

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology 407.1

SOCIOLOGY OF THE BODY  
FALL 2010

Instructor: Dr. Leslie Miller  
Email: lmiller@ucalgary.ca  
Classroom: SS012  
Office hours: TBA

Office: SS910

Time: Tuesdays 3:30 - 6:20

**Course Materials.** A package of readings is available for purchase in the bookstore. Occasional additional readings may be distributed in class.

**Course content and objectives.** This course is an introduction to the sociology of the body and considers the many ways that human bodies are socially and culturally significant. Although we feel that we know our bodies directly -- because we inhabit them -- I shall suggest in this course that knowledge of our bodies (and bodily practices) is only available to us through the many ways we have to think and talk about them. That is, what the body and its practices "mean" to us, and to others, is a matter of social and historical context. (Body piercing, for example, can be a fashion statement in one social setting, a means of spiritual enlightenment in another, and a mark of manhood in a third). But whatever its meanings, the body is crucial to how we see ourselves, how we represent ourselves to others, and how others come to know and judge us.

The course will familiarize students with important theoretical debates and perspectives in the sociology of the body. It will also sample a variety of substantive topics in this expanding area, including: the body in history; the body and social class; the body as a focus of regulation, of social stigma, and as a means of resistance; the body as a creative template for the performance of self; the body as a commodity in consumer society; the disabled body and the body in pain; the sexualized body; the body as a site of political contest. Our examples are drawn from everyday life and popular culture in the past and the present, and our emphasis is mainly on Western society.

**Assignments and evaluation.** Students are responsible for all lectures, text materials and films/videos. Exams are comprised of short answer and/or short essay questions. The course also includes a research paper, which will require students to apply course themes to an empirical example of their choice. It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of submitted research projects. **There will not be a registrar-controlled final examination** in this course. **All components of the course must be completed for a passing grade.**

WEEK

READING

|                          |  |  |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| 1<br>Sept. 14            | Introduction:<br>course organization and themes                      | - video: <i>Visions of Prophecy</i>  |
| 2 & 3<br>(Sept. 21 & 28) | The body in history: body regulation and<br>the "civilizing process" | - "Changes in attitude toward<br>the natural functions" (Elias)<br><br>- "The power of dirt"<br>(Clark and Davis") |

embodying social class in history

- "Clean and proper" (Frykman and Lofgren)

the body and social class today

- "The body and physical capital" (Shilling)

**4 - 5**  
**(Oct. 5 & 12)**

The body in consumer culture:

body projects  
body modification and power  
"poaching" in sport

- "Talking bodies" (Miller and Penz)

body modification and state politics

- "Victims or offenders" (Bloul)

body modification and art:  
cosmetic surgery

- "'My body is my art': cosmetic surgery as feminist utopia?" (Davis)

- video: *Bodywork*

**Week 6**

**TEST # 1 TUESDAY OCTOBER 19**

**WEIGHT 30%**

**7 & 8**  
**(Oct. 26 & Nov. 2)**

The sexualized body

- "The Gendered Body" (Kimmel)
- "Daring to desire" (Tolman)
- "Breast feeding..." (Carter)
- "The Medicalization of Women's Bodies and Women's Lives" (Berenson and Miller)

- video: *Internet Porn*

**PAPER WILL BE ASSIGNED AT THIS TIME**

- "Narratives of the gendered body" (Gergen and Gergen)

**--- THE BODY AND AUTO/BIOGRAPHY**

**WEEK 9**  
**(Nov. 9)**

**T.B.A**

**10**  
**(Nov. 16)**

The body in pain;  
bodies and disabilities

- "Coming to terms: masculinity and physical disability" (Gerschick)

- "Pain and the dys-appearing body" (Williams and Bendelow)

- "Faulty selves" (Benson)
- "Witty ticcy Ray" (Sacks)

11                            **TEST #2 TUESDAY NOV. 23**                            **WEIGHT 30%**

12  
(Nov. 30)

- "Women and their hair:  
seeking power through  
resistance and accommodation" (Weitz)
  
- "Men and muscles"  
(Glassner)

13 (Dec. 7)            **FINAL QUIZ**                            **WEIGHT 10%**

**PAPER DUE: TUESDAY DEC. 14, in my office SS 910, between 2 and 4 pm. Weight 30%**

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**SUMMARY OF TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Test #1                    Friday October 19. Weight 30%  
Test #2                    Tuesday November 23 Weight 30%  
Final Quiz                Tuesday Dec.7 (last class) Weight 10%  
Research paper        Due **Tuesday December 14.** Weight 30%

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**ALSO PLEASE NOTE**

***Emergency evacuations:***

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by [*check link to find assembly point for your building:*  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/node/75>]

***Deferrals:***

If at all possible you must provide *advance* notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment or essay on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a “make up” test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department.

Please note that requests to defer a final examination or to defer term work past the end of a term go through the Undergraduate Programs Office (UPO) and must be processed by the deadlines that are established in the U of C Calendar. You can find the forms you need online:

*Deferred Final Exam Application:*

[http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/APP%20FOR%20DF%20EXAM\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/APP%20FOR%20DF%20EXAM_0.pdf)

*Deferred Term Work Form:*

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

You must submit these deferral forms to the Faculty of Arts Associate Dean (Students) through the UPO office: Undergraduate Programs Office, 4th Floor, MacEwan Student Centre. Only the Associate Dean approves requests for deferrals which extend beyond the end of a term. Instructors are not involved in such decisions. To make an appointment with the Associate Dean, phone (403) 220-8155.

***Ethics Research:*** Students are advised that any research with human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

***Academic Misconduct:*** Plagiarism, cheating and other academic misconduct are regarded as serious academic offences. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

***The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP)*** legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor’s office or the Department main office. Written assignments must be returned to students individually, during class, or during the instructor’s office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

***Safewalk:*** The University of Calgary provides a “safe walk” service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the “Help” phones located around Campus.

***Academic Accommodation:*** Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, phone

220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. **It is a student's responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.**

*Handing in papers outside of class, return of final papers, and release of final grades:*

1. When students are unable to submit papers in class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant. Papers will not be accepted in the main Sociology Department office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the main Sociology Department office. The Freedom of Information and Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place (i.e. outside an instructor's office, the department office etc.) Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will be available for pick-up only during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or at the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are available only online.