

## Does the body have a future? (London, 11-12 Nov 05)

Natalie Warner

### CALL FOR PAPERS

"Does the body have a future?"

A series of international workshops and conferences at  
Birkbeck, University of London, Bloomsbury

Deadline: 1st October 2005

Workshop 1: 'Bodies past': Friday 11th - Saturday 12th November 2005

In concepts as diverse as the cyborg, the questioning of mind/body dualism, the contemporary image of the suicide bomber and the patenting of human genes, we can identify ways in which the future of the human body has become ambiguous. The aim of these three international workshops and conferences, under the aegis of the new Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities, is to explore interdisciplinary answers to the question 'Does the body have a future?' The first of these workshops, 'Bodies past', asks what the past history of the body can tell us about that question. Two further workshops on 'Bodies Present' and 'Bodies Future' will be held in 2006.

This call for papers for the first workshop, 'Bodies past', includes such questions as:

- What ways of thinking about the body have been abandoned, obscured or rejected? Have certain conceptualisations of the body from the past been lost?
- What kinds of bodies from the past have now become defunct?  
Can a particular image or type of body become obsolete?
- Can images, representations and conceptualisations of the body from the past force us to rethink contemporary categories of the body?
- Can revisiting bodies of the past help us critically rethink key modern and postmodern constructions of the human?
- What media and technologies of the body existed in the past?
- What can we learn about representations of the body from our own individual pasts, in our childhoods?

Abstracts are encouraged from a wide range of disciplines, such as history, sociology, psychology, literature, medicine, law, philosophy, film studies and art history. We want to make the workshop genuinely interdisciplinary, rather than multidisciplinary, so that a narrowly discipline-based focus is discouraged. It is important to link specific topics about 'past bodies' to the overall theme of changes in embodiment and the future of the body. Papers should be about twenty minutes in length, with an initial 200-word abstract to be submitted by 1st October 2005.

The 'Bodies past' workshop will begin on Friday evening with a reception and film showing, introduced by Professor Ian Christie of Birkbeck. Concurrent sessions will run on Saturday, with the workshop culminating in a final keynote speaker.

The cost of the workshop is £60, £30 for students, to include a wine reception on Friday, coffees and teas.

Please submit abstracts to Professor Donna Dickenson, Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities: [d.dickenson@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:d.dickenson@bbk.ac.uk).

Bookings for the workshop can be made through Natalie Warner, Institute Administrator:  
[n.warner@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:n.warner@bbk.ac.uk) , who can also advise on accommodation.

Reference:

CFP: Does the body have a future? (London, 11-12 Nov 05). In: ArtHist.net, Aug 24, 2005 (accessed Dec 25, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/27425>>.