

Fall 2015
920:570:01
M 4:10-6:50

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Sociology of the Body

The body is at once material and symbolic, an object of regulation and control and a site of contentious political struggle. It exists at the intersection of multiple discourses (e.g., occupational, reproductive, technoscientific, feminist, leisure, sport, and sexual). In this seminar, we will draw on an interdisciplinary literature and use a range of theoretical traditions to consider ways in which the body is constituted by these discourses. For example, what is “natural” about the body? How are distinctions made between the normal and the pathological? Are bodies subordinate to the mind? How are bodies commodified? How are bodies categorized and constituted by discourses of race, class, gender and sexuality?

Learning Goals

Students will

- Be versed in a wide range of theory and research in the sociology of the body
- Critically assess how the body is shaped and produced through social, political, economic and cultural forces on a macro, meso and micro level.
- Bring research on the body to bear on other areas of sociology
- Conduct original, theoretically engaged research in the area of the body.
- Practice the skills needed to enter the sociological profession as accomplished scholars and teachers engaged in knowledge production and critical intervention in academic, policy and/or public arenas.

Course Logistics

Students must fulfill the following requirements:

- 1) This is a seminar course. Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to show up to every class having read all required material. The quality of our discussions depends on your full participation.
- 2) Over the course of the semester, each student will be expected to write a 1-2 single space page memo responding to each week’s readings. These comments will be uploaded to the appropriate folder on sakai by noon on Monday, so that everyone has time to read each other’s comments by class. Comments may be informal, but they must be a *critical* response. Memos will be graded as check/check plus/check minus (which will be translated in a number: 0, 1, 2, or 3). You can take three exemptions from writing these memos. Please let me know by email if you choose to take an exemption.

These memos should help you focus your ideas in a way that can contribute to our collective conversation during class time. In general, each memo should include: a) a

brief summary of the main idea of the readings and how these claims were supported; b) a synthetic analysis of some dimension of the course readings that you found compelling and warrants further discussion; and c) two to three well-crafted questions for the class to consider as a group. These memos ought to compare readings within that particular week, but you may also bring compare that week's readings to themes and theories discussed earlier in the semester. This is also a good opportunity to raise questions and concerns about the substance of the readings. Finally, these memos are a great opportunity to develop a killer set of notes.

3) Participate in class! This is a seminar and each of you are expected to contribute to the discussion. Part of participation includes helping me lead at least one weekly class discussion for a single article assigned that week. Sign-up sheets will be passed around during the first week of class. As a codiscussant, your job is to introduce critically the material and to come up with a few (3-5) substantive questions in the form of a one-page handout (to be electronically distributed to the rest of the group by 12pm on the day of class) to get the discussion rolling. Such questions may target what you consider the key issue/problematic raised by the author(s) in question, a shortcoming in the argument/evidence, a puzzling claim, broader implications, exciting/provocative comparisons, and so forth. You will meet with me 10 minutes before class to go over our approach to discussion for the day.

Note on computer use: I understand that many of you read the articles electronically and like to take notes on your computer. However, there is a ton of research that demonstrates that note-taking by hand is far more useful. In addition, it is very distracting when students are surfing the Internet, IM'ing or otherwise not participating during class. I will allow laptop use, but I reserve the right to change my mind and I urge you to use your computers sparingly.

Class participation is worth 25% of your grade.

4) Students taking the course for credit are expected to submit a 17-20 page paper on a topic related to this course. The paper can be analytical, critically reflecting on a substantive issue related to the sociology of the body or you may choose to write a research proposal, drawing on theoretical perspectives and existing empirical work to identify an interesting and, as of yet, unsolved empirical question.

Your topic must be approved in advance. Approval will be granted via a 2-3 page memo that describes your project, complete with a brief bibliography by **October 14th**. At that time, please make an appointment with me, so that we can discuss the paper in greater detail. Of course, I'm happy to discuss this with you in advance. **Final paper is due on December 16th**. Late papers are strongly discouraged.

5) Students will present their research in progress in class on December 9th. These presentations are both an opportunity to share your work with the class and to receive feedback on your project.

Grade Allocation

Class participation 25%

Memos 25%

Presentation 10%

Final Paper 40%

Required Texts

Available at the Rutgers University Bookstore

Rene Almeling. 2011. *Sex Cells: The Medical Market for Eggs and Sperm*. University of California Press.

Khiara Bridges. 2011. *Reproducing Race: An Ethnography of Pregnancy as a Site of Racialization*. University of California Press

Alice Dreger. 2004. *One of Us: Conjoined Twins and the Future of the Normal*. Harvard University Press.

Arthur Frank. 2013. *The Wounded Storyteller*. University of Chicago Press. Second edition.

Asia Friedman. 2013. *Blinded to Sameness: Sexpectations and the Social Construction of Male and Female Bodies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Adriana Petryna. 2013. *Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl*. Princeton University Press.

All other readings are available on sakai.

Diversity Statement

The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances.

Course Schedule

Week One: Monday, September 8th

Bringing in the Body

Chris Shilling. 2007. Sociology and the Body: Classical Traditions and New Agendas. *Sociological Review*. 55(1). 1-18.

Week Two: Monday, September 14th

Phenomenology and the Lived Body

Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*. Selections.

Iris Marion Young, "Throwing Like a Girl." *On Female Body Experience: Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays*.

S. Kay Toombs. 1995. "The Lived Experience of Disability." *Human Studies*. 18, 1: 9-23.

Elizabeth Grosz. 1994. "Lived Bodies" in *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Pp.86-111.

Recommended:

Nick Crossley, Merleau-Ponty, the Elusive Body and Carnal Sociology. *Body & Society*. vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 43-63, Mar 1995

Drew Leder. 1990. *The Absent Body*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Week Three: Monday, September 21st

Habitus and the Social Body

Marcel Mauss. 1935/1973. "Techniques of the Body." *Economy and Society* 2: 70-88.

Pierre Bourdieu. 1984. The Habitus and the Space of Lifestyles in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*.

Matthew Desmond. 2006. Becoming a Firefighter. *Ethnography*. 7(4). 387-421.

Maxine Leeds Craig. 2013. Sorry I Don't Dance: Why Men Refuse to Move. Chapter 6 "Home Schooling."

Recommended:

Loic Wacquant. 1995. Pugs at Work: Bodily Capital and Bodily Labor Among Professional Boxers. *Body and Society* 1-1 (March): 65-94.

Week Four: Monday, September 28th

Normal & Pathological

Foucault, Michel. 1984. "Docile Bodies," in *The Foucault Reader*. Edited by Paul Rabinow. New York: Pantheon, pp. 179-213.

Margaret Shildrik. 2005. "Unreformed Bodies: Normative Anxiety and the Denial of Pleasure." *Women's Studies*. 34: 327-244.

Alice Dreger. 2004. *One of Us: Conjoined Twins and the Future of the Normal*. Harvard University Press. Chapters 1-3, 5

Recommended:

“The Means of Correct Training,” and “Panopticism,” in *The Foucault Reader*. Edited by Paul Rabinow. New York: Pantheon, pp. 179-213.

Week Five: Monday, October 5th

Medicalization

Peter Conrad. 2007. “The Shifting Engines of Medicalization.” In *The Medicalization of Society*.

Jennifer R. Fishman. 2004. Manufacturing Desire: The Commodification of Female Sexual Dysfunction. *Social Studies of Science*. 34(2): 187-218.

Jeremy A. Greene. 2005. “Releasing the Flood Waters: Diuril and the Reshaping of Hypertension.” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*. 79: 749-794.

Kristen Barker. 2008. “Electronic Support Groups, Patient-Consumers, and Medicalization: The Case of Contested Illness.” *Journal of Health & Social Behavior*. 49: 20-36.

Recommended:

Adele Clarke, Janet Shim, Laura Mamo, Jennifer Ruth Fosket, and Jennifer Fishman. 2003. “Biomedicalization: Technoscientific Transformation of Health, Illness and US Biomedicine.” *American Sociological Review*. 68(2): 161-194.

Nikolas Rose. 2001. “The Politics of Life Itself.” *Theory, Culture & Society*. 18(1). 1-30.

Week Six: Monday, October 12th

Are Bodies There? Theorizing the biosocial

Ian Hacking. 1986. “Making Up People.” Reproduced in *Beyond the Body Proper*, edited by Margaret Lock and Judith Farquhar.

Judith Butler. 1993. “Bodies That Matter.” Reproduced in *Beyond the Body Proper*, edited by Margaret Lock and Judith Farquhar.

Bruno Latour. 1999. “Do You Believe in Reality?” Reproduced in *Beyond the Body Proper*, edited by Margaret Lock and Judith Farquhar.

Michel Foucault. “Truth and Power.” *The Foucault Reader*. Paul Rabinow, editor.

Anne Fausto-Sterling. 2005. “The Bare Bones of Sex.” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. 30(2). Pp. 1491-1527.

Week Seven: Monday, October 19th

The Social Construction of Sex

Guest Speaker: Asia Friedman

Asia Friedman, Blind to Sameness: Sexpectations and the Social Construction of Male and Female Bodies

Recommended:

Anne Fausto-Sterling. 2000. *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*. Basic Books.

Londa Schiebinger, 1986. "Skeletons in the Closet: The First Illustrations of the Female Skeleton in Eighteenth-Century Anatomy." *Representations*. (14), pp. 42-82.

Week Eight: Monday, October 26th

Racialized reproduction

Khiara Bridges. 2011. *Reproducing Race: An Ethnography of Pregnancy as a Site of Racialization*. University of California Press. *Selections TBD*.

Recommended:

Dorothy Roberts. 1998. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. Vintage.

Week Nine: Monday, November 2nd

Somaticization: Do Bodies Speak?

Arthur Frank. 2013. *The Wounded Storyteller*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1,2, 4,5, 6 and 7, plus pp. 56-64.

Week Ten: Monday, November 9th

Technologies and the Body

Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century", in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women*: 149-81.

Sarah S. Jain, 1999, "The Prosthetic Imagination: Enabling and Disabling the Prosthesis Trope" *Body & Society*. 24(1). 31-54.

Laura Mamo, 2007, "Negotiating Conception: Lesbians' Hybrid-Technological Practices", *Science, Technology and Human Values* 32: 369-93

Vivian Sobchack. 2006. "A Leg to Stand On: Prosthetics, Metaphor and Materiality." *The Prosthetic Imagination: From a Posthuman Present to a Biocultural Future*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Week Eleven: Monday, November 16th

Commodifying Bodies

Guest speaker: Rene Almeling

Rene Almeling. 2011. *Sex Cells: The Medical Market for Eggs and Sperm*. University of California Press. *Selections*.

Week Twelve: Monday, November 23rd

***Should we reschedule?**

Biological Citizenship

Michel Foucault, Part IV, *History of Sexuality*. vol. 1

Adriana Petryna. 2002. *Life Exposed: Biological Citizens after Chernobyl*. Princeton University Press. *Selections*.

Recommended:

Nikolas Rose. 2007. "Biological Citizenship" in *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century*. Princeton University Press.

Week Thirteen: Monday, November 30th

Embodied Fieldwork

Judith Okely. 2007. Fieldwork Embodied, *Sociological Review*. 55(s1). 65-79.

Joanna Kempner. 2014. *Not Tonight: Migraine and the Politics of Gender and Health*. Chicago. Preface.

Kris Paap. 2006. *Working Construction: Why Working Class Men Put Themselves And the Labor Movement In Harm's Way*. Cornell University Press. Appendix.

Seth Holmes. 2013. *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*: University of California Press. Chapters 1 and 2.

Recommended:

Jennifer A. Reich. 2003. "Pregnant with Possibility: Reflections on Embodiment, Access, and Inclusion in Field Research." *Qualitative Sociology*. 26: 351-367.

Jean E. Jackson. "I Am A Fieldnote': Fieldnotes as a Symbol of Professional Identity." *Fieldnotes: The Making of Anthropology*. Ithaca. Cornell University Press. Pp. 3-33.

Week Fourteen: Monday , December 7th

Presentations

Final paper due on December 16th.