

Please note: Draft Syllabus. Some topics may change.

THE HISTORY OF THE BODY IN SCIENCE, MEDICINE, AND CULTURE
History 244/444C

Professor Londa Schiebinger
Office: 27 History (Building 200)
Office Hours: Wed. 1:30-3:00 and by appt.
Contact: Schiebinger@stanford.edu

Spring 2007
Class: Tues., 2:15 PM-4:05 PM
Class location: Bldg. 260, Room 002

Exploring topics in body history from the seventeenth century to the present, we consider the body as both a natural and cultural artifact. We explore, for example, how medical doctors and biologists have studied and understood the body. How, for instance, were sexual hormones discovered in the human body and how was testosterone labeled the "male sex hormone" and estrogen the "female sex hormone," when in fact both sexes require a full complement of both? We analyze the role bodies have played in the "body politic," ranging from the elaborate rituals surrounding king's and queen's bodies in absolutist regimes to the notion that "biology is destiny" in modern democratic societies. We examine how cultural ideals, such as liberty and justice, came to be embodied in feminine icons. We also investigate diverging body aesthetics, looking at ideals of beauty over time and across cultures, ideals of thinness in the West, and foot-binding in China. We also analyze scientific understandings of race and sex and the relation of each of these to health care.

The course takes an interdisciplinary, cross-cultural approach. The literature on this topic is extensive. I have included a list of references at the end of the syllabus so that students can pursue their own interests in papers, etc.

The seminar is organized around selected readings. Students should be prepared to engage in lively discussion of the assigned readings for each class session. One student will be selected (in advance) to initiate our discussion for each class session. This student should situate the reading in the course (suggest what is interesting about the reading and how it brings to light new aspect of the course); critique the reading (suggest what specific points-of-view animate the author, what the author did well, what the author might have done better); pose to the class three questions or topics for discussion.

Undergraduate students will be invited to write a research paper on a topic of his or her choice (maximum 10 pages) and present a report of this research to the class. I will be happy to help students find appropriate topics and to suggest readings. Graduate students will write a 20 page paper. All students will also write 1 two-page book critique. For paper format, please see "paper preparation" on CourseWork.

Book choices are due May 1.

Book critiques are due May 8 (no late papers accepted).

Paper topics (one paragraph plus a short bibliography) are due May 1.

Research papers are due June 9 (no late papers accepted).

Students will present the findings of their research to the class beginning May 22.

Schedule of Meetings:

April 3 Introduction

April 10 I. Sexing and Gendering the Body

Thomas Laqueur, "Amor Veneris, vel Dulcedo Appeletur," *Feminism and the Body*, ed. Londa Schiebinger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Nancy Tuana, "Coming to Understand: Orgasm and the Epistemology of Ignorance," manuscript on CourseWork

Nelly Oudshoorn, "The Birth of Sex Hormones," in *Feminism and the Body*, ed. Schiebinger.

Londa Schiebinger, "Why Mammals are Called Mammals," *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), chap 2.
CourseWork

April 17 (No class)

April 24 II. Embodied Political Ideals

Two books on reserve in Green: look at them.

Charles Cochin and Hubert Gravelot, *Iconologie par figures; ou Traité complet des allégories, emblèmes &c.* (1791; Geneva, 1972). NC248.G62.A5

Cesare Ripa, Cesare, *Iconologia: or, Moral Emblems* N7740 .R513 1971

Read:

Lynn Hunt, "Freedom of Dress in Revolutionary France," *Feminism and the Body*, ed. Schiebinger.

Robert Proctor, *Nazi War on Cancer*, chapters 4-6.

Marina Warner, "The Slipped Chiton," in *Feminism and the Body*, ed. Schiebinger.

May 1 IV. Race. Visitor, Professor Sue Peabody (powerpoint)

Sue Peabody, "'A Nation Born to Slavery': Missionaries and Racial Discourse in Seventeenth-Century French Antilles," *Journal of Social History* 38:1 (2004): 113-126.

Sue Peabody and Tyler Stovall, eds., *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003). Everyone should read the short introduction, then each student should choose a chapter of interest to him or her.

May 8 VIII. Colonialism and the Body

EM Collingham, *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj, 1800-1947* (Cambridge: Polity, 2001).

Sumathi Ramaswamy, "Body Language: The Somatics of Nationalism in Tamil India," *Gender & History* 10 (1998): 78-109. RR

Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire*, chapter 3. CourseWork

May 15 V. Femininities

Jacqueline Urla and Alan Swedlund, "The Anthropometry of Barbie: Unsettling Ideals of the Feminine Body in Popular Culture," in *Feminism and the Body*, ed. Schiebinger.

C. Fred Blake, "Foot-binding in Neo-Confucian China and the Appropriation of Female Labor," in *Feminism and the Body*, ed. Schiebinger.

Harold Koda, *Extreme Beauty: The Body Transformed* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), on reserve. Look at what is of interest to you.

May 22 VI. Masculinities

Janet Browne, "I Could Have Retched All Night: Charles Darwin and His Body," in *Feminism and the Body*, ed. Schiebinger.

Sander Gilman, "The Jew's Foot," in *Feminism and the Body*, ed. Schiebinger.

Sabina Gieske, "Big Man, Little Woman: The Ideal Couple," in *Feminism and the Body*, ed. Schiebinger.

Body Building

May 29 VII. Bodies, Technology, and Design

Urban Design

Cockpit article

Knees—now his and hers

June 5 IX. Paper presentations