Anthropological Perspectives on the Human Body
Ant M234T/Psy M282
Fall, 2009 Thu 12-2:50PM
310 Haines Hall
Professor Carole H. Browner, Hanna Garth, Hannah Reiss

Contact information

Email is usually the best way to get in touch: browner@ucla.edu; hanna.garth@gmail.com; hannah.reiss@gmail.com.

Browner office locations: C8-151 Semel/304 HH; tels: 310/794-6299 (Semel) 310/206-7899 (Haines); 949/370-7075 (mobile). Office hrs: Mon 2-3 in Haines and by appt.

Course Description

This seminar explores the ways that socio-cultural and political economic dynamics shape perceptions of and understandings about the human body and how, reciprocally, those perceptions and understandings influence social processes. Course materials come from non-Western and Western societies. Topics include: how social, cultural and political processes influence the multiplicity of ways we perceive our own bodies and those of others; body metaphors, narratives, and discourses; the body and the state, especially state-sponsored violence; reproduction; ingestion; bodily experience of illness and disability; and how sickness and disability challenge and alter perceptions of the body among those affected, those around them and the society at large. Of particular interest will be the dialectical nature of the diverse ways that human bodies are shaped, acted upon, and controlled and the nature of and sources of resistance.

Requirements

1. Class sessions will consist of group discussion based on the assigned readings, which are posted on the password-protected class website: http://classes.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/09F-ANTHROM234T-1. You are required to attend each class having read the assigned readings and ready to discuss them. Please bring to class a one to two paragraph abstract of each selection (alternately, you may want to write a short synthesizing commentary of the week’s selections). The abstracts will not be graded nor circulated among seminar participants, but they are to be handed in at the end of each class and will count toward your final grade.

The abstract should include a succinct statement of the content of the reading, the questions it raised for you, and issues you would like discussed; you may comment critically on the readings if you choose. You may want to include in the abstract your thoughts on how the reading relates to research you’ve done,
other interests you have, or other readings for the course. The length of each abstract will likely vary according to how engaging you found the selection. Please also rate each reading on a scale of A - F on two criteria: how much you learned from the selection; how much you enjoyed reading it.

2. You are expected to choose a topic and week that relates to your own research. At the beginning of class that day, you will be asked to spend 10-15 minutes describing your research as it relates to the week's topic and readings, discussing how the readings were (or were not) relevant and helpful for your work, and then generally helping move along the broader discussion. You will not be responsible for facilitating the entire class meeting, and your introductory comments are not to be a summary of the readings. Instead this is an opportunity for you to bring your own data and larger research interests to the group and benefit from our feedback. We will make a preliminary plan for topic and week assignments during the first class meeting.

3. You are required to submit a **20-25-page written assignment** dervied from some of the broad issues that orient the seminar. You may choose to write a paper based on field research, bibliographic work or some combination, or you may submit a draft of a research proposal or Ph.D. qualifying exam.

   Your paper should be typed, double spaced, and **have left and right margins of at least 1"**. It should be proofread and corrected prior to submission and submitted **both on paper and by email attachment**. Please use the style guide of the American Anthropologist or the Medical Anthropology Quarterly for footnotes and references.

   Please submit a one-paragraph description of your paper topic by **October 15**. Papers are due at noon on **December 3** by email **and in Carole’s Haines mailbox**. She will be happy to review and comment upon your paper's first draft, if you submit it no later than **November 17** (email attachment is fine).

4. Each week please bring to each class one item you've come across during the previous week (in a newspaper, on the internet, movies, TV, another class, etc.) that says something interesting to you about bodies in culture and society.

   **No class November 26 (Thanksgiving) and December 3 (AAA Meetings).**

5. **Grading**
   
   | Abstracts and class discussion | 50% |
   | Term paper                     | 50% |

   **An Incomplete (I) will be given only under exceptional circumstances. Late papers will be downgraded.**
SYLLABUS

SEPT 24  WEEK 1: COURSE INTRODUCTION: Introduction, orientation to basic concepts, readings, course requirements, instructor and student, expectations, paper topics, etc.

OCT 1  WEEK 2: THEORIES OF THE BODY

Mauss, Marcel

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice

Jackson, Michael

Schepker-Hughes, Nancy and Margaret M. Lock

Csordas, Thomas J.

Sharp, Leslie

OCT 8  WEEK 3: THE BODY: REPRODUCTION, REPRODUCTIVE RELATIONS

Browner, Carole and Carolyn F. Sargent
Sawicki, Jana

Martin, Emily

Moore, Lisa Jean

Gutman, Matthew

Ikemoto, Lisa C.

Fleuriet, K. Jill
2009 La Tecnología y Las Monjitas: Constellations of Authoritative Knowledge at a Religious Birthing Center in South Texas. Medical Anthropology Quarterly 23 (3): 212-234.

OCT 15 WEEK 4: TOWARD PERFECT BODIES: Prenatal and Postnatal Imperatives
Mara Buchbinder, Facilitator

Buchbinder, Mara and Stefan Timmermans

Landsman, Gail
Ivry, Tsipy  
2009  The Ultrasonic Picture Show and the Politics of Threatened Life: Medical Anthropology Quarterly 23: 189-211.

Samerski, Silja  

Browner, Carole  

Bumiller, Kristin  

**OCT 22  Week 5: CONTROLLING BODIES: BODY PRESENTATION, MODIFICATION**

McDade, Thomas  

Mamo, Laura and Jennifer Ruth Fosket  

Kaw, Eugenia  

Navarro, Mireya  

Saint Louis, Catherine  
Weiss, Meira

Jacobson, Yehuda and Diana Luzzatto

OCT 29  WEEK 6: CONTROLLING BODIES: BODIES AND INGESTION
Hanna Garth, Facilitator

Ohnuki-Tierney, E.

Pollan, Michael

Sobo, Elisa J.

Campos, Paul; Abigail Saguy; Paul Ernsberger; Eric Oliver; and Glenn Gaesser

Lester, Rebecca

Benson, Peter
NOV 5  WEEK 7: CONTROLLING BODIES: BODIES AND SOCIAL DISORDER
Hannah Reiss, facilitator

Rose, Nikolas and Carlos Novas

Ong, Aihwa

Kroeger, Karen A.

Kligman, Gail

Pedersen, Susan

Price, Janet and Margrit Schildrick

NOV 12  WEEK 8: CONTROLLING BODIES: STATE VIOLENCE
Rebekah Park, facilitator

James, Erical Caple
Moon, Claire  

Olujic, Maria B.  

Orozco-Suarez, Marcelo M.  

Perelli, Carina  

**NOV 19  WEEK 9: WEARING BODIES DOWN: WORK AND THE BODY**

Lock, Margaret and Judith Farquhar  

Thompson, E. P.  

Wacquant, Loïc  

Mole, Noelle  
Bilefsky, Dan

Schneider, Suzanne D.

NOV 26  NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING

DEC 3  NO CLASS: AAA MEETINGS