From Humors to Hysteria: Human and Political Bodies in European History, 1517-1918

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MW: Lecture in Humanities 1217    Office: 4218 Humanities
F: Discussion in Room TBA       Office Hours: F, 9:00-11:00

Course Overview: Between the early rumblings of the Reformations and the last cannon shot of World War I, Europeans underwent a profound change in how they conceptualized bodies as experience and metaphors. During these four centuries, Europeans grounded the ways in which they interacted with each other and the world around them in bodily imaginings in multiple registers. On an individual level, the living, human body provided a means of accessing and understanding the material or spiritual world. On a collective scale, the physical body, its adornments, and its gestures provided markers that Europeans used to fracture society along axes of gender, class, race, mental aptitude, and even sacrality. Drawing in part from their myriad imaginings of the human body, Europeans constructed metaphorical political bodies. These body politics governed the nature of the relationship between individuals and the state and between individuals and society. This course will probe human and political bodies.

We will dissect the ways in which Europeans perceived the shifting physical, mental, and spiritual boundaries within their bodies through the various ideas of the body/mind/soul triad that early modern theologians, philosophers, and scientists advanced. We will weigh how the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment expanded upon established methods to examine the living body as a machine. When confronted with the New World, Europeans forged ways of interacting with foreign bodies. While regenerating society, the French revolutionaries negotiated citizenship through bodily axes of gender and race. Due to the multiplying social institutions of nineteenth-century states, Europeans increasingly attempted to survey, classify, and discipline individual bodies through the lenses of deviancy or conformity. Finally, as World War I ravaged and betrayed leaky bodies, we ask how Europeans responded to a crisis of faith in the human body’s physical and mental prowess.

From divine right monarchs to revolutionary republics and modern nation-states, this course will examine different political models and ask how governments and individuals crafted their legitimacy via metaphors of political bodies. As Europeans negotiated where individuals fell in political hierarchies and debated who could be included as a citizen in the body politic, they predicated their decisions upon attitudes towards living bodies. Our course will lay bare the body as culturally constructed, while fleshing out how Europeans’ evolving visions affected political imaginings.

What Skills You Will Develop: While deepening your understanding of European culture and politics, this course will help you acquire or improve several skills. The most important skill that this course will teach you is how to think critically. You will develop analytical skills from your close-readings, hone your ability to articulate your insights in discussion, and sharpen your expository writing skills. Ultimately, the tools and knowledge you can acquire from this course
depend upon the amount of effort you put into it. I encourage you to come by during office hours if you would like help outside of class.

**Course Format:** Our course will follow both lecture and discussion formats. Our Monday and Wednesday meetings will consist of a lecture in order to help us historically contextualize our readings and provide us with points of inquiry. Our Friday meetings will be a discussion in which we analyze primary and/or secondary sources together. There will be two 2.5-3.5 page papers, a midterm, and a final exam.

**Grade Composition:**
Participation: 30%, Paper I: 15%, Midterm Exam: 20%, Paper II: 15%, Final Exam: 20%

**Required Texts:** You must purchase a Course Reader from the L&S Copy Center (1650 Humanities Building). I have copied all of our semester texts into this reader, which makes this course highly affordable. The total price is $27.35. You can buy it Monday to Friday, 7:30-11:45am and 12:30-4:15pm. The Copy Center accepts cash, check, or Wiscard. I have also put a copy on three-hour reserve in College Library. Bring the Course Reader with you to our Friday discussions.

**Supplemental Texts (not required):** Our course draws heavily from primary source readings. If you would like additional background or other overarching narratives, the following survey textbooks are on three-hour reserve:

**Participation:** I greatly respect your ideas and look forward to hearing your insights on the readings. Our weekly discussion is a pillar of this class; therefore, participation is the largest component of your grade (30%). I grade individual participation after each section. Participation requires more than simple attendance; you are expected to take an active role in class discussion by building from your readings, the lectures, and even outside information you may have. Some simple strategies including note taking, writing down questions, and marking significant passages will facilitate your participation in discussion. Every individual brings his/her unique perspective to the readings, which enriches our conversation. These differences, be they of analysis or opinion, can often advance our discussion and understanding of the reading. It perfectly okay to disagree with a fellow classmate or me, but it is imperative that you do so respectfully. This intellectual and personal respect will keep our discussions lively and productive.

**Attendance:** You must always be present on a day that a paper is due or an exam is given. Apart from that, you will be allowed 2 unexcused lecture absences and 1 unexcused discussion absence for this course. If you exceed these unexcused absences, you will lose points from your participation grade. An excused absence will only count for religious holidays, university obligations, or in cases of emergencies such as a serious illness or family emergency. If you will miss class for one of these reasons, contact me (by email or in person) prior to the missed section. You must be present for all 50 minutes of class. If you are late, you will be marked as absent.
Papers: Your two papers will be due at the start of discussion. Please use the following format: Times New Roman, size 12 font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, stapled, with Chicago Style or Turabian citations. To be fair to those who complete their papers on time, a full letter grade will be deducted for each day a paper is late. Since your papers focus on the readings due that week, you will be unable to attend that week’s discussion without your paper. Please note that plagiarism a grave academic offense that carries serious ramifications. I am happy to talk with you if you have questions about plagiarism or how to avoid it. You can find more on the university’s policy here: http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/index.html.

Laptop and Phone Policy: Technology offers us many exciting resources for learning. However, unless we use laptops in specific exercises, research suggests that we benefit more from using them outside than inside the classroom. A recent study from psychologists at York University concludes that students who use laptops in classrooms do “11% worse on comprehension tests” than those who did not, while those who could see a neighbor’s laptop screen fared 17% worse on tests than students who could not.¹ This disadvantage equals one to two whole letter grades. Yikes! The researchers concluded that we often overestimate our capacity to effectively multitask and laptops unintentionally distract those around us. Therefore, to promote a productive learning environment, laptops will not be allowed in lecture or discussion. Our amazing mini-computers (cell phones) will not be allowed for the same reasons.

Learn@UW: I will upload all course handouts and resources, such as this syllabus, on Learn@UW (learnuw.wisc.edu). Simply use your UW Net ID and password to access our course.

Email Policy: I can be most easily reached by email. If you have questions that cannot be answered by the material on Learn@UW, please feel free to email me. If the information you need is time sensitive, please give me adequate time (at least 24 hours) to respond. Please read messages sent to the class listserv. I will provide you with important handouts, assignment clarifications, and helpful questions to guide your readings via email.

Office Hours: Office hours are a great opportunity for one-on-one guidance should you have questions outside of class, are struggling with something in the course, would like to work through comments on your assignments, or would like to further pursue something from our material. You can drop in anytime during my office hours on Fridays, 9:00-11:00. If these hours conflict with your other classes, we can set up an appointment for another time. My office is in room 4218 Humanities.

Part I: Sacred Bodies, Lowly Bodies: The Reformations, Social Maladies, and Absolutism
Week 1: The Reformations
January 22, 24
Lecture 1: Luther, Calvin, and the Catholic Church Debate Bodies
   Catholics and Protestants on Relics, Saints, and their Bodies
Readings to complete before Friday Discussion:

* Read this syllabus thoroughly and be sure to note the paper and exam dates on your calendar. Bring any questions you may have to our Friday discussion section.
* All of the course texts can be found in the Course Reader (sold in 1650 Humanities).

**Week 2: Violence and Unstable Bodies**

**January 27, 29, 31**

Lecture 1: Bodily Harm in the Wars of Religion
Lecture 2: Humors, the One-sex Model, and Understanding the Human Body

Readings for Discussion:

**Week 3: Witches and Absolutism**

**February 3, 5, 7**

Lecture 1: Witches, Bodies, and Social Disease; The Body Politic in Absolutism
Lecture 2: Enacting the Divine Right Monarchy: Bodily Performance and Temporal Power

Readings for Discussion:
  * Part II, Question 1, Chapter 1: Of the several Methods by which Devils through Witches Entice and Allure the Innocent to the Increase of that Horrid Craft and Company, 96-99.
  * Part II, Question 1, Chapter 15: How they [witches]Raise and Stir up Hailstorms and Tempests, and Cause Lightning to Blast both Men and Beasts, 147-149.
* Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger, *The Hammer of Witches* (on the tendency for witches to be women 1486), in *The West in the Wider World: Sources and Perspectives*, Richard
Part II: Defining Boundaries: Rational Minds, Material Bodies, and the Individual
Week 4: Astronomy and Ways of Knowing
February 10, 12, 14
Lecture 1: Heavenly Bodies in the Scientific Revolution
Lecture 2: “I think, therefore I am”: Cartesian Dualism and Locke’s Revisions
Paper I Due at the Start of Discussion
Readings for Discussion:

Week 5: Materialism and Sensibility in the Enlightenment
February 17, 19, 21
Lecture 1: The Original Material Girl: Evolving Sciences of the Body
Lecture 2: Sensitive Bodies and Sensible Minds in the Enlightenment
Readings for Discussion:
Week 6: Climate and Race in the Colonial World
February 24, 26, 28
Lecture 1: Foreign Climates and Nobles Savages
Lecture 2: Hot-Blooded: Conceptualizing Race in the Colonies
Readings for Discussion:

Week 7: Constitutional Monarchies and Social Contracts
March 3, 5, 7
Lecture 2: Discussion
Friday: MIDTERM IN CLASS
Readings for Discussion:

Part III: Embodiment and Regeneration during the French Revolution
Week 8: Imagining the Body Politic
March 10, 12, 14
Lecture 1: Corporate and Individual Bodies: The Estates General and The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen
Lecture 2: Killing the King and the Rebirth of the Body Politic
Readings for Discussion:
1999), 101-104.


Week 9: Embodying Citizenship
March 24, 26, 28
Lecture 1: Gender and Race
Lecture 2: Festivals and Collective Experiences
Readings for Discussion:

Week 10: Human Bodies and Revolutionary Virtues
March 31, April 2, 4
Lecture 1: Secular Saints: Marat and the Panthéon
Lecture 2: Marking Patriotic Bodies
Readings for Discussion:
* Fashion Images from the Journal des Dames (via email)

Part IV: Bodily Regulations, Social Categories, and National Visions in the Nineteenth Century
Week 11: Medicine and Work Regulate the Body
April 7, 9, 11
Lecture 1: New Medical Discourses, Public Health, and Disciplining the Body
Lecture 2: The Separate Spheres Gain Steam: The Industrial Revolution, Work, Bodies, and Gender
Readings for Discussion:
* Michel Foucault, ed. *Herculine Barbin*, vii-xvii, 122-128, 144-146.

Week 12: Classifying and Controlling Bodies
April 14, 16, 18
Lecture 1: Categorizing Deviant Bodies: Prostitution, Hospitals, and Asylums
Lecture 2: Naturalism, Darwinism, and Colonialism
**Paper II Due at the Start of Discussion**
Readings for Discussion:

Week 13: Nationalism, Revolution, and Unification
April 21, 23, 25
Lecture 1: Revolutionary Body Politics - Round Two: France and Italy
Lecture 2: Nationalism, Theories for Unification, Empires: Germany
Readings for Discussion:
* Nelson Moe, “‘This is Africa’: Ruling and Representing Southern Italy, 1860-1861” in Albert Russell Ascoli and Krystyna von Henneberg, eds. *Making and Remaking Italy: The*


Part V: La Belle Époque and World War I: Liberal Imaginings Dismembered

Week 14: Consumption and the Self
April 28, 30, May 2

Lecture 1: Window Licking: Consumption, Fashion, Performativity
Lecture 2: Irrational Shadows: Nietzsche and Freud Theorize the “Self”

Readings for Discussion:

Week 15: The Machine Man’s Revenge: World War I
May 5, 7, 9

Lecture 1: Decimated Bodies, Destroyed Ideals, and World War I
Lecture 2: The Fallout beyond the Trenches: Resuscitating the Body Politic

Readings for Discussion:

FINAL EXAM on Tuesday, May 13, 2014 at 7:25p.m.