MMCC3022
Inventing Normality
Session 1, Weekday attendance, North Ryde 2020
Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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Unit guide MMCC3022 Inventing Normality

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Lecturer and tutor
Nicole Matthews
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Contact via Email
Room 165C, 10 Hadenfeld Av
Monday 11-12

Credit points
10

Prerequisites
130cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
The notion of the "normal" is surprisingly recent but has come to have a powerful role in shaping individual bodies and lives, how people interact and the ways populations are managed and organised. In this unit, we use various frameworks from media and cultural studies, gender studies, queer theory, disability studies, the environmental humanities and science and technology studies, to consider often unquestioned assumptions about what constitutes a 'normal' body. How are these norms created and, in particular, how do they shape the experiences of people who challenge them? We will consider how conceptions of normalcy are deployed and challenged in screen texts and media practices including documentaries, "selfies" in social media, self-monitoring and self-management using apps, as well as autobiographical video and film. This will allow us to explore how ideas about "normality" and "abnormality" come to form part of our everyday lives. Our critical examination may cover disability, pregnancy, fatness, ageing, work, time, relationships with non-human, surgical interventions and other forms of body modification. The aim of this unit is to think through the ways in which various forms of embodiment are understood in contemporary culture and to explore the social, political and ethical effects of these understandings.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates
Learning Outcomes
On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: analyse the ways in which 'the body' is understood and experienced across a range of contexts.
ULO2: interrogate key concepts around 'the body' and normalising practices, showing an awareness of debates around definitions of these terms.
ULO3: communicate a theoretically-informed account of the relationship between forms of knowledge and forms of embodied subjectivity and sociality.
ULO4: apply key methods of critical analysis to discuss social, economic, legal and/or medical practices which focus on bodily-being.
ULO5: communicate ethics in contemporary practices and debates around normalisation of 'the body'.

Assessment Tasks

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update
Assessment details are no longer provided here as a result of changes due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
Students should consult iLearn for revised unit information.
Find out more about the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and potential impacts on staff and students.

General Assessment Information

• Additional information
• MMCCS website https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/department_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/
• MMCCS Session Re-mark Application http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914 Information is correct at the time of publication

University standards on assessment
More information about university standards on assessment can be found at:
Practices on late submission

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Delivery and Resources

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Any references to on-campus delivery below may no longer be relevant due to COVID-19.

Please check here for updated delivery information: https://ask.mq.edu.au/account/pub/display/unit_status

This unit will use iLearn for submission of assignments, including reflections. However, attendance at lectures and tutorials is highly valued. Educational research has repeatedly demonstrated that attendance at class correlates closely with grades. Lectures in this unit are interactive - we will be discussing ideas, analysing materials and brainstorming in the lecture and these kinds of class discussions in lectures are poorly recorded on iLecture, making face-to-face attendance highly valuable for students. I also really enjoy the opportunity to hear your ideas and experiences so please do attend!

Reading the set texts for the week is essential for completion of the unit. Reflective summaries of key readings must be submitted on-line BEFORE that week's lecture and tutorials. These summaries are not expected to be written beautifully or show an in depth understanding of the reading - they just need to be completed in a timely way on the appropriate two readings. The main purpose of the summaries is to prepare you for discussions in tutorials - if you don't understand everything in the reading when you write the summary that's fine!

The final reflection, due in Week 13, will require you to describe three moments across the course of the semester where your understanding of a reading changed after participating in a lecture or a tutorial. Your summaries will be a great resource for this reflection, but obviously to reflect on your experiences in class you need to come along!

The readings for the unit will be available in electronic format in the library. The link to Leganto in iLearn will take you directly to the readings. Please let me know if there are any problems with availability.

Suggestions for further readings are offered for most weeks, to enable deeper reading on the topic for those who are passionately interested, or are writing an essay or putting together an autobiographical reflection on that theme. These are just the starting point for your further reading.

PLEASE do use the library as a resource for your essays as well as for the weekly readings. Millions are spent purchasing subscriptions to the academic journals and databases held there - they cover much more territory than Google Scholar or other publicly available databases. If you
struggle to find appropriate material, please get in contact with Nicole or speak to the staff at the library.

**Unit Schedule**

**Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update**

The unit schedule/topics and any references to on-campus delivery below may no longer be relevant due to COVID-19. Please consult iLearn for latest details, and check here for updated delivery information: [https://ask.mq.edu.au/account/pub/display/unit_status](https://ask.mq.edu.au/account/pub/display/unit_status)

**CUL3022 Inventing normality**

**Block 1: Creating “normal”**

**Week 1 Introduction to the unit**

- * Urla, Jacqueline and Terry, Jennifer (1995) "Introduction: Mapping Embodied Deviance" (exerpts) from *Deviant Bodies*, Indiana University Press

Note that there WILL be a tutorial in Week 1

**Week 2 Biopower and perfect babies**


**Extension reading**


**Weekly reading summaries begin this week**

**Week 3 Ab/normalcy**
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Extension reading
- Samuels, Ellen (2011) examining Christine and Millie McKoy: Where Enslavement and Enfreakment Meet, Signs 37(1), pp.53-81

Week 4: (Inter)sexed bodies


Further reading

Week 5: dis/ability

- Garland-Thompson, Rosemarie (2011) “Misfits: a feminist materialist disability concept” Hypatia vol. 26, no. 3

Further reading
- Finger, Anne (2005) “Writing disabled lives: beyond the singular” PMLA Conference on Disability Studies and the University 610-615
- Goodley, Dan (2011) “Introduction: global disability studies” from Disability Studies: An Interdisciplinary Introduction, Sage, pp.1-21
- Siebers, Tobin 2008 “Body Theory” in Disability Theory 53-69

Week 6: from eugenics to genetics


Further reading

• Eve Kittay (2009) “The personal is philosophical is political: a philosopher and mother of a cognitively disabled person sends notes from the battlefield” from Metaphilosophy, 40(3-4) 606-627

Essay plan due this week

Week 7: No lecture, tutorials or readings.

Instead there will be one to one consultations on essays. Timetable of meetings to be circulated in Week 5 and 6. Not all meetings will take place in normal class time.

MID SEMESTER BREAK

Block 2: “Normal” lives

Week 8 Working bodies
Thompson, E.P. (1967) “Work Discipline and Industrial capitalism” *Past and Present* 38 pp.56-97


Further reading

- 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
- Mitchell, David and Sharon Snyder (2016) “Disability as multitude: reworking non-productive labor power” pp.204-222 from *The Biopolitics of Disability*, University of Michigan

Case study essay due this week

**Week 9  Active and debilitated bodies**


Further reading

- **Shildrick, Margrit (2015)** “Living on; not getting better” *feminist review* 111 2015
- **Puar, Jasbir (2017)** “The Right to Maim, ix - xxiv

**Week 10  Ageing bodies**


Further reading

- **Morten Hillgaard Bulow and Marie-Louise Holm (2016)** “Queering ‘Successful Ageing’,
Week 11 Biomediation: bodies, technologies and normalcies

- Belser, Julia Watts (2016)

Week 12 Life on us: waste and the limits of the body

- Haraway, Donna (2011) “Awash in Urine: " from Women’s Studies Quarterly 40(1&2)

Reflective media presentation due this week

Week 13 No teaching

Final reflection on reading due this week

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Progression Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Fitness to Practice Procedure
- Grade Appeal Policy
- Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public
- Special Consideration Policy (Note: The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit the Student Policy Gateway (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.
If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit Policy Central (https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/student-conduct

**Results**

Results published on platform other than eStudent, (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

**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 help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Getting help with your assignment
- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- Subject and Research Guides
- Ask a Librarian

**Student Enquiry Service**

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

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

**Equity 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.

**IT Help**

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/
When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.