

The University of Toronto

NARRATIVES OF THE BODY

German 338H / Fall 2018

Instructor:	JOHN NOYES	Dept:	German
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Hours:	Tuesdays 5-6 Wednesdays 4-5 Or appointment	Tel.:	416-926-2344

Class meets on **Wednesdays from 4:10 to 6:00**

NF 007

DESCRIPTION

What is a body? In what sense is it distinct from the mind? How does the representation of the body relate to bodily control? The ways we choose to answer questions like these have consequences for politics and aesthetics. In this course we will concentrate on the struggles for appropriate theories and representations of the body in late Enlightenment Germany. Our aim will be to develop a wider perspective on the contentious role of body politics today. We will do this by examining the discourses of the body as a problem in German philosophy and literature in the century of emerging modernization.

This course is taught in English, and all of the texts will be read in English.

This is a Low-Paper course. Please submit all work electronically.

REQUIREMENTS / EVALUATION

Attendance and Participation	10%
Summary of philosophical reading	20%
Short assignments	30%
Term paper	40%

MATERIALS

Students will have access to an online course reader including essays and extracts from various philosophies of the body, as well as short stories and plays by Schiller, Kleist, Lessing, Hoffmann, and Jean Paul. Students should purchase a copy of Goethe's *Elective Affinities* in any version.

DETAILS

Attendance and Participation

This course is evaluated according to your readings, written papers, and classroom discussion. You are expected to attend class regularly, and to come punctually and well-prepared. That means having completed the week's reading and being prepared to discuss it. Discussing does not mean always having deep insight or profound things to say. It means being able to formulate what you like and don't like about the reading, what you don't understand, and the questions that arise in your mind when you read. If you know in advance that you will not be able to attend class, please let me know. If you miss more than two classes, you are required to bring a medical report.

Summary of philosophical reading

This comes in 2 parts, each carrying 10% of the total grade:

1. Identify a philosopher writing about the body in the 18th century. Write a two page paper explaining their main ideas.

OR

Identify a philosopher writing about the body today. Write a two page paper explaining their main ideas.

Submit by e-mail by midnight **Wednesday 3 October**.

2. Select a critical article or a chapter in a book dealing with the body in 18th century literature. This can be from our prescribed reading or it can be something you found yourself. Write a two page paper explaining their main ideas.

Submit by e-mail by midnight **Wednesday 15 November**.

Short Assignments

There will be a total of 6 short assignments on the reading, each one page and carrying 5% of the course grade. They are to be submitted electronically before midnight on the following days:

Wednesday 26 September, 10 October, 25 October, 7 November, 21 November, 5 December

Term Paper

I will be meeting with you individually during my office hours toward the end of September. You will come with ideas about what you would like to write your term paper on, and we will arrive at a topic together. It will be graded twice: once on a first draft, and again on your ability to incorporate my comments, criticism and suggestions. Your draft paper will be 6 pages long. Your final paper will be 8 pages long.

Submit draft version electronically by midnight **Wednesday 14 November**. Submit final version electronically by midnight **Wednesday 5 December**.

CALENDAR

Note: The purpose of this calendar is to provide a general idea of how this course is structured. It may be subject to change. A final course syllabus will be provided at the first class session.

Week 1 Sept. 12	The problem of the body today John Fox, "Introduction," <i>Marx, the Body and Human Nature</i> (2015) Students write down one point they find interesting, or worth commenting on and describe in one paragraph what they found interesting or noteworthy about it.
Week 2 Sept. 19	The problem of the body today (continued)
Week 3 Sept. 26	The Mind and the Body. Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz
Assignment 1, Due Sept 26: What do you think are the most important ideas at stake in the mind-body discussion?	
Week 4 Oct. 3	The body and aesthetics in the 18 th century
Week 5 Oct. 10	The legibility of the body: Schiller, <i>Fiesco; or, the Genoese Conspiracy</i>
Assignment 2, Due Oct 10: Note down some of the ways you see Schiller developing the body as a site of struggle. Sketch out some of the terms of this struggle.	
Week 6 Oct. 17	The legible body and the gendered body: Kleist, "Die Marquise von O"
Week 7 Oct. 24	Gender and happiness: Lessing, <i>Emilia Galotti</i>
Assignment 3, Due Oct 24: Referring to the three works you have read so far (Schiller, Kleist, Lessing), note down some of the important issues you have seen concerning gendered bodies.	
Week 8 Oct. 31	The thinking body and the mechanized body: Kleist, "On the Marionette Theatre"; Jean Paul, "Machine Man"
Week 9 Nov. 14	The passionate body and the mechanized body: Hoffmann, "The Sandmann"

Assignment 4, Due Nov 14: List the properties that differentiate machines from human bodies. Which of these seem to be problematic, and why?	
Week 10 Nov. 21	Organic and inorganic bodies: Tieck, "Runenberg"
Assignment 5, Due Nov 20: How is the idea of the organic and the inorganic related to the idea of the mechanized body?	
Week 11 Nov. 28	The gendered body: Goethe, <i>Elective Affinities</i>
Week 12 Dec. 5	The gendered body: Goethe, <i>Elective Affinities</i>
Assignment 6, Due Dec 5: List some of the problems associated with gendered bodies in Goethe.	