

# THE BODY IN AND OUT OF SOCIAL THEORY

## SOC202B – FALL 2001

Who would not believe, to see us compose all things of mind and body, that this very admixture would be readily understandable to us? Yet it is the one thing that we understand the least. Man is to himself the most prodigious object of nature; because he cannot conceive what body is, and still less what mind is, and less than any other thing how a body can be united with a mind. That is the climax of his difficulties, and yet that is his own being: *Modus quo corporibus adhaerent spiritus comprehendi ab hominibus non potest, et hoc tamen homo est.*

Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, 72

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What difference would it make if social theory and research took seriously the fact that social agents are, prior to anything else, sentient, sensuous, and gendered beings of flesh, blood, nerves and sinews doomed to death — a brute fact studiously shunned by most social analysts across the social sciences? Has the recent “rediscovery” of the instinctual, habitual, feeling, knowing, communicative, erotic, political, and prosthetic organism by diverse modern, neo-modern and self-styled “postmodern” currents of social inquiry redeemed the body and moved us towards a resolution of its mystery, or consigned it to newer forms of peripherality and obscurity, reducing it to yet another sign, thereby eliding its special *presence, knowledge and powers*? How to hold together and reconcile the body’s manifold facets and guises as materiality and representation, subject and object, text and template, icon and commodity, and grasp its import as the source, site, and target of desire, emotions, pain, and violence? What analytical resources — metaphors, mechanisms, concepts, theories, methods, findings — are laying about, or need to be further excavated and built, adequately to grasp the body as *social product, matrix, and mediation*, in an effort to move beyond the dualistic and desincarnated theories of action, knowledge and structure that dominate sociological, anthropological, and historical analysis?

This seminar pursues these and related questions by means of a close examination of several contemporary currents of social theory that circle about and/or through the body. Its aim is to expose participants to a broad, if selective, panorama of views and equip them with a varied and extended conceptual “tool-kit” for pursuit of their own research agendas, body-related or not. Each weekly session focuses on a paradigmatic statement or major exemplar of one of the following theoretical lineages: Durkheimian, Weberian, Simmelian, phenomenology, Foucault, the New cultural history, Bourdieu, feminism(s), and medical anthropology.

We will question the common wisdom that to the era of “repression” of the body in social theory has succeeded one of judicious and well-rounded theorizing; we will try to distinguish facile celebration from serious analysis and identify what conceptual strategies and empirical objects are or might be conducive to a better understanding of the embodied nature of social agents, knowledge, and institutions.

**READINGS AND REQUIREMENTS:** All required books have been ordered and should be available at the usual bookstores; the other required readings are available on reserve. A packet of readings with dispersed articles and book chapters is also available from Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft Way, under the course title.

The two most important requirements for this course are *intensive and careful reading* (preferably of entire books) and active engagement in *discussion both in class meetings and on the wires*. Learning how to read intelligently and to read a lot is an indispensable component of the training for an intellectual craft; you should use this course to acquire, expand or sharpen your reading abilities. Debating and evaluating other people’s viewpoints is another critical skill a researcher must continually develop and hone. This seminar is an occasion for “learning by doing.” This means that it is imperative that you come prepared and willing for discussion, i.e., to have done the readings and written up your “electronic notes” beforehand as well as to attend every week for continuity.

All participants are required to submit “reading notes” each week (3-4 pages outlining the core issues and concepts of that week’s readings) to the class by e-mail. These notes are due imperatively by *12 midnight on the Monday before class*. You are encouraged to read and to respond to each other’s reports both before and after the week’s meeting. Each participant will be asked to (co)lead one session and to provide others with a 3/5-page analytical synopsis of the work(s) assigned that week, as well as a summary of the ensuing discussion (live and electronic). A term paper on a research or conceptual topic to be approved by the instructor by *1<sup>st</sup> November* is due no later than *4 December*. No extensions will be granted; no auditing is permitted.

## BOOKS REQUIRED

- Bordo, Susan. 1993. Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. [1980] 1990. The Logic of Practice. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre [1998] 2000. Masculine Domination. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Csordas, Thomas (ed.). 1994. Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Elias, Norbert. [1939] 1994. The Civilizing Process. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Foucault, Michel. [1980] 1988. The Care of Self. Vol III of A History of Sexuality. New York: Pantheon.
- Goffman, Erving. 1967. Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior. New York: Pantheon.
- Honneth, Axel and Hans J. Joas. [1980] 1990. Social Action and Human Nature. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Katz, Jack. 2000. How Emotions Work. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Kessler, Suzanne J. 1998. Lessons from the Intersexed. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

- Kleinman, Arthur. 1988. The Illness Narratives: Suffering, Healing, and the Human Condition. New York: Basic Books.
- Laqueur, Thomas. 1990. Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice [1947]. 1962. Phenomenology of Perception. New York: Routledge.
- Murphy, Robert F. 1987. The Body Silent. New York: Henri Holt (W.W. Norton, 1990).
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 1991. Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Schiebinger, Londa (ed.). 2000. Feminism and the Body. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Young, Iris. 1990. Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

## **1. FROM REPRESSION TO PROLIFERATION: THE “RETURN” OF THE BODY**

- Freund, Peter E.S. 1988. “Bringing Society into the Body: Understanding Socialized Human Nature.” Theory and Society 17-6: 839-864.
- Lock, Margaret. 1993. “Cultivating the Body: Anthropology and Epistemologies of Bodily Practice and Knowledge.” Annual Review of Anthropology 22: 131-55.
- Bynum, Caroline. 1995. “Why All the Fuss About the Body: A Medievalist’s Perspective.” Critical Inquiry 22-1 (Autumn): 1-33.
- Peruse a few issues of Body and Society.

### **Recommended**

- Shilling, Chris. 1993. The Body and Social Theory. London and Newbury Park: Sage Publications, esp. chapters 2-8.
- Porter, Roy. 1992. “The History of the Body.” Pp. 206-232 in New Perspectives on Historical Writing. Edited by Peter Burke. University Park: Penn State University Press.
- Blacking, John (ed.). 1975. Anthropology of the Body. New York: Academic Press.
- Scarry, Elaine (ed.). 1987. Literature and the Body: Essays on Populations and Persons. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Feher, Michel, Ramona Nadaff and Nadia Tazzi (eds.) 1989. Fragments for a History of the Body. New York: Zone Books, 3 vols.
- Featherstone, Mike, Mike Hepworth, and Bryan S. Turner (eds.). 1991. The Body: Social Processes and Cultural Theory. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- Foster, Susan (ed.). 1995. Corporealities: Body, Knowledge, Culture, Power. London: Routledge.

## **2. THE DURKHEIMIAN LINEAGE: SOCIAL ORGANISM, SYMBOLIC TEMPLATE**

- Durkheim, Emile. [1914] 1973. “The Dualism of Human Nature and Its Social Conditions.” Pp. 149-163 in Emile Durkheim on Morality and Society. Edited and with an introduction by Robert N. Bellah. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Durkheim, Emile. [1914] 1995. “The Negative Cult and its Functions: The Ascetic Rites.” Pp. 303-329 in The Elementary Forms of Religious Life. New York: Free Press (use only the new Karen Fields translation).
- Mauss, Marcel. 1923. “Total Man” (unpublished translation available from instructor).

- Mauss, Marcel. [1936] 1973. "Techniques of the Body." Economy and Society 2: 70-88 (also available in a new translation from instructor).
- Douglas, Mary. 1970. "The Two Bodies." Pp. 65-81 in Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology. New York: Pantheon.
- Wacquant, Loïc. 1998. "The Prizefighter's Three Bodies." Ethnos 63-3 (November): 325-352.

### **Recommended**

- Hertz, Robert. [1909] 1973. Death and the Right Hand. Edited by Rodney Needham. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Douglas, Mary. 1966. Purity and Danger. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Turner, Victor. 1967. The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Suaud, Charles. 1976. La Vocation. Paris: Editions de Minuit.
- Connerton, Paul. 1989. How Societies Remember. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Alter, Joseph. 1992. The Wrestler's Body: Identity and Ideology in Northern India. Berkeley: University of California Press.

### **3. THE WEBERIAN LINEAGE: RATIONALIZATION & THE CIVILIZING PROCESS**

- Weber, Max. [1918-20] 1978. "Orgy versus Chastity." Pp. 602-604 in Economy and Society. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Elias, Norbert. [1937] 1994. The Civilizing Process, esp. Book I.
- Freud, Sigmund. [1900] 1993. "The Psychological Apparatus" and "Dream-Work and Interpretation." Pp. 137-145 in Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings. Edited by Charles Lemert. Boulder: Westview.

### **Recommended**

- Honneth, Axel and Hans J. Joas. [1980] 1990. Social Action and Human Nature, "Control of Affect and the Weaving of the Social Fabric," pp. 119-129.
- Weber, Max. [1904-5] 1958. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. London: Scribner's Son. Esp. Part II, "The Practical Ethics of the Ascetic Branches of Protestantism."
- Elias, Norbert and Eric Dunning. 1986. The Quest for Excitement. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell.
- Elias, Norbert. 1987. "On Human Beings and their Emotions: A Process Sociological Essay." Theory, Culture, and Society 4: 339-361. (Reprinted in Featherstone et al., The Body: Social Processes and Cultural Theory, pp. 103-125).
- Mennell, Stephen. 1987. "The Civilizing of Appetite." Theory, Culture and Society 4: 126-156. (Reprinted in Featherstone et al., The Body, pp. 373-403).
- De Swaan, Abraham. 1990. "The Politics of Agoraphobia: On Changes in Emotional and Relational Management." Pp. 138-167 in The Management of Normality. London: Routledge.
- Bremmer, Jan and Herman Roodenburg (eds.). 1991. A Cultural History of Gesture. Cambridge: Polity Press. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Falk, Pasi. 1996. The Consuming Body. London: Sage.

#### 4. SIMMELIAN FORMALISM: THE BODY AS BARYCENTER OF SOCIAL GEOMETRY

- Simmel, Georg. 1908. "Sociology of the Senses." In Soziologie (Munich: Duncker and Humblot), reprinted in R.E. Park and E.W. Burgess, eds., An Introduction to the Science of Sociology. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1921).
- Goffman, Erving. 1967. Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior, esp. chapters 2, 3, 4, 7.

##### Recommended

- Goffman, Erving. 1963. Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings. New York: Free Press.
- Goffman, Erving. 1966. Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity. New York: Harper.
- Kuzmics, Helmut. 1991. "Embarrassment and Civilization: Some Similarities and Differences in the Work of Goffman and Elias." Theory, Culture, and Society 8: 1-30.
- Montagu, Ashley. 1978. Touching: The Human Significance of the Skin. New York: World Publishing.
- McNeil, William. 1994. Keeping Time Together. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Foster, Gwendolyn Audrey. 2000. Troping the Body: Gender, Etiquette, and Performance. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

#### 5. PHENOMENOLOGY I: PRESENCE AND POWERS OF THE "LIVED BODY"

- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. [1947] 1962. The Phenomenology of Perception, "Introduction," "Part I: The Body"; "Part II: The World Perceived."
- Csordas, Thomas (ed.). 1994. Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self, Introduction, chapter 12 and another chapter of your choice.

##### Recommended

- Schmidt, James. 1985. Maurice Merleau-Ponty: Between Phenomenology and Structuralism. New York: Saint Martin's.
- Straus, Erwin. 1963. The Primary World of the Senses, Free Press, 1963.
- Scheler, Max. 1991. On Feeling, Knowing, and Valuing. Edited and with an introduction by Harold J. Bershady. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Buytendjik, F.J. 1974. Prolegomena to an Anthropological Physiology. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.
- O'Neill, John. 1985. Five Bodies: The Human Shape of Modern Society. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Varela, C.R. 1994. "Harré and Merleau-Ponty: Beyond the Absent Body in Embodied Social Theory." Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior 24-2: 167-185.
- Crossley, Nick. 2001. The Social Body: Habit, Identity, and Desire. London: Sage.

#### 6. PHENOMENOLOGY II: METAMORPHOSIS AND TRANSCENDENCE

- Mauss, Marcel. 1921. "The Mandatory Expression of Sentiments" (unpublished translation available from instructor).
- Desjarlais, Robert. 1994. "Struggling Along." American Anthropologist 94-4 (reprinted in M. Jackson [ed.], Things as They Are, pp. 70-93).
- Katz, Jack. 2000. How Emotions Work, esp. Introduction, 2-4, 7.

### **Recommended**

- Honneth, Axel and Hans J. Joas. [1980] 1990. Social Action and Human Nature. Chapter 2: "Anthropological Foundations of Social Action," pp. 41-117 (esp. 48-90).
- Plessner, Helmut. 1976. Laughing and Crying. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Leder, Drew. 1990. The Absent Body. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Esp. Introduction, Part I.
- Joas, Hans. 1996. The Creativity of Action. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, chapter 3: "Situation, Corporeality, Sociality."
- Jackson, Michael (ed.). 1997. Things As They Are: New Directions in Phenomenological Anthropology. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press.
- Wacquant, Loïc. 1995. "The Pugilistic Point of View: How Boxers Feel and Think About their Trade." Theory and Society 24-4 (August): 489-535.

## **7. FOUCAULT: PANOPTICISM, BIO-POWER, AND THE ETHIC OF THE SELF**

- Foucault, Michel. 1980. "Body/Power," pp. 55-62; "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century," pp. 166-182; "The History of Sexuality," pp. 184-194 in Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972/1977. Edited by Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon.
- Foucault, Michel. 1984. "Docile Bodies," "The Means of Correct Training," and "Panopticism," in The Foucault Reader. Edited by Paul Rabinow. New York: Pantheon, pp. 179-213.
- Foucault, Michel. [1980] 1988. The Care of Self, entire.

### **Recommended**

- Honneth, Axel and Hans J. Joas. [1980] 1990. Social Action and Human Nature. "The Disciplining of the Body and Decentralized Power," pp. 129-150.
- Foucault, Michel. [1975] 1978. Discipline and Punish. New York: Vintage.
- Foucault, Michel. [1976] 1980. The History of Sexuality. Vol. 1: An Introduction. New York: Pantheon.
- Arnold, David. 1993. Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India. University of California Press.
- Barker, Francis. 1995. The Tremulous Private Body: Essays on Subjection. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Leupp, Gary P. 1995. Male Colors: The Construction of Homosexuality in Tokugawa Japan. Berkeley: University of California Press.

## **8. THE NEW CULTURAL HISTORY: INVENTION(S) OF THE NATURAL BODY**

- Laqueur, Thomas. 1990. Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud, entire.

- Johnson, Walter. 2001. "Reading Bodies and Marking Race," in Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 135-161.
- Kessler, Suzanne J. 1998. Lessons from the Intersexed, chapters to be announced.

### **Recommended**

- Gallagher, Catherine and Thomas Laqueur (eds.). 1988. The Making of the Modern Body. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Pouchelle, Marie-Christine. [1983] 1990. The Body and Surgery in the Middle Ages. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Sennett, Richard. 1994. Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Herd, Gilbert (ed.). 1994. Third Sex, Third Gender: Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History. New York: Zone Books.
- Bynum, Caroline Walker. 1995. The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336. New York: Columbia University Press.

## **9. BOURDIEU: HABITUS AND THE BODY AS "ANALOGICAL OPERATOR"**

- Bourdieu, Pierre. [1980] 1990. The Logic of Practice, Preface, Book I, esp. "Belief and the Body," and chapter 3 of Book II, "The Devil of Analogy."
- Bourdieu, Pierre [1998] 2000. Masculine Domination, esp. chapters 1 and 2.
- Wacquant, Loïc. 1995. "Pugs at Work: Bodily Capital and Bodily Labor Among Professional Boxers." Body and Society 1-1 (March): 65-94.

### **Recommended**

- Bourdieu, Pierre. [1979] 1984. Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Esp. chapter 3: "Habitus and the Space of Lifestyles."
- Bourdieu, Pierre. [1997] 2000. Pascalian Meditations. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre and Loïc Wacquant. 1992. An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, part II, "Interest, habitus, and rationality," pp. 115-140.
- Schusterman, Richard (ed.). 1999. Pierre Bourdieu: A Critical Reader. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Muel-Dreyfus, Francine. 1997. Vichy et l'éternel féminin. Paris: Flammarion.
- Wacquant, Loïc. 2000. Corps et âme. Carnets ethnographiques d'un apprenti boxeur. Marseille and Montréal: Agone, Comeau & Nadeau.

## **10. FEMINISM(S): MASCULINE DOMINATION, PHYSIOLOGY, AND "POSTMODERNITY"**

- Bordo, Susan. 1993. Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body, pp. 1-70, 165-184, 215-300.
- Young, Iris. 1990. "Throwing Like a Girl" and "Breasted Existence," in Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory.
- Shiebinger, Feminism and the Body, Introduction and two chapters of your choice.

### **Recommended**

- Martin, Emily. 1987. The Woman in the Body: A Cultural Analysis of Reproduction. Boston: Beacon Press, with new preface 1992.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. 1994. Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Braidotti, Rosi. 1994. Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Issues. Columbia University Press.
- Allison, Ann. 1994. Nightwork: Sexuality, Pleasure, and Corporate Masculinity in a Tokyo Hostess Club. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Burbank, Victoria Katherine. 1994. Fighting Women: Anger and Aggressive Behavior in Aboriginal Australia. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Terry, Jennifer and Jacqueline Urla (eds.). 1995. Deviant Bodies. Indiana University Press.
- Fausto-Sterlin, Anne. 2000. Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality. New York: Basic Books.

## **11. MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY GRAPPLES WITH THE SUFFERING BODY: SOMATIZATION VERSUS EMBODIMENT**

- Leder, Drew. 1984. "Medicine and Paradigms of Embodiment." Journal of Medicine and Philosophy 9: 29-43.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy and Margaret M. Lock. 1987. "The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology." Medical Anthropology Quarterly: 6-41.
- Kleinman, Arthur. 1988. The Illness Narratives: Suffering, Healing, and the Human Condition, chapters 1-6, 14-16.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 1991. Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil, chapters 5-9, 12.

### **Recommended**

- Young, Allen. 1982. "The Anthropologies of Illness and Sickness." Annual Review of Anthropology 11: 257-285.
- Zola, I.K. 1991. "Bringing Our Bodies and Ourselves Back In: Reflections on a Past, Present, and Future 'Medical Sociology'." The Journal of Health and Human Behavior 32-1: 1-16.
- Desjarlais, Robert R. 1992. Body and Emotion: The Aesthetics of Illness and Healing in the Nepal Himalayas. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Lindenbaum, Shirley and Margaret Lock (eds.). 1995. Knowledge, Power and Practice: The Anthropology of Medicine and Everyday Life. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kleinman, Arthur, Veena Das, and Margaret Lock (eds.). 1997. Social Suffering. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Farmer, Paul. 1999. Infections and Inequality: The Modern Plagues. Berkeley: University of California Press.

## **12. REPRISE: THEORY OF THE BODY OR EMBODIED THEORY?**

- Marx, Karl. 1975. "Thesis ad Feuerbach" (1845). Pp. 421-423 in Early Writings. Edited by Quentin Hoare. Reflect upon theses 1, 5, 6, 8, 9 in particular.



- Martin, Emily. 1992. "The End of the Body?" American Ethnologist 19-1: 121-140.
- Turner, Terrence. 1994. "Bodies and Anti-Bodies: Flesh and Fetish in Contemporary Social Theory." Pp. 27-47 in Csordas (ed.), Embodiment and Experience.
- Murphy, Robert F. 1987. The Body Silent, entire.

### **Recommended**

- Honneth, Axel and Hans J. Joas. [1980] 1990. Social Action and Human Nature. "Anthropology and Historical Materialism," pp. 12-40.
- Kimbrell, Andrew. 1993. The Human Body Shop. New York: Harper Collins.
- Elshtain, Jean Bethke and J. Timothy Cloyd (eds.). 1995. Politics and the Human Body. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
- A.J. Strathern. 1996. Body Thoughts. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Stoller, Robert. 1996. Sensual Epistemologies. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Hyde, Alan. 1996. Bodies of Law. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Coakley, Sarah. 1997. Religion and the Body. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. 1999. Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought. New York: Basic.
- Richardson, Ruth. 2000. "Afterword" to the paperback edition of Death, Dissection and the Destitute. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 409-434.