

“The Minded Body”:
Theoretical and Empirical Explorations
Fall, 2002

Wednesdays, 2-4
Science Center 226
Instructor: Anne Harrington
(tel: 6-5234; email: aharring@fas.harvard.edu)

Limited to 10 students

“There's so much written about the body," she groans, "... And in so much of it, the body dissolves into language. The body that eats, that works, that dies, that is afraid--that body just isn't there.”

--from Caroline Bynum, “Why all the fuss about the body?” *Critical Inquiry* (Fall 1995)

Twenty years ago, almost no one in the humanities paid particular attention to the body. Now “the body is everywhere,”¹

But do many or most of the current dominant approaches to the body in fact do justice to the body as something fleshly and alive – as an entity that “eats, works, dies, and is afraid?” If not – or at least, not often enough -- what would it mean to do historical scholarship that did do fuller justice to the demands (and do we know what they are?) of real bodies as they manifest themselves across time and space?

This graduate seminar is an invitation to explore these questions. Collaborative in style, we will refine our plan of reading together, and small groups of students will take turns leading discussions on specific works. In the final four weeks of this course, we will transform the seminar into a research workshop. During that time, students will develop and orally present research projects (due in final form after Christmas break); read key source articles assigned by their peers in advance of specific presentations; and participate in critical discussions of their own and others’ projects.

A tentative plan for the semester follows:

¹ Sue V. Rosser, “Now the Body is Everywhere,” [review essay] *NWSA Journal* 12.2 (2001): 142-148.

Week 1 (September 18): Orientations

Bynum, Caroline W., "Why All the Fuss about the Body?" *Critical Inquiry* 22 (1995), 1-33 (excerpt: handed out in class).

Weeks 2 and 3 (Sept 25-Oct 2):

So What Kind of Body is "Everywhere"? A Critical Review of Two Decades of Trends

- Foucault, Michel, selections from *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow: "The Body of the Condemned," "Docile Bodies," "We 'Other Victorians,'" "The Repressive Hypothesis."
- Culiani, Ioan P., "A Corpus for the Body [essay review]," *The Journal of Modern History* 63 (1) March, 1991, pp. 61-80.
- Vila, Anne C., "The Making of the Modern Body" [essay review], *Modern Language Notes* 104 (4) September 1989, 927-936.
- Roy Porter, "History of the Body" in Peter Burke, *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, pp. 206-232
- Selections from Feher, M (ed), *Fragments for a History of the Human Body* vol. 3 (Zone Books, 1989)
- *Internet search* (using Google.com) for on-line course syllabi at other universities dealing with "body criticism," "the history of the body," "the body in American culture," etc. at other universities – follow up on sources, as deemed relevant.

Week 4 (October 9):

Can we get from a "History of the Body" to a "History of Embodiment"?

- Reiss, Tim, 'Denying the Body? Memory and the dilemmas of history in Descartes', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 57 (1996), 587-607.
- Duden, Barbara, *The Woman Beneath the Skin* (Harvard UP, 1991), ch.1 "Toward a History of the Body."
Lock, Margaret, "Cultivating the Body: Anthropology and Epistemologies of
- Bodily Practice and Knowledge," *Annual review of Anthropology* 22 (1993), 133-155.

- Csordas, Thomas J., “Introduction: the body as representation and being-in-the-world,” *Embodiment and Experience*, ed. T. Csordas. Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Harrington, Anne, “Introduction,” *Stories under the Skin: Body and Culture in Mind-Body Medicine* (draft: to be published by W.W. Norton)

Weeks 5-9 (Oct. 16-Nov. 13): Case studies

**Note: reviews, counter-arguments, and background readings will be added each week, as needed*

Case study #1: *The Pre-Modern Body*

- Bynum, Caroline Walker. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: the religious significance of food to medieval women*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.
- Duden, Barbara, *The Woman Beneath the Skin* (Harvard UP, 1991) – finish book
- Biddick, Kathleen, “Gender, Borders, Bodies, *Speculum* 68 (2), April, 1993, 389-418.

Case-study #2: *The Non-Western Body*

- Kuriyama Shigehisa, *The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine* (New York: Zone Books, 1999)
- Lock, Margaret, *Encounters with Aging: Mythologies of menopause in Japan and North America*: Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

Case-study #3: *Healing the Body in Time and Space*

- Katz, Richard, *Boiling Energy: Community Healing among the Kalahari Kung*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.
- Harrington, Anne, “The Power of Suggestion,” from *Stories under the Skin* (draft)
- Spanos, Nicholas P. and Jack Gottlieb, “Demonic Possession, Mesmerism, and Hysteria: A Social Psychological Perspective on

Their Historical Interrelations.” *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 88 (5) 1979, pp. 527-546

Case-study #4: ***The Body in Extremis: Pain, Torture, Dying***

- Morris, David B. *The Culture of Pain*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
- Scarry, Elaine, *The Body in Pain: the Making and Unmaking of the World* (Oxford University Press, 1985), excerpts
- Phillips, David P, "Postponement of death until symbolically meaningful occasions," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 263:1947-1951, April 11, 1990
- Harrington, Anne, “Death and Dying in the Worlds of Mind-Body Medicine: Insights, Silences, New Questions” *lecture, Harvard CME course* (December 12-14, 1998)

Case-study # 5: ***The Body that Remembers***

- Hacking, Ian, “Memoro-Politics, Trauma, and the Soul,” from *Rewriting the Soul: Multiple Personality and the Sciences of Memory* (Princeton University Press, 1995).
- Micale, Mark and Paul Lerner, eds. *Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry, and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870–1930* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), selections
- Leys, Ruth, “Traumatic Cures: Shell Shock, Janet, and the Question of Memory,” *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory*, ed. Paul Antze and M. Lambeck (Routledge, 1996) pp. 103-145.
- Harrington, Anne, “The Honest Body,” from *Stories under the Skin* (draft)

Weeks 10-14 (Nov. 20-Dec. 18): Research Workshop

Note: The exact structure and rhythm of meeting during this time period remains to be worked out. You can safely assume, however, that class will not meet in Week 11 (Thanksgiving week). Instead, written 2-3 page proposals for research projects (with preliminary bibliography) will be due that week (no later than 5pm on Wednesday, November 26). The final research paper for this course will be due on January 17, 2002