



CUL 322

Ab/Normal Bodies

MQC3 Day 2014

Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Lara Palombo

Lara.Palombo@mq.edu.au

Contact via Lara.Palombo@mq.edu.au

Before or after class

Moderator

Nicole Matthews

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp or admission to GDipArts

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Our bodies give us a world, and already have meaning, both for ourselves and others. We are directed at every level to align our bodies with cultural norms – but what about modes of embodiment that don't conform to what we generally understand as 'normal'? Underpinning our understanding of our bodies is the politics of normativity, and in this course, we seek to explore a range of modes of bodily being that challenge the boundaries of the 'normative'. The aim of this unit is to critically examine the ways in which various forms of (ab)normal embodiment are understood in contemporary culture and to explore the social, political and ethical effects of such understandings. Our critical examination may cover disability, fatness, surgical interventions and other forms of body modification.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

identify the ways in which 'the body' is understood and experienced across a range of contexts

interrogate key concepts around 'the body' and normalising practices, showing an awareness of debates around definitions of these terms

offer a theoretically-informed account of the relationship between forms of knowledge and forms of embodied subjectivity and sociality

use key methods of critical analysis to discuss social, economic, legal and/or medical practices which focus on bodily-being

critically discuss ethics in contemporary practices and debates around normalisation of 'the body'

reflect on their own work, in relation to the work and input of others, as a way of further developing their learning

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Take-home exam</u>	20%	8.30 am Wednesday week 6
<u>Reflective summaries</u>	10%	tutorials of weeks 3,4,7,8,9
<u>Essay outline</u>	20%	8.30 am Wednesday of Week 10
<u>Participation</u>	10%	Ongoing
<u>Final essay</u>	40%	Monday February 16, 4.30 p.m

Take-home exam

Due: **8.30 am Wednesday week 6**

Weighting: **20%**

This is a short answer exam with four questions relating to key concepts and readings introduced in Weeks 1-4. The exam paper will be distributed on Monday of Week 5.

Students are required to submit the exam paper in Hard Copy and in Turnitin by Wednesday of Week 6, at 8.30 am in tutorial class. Papers won't be marked if they have not been submitted in hard copy and in Turnitin by due time. This is an Exam paper and any exams received after due date will be failed. Students will need to apply for Disruption of Studies to avoid an automatic Fail.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- identify the ways in which 'the body' is understood and experienced across a range of contexts
- interrogate key concepts around 'the body' and normalising practices, showing an

awareness of debates around definitions of these terms

- use key methods of critical analysis to discuss social, economic, legal and/or medical practices which focus on bodily-being

Reflective summaries

Due: **tutorials of weeks 3,4,7,8,9**

Weighting: **10%**

Students will be required to submit and discuss five short reflections on weekly readings.

Reflections must be submitted and discussed in class in weeks 3, 4, 7, 8, 9. These will cover the topic/readings introduced in the lecture of the previous week so in week 3 students will be discussing topic/readings of lecture from week two and in week 4 will cover topic/readings of lecture from week 3 and so on. Reflections should be between 200 and 300 words in length, and should summarise key ideas from the weekly reading. Students will need to discuss their reflections in class.

The aim of this exercise is to ensure that students read and engage and share their understanding of the set readings in class so that they develop a scholarly understanding of issue and debates, and that class discussion is informed and productive. Consequently reflections won't be accepted after due date, unless a student presents a medical certificate.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- reflect on their own work, in relation to the work and input of others, as a way of further developing their learning

Essay outline

Due: **8.30 am Wednesday of Week 10**

Weighting: **20%**

This outline should be no longer than 500 words. It should clearly outline the question or problem to be discussed, line of argument or position, key theoretical perspectives to be used, and the case study or cultural practice which will be the focus of your essay. Your outline should

map out the introduction, key points of your argument and related readings. A sample of the essay plan format will be distributed in class.

The outline will need to include a bibliography no less than five sources which you plan to use in your essay. Student must use in-text referencing.

The outline is due in Hard Copy and Turnitin by 8.30 am of week 10, in tutorial class. Late papers will receive a 10% penalty per day and after seven days they wont be marked and receive a Zero/ Fail.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- use key methods of critical analysis to discuss social, economic, legal and/or medical practices which focus on bodily-being
- reflect on their own work, in relation to the work and input of others, as a way of further developing their learning

Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **10%**

All students are expected to attend, come prepared and participate in class discussions. Your grade will depend on the quantity and quality of participation.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Final essay

Due: **Monday February 16, 4.30 p.m**

Weighting: **40%**

Length: 3,000 words. Essay questions will be posted on unit webpage after the holiday break.

Papers must be submitted in Hard Copy and Turnitin by 4.30 p.m. at MQC front desk, Monday 16 February. Please note that this essay is in lieu of exams so late papers won't be marked and will receive an automatic fail. Students must apply for Disruption of Studies to avoid an automatic Fail.

You will be marked on the following criteria:

- 1) effectiveness with which the essay engages with the chosen question
- 2) relevance and originality of case study materials chosen
- 3) structure: statement of aims in the introduction; organisation of material (your argument should develop in a logical manner); conclusion.
- 4) Quality of analysis; substantiation of argument.
- 5) Identification of appropriate concepts, theorists, debates etc from lectures and set readings.
- 6) Quality and scope of research and accurateness and completeness of referencing.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Delivery and Resources

This unit will use iLearn for submission of assignments, including reflections. However, attendance at lectures and tutorials is important as indicated by the 80% mandatory attendance and the participation mark set out in this course.

Lectures will be interactive. A roll will be taken in both lectures and tutorials.

Equally, reading the set texts for the week is essential for completion of the unit.

The readings for the unit will be available on eReserve.

What has changed since last year?

The range of theoretical reference points has been broadened in the 2014 iteration of this unit, with new a new lecture on The human biome and the anthropocene as part of a block focussing on intersubjectivity, emotion and space.

An additional lecture on Biopower has been added in Week Three to enable students without a strong background in cultural studies more resources to help develop more effectively develop their understanding. The reading list in Block 1 has been divided into essential and extension readings, with some changes to the essential readings, to offer students new to Cultural Studies an accessible entry point to new ideas, while enabling those with a highly developed understanding of Cultural Studies to continue to develop the theoretical sophistication of their arguments.

Unit Schedule

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We will discuss Week 1's reading in Week 2, Week 2's in Week 3 etc... This will ensure that everyone has a chance to listen to the lecture recorded in Echo before discussing the readings in the tutorial.

You **MUST** attempt the essential reading before attending class. Your preparation for and participation in tutorials will be assessed. You will probably need to read most of these articles twice – the material is challenging! If you are struggling, make a note of what confuses you and bring it to class for us to discuss.

Those who are confident with cultural studies arguments or want to aim for very high marks should read the extension reading in addition to the essential reading. We will often work through passages of the extension reading in detail in class, but it will not be assumed that everyone has read these articles beforehand.

Block 1: Creating “normal”

Week 1: Introduction to the unit

Essential reading:

- Budgeon, Shelley (2003) “Identity as an Embodied Event”, *Body & Society*, 9:1, pp.35-55.

Week 2: Biopower and perfect babies

Essential Readings:

- Perron, A., Fluet, C., Holmes, D. (2004) “Agents of care and agents of the state: bio-power and nursing practice” *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 50(5), pp.536-44
- Landsman, Gail (2009) “Chapter Two: Doing everything right: choice, control and mother blame” pp.15-49 from *Reconstructing motherhood and disability in the age of “perfect babies”*, London, Routledge

Extension reading:

- Rabinow, P. and Rose, N. (2006) "Biopower now" from *Biosocieties* 1, 195-217

Week 3: ab/normalcy

Essential readings:

- Davis, Lennard (1995) "Constructing Normalcy", in *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body*, New York: Verso
- Dreger, A. (1998) "The limits of individuality: ritual and sacrifice in the lives and medical treatment of conjoined twins" *Studies in the history and philosophy of biology and biomedical science* 29(1) 1-29

Extension reading

- Sharpe, Andrew (2007) "Structured Like a Monster: Understanding Human Difference Through a Legal Category", *Law and Critique* 18:2

Week 4: Dis/ability

Essential Readings:

- Goodley, Dan (2011) "Introduction: global disability studies" from *Disability Studies: An Interdisciplinary Introduction*, Sage, pp.1-21
- Longmore, Paul. (1997) 'Conspicuous Contribution and American Cultural Dilemma: Telethon Rituals of Cleansing and Renewal' *The Body and Physical Difference: Discourses of Disability* (eds) David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder (eds) Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 134-158

Extension reading:

- Mitchell, David and Snyder, Sharon (2001) "Re-engaging the body: disability studies and the resistance to embodiment" from *Public Culture*, Vol.13 No.3

Week 5: Exam Week

Week 6: from eugenics to genetics

Essential readings:

- Snyder, S. L. & D. Mitchell (2002) "Out of the Ashes of Eugenics: Diagnostic Regimes in the United States and the Making of a Disability Minority", *Patterns of Prejudice*, 36:1.
- Novas, Carlos and Rose, N. (2000) "Genetic Risk and the Birth of the Somatic Individual", *Economy and Society*, 29:4.

Extension reading:

- Garland-Thomson, R. (2012) "The Case for Conserving Disability" *Bioethical Inquiry* (2012) 9:339–355

Week 7: Intersex bodies

Essential Readings:

- Preves, Sharon (2002) "Sexing the Intersexed: An Analysis of Sociocultural Responses to Intersexuality", *Signs*, 27:2, pp.523-56.
- Dreger, Alice Domurat (2000) "Jarring Bodies: thoughts on the Display of Unusual Anatomies", *Perspective in Biology and Medicine*, 43:2, pp.161-72.

Block 2: The experience of embodiment: spaces, emotions and social life

Week 8: The child with intellectual disability and the 'disabled' family: stigma, personhood and identity

Essential readings:

- Goffman, E. 1963. Selections from *Stigma*. In *The Disability Studies Reader* ed. L.J. Davies. 2006. New York: Routledge.
- Kittay, E.F. 2009. The personal is philosophical is political: a philosopher and mother of a cognitively disabled person sends notes from the battlefield. *Metaphilosophy*, vol. 40, nos 3-4, pp 606-26.

Week 9: Bodies in space and time

Essential readings:

- Crook, Tim (2008) "Norms, Forms and Beds: Spatializing Sleep in Victorian Britain", *Body & Society*, 14:4, pp.15-35.
- Thompson, E.P. (1967) "Work Discipline and Industrial capitalism" *Past and Present* 38 pp.56-97

Week 10: Bodies at work

Essay proposal due for submission day

Essential readings:

- Dyer, S., McDowell, Banitzky, A. (2008) "Emotional labour/body work: the caring labours of migrants in the UK's National Health Service" from *Geoforum* 39, 2030-2038
- Collinson, David and Collinson, Margaret (1997) "'De layering managers': time-space surveillance and its gendered effects' *Organization* August 1997 vol. 4 no. 3 375-407

Week 11: The human biome and the anthropocene

Essential reading

- No author "The human biome: me, myself, us" from *The Economist* Aug 18 2012 <http://www.economist.com/node/21560523>
- Flannery, Tim "The Superior Civilisation", *New York Review of Books*, 26 February, 2009, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2009/feb/26/the-superior-civilization/?pagination=false>
- Roeder, Mark (2013) *Unnatural Selection: why the geeks will inherit the earth*, Sydney: Harper Collins Australia, 2013, "The Anthropocene" from pp. 15-29.

Week 12: Ageing bodies, bare lives?

Essential readings:

- Crichton, J. (2007) "Living with dementia: curating self identity" *Dementia*, 2007, Vol.6(3), pp.365-381
- Lanoix (2006) "No Room for abuse" *Cultural Studies* Vol. 19, No. 6 November 2005, pp. 719-736

Week 123 : Summary Lecture.

Final essay due: Monday February 16, 2014

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)

- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- identify the ways in which 'the body' is understood and experienced across a range of contexts
- interrogate key concepts around 'the body' and normalising practices, showing an awareness of debates around definitions of these terms
- offer a theoretically-informed account of the relationship between forms of knowledge and forms of embodied subjectivity and sociality
- use key methods of critical analysis to discuss social, economic, legal and/or medical practices which focus on bodily-being
- critically discuss ethics in contemporary practices and debates around normalisation of 'the body'

Assessment tasks

- Take-home exam
- Reflective summaries
- Essay outline
- Participation
- Final essay

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- identify the ways in which ‘the body’ is understood and experienced across a range of contexts
- interrogate key concepts around ‘the body’ and normalising practices, showing an awareness of debates around definitions of these terms
- offer a theoretically-informed account of the relationship between forms of knowledge and forms of embodied subjectivity and sociality
- use key methods of critical analysis to discuss social, economic, legal and/or medical practices which focus on bodily-being
- reflect on their own work, in relation to the work and input of others, as a way of further developing their learning

Assessment tasks

- Take-home exam
- Reflective summaries
- Essay outline
- Participation
- Final essay

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in

order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- identify the ways in which 'the body' is understood and experienced across a range of contexts
- interrogate key concepts around 'the body' and normalising practices, showing an awareness of debates around definitions of these terms
- offer a theoretically-informed account of the relationship between forms of knowledge and forms of embodied subjectivity and sociality
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Assessment tasks

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- Reflective summaries
- Essay outline
- Participation
- Final essay

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- interrogate key concepts around 'the body' and normalising practices, showing an awareness of debates around definitions of these terms
- offer a theoretically-informed account of the relationship between forms of knowledge and forms of embodied subjectivity and sociality

- use key methods of critical analysis to discuss social, economic, legal and/or medical practices which focus on bodily-being
- critically discuss ethics in contemporary practices and debates around normalisation of 'the body'
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Assessment tasks

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Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- critically discuss ethics in contemporary practices and debates around normalisation of 'the body'

Assessment tasks

- Reflective summaries
- Participation
- Final essay

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- critically discuss ethics in contemporary practices and debates around normalisation of 'the body'
- reflect on their own work, in relation to the work and input of others, as a way of further developing their learning

Assessment tasks

- Reflective summaries
- Participation
- Final essay