

## BODIES (meanings are social)

- We think of bodies as biological
  - skeletons
  - bodies differ
  - positive judgement & negative
- Ethnocentrism
  - meaning your standards are everyone's standards (universal)
  - everyone is ethnocentric
- Body standards vary from place to place
  - Paleolithic "venus" figures
    - From Europe about 25,000 years ago
    - Large women
  - Many cultures consider that being heavier is a good thing
    - sign of wealth and prosperity

**\*\*most cultures, having more weight is desirable\*\***

- Reubenesque
  - Larger women paintings
- French postcards
  - early erotic photos
- Gibson girls turn-of-the-century icons
  - very thin waist
- John Held's flappers
  - very thin; look anorexic
- In Africa & Asia
  - large women are celebrated

**\*fat is valued when it symbolizes wealth and leisure\* ~ Queens**

- Jane Austen's women
  - respectable women but not rich; looking for wealthy husbands
  - wear bonnets because they don't want to be tan
  - if tan, it showed you worked outside and were poor
    - loss of respect
- In many famous nude paintings - women were pale

- Now
  - being tan is a sign that we don't have to work
  - have time to get outside - leisure
    - which means tan lines are sexy
    - leads to fake tanning
  
- Thorstein Veblen
  - famous for writing the sarcastic book The Theory Of The Leisure Class
  - conspicuous consumption
    - consume things that demonstrate your wealth
    - dogs & horses were status symbol - high maintenance
    - women would have elaborate hairstyles
      - servants (status)
    - men carry walking stick
      - proves that you aren't doing anything useful (not working)
    - powdered wig
      - sign of age (wise)
    - high waist
      - look old
  - Today old people wear clothes to make them look younger
  - One's body can be changed
    - medical modification
  - Can look at bodies at achievements
  - Tattoos suggested lower status
  - Marlboro cigarettes used to be for women
    - ad with man holding cigarette with a tattoo
    - Tattoos were signs of criminality
    - Now tattoos are respectable - artistic
  - Bodies become social problems
    - obesity
    - standards shift
      - desirable healthy weight
  - In 1998 the federal gov redefined the BMI range for normal weight
  - Anorexia is also a problem
    - pro-ana sites - celebrate anorexia
  
- Erving Goffman
  - book called The Presentation Of Self In Everyday Life

- dramaturgical perspective - all life can be seen as a theatrical performance
- aspects of performance;
  - appearance
  - demeanor
  - speech, etc.
- Theater: front & backstage regions
  - what people see & what they don't see
- Home: front & back regions
  - living room, bedrooms (tucked away)
- Work:
  - front & back office
- Teams that put on performances
- family members, co-workers, celebrities
  
- Embarrassment from failure to manage one's appearance
  - sense where you have been "found out" in your performance
  - failed in your performance
- People use their bodies to get where they want to be in the world
- World we live in has been made for us by other people according to their standards
- Product of society where you make yourself look desirable according to society