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Office Hours:
Tuesdays: 1:30-3:00
Wednesdays: 10:00-12:00
Fridays: by appointment

GSC 63514/43514: Body Politics

As humans, we are embodied beings. Although specific bodies can – and do – vary greatly, our embodiment is a hallmark and defining feature of our humanity. This course begins by defining *body politics* as both the regulatory practices and policies through which society regulates the human body (that is, the power to control bodies), and, from the opposite perspective, the individual's struggle to control their own body (through resistance and protest against these powers). Topics to be considered might include: reproduction, medicine, and the raced body; disability; transgender bodies; hunger strikes; the relationship of feminism and body politics. We will read feminist/gender scholarship that unpacks how the body is perceived, represented, and symbolically charged and novels/films that engage artistically with the body; throughout, our primary ethical precept will be the inherent dignity of the human body.

Course assignments will include a book review, several short response papers, and a substantial individual research project on a topic of the student's choice.



Texts to purchase:

1. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*
2. Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter*
3. Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza*
4. Terry Kapsalis, *Public Privates: Performing Gynecology From Both Ends of the Speculum*
5. Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*
6. Sinead Dowd, *Bog Child*
7. David Valentine, *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category*
8. Kathleen Winter, *Annabel*
9. Kenny Fries, *Body, Remember: A Memoir*
10. Anne Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*



Assignments:

1. Short responses (5 – either group A or B) – 30%
 - a. Identify and discuss 1 or 2 important aspects of the day's reading (undergrads: 1-2 pages; grads: 2-3 pages); these are due at the beginning of the class session.

2. A book review (500 words max.) – 20%
 - a. Select a text from the bibliography that follows at the end of the syllabus and write a short review of the work. Identify the text’s strengths and weaknesses, and discuss how it contributes to the field of body studies. The review should begin with the bibliographic info for the text and should be signed “Reviewed by [your name].”
3. A substantial individual research project (with an oral presentation component) – 50%
 - a. Select a topic and obtain my approval by 4/1/14 (presentation date to be signed up for in advance)
 - b. Select a reading for the class to do in preparation for your teaching session (maximum of 20 pages); a PDF of the reading must be posted to Sakai 48 hours in advance. EVERYONE is responsible for reading this text.
 - c. Compile a bibliography of 6-8 key texts about your topic (either classics or published since 2008) for distribution to the class during your session.
 - d. Teach a mini-session on your topic (undergrad students: 20 minutes; grad students: 30 minutes), including presentation of important background information and a discussion of the reading.
 - e. Submit a research paper on this topic (focus of your choice; I am happy to discuss this in advance with you) at the final exam period (undergrads: 12-15 pages; grads: 15-20 pages).



Grade scale:

- A – Meets highest expectations
- A- – superior work in all areas
- B+ – Superior work in most areas
- B – Solid work
- B- – More than acceptable, but 1 or 2 shortcomings
- C+ – Meets all basic standards
- C – Meets most basic standards
- C- – Meets some basic standards
- D – Minimally passing
- F – Unacceptable performance

Grade Scale:

A – 95-100

A- – 90-94

B+ – 87-89

B – 83-86

B- – 80-82

C+ – 77-79

C – 73-76

C- – 70-72

D – 65-69

F – 64 or lower



Course policies:

- We are all mutually responsible for maintaining a respectful, safe, appropriate learning environment. Actions or comments which detract from this goal will not be tolerated.
- **Plagiarism cannot be tolerated. Please be mindful of the Honor Code pledge – “As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty.” – All major assignments must be done on your own, with any ideas of scholars properly cited (Please use MLA style, UNLESS you have made prior arrangements with me). You may discuss**

the readings with classmates both before and after class meetings, and obviously should take notes during class discussions.

- Attendance – any absence not covered by the University’s policy on excused absences is considered unexcused. My policy for attendance is as follows: for every absence after your FIRST unexcused absence, you will lose a HALF of a letter grade; if you miss more than THREE classes (unexcused), you will FAIL the class.
- Additionally, ABSENCE IS NOT AN EXCUSE TO NOT TURN IN WORK ON TIME. Assignments must be submitted by the indicated due date. Late assignments will only be accepted if arrangements are made prior to the due date and may be assessed a letter grade penalty.
- Email – Please use a subject line that indicates your content. Also, please compose the email in a professional manner (i.e., include both a greeting and a closing, as well as your name).
- I expect that class will not be interrupted by cell phones/text messages or laptop usage. While I will not embarrass you if this happens, please be aware that I will notice it.

An important note regarding the reading assignments:

- The standard rule of thumb in academia is that you should spend approximately 3 hours of prep time for each hour of class time at the graduate level (for our class, this translates into spending about 4.5 hours before each of our class meetings). Please see me if you find that you are spending significantly more time than this on a routine basis and you would like to brainstorm some reading/writing/studying strategies.



Schedule of readings:

Week 1: Introduction

1/14	Introduction
1/16	Iris Marion Young, “Lived Body vs. Gender: Reflections on Social Structure and Subjectivity.” (<i>On Female Body Experience: “Throwing Like a Girl” and Other Essays</i> . New York: Oxford UP, 2005. 12-26.) [E]

Week 2: Theory

1/21	Michel Foucault, <i>Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison</i> , Parts 1 & 2 Group A
1/23	Foucault, cont., Parts 3 & 4

Week 3: Theory, cont.

T, 1/28	Judith Butler, <i>Bodies that Matter</i> , Part 1 Group B
H, 1/30	Butler, cont., Part 2

Week 4: Theory, cont.

2/4 Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, "Atravesando Fronteras/Crossing Borders"

Group A

2/6 Anzaldua, cont., "Un agitado viento/Ehécatl, the wind"

Week 5: Policing Women's Bodies

2/11 Terry Kapsalis, *Public Privates: Performing Gynecology From Both Ends of the Speculum*

Group B

2/13 Siobhan B. Somerville, *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture* Chapter 1: "Scientific Racism and the Invention of the Homosexual Body" (15-38) [E]

Hildebrandt S. "The women on Stieve's list: Victims of national socialism whose bodies were used for anatomical research." *Clin Anat.* 2013 Jan 26(1):3-21. [E]

Week 6: Policing Women's Bodies, cont.

2/18 Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*

Group A

2/20 Skloot, cont.

Week 7: Hunger Strikes

2/25 *Some Mother's Son*; to be screened in advance

Maud Ellmann, *The Hunger Artists: Starving, Writing, and Imprisonment* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993.) [E]

Susan Bordo, "Hunger as Ideology" (*Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*. Berkley: U of California P, 2004. 99-138.) [E]

Group B

2/27 Sinead Dowd, *Bog Child*

Sondra S. Crosby, Caroline M. Apovian, and Michael A. Grodin. "Hunger strikes, force-feeding, and physicians' responsibilities." *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association* 298.5 (2007): 563-566. [E]

Sharmila Devi, "Guantanamo hunger strikers make a plea to their doctors." *The Lancet* (2013). [E]

Corinna Howland, "To feed or not to feed: Violent state care and the contested medicalization of incarcerated hunger-strikers in Britain, Turkey and Guantanamo Bay." *New Zealand Sociology* 28.1 (2013): 101. [E]

Week 8: Gendered bodies

3/4 David Valentine, *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category*, parts 1 & 2

Group A

3/6 Valentine, part 3 AND (next page)

Elizabeth Reis, "Divergence or Disorder? The Politics of Naming Intersex." (*Bodies in Doubt: An American History of Intersex*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2012. 153-162.) [E]

SPRING BREAK

Week 9: Intersex conditions

- 3/18 Kathleen Winter, *Annabel* Parts 1 & 2
Group B
- 3/20 Winter, cont., Parts 3 & 4
David A. Rubin, "'An Unnamed Blank That Craved a Name': A Genealogy of Intersex as Gender." (*Signs* 37. 4 Sex: A Thematic Issue (Summer 2012): 883-908.) [E]

Week 10: Disability studies

- 3/25 Kenny Fries, *Body, Remember: A Memoir*
Group A
- 3/27 Carrie Sandahl, "Queering the Crip or Crippling the Queer?: Intersections of Queer and Crip Identities in Solo Autobiographical Performance" (*GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 9.1-2 (2003) 25-56.) [E]

Week 11: culture vs. medicine

- 4/1 Anne Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, Preface and chapters 1-11
Group B
- 4/3 Fadiman, cont., chapters 12-19 and Afterword

Week 12: research week (no classes)

- 4/8 **Book review due @3:30pm via email**

Week 13: Presentations (5)

- 4/15 readings (3) to be posted on Sakai by 4/13, 5pm
4/17 readings (2) to be posted on Sakai by 4/15, 5pm

Week 14: Presentations (5)

- 4/22 readings (3) to be posted on Sakai by 4/20, 5pm → this is Easter; please plan ahead
4/24 readings (2) to be posted on Sakai by 4/22, 5pm

Week 15: Presentations (2)

- 4/29 readings (2) to be posted on Sakai by 4/27, 5pm

Tuesday, May 6 – final paper due at 12:30 pm



Book Review options:

- Angier, Natalie. *Woman: An Intimate Geography*. Anchor, 2000.
- Balsamo, Anne. *Technologies of the Gendered Body*. Duke Univ. Press, 1996.
- Banks, Ingrid. *Hair Matters: Beauty, Power and Black Women's Consciousness*. NYU P, 2000.
- Bordo, Susan. *The Male Body: A New Look at Men in Public and Private*. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1999.
- Bordo, Susan. *Twilight Zones: The Hidden Life of Cultural Images From Plato to O.J.* University of California Press, 1997.
- Bordo, Susan. *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body*. University of California Press, 1993.
- Bordo, Susan and Alison Jaggar, ed. *Gender/Body/Knowledge: Feminist Reconstructions of Being and Knowing*. Rutgers University Press, 1989.
- Browne, Connors, and Stern, ed. *With the Power of Each Breath: A Disabled Women's Anthology*. Cleis Press, 1985.
- Brumberg, Joan Jacobs. *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls*. Vintage, 1998.
- Camper, Carol, ed. *Miscegenation Blues: Voices of Mixed Race Women*. Sister Vision Press, 1994.
- Davis, Kathy. *Reshaping the Female Body: The Dilemma of Cosmetic Surgery*. Routledge, 1995.
- Davis, Kathy, ed. *Embodied Practices: Feminist Perspectives on the Body*. Sage Publications, 1997.
- DeMello, Margo. *Bodies of Inscription: A Cultural History of the Modern Tattoo Community*. Duke UP, 2000.
- Fausto-Sterling, Anne. *Sex/Gender: Biology in a Social World*. Routledge, 2012.
- Featherston, Elena, ed. *Skin Deep: Women Writing on Color, Culture, and Identity*. Crossing Press, 1994.
- Fessler, Ann. *The Girls Who Went Away: The Hidden History of Women Who Surrendered Children for Adoption in the Decades Before Roe v. Wade*. Penguin, 2007.
- Friedman, David. *A Mind of Its Own: A Cultural History of the Penis*. Free Press, 2001.
- Grogan, Sarah. *Body Image: Understanding Body Dissatisfaction in Men, Women and Children*. NY: Routledge, 1999.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. *Space, Time and Perversion. Essays on the Politics of Bodies*. Routledge, New York; and Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1995.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Indiana Univ. Press, 1994.
- Heywood, Leslie. *Dedication to Hunger: The Anorexic Aesthetic in Modern Culture*. California, 1996.
- Kirby, Vicki. *Telling Flesh: The Substance of the Corporeal*. Routledge, 1997.

- Latteier, Carolyn. *Breasts: The Women's Perspective on an American Obsession*. Haworth Press, 1998.
- McGuire, Danielle L. *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance--A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power*. Vintage, 2011.
- Nast, Heidi J. and Steve Pile, ed. *Places Through the Body*. Routledge, 1998.
- Newman, Karen. *Fetal Positions: Individualism, Science, Visuality*. Stanford UP, 1996.
- Prince, Althea. *The Politics of Black Women's Hair*. Idiomatic, 2010.
- Rand, Erica. *Barbie's Queer Accessories*. Duke UP, 1995.
- Schor, Naomi and Elizabeth Weed, ed. *Love, Anger, and the Body*. (*differences* Vol. 9, no. 1) Indiana University Press.
- Thone, Ruth Raymond. *Fat -- A Fate Worse Than Death? Women, Weight and Appearance*. Haworth Press, 1997.
- Ussher, Jane, ed. *Body Talk: The Material and Discursive Regulation of Sexuality, madness and Reproduction*. NY: Routledge, 1997.
- Walker, Michelle Boulous. *Philosophy and the Maternal Body: Reading Silence*. Routledge, 1998.
- Weiss, Gail. *Body Images: Embodiment as Intercorporeality*. Routledge, 1999.
- Weiss, Gail and Honi Fern Haber, ed. *Perspectives on Embodiment: The Intersection of Nature and Culture*. Routledge, 1999.
- Weitz, Rose, ed. *The Politics of Women's Bodies: Sexuality, Appearance and Behavior*. Oxford, 1998.
- Wilson, Deborah and Christine Laennec, ed. *Bodily Discursions: Gender, Representations, Technologies*. SUNY P, 1996.
- Wolf, Naomi. *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women*. Harper, 2002.
- Wolf, Naomi. *Vagina: A Biography*. Ecco, 2012.