



# CUL 322

## Ab/Normal Bodies

S1 Day 2014

*Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies*

### Contents

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<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	6
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	7
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	10
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	12

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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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
<a href="#"><u>Take-home exam</u></a>	10%	midnight Wednesday April 9
<a href="#"><u>Reflective summaries</u></a>	10%	midnight Thurs Apr 10 - May 29
<a href="#"><u>Essay outline</u></a>	10%	midnight Wednesday May 14
<a href="#"><u>Participation</u></a>	20%	Ongoing
<a href="#"><u>Final essay</u></a>	50%	midnight Tuesday June 10

### Take-home exam

Due: **midnight Wednesday April 9**

Weighting: **10%**

This is a short answer exam with three questions relating to key concepts and readings introduced in Weeks 2-5. The exam paper will be distributed in Week 4, and student will be required to post their exam paper to the iLearn site by midnight Wednesday April 9 (Week 6).

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: **midnight Thurs Apr 10 - May 29**

Weighting: **10%**

Students will be required to submit, online via iLearn, at least five short reflections on weekly readings. Summaries should be submitted weekly from Week 6 and Week 11. Reflective summaries should be submitted by midnight each Thursday. Reflections should be between 200 and 350 words in length, and should summarise key ideas from the weekly reading. Reflections may also include connections between weekly readings and lectures and readings for previous weeks and comments on the relationship between readings and embodied practices or experiences.

The aim of this exercise is to ensure that students read and engage with the set readings so that they develop a scholarly understanding of issue and debates, and that class discussion is informed and productive. Consequently reflections posted after midnight on Thursday on the week the reading is set will not be assessed, unless a student presents a medical certificate.

Students may wish to post more than five reflective summaries, in which case the best five reflections will be assessed.

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
- 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

## Essay outline

Due: **midnight Wednesday May 14**

Weighting: **10%**

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 key points in your argument in the order in which you will find them. You may choose to write in bullet form or in paragraphs.

The outline should include a bibliography no less than five sources which you plan to use in your essay. You should use in-text referencing as appropriate in your outline.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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

## Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

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

Attendance in both lectures and tutorials will be recorded each week, and students who are unable for medical or family reasons to attend a particularly lecture will be required to submit 5 discussion questions relating to the material in the lecture and associated reading to an iLearn discussion forum by the Monday after the lecture they have missed.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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

## Final essay

Due: **midnight Tuesday June 10**

Weighting: **50%**

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

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:

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

## **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 participation mark.

Lectures will be interactive and class discussion in lectures is poorly recorded on iLecture, making face-to-face attendance highly valuable for students. A roll will be taken in both lectures and tutorials will be recorded.

Those who have compelling reasons for not attending a face-to-face lecture (such as illness or family responsibilities) should contact the convenor. Students who cannot attend the lecture but wish to maintain a high participation mark for the unit will be required to five discussion questions relating to the lecture and reading material for that week to a discussion board on iLearn by the Monday following the lecture they have missed.

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. Tutorials are now 90 minutes in length, giving students sufficient time to think through complex ideas and view relevant video resources in tutorial.

In 2014 attendance at face-to-face lectures will be recorded and students who choose not to attend a face-to-face lecture will be required to submit a list of 5 discussion questions to an online discussion forum on the week after the lecture takes place. The participation component for the unit has been increased to 20% to reflect this change, while the weighting of the exam has been reduced to 10%.

## Unit Schedule

### CUL322 Ab/normal bodies

The readings for each week relate to that week's lecture. For students in tutorials on Fridays, the first tute will be in Week 1. The Tuesday class will start in Week 2, and the readings for that tutorial will be for the previous week lecture (ie we will discuss Week 1's reading in Week 2, Week 2's in Week 3 etc.). There will be no tutorial in Week 12 for the Friday classes, but there will be a tutorial in Week 12 for for the Tuesday class. This will ensure that everyone has a chance to listen to the lecture before attending their 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 (wk beginning 3 Mar): Introduction to the unit

Essential reading:

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

#### Week 2 (Wk beginning 10 Mar) 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 (wk beginning 17 March): 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 (wk beginning 24 March): 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 (wk beginning 31 March): 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 6 (wk beginning 7 April): Intersex bodies

**Wednesday 9 April by 12 midnight, take-home exam due for submission via Turnitin on iLearn.**

**Reflective summary of reading due by midnight April 10**

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.

## **MID SEMESTER BREAK**

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

Week 7: (Wk beginning 28 April) The child with intellectual disability and the 'disabled' family: stigma, personhood and identity (Guest lecturer: Kathryn Knight)

**Reflective summary of reading by midnight May 1**

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 8 (Wk beginning 5 May) Bodies in space and time

**Reflective summary of reading due by midnight Thurs May 8**

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 9 (wk beginning 12 May): Bodies at work

**Essay proposal due for submission by midnight Wednesday May 14**

### **Reflective summary of reading due by midnight Thurs May 15**

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 10: The human biome and the anthropocene (Guest lecturer: Cath Simpson)

### **Reflective summary of reading due by midnight Thurs May 22**

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.

Week11 (wk beginning 27 May): Ageing bodies, bare lives?

### **Reflective summary of reading due by midnight Thurs May 29**

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

Week12 (wk beginning 2 June): Revision and writing week

There will be no lecture or Friday tutorial this week, but Nicole will be available in her office between 10 am and 2 pm for one to one meetings to discuss the essay. The Tuesday class will run as usual to discuss Week 11's readings.

**Final essay due: midnight Tuesday June 10, 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](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](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](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/](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](http://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](http://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
- 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**

- Take-home exam
- 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'
- 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

## 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