rubin. 2003. "Always Already Men." pp: 143-173 in *Self-made Men: Identity and Embodiment among transsexual men*.

Douglas Schrock, Lori Reid, and Emily M. Boyd. 2005. Transsexuals' Embodiment of Womanhood. *Gender & Society* 19(3): 317-335.

Week 4: Racialized Bodies

Monday 4/14

George Yancy. 2005. Whiteness and the return of the black body. *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. 19(4): 215-241

Suki Ali. 2004. Reading Racialized Bodies. in *Cultural Bodies*. Helen Thomas and Jamilah Ahmed (eds.) pp:76-97.

Sander Gilman. 2000. The Racial Nose. in *Making the Body Beautiful: A Cultural History of Aesthetic Surgery*. pp: 85-118.

Wednesday 4/16

Steven Epstein. 2007. To Profile or Not to Profile: What Difference Does Race Make? in *Inclusion: The Politics of Difference in Medical Research*. pp: 203-232.

Ann Morning. 2008. "Reconstructing race in science and society: biology textbooks, 1952-2002." *American Journal of Sociology*. 114(s1): S106-S 137.

Friday 4/18

Kimberly J. Lau. 2011. "New Bodies of Knowledge." in *Body Language: Sisters in Shape, Black women's fitness and feminist identity politics*. pp: 107-142

Tamara Beauboeuf-Lafontant. 2003. Strong and Large Black Women? Exploring Relationships between Deviant Womanhood and Weight. *Gender & Society* 17(1): 111-121

Eugenia Kaw. 1993. The Medicalization of Racial Features: Asian American Women and Cosmetic Surgery. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*. 7(1): 74-89

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

Bryan S. Turner. 2000. The government of the body: medical regimes and the rationalization of diet. in *Regulating bodies*. pp: 177-195.

Simon J. Williams. 1997. "Modern Medicine and the 'Uncertain Body': From Corporeality to Hyperreality?" *Social Science and Medicine*. 45(7): 1041-1049.

Wednesday (intro to sport) 4/23

Chris Shilling. 2008. Chapter 4: Competing in *Changing Bodies* pp:44-63.

John Hockey and Jacquelyn Allen Collinson. 2007. Grasping the Phenomenology of Sporting Bodies. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. 42(2): 115-131

Friday (aesthetics and integrity) 4/25

Margrit Shildrick. 2010. Some Reflections on the Socio-cultural and Bioscientific Limits of Bodily Integrity. *Body & Society* 16(3):11-22.

Nick Crossley. 2005. Mapping Reflexive Body Techniques: On Body Modification and Maintenance. *Body & Society*. 11(1):1-35.

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

Week 6: "Healthy Bodies"

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

Monday 4/28

Alexandra Howson. 1998. "Embodied obligation: the female body and health surveillance." in Sarah Nettleton and Jonathan Watson (eds.). *The Body in Everyday Life*. New York: Routledge. pp: 218- 240.

Sarah E. H. Moore. 2010. "Is the healthy body gendered? Toward a feminist critique of the new health paradigm." *Body and Society*. 16(2): 95-118.

Wednesday 4/30

Eeva Sointu. 2006. "Healing Bodies, Feeling Bodies: Embodiment and Alternative and Complementary Health Practices." *Social Theory and Health*. 4: 203-220.

Peter Conrad and Ashley Rondini. 2010. Chapter 5: The internet and medicalization: reshaping the global body and illness. in *Culture, Bodies, and the Sociology of Health*. Elizabeth Etorre (eds). pp: 107-120

Friday 5/2

Samantha Kwan. 2009. Framing the fat body. *Sociological Inquiry*. 79(1):25-50.

Lee F. Monaghan. 2005. Big handsome men, bears, and others: Virtual constructions of 'fat male embodiment.' *Body & Society*. 11(2): 81-111

Laura Backstrom. 2012. From the freak show to the living room: cultural representations of dwarfism and obesity. *Sociological Forum* 27(3): 682- 707

Week 7: Bodies in Motion

Monday 5/5

Susie Scott. 2010. How to Look Good (Nearly) Naked: The Performative Regulation of the Swimmer's Body. *Body & Society*. 16(2):143-168

Neil Lewis. The Climbing Body, Nature and the Experience of Modernity. *Body & Society*. 6(3-4):58-80

Anna Aalten. 2007. Listening to the dancer's body. *The Sociological Review* 55(1): 109- 125.

Wednesday 5/7

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

Peggy Roussel et. al. 2010. The metamorphosis of female bodybuilders: Judging a paroxysmal body? *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*.45(1):103-109.

Elise Paradis. 2012. Boxers, Briefs or Bras? Bodies, Gender and Change in the Boxing Gym. *Body & Society*. 18(2):82-109.

Friday 5/9

Sheila L. Cavanagh and Heather Sykes. 2006. Transsexual bodies at the Olympics: the International Olympic Committee's policy on transsexual athletes at the 2004 Athens Summer Games. *Body & Society*. 12(3): 75-102.

Brett St. Louis. 2003. "Sport, Genetics and the 'Natural Athlete': The Resurgence of Racial Science." *Body & Society*. 9(2): 75-95.

Week 8: Bodily Integrity /Surgical Interventions)

Monday 5/12

Nikki Sullivan. 2008. The Role of Medicine in the (Trans)Formation of 'Wrong' Bodies. *Body & Society*. 14(1):105-116

Julie Doyle and Katrina Roen. 2008. Surgery and Embodiment: Carving out Subjects. *Body & Society*. 14(1):1-7

Karen Throsby. 2008. Happy Re-birthday: Weight loss surgery and the 'new me.' *Body and Society*. 14(1): 117-133.

Wednesday 5/14

Atkinson, Michael. 2008. "Exploring male femininity in 'crisis': men and cosmetic surgery. *Body & Society*. 14(1): 67-87.

Victoria Pitts-Taylor. 2007. Normal Extremes: Cosmetic Surgery Television. in *Surgery Junkies: Wellness and Pathology in Cosmetic Culture*. pp: 39-72.

Friday 5/16

Niall Richardson. 2010. Becoming *whole*: Amputees, devotees, and self-demand amputation. in *Transgressive bodies*. pp:193-204.

Vivian Sobchak. 2010. Living a 'phantom limb': on the phenomenology of bodily integrity. *Body & Society*. 16(3): 51-67.

Jenny Slatman and Guy Widdershoven.2010. Hand Transplants and Bodily Integrity. *Body & Society* 16(3): 69-92.

Week 9: Aesthetic Modifications (non-surgical)

Monday 5/19

Patricia MacCormack. 2006. The Great Ephemeral Tattooed Skin. *Body & Society*. 12(2): 57-82.
Michael Atkinson. 2003. Shame, Social Control, and Display. in *Tattooed: The Sociogenesis of Body Art*. pp: 207-236.

Wednesday 5/21

Victoria Pitts Taylor. 2000. "Visibly queer: body technologies and sexual politics." *The Sociological Quarterly*. 41(3): 443-464.
Lesley A. Sharp. 2011. The Invisible Woman: The Bioaesthetics of Engineered Bodies. *Body & Society*. 17(1): 1-30.

Friday 5/23

Barbara Jane Brickman. 2004. 'Delicate' Cutters: Gendered Self-mutilation and Attractive Flesh in Medical Discourse. *Body & Society*. 10(4): 87-111.
David Bell. 2001. Meat and Metal. in *Contested Bodies* Ruth Holliday and John Hassard (eds). pp:168-178.

Week 10: At Body's End**Monday 5/26**

No class, Memorial Day

Wednesday 5/28

Mary Roach. 2003. "Out of the fire, into the compost bin: and other new ways to end up." pp: 251-280 in *Stiff: The curious lives of human cadavers*.
Margaret Lock. 2004. Living cadavers and the calculation of death. *Body & Society* 10(2-3): 135-152.