

COURSE OUTLINE
Anthropology 2263A-650
Bodies: Making, Buying, Living and Dying
Summer 2020 · Distance Studies



This course runs for 12 weeks from May 4 – July 31, 2020.

Instructor: Dr. Karyn Olsen

Pronouns: she/her

Office: Online

Office hours: Online, by appointment

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Calendar Course Description

Bodies are physical and sensual, personal and public, the result of evolution, and yet flexibly attuned to local histories and desires. This course will take a biocultural approach to exploring what bodies are, how they are used, by whom, for what purposes, and how we come to know such things.

Credit value: 0.5 credit

Prerequisite(s): None.

Antirequisite(s): None.

Course Syllabus

Why take this course? This course draws on cultural, medical, archaeological, and biological fields in anthropology to engage students in critical reflections on the human body. We will start by considering how anthropologists contribute to the study of bodies and then examine how body “norms” are constructed and disrupted. We will discuss key aspects of our social and cultural identities that are enacted and resisted through bodies. You will have the opportunity to review ideas on “body image” as we explore perspectives on weight and body modification. We will consider the different ways that anthropologists help us to understand notions of sick and healthy bodies. We will explore representations of the body in the ancient past and how modern anthropologists navigate the ethics of studying and displaying human remains. Finally, you will have the chance to examine how we treat bodies after death across cultures and through time.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define embodiment and other key terminology used to conceptualize the human body physically and socially.
2. Discuss approaches to understanding the human body from various perspectives including, sociocultural, medical, archaeological, and bioarchaeological perspectives.
3. Compare and ask questions about body “norms” and the ways in which bodies are represented and perceived across cultures and through time.
4. Complete the essential first steps of scholarly research, including critically evaluating scholarly sources relevant to the anthropological study of the body.
5. Reflect on and articulate connections among social constructions of the body, the scholarly literature, and your own experiences.

Course Materials

There is no textbook for this course. All readings will be available as PDF downloads from the Western Libraries Website.

Evaluation

Assessment	Weight	Learning Outcomes Demonstrated by Completing the Assessment
Weekly Quizzes	12%	LO1; LO2
Discussion/Reflection Activities	28%	LO2; LO3
Response Paper 1	20%	LO3; LO4; LO5
Response Paper 2	20%	LO3; LO4; LO5
Take Home Exam	20%	LO3; LO4; LO5

Weekly Quizzes – 12%

The quizzes incorporated into this course are intended to help you stay on top of the course material. Each quiz consists of several multiple choice and true/false questions and is based on the readings and resources posted to the OWL site for that week. Quizzes are open book and you can take as long as you need to complete once you have started them, provided you do not go past the due date. You may work together if you wish.

Note: Each quiz will only be open for a one-week period. If you miss a quiz deadline, you will not be able to complete that quiz. The lowest graded quiz will be dropped from your overall mark.

Discussion/Reflection Activities – 28%

The Discussion Activities/Reflections embedded in this course are opportunities to engage with course content, see the thoughts and opinions of your peers, contribute your own questions, or ideas, present evidence from independent research on the web, or reflect on coursework. Additional details for each discussion activity will be posted on the course OWL site.

Note: Discussion Activities are not accepted following deadline given that each one is relevant to its own week and contributions are typically synthesized and posted for everyone to read. If you miss a deadline, you will not be able to complete that activity. The lowest graded discussion activity will be dropped from your overall mark

Response Papers (2 x 20%)

During this course, you will write two short response papers (750 words each). A response paper is not a research essay but a critical analysis that asks you to consider your assumptions on a topic, articulate what you have learned, practice posing research questions, and make connections among the published literature. For each paper, you will get to choose a focus subject from 1-2 provided options covered in the previous weeks. Additional details and instructions on topics for reflection papers will be provided on OWL.

Take Home Exam (20%)

The take home exam will follow the same format as the response papers assigned in this course (750 words). For the exam, you will get to choose a focus subject from 1-2 provided options covered in the final six weeks of the course. Similar to the previous response papers, you will be asked to consider your assumptions on a topic, articulate what you have learned, pose a research question, and find connections in the published literature.

Note: A 5% late penalty per day (including weekends and holidays) applies for both the Response Papers and the Take Home Exam. None will be accepted one week past the due date.

Course Specific Statements and Policies

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

I would like to create a learning environment that supports diverse thoughts, perspectives, and experiences. We all bring unique identities to the classroom that reflect differences in age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, religion, and class. I will gladly honour any request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. I will attempt to foster an environment in which students are able to express ideas and hear and respect one another. Please let me know if there are ways that you think I could improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students/student groups.

Statement on Engaging in the Online Learning Environment

This course relies on the OWL site to connect you with the syllabus, assignment outlines, content, and other course material. Here, you will engage with me and your peers as we progress through the course. Please keep track of weekly tasks and contribute respectfully to online activities.

Statement on Email

You may contact me by email, but it may take up to 24 hours for a response. If I cannot provide an immediate response, or if the matter is something that I cannot address easily in an email, we will plan to meet virtually using Zoom or Collaborate. Please ensure that your emails are worded professionally and include the course number (1026G) in the subject line.

Statement on Plagiarism

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Statement on Student Success

- If you need support with your academic writing skills, please visit the Writing Support Centre in person or online at: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/>. The Centre aims to (1) enhance your writing and communication skills and build your confidence, (2) equip you with tools, resources and knowledge to effectively communicate through writing, (3) increase your critical analysis abilities to effectively communicate scholarly ideas, (4) convey university level writing expectations, and (5) provide you with the skills you need to navigate academic transitions.

- Learning Development and Success (<http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning/>) supports your development as student by answering questions and providing advice on how to succeed in your studies at Western. They can help you to develop and strengthen academic skills.
- The Wellness Education Centre (<http://wec.uwo.ca/>) will help you navigate any kind of mental health issue (e.g., anxiety, stress, etc.) WEC provides free assistance in connecting you with wellness services and resources on and off campus.

Statement on Seeking Special Accommodations

No accommodations will be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment's due date or a missed quiz or test. Please contact an academic counsellor immediately if you will be seeking accommodations based on medical or compassionate grounds.

Institutional Statements and Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined, with links to the full policies, at:

http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/academic_policies.html

Weekly Breakdown of Topics and Due Dates

DATE	TOPIC	DUE
Week 1: May 4 to 10	How Anthropologists define and study "bodies"	DA1 due May 13 Q1 due May 17
Week 2: May 11 to 17	Normative bodies: Questioning what is "normal"	Q2 due May 17
Week 3: May 18 to 24	Cultural perspectives on big bodies	DA2 due May 22 Q3 due May 24
Week 4: May 25 to 29	Transformed: Body modification in the present	Response Paper 1 due June 7 Q4 due Jun 7
No class: May 30 - June 5		
Week 5: Jun 8 to 14	Embodying race and gender	DA3 due Jun 12 Q5 due Jun 14
Week 6: Jun 15 to 21	Sick bodies	Q6 due Jun 21
Week 7: Jun 22 to 28	Ancient bodies	DA4 due Jun 26 Q7 due Jun 28
Week 8: Jun 29 to Jul 5	Embodying identity through material culture	Response Paper 2 due Jul 3 Q8 due Jul 5
Week 9: Jul 6 to 12	Transformed: Body modification in the past	DA5 due Jul 10 Q9 due Jul 12
Week 10: Jul 13 to 19	Bodies as evidence of care in the past	Q10 due Jul 19
Week 11: Jul 20 to 26	Dead bodies	DA6 due Jul 24 Q11 due Jul 26
Week 12: Jul 27 to 31	Study and display of human remains	Q12 due Aug 2
Exam Period		Take Home Exam posted Aug 1 and due Aug 7

Weekly Readings

Week 1 - How Anthropologists define and study “bodies”

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Margaret Lock. 1987. “The Mindful Body: A Prolegomenon to Future Work in Medical Anthropology.” *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 1(1): 6-41.
<https://doi.org/10.1525/maq.1987.1.1.02a00020>.

Week 2 - Normative bodies: questioning the idea of a “normal” body

Lock, Margaret, and Vinh-Kim Nguyen. 2018. “The Normal Body” In *An Anthropology of Biomedicine*, 29-50. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Půtová, Barbora. 2018. “Freak shows. Otherness of the Human Body as a Form of Public Presentation.” *Anthropologie: International Journal of Human Diversity and Evolution*, 56(2): 91-102.
<https://doi.org/10.26720/anthro.17.07.20.1>

Week 3 - Cultural perspectives on big bodies

Brewis, Alexandra A. 2010. “Big-Body Symbolism, Meanings, and Norms.” In *Obesity: Cultural and Biocultural Perspectives*, 99-124, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Brewis, Alexandra A., Amber Wutich, Ashlan Falletta-Cowden and Isa Rodriguez Soto. 2011. “Body Norms and Fat Stigma in Global Perspective.” *Current Anthropology* 52(2): 269-276.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/659309>.

Week 4 - Transformed bodies: Body modification in the present

Edmonds, A. 2007. “‘The Poor Have the Right to Be Beautiful’: Cosmetic Surgery in Neoliberal Brazil.” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 13(2): 363-381.

Simpson, Ruth, and Alison Pullen. 2018. “‘Cool’ Meanings: Tattoo Artists, Body Work and Organizational ‘Bodyscape’.” *Work, Employment and Society* 32(1): 169-185.
<https://www.doi.org/10.1177/0950017017741239>.

Week 5 - Embodying Race and Gender

Martin, Emily. 1991. “The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles.” *Signs*, 16(3): 485-501. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3174586>.

Blackwood, Evelyn. 2009. “Trans Identities and Contingent Masculinities: Being Tombois in Everyday Practice” *Feminist Studies*, 35(3): 454-480.

St. Louis, Brett. 2003. "Sport, Genetics and the 'Natural Athlete': The Resurgence of Racial Science." *Body & Society*, 9(2): 75–95.

Week 6 - Sick bodies

Singer, Merrill. 2004. "The Social Origins and Expressions of Illness." *British Medical Bulletin* 69: 9-19. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bmb/ldh016>.

Lock, Margaret, and Vinh-Kim Nguyen. 2018. "Global Health." In *An Anthropology of Biomedicine*, 291-309. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Manderson, Lenore, and Susan Levine. 2020. "COVID-19, Risk, Fear, and Fallout." *Medical Anthropology*, 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2020.1746301>.

Week 7 - Ancient bodies

Joyce, Rosemary A. 2005. "Archaeology of the Body." *Annual Review of Anthropology*. 34: 139-158.

Zimmerman, Michael R. 2004. "Paleopathology and the Study of Ancient Remains." In *Encyclopedia of Medical Anthropology*, edited by C. R. Ember, and M. Ember M, 49-58. Boston, MA: Springer.

Fisher, Genevieve, and Loren, Diana DiPaolo. 2003. "Embodying Identity in Archaeology." *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 13(2): 225-230.

Week 8 - Embodying identity through material culture

Loren, Diana DiPaolo. 2003. "Refashioning a Body Politic in Colonial Louisiana." *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 13(2): 231-237.

Joyce, Rosemary A. 2003. "Making Something of Herself: Embodiment in Life and Death at Playa de los Muertos, Honduras." *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 13(2): 248-261.

Week 9 - Transformed bodies: Body modification in the past

Williams, Jocelyn S., and White, Christine D. 2006. "Dental Modification in the Postclassic Population from Lamanai, Belize." *Ancient Mesoamerica* 17(1): 129-151. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0956536106050267>.

Lee, Christine, and Lei Sun. 2019. "A Bioarchaeological and Biocultural Investigation of Chinese Footbinding at the Xuecun Archaeological Site, Henan Province, China." *International Journal of Paleopathology* 25: 9-19. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpp.2019.03.001>.

Week 10 - Bodies as evidence of care in the past

Krutak, Lars. 2019. "Therapeutic Tattooing in the Arctic: Ethnographic, Archaeological, and Ontological Frameworks of Analysis." *International Journal of Paleopathology* 25: 99-109.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpp.2018.05.003>.

Tilley, Lorna, and Oxenham, Marc F. 2011. "Survival Against the Odds: Modeling the Social Implications of Care Provision to Seriously Disabled Individuals." *The International Journal of Paleopathology* 1: 35-42.

https://doi.org/10.1016_j.ijpp.2011.02.003.

Week 11 - Dead bodies

Gardeła, Leszek and Kamil Kajkowski. 2013. "Vampires, Criminals or Slaves? Reinterpreting 'Deviant Burials' in Early Medieval Poland." *World Archaeology*, 45(5): 780–796.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00438243.2013.849853>.

Adams, Kathleen M. 2018. "Leisure in the 'Land of the Walking Dead': Western Mortuary Tourism, the Internet, and Zombie Pop Culture in Toraja, Indonesia." In *Leisure and Death An Anthropological Tour of Risk, Death, and Dying*, edited by A. Kaul and J. Skinner, 97-120. Denver: University of Colorado Press.

Week 12 - Studying and displaying human remains

Lambert, Patricia M. 2012. "Ethics and Issues in the Use of Human Skeletal Remains in Paleopathology." In *A Companion to Paleopathology*, edited by Anne L. Grauer, 47-65. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Joy, Jody. 2014. "Looking Death in the Face: Different Attitudes towards Bog Bodies and their Display with a Focus on Lindow Man." In *Regarding the Dead: Human Remains in the British Museum*, edited by A. Fletcher, D. Antoine and J.D. Hill, 10-19. London: British Museum Press.

Bates, Stephen. 2010. "Bodies Impolitic? Reading Cadavers." *International Journal of Communication*, 4: 198-219.