Course Description
This seminar is aimed at advanced students who are interested in exploring the body as a site for the production of social and cultural meaning and social inequality.

We will draw on sociological theories of the body, critical race theory, queer theory, feminist theory, postcolonial theory to highlight and ask questions about the ways that bodies are racialized, gendered and sexualized. How and why are our bodies represented as black, brown, white, male, female, fertile, pure, desirable, sexually available, disabled, diseased, or happy...and what are the effects of these representations? We will address these questions from historical, global and contemporary perspectives.

Topics covered include sexual diversity and desire, racism, eugenics, colonialism, nation-building, disability, body image, popular culture and reproduction. You are expected to have a foundation in social and/or feminist theory, and will be expected to critically read and analyse a considerable volume of challenging texts.

There are many areas that we will not have time to explore deeply, but the major paper gives you a chance to focus more closely on a topic that interests and excites you.

I am available for meetings on Thursday between 10 and 11:30. Please do contact me via email if you have questions or wish to make an appointment to see me: sarita@queensu.ca

Required Texts:

*SOCY 403 Sociology of the Body Reader*. Please contact or visit the P and CC, the Publishing and Copy Centre in JDUC to obtain a copy. Additional articles are available on-line, as indicated in the course outline.

An additional list of ‘recommended’ texts is included at the end of this course outline; you may find these useful in finding or researching a paper topic.
1. **Introduction to the seminar and its participants** January 9

Film: *The Body Beautiful* (23 min)

2. **Theories of the Body and Sexuality** January 16

   * IN-CLASS WRITING EXERCISE

Film: *Juggling Gender*


Suggested (optional):

- Chris Shilling, later chapters.

3. **Theories of the Body: Foucault and Butler** January 23

   * IN-CLASS WRITING EXERCISE

Film: *Paris is Burning*


4. **Colonising and Regulating Bodies: Of Empire, Nation and the Body** January 30

   * IN-CLASS WRITING EXERCISE

Film: *The Life and Times of Sara Baartman: the Hottentot Venus*


Recommended:

5. Eugenics: Race and Disability February 6
* IN-CLASS WRITING EXERCISE

Film: The Sterilization of Leilani Muir


6. Contemporary Representations of Gendered and Racialised Bodies February 13
IN-CLASS WRITING EXERCISE
Film: Tough Guise [excerpt]
On Cannibalism (6 min)
On Western Eyes 40 min


READING WEEK

7. RESEARCH PROJECT and presentations DUE Feb 27

8. March 6
IN-CLASS WRITING EXERCISE

a. Contemporary Representations of Gendered and Racialised Bodies, Altered Bodies
b. The ‘Science’ of Gender, Sex and Race/ Medicine and the Body
film: Black, Bold and Beautiful

http://search.proquest.com.proxy.queensu.ca/docview/194908202


Suggested:


9. March 13

Essay Workshops begin: Class Presentations of your Work in Progress (annotated bibliography due)

10. March 20
Writing Response on

Kathy Davis “My Body is My Art: Cosmetic Surgery as Feminist Utopia?” *European Journal of Women’s Studies*, 02/1997, Volume 4, Issue 1, pp. 23 - 37
http://journals2.scholarsportal.info.proxy.queensu.ca/details/13505068/v04i0001/23_csafu.xml

Or

*Cressida J. Heyes* “Cosmetic Surgery And The Televisual Makeover”
*Feminist Media Studies* (March 2007), 7 (1), pg. 17-32
http://journals2.scholarsportal.info.proxy.queensu.ca/details.xqy?uri=/14680777/v07i0001/17_csattm.xml

11 March 27. Essay Workshop: Class Presentations of your Work in Progress  (annotated bibliography due)

Crossing Borders: Sex, Sexuality and Intersexuality


12. Good Friday

FINAL ESSAYS DUE end of the first week of April

**Recommended Texts**

You may find the following texts useful to buy or peruse in developing your essay topics.


*Foucault, Michel. History of Sexuality*. Vintage.


Assignments

In-class Writing Exercises (10%)
Research Project: Paper and Presentation: (35%)
Final essay presentation (5%)
Annotated Bibliography (5%)
Final Essay (45%)

1. In-class Writing Exercises (10%)
The idea of this exercise is to encourage you to come to class prepared to engage with the readings. Several times during the term you will be given time during class to write a brief analysis of the readings for that week.
The summaries will have the following structure:
   a. You will begin by summarizing the central argument and contribution of the article, supporting your analysis through brief quotes (w page numbers).
   b. Then you will raise at least one thing that you found intriguing and interesting about this piece, again demonstrating through key quotes or page number references.
   c. You will raise any criticisms you or others may have about the author’s arguments, or any weaknesses you detect.
   d. Finally, you will create a discussion question that you think could encourage discussion or debate. E.g. the relevance of this article for contemporary debates, obvious criticisms of this piece, etc. Include a brief explanation of why you are asking the question – a good discussion question is often more than one brief sentence. You may be asked to read your discussion question in class.

Learning how to do an annotated bibliography will be good preparation for this writing assignment: [http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/annotated-bibliography](http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/annotated-bibliography)

The assignment will be marked on a pass/fail basis. In order to receive the 15% you must complete all the assignments.

Sometimes you will be asked a question on one of the articles, at other times, you may be asked about a concept that is discussed in more than one of the articles, perhaps requiring you to compare two articles.

These will be open-book exercises. The primary aim is to encourage you to come to class prepared, and to improve your skills of reading, summarizing and critical analysis. I believe you will find the exercise useful in preparing you for the lecture and discussion, and more generally in helping you to focus on and retain the material in the course.

There are three possible marks, 0, 1 and 2. If the analysis is done incorrectly, or has obvious errors (if it is clear that you are not familiar with the reading, for example), you will receive zero or 1. Otherwise, you will receive full marks.

NB: In general, there are no make-up assignments – the point of this assignment is to do it in class. However, you are allowed to miss one assignment due to illness, and may use one of the non-credit assignments in its place.
See the course outlines for the dates on which you are required to do an in-class exercise. You will need to come to these classes well-prepared, having read all the readings. (See the discussion of how to do a précis and critical analysis later in this syllabus.)

2. Research Project: Paper and Presentation: (30%)
The point of this assignment is to offer you an alternative and enjoyable way of learning and being evaluated, one that allows you to connect your everyday experiences and observations with sociological theory and analysis. You are encouraged work in partnership with others in the class (although you do not have to work in a group) but you must hand in an individual record of your work.

The idea is for you to carry out your own sociological ‘study’ of some aspect of ‘the body.’ Consider yourself a researcher who is beginning a sociological study of the body, and who needs to make some initial observations, do some initial analysis, and raise some interesting questions.

Observing your own body or the bodies of others, make some observations on one or all of the following (or some variation of the following – these categories are meant to be a guide):

- bodies in social interaction
- the movement of bodies in social spaces
- work done on the body; altered bodies
- work done with the body
- representations of bodies
- social and physical limitations and restrictions on bodies
- social, political and legal regulation of bodies

You are not expected to make grand theoretical conclusions, or broad, general statements, or to do original research (although many students do make quite original observations, and describe phenomenon that no one has probably ever described before). Rather, you are being asked to

i) observe and describe a particular practice, action, event or representation, and

ii) do some tentative analysis or ask some interesting questions about what it means.

This means that you must do more than just observe, describe, and document. You should be trying to analyse the meaning of what you have observed. You should be trying to make links between your observations, and social theory. (either the theories of the body you have learned in the course or social theories and sociology research you have learned in other sociology courses or which you research for this paper)

You may explore anything about bodies that interests you – whether it is piercing or tattooing, or hair products or toothbrushing, or weightlifting or menstruation, or the way that people hold and move their bodies when they are in a bar on a Saturday night. The key is to base your paper on your own observations of the world around you, rather than on secondary library research, and to frame this with a sociological analysis.
There are two elements to this assignment:

a. **Short paper or report (30%)**
   Your paper will probably be about 5-6 pages long double-spaced, but it may be longer, with an absolute maximum of 8 pages. You may write your paper in the style of a research report, with sections such as background/introduction, method, description, analysis (these are merely suggestions), or it can be in the style of a standard academic essay. However, it should have at least a few academic references – you must place your topic and your observations in the context of existing research or theories.

b. **Short presentation 5%**
   You are also asked to do a very brief presentation of your work (5 minutes) to the rest of the class. (You will present as a group, if you are working in a group). This presentation is mandatory, but will not be graded; the idea is to have fun and share your experiences in doing your project research.

Note: Since research involving human subjects is required to undergo an ethical review process, you should tread very carefully if your research involves individuals other than yourselves. In other words, please do not undertake projects that directly require the participation of people, such as formal interviews, public surveys, etc. Stick to informal discussions and observations that do not intervene in other people’s spaces or lives. Remember to act ethically and respect people’s privacy and personal space.

3. **Final essay and presentation**
   **Presentation: 5%, pass/fail**
   **Annotated Bibliography 5%**
   **Essay: 45%**

   a. **Workshop Presentation of Essay Topic:**

   This is a brief (5-10 minute) presentation of your work in progress. Your presentation will be followed by questions, discussion and feedback from your classmates and myself. If you are not presenting, you are expected to provide suggestions and helpful critiques to your classmates.

   Think of this as an informal opportunity to workshop your paper, to get help with a work in progress. But remember that you must give us something to go on, a foundation of topic and questions so that we can help you with your thinking and research.

   Please attend your classmates’ presentations. Not only is it respectful, but it is also an excellent opportunity to learn about how to write and think better, how to write a better essay, and about how to participate in a collegial environment, including giving and receiving suggestions in respectful ways. You will also learn a great deal about how to write your essay, and a great deal more about the sociology of the body than we have been able to cover in course material.

   **Your presentation:**
   You should present the tentative thesis or argument of your paper, and perhaps suggest why this topic is important. Please prepare the tentative thesis statement, and perhaps the outline, in a form that the
rest of us can read: an overhead, powerpoint presentation, or one page handout. Also tell us about any questions or concerns you have about how to approach this topic. Do you need help with your conceptual framework? With resources? With refining your argument?

NB: You will be marked on how well and how succinctly you can summarize your topic, tell us why it is significant or important to explore, and state a tentative thesis/argument. You should be able to state your tentative thesis in a sentence or two. I am not expecting you to have all your thinking done, but I am expecting to see some evidence of thinking! So, you will get higher marks for bringing us a really rough, confused draft of a thesis and asking for help, than for presenting a long description of the topic with no thesis.

b. Annotated Bibliography for your final essay: 5%

Your annotated bibliography should include a detailed summary and discussion of a minimum of 4 key sources. Three of these sources must be ‘academic’ – i.e. scholarly journal articles or scholarly books. The rest may be from any other source – magazines, newspapers, blogs, fiction, film, etc.


There are many other sources out there that will help you learn how to do an annotated bibliography.

c. Major essay (50%)

Write a major essay no greater than 10 pages in length.

You may choose any topic of interest to you, as long as it is relevant to the themes and analytical approach of the course. You may choose a topic we have already covered in class, but which you which to pursue in greater depth. If you are uncertain about your topic, please consult me.

Here are some suggested topics to spark your thinking. Your own essay will probably need to be focussed on specific questions or concerns within these general topics:
The Racialized body, Eugenics and Racism, Transgendered bodies, Sex and the body, The Dancing Body, Emotions and the Body, Disabled Bodies, Working Bodies, Migrating Bodies, Sporting Bodies/Active Bodies, Meditation, Yoga, Eating Bodies, Food and the Body, Aging Bodies, Body image, Altered bodies, Medicalization of the body, Reproduction, Illness and Death, etc……

Alternatively, you could approach this essay as an exploration of social theories about the body, rather than an analysis of a specific area within sociology of the body.

Whichever topic you choose, you must draw on the themes and/or theoretical direction of this course. In other words, there are many ways one may write a paper on transnational migration, or on sport, but your paper must be framed by sociology of the body. I suggest you use the texts and lectures in the course as your guide for how to do this.

See the following pages for writing tips and evaluation criteria.
Assignment Requirements and Tips

1. I encourage all of you to refer to a writing guide, writing website or writing counsellor for guidance on constructing an analysis and thesis for your papers. You will be marked on both your writing and analytical skills.

2. LATE PAPER POLICY:
5% PER DAY, TO A MAXIMUM OF 7 DAYS. Late papers should be handed in to the sociology department, (Mac-Corry, 4th floor) so they can be date-stamped. I strongly encourage you to avoid late papers, as even a highly-graded paper will receive a poor mark if it is several days late.

Extensions will not generally be granted except under exceptional circumstances and with appropriate documentation; please organize your time accordingly. Make contingency plans, and leave yourself some extra time, in case you have technical difficulties. However, if you anticipate a serious problem, please see me.

3. Policy on medical or other emergencies:
If you are seriously ill or have another emergency that causes you to miss an exam or deadline, you must:
A. Notify me before or on the exam/due date, preferably by both e-mail and phone. Provide documentation as soon as possible.
B. If, in the case of an emergency, it is not possible to contact me immediately, you or a member of your family should notify me within a week; you also need to submit a letter of explanation with appropriate documentation.

4. REFERENCING:. All work must be referenced appropriately. This includes: paraphrased sentences, lectures, unpublished ideas and commentary, informal interviews, conversations, e-mails, visual materials, etc. All forms of plagiarism and academic dishonesty are taken seriously, including rewording someone else’s work without referencing them.

5. QUOTATIONS: Please use appropriate quotation and referencing style. For example, single space and indent long quotations. Don’t let quotations stand alone, but integrate them into your own sentences. Try not to overuse quotations.

6. Do not hesitate to use the first person in your writing, although it is not required.

7. All major assignments should be double-spaced, typed in 12 point, times roman (or other standard) font, with approximately 1” margins. The short summaries and research projects may be single-spaced. Please don’t use a dense font or narrow margins, etc., to get your paper to fit -- it makes it very difficult for me to read!

8. Please title all work, staple it and number every page. Please don’t use plastic sleeves, folders, or paper clips, as it is easier for papers to become misplaced.

9. Keep a copy of your essay and any drafts and library notes, in case you are asked to show evidence of your work, or are asked to provide another copy.

Evaluation Criteria
Your papers will be evaluated on the following:

1. - Your analytical writing skills. In particular, your paper must have a thesis statement and must state its scope. Your paper also needs to have a clear, logical organization and structure that is then based on developing that thesis or argument. Remember that clear structure, and clear development of your thesis, will also depend on clear paragraph and sentence structure. Please take this seriously. I urge you all to refer to a writing guide.

2. a) - Your ability to construct a precise, intelligent and relevant thesis and to b) support it with evidence from your readings, course material and elsewhere.

3. - Your understanding and application of the material and themes of the course

Remember: opinion is not the same as analysis. Remember too that analysis does not automatically require negative criticism or outright dismissal of other people’s work.

4. - Where relevant, your ability to link your analysis to your own observations and experience in an insightful and relevant way. [This does not mean that personal stories are necessary, only that, if appropriate, you may draw on your own knowledge and observations of the issue, or your own connections to the topic – but that these must also be clearly linked to your analysis].
In-class writing assignments:
How to take notes and prepare to write a short précis and critical analysis

1. Read the article carefully, highlighting or making notes as you go.

2. As you make notes, remark on the following:
   a. The central thesis of the article
   b. The ways in which the author demonstrates her thesis; the author’s key arguments or points
   c. Theoretical approach or framework – how does the author make his key arguments? What assumptions does the author make?
   d. Significance of the article: What contributions or innovations does it make? How is it useful in understanding the field or topic? How does it compare, differ, draw on, the work of others in the field?
   e. Gaps, inconsistencies in the author’s argument or evidence, areas which are not discussed.
   f. What questions does the article raise for you?

Except for the thesis and key points, you do not have to cover all of the above in your short précis; use these instructions as a guide.

Remember, critical does not mean negative, analysis does not mean opinion, and review does not mean writing about whether you like or dislike the article. Whether you agree or disagree with the writer is not the issue here.

Also, focus of the article itself, and on what the author says, rather on than the general topic of the article.