

**The Human Body: A Machine, A Work of Art,
A Temple, A Miracle**

By Angelique Tooley

The Human Body: A Machine, A Work of Art, A Temple, A Miracle

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

Angelique Tooley

Thesis Advisor
Ken Henien

Ken Henien

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

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Abstract

Using photographic illustrations, I displayed a study of what I felt were the four main capabilities of the human body. My four areas study included: a machine, or the body as a functioning mechanism that allows us to move and operate; a work of art made up of lines and shapes working in visual harmony; a miracle, or a reproducer allowing the creation of one human being inside another; and a temple, or the keeper of our emotions, personality, mind, and our soul. I presented these photographs in a Power Point presentation complete with text to further explain the pictures and the concepts they illustrate. Using my photographs and presentation, I wanted to remind people that their bodies are a medium through which they experience their lives. Using my study of some of the body's capabilities, I wanted to express to people how important their body is to determining who they are and what they do in life. I hoped my illustration could induce appreciation and further understanding of the human body that will encourage people to better use and care for their bodies.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Ken Henien for advising me through this project. Ken helped me brainstorm ideas for the project and helped with corrections and suggestions of pictures as the project progressed. He also loaned me his time, equipment, and even musical skills as contributions to my thesis project. He was more than helpful in the creation of this project and I appreciate all he has done.

I would like to thank the following people for posing and modeling for the pictures in my project. Without their help, I would have no project to present. Thank you Elizabeth Curet, Tiara Kincade, Meaghan Molsberry, Shea Parkes, Billy Ratliff, and Ryan Sparrow.

Rationale

My thesis project consists of 51 black and white, digital pictures of the human body presented in a Power Point slideshow. The images are divided into four categories of capabilities of the body. These categories are described in full detail in my abstract and in the slideshow. I chose these four categories because I wanted to show people all the different things the body can do. I thought it would be overwhelming and less thought provoking if I just showed a large number of pictures of the body performing different actions. I decided to take the different concepts I wanted to illustrate and divide them up into a couple groups so people could look at the body, and my thesis, a section at a time. I chose four categories in the end because I wanted to demonstrate a little bit of at least each occupation of the body. After analyzing what my body did for me and the ideas I wanted to portray in my pictures, I came up with four categories.

I chose to do a photography-based thesis project because one emphasis of my major at Ball State is photojournalism. I chose the human body topic from my second emphasis of study in dance and performance. I have learned how to use and position my body in dance classes and how my body works and functions in classes such as anatomy, physiology, and kinesiology. The idea for this project just hit me in anatomy class one day when my anatomy professor was trying to show the class the different muscles of the human body by looking at pictures of body builders. I realized it would be a wonderful challenge to try and demonstrate for people all the knowledge and appreciation I have for the human body in the form of pictures. From there, I took the idea and expanded on it.

I chose to use a Nikon D-100 digital camera for the pictures. The digital format is the easiest and fastest way to capture the images and to electronically edit them. It was the best way to create shareable copies for my professor and to turn in at the end of the project. It is also the

most convenient and durable way to store, organize, and compile the large number of pictures. Because I used the digital format for the pictures, the Power Point presentation was a logical way to present all my digital photos. I also liked that Power Point allows me to add text with the pictures to explain them. It also permits me to add animation and movement to my still photographs. I chose to include animation and motion in my photographs because the body is usually moving; therefore one of the best ways to demonstrate how the body works is to show it performing in its natural fashion. The animations also made it much easier to demonstrate some of the concepts I was trying to express through still photographs. For example, many of the concepts I was illustrating involved how the body moved. The animations demonstrated movements better than the still photographs alone.

I chose to use black and white pictures because it was less distracting. All the pictures were originally taken in color and converted to black and white. I found color to be distracting from my message. Things such as the color of people's skin or the color of the clothes they were wearing distracted from the idea I was trying to depict and sometime added connotations to the image I did not want. I felt the black and white tones help people look at the images more analytically rather than subjectively. The monotone of the pictures was more neutral.

The lighting of the pictures was very important to this project because I wanted to light each picture to emphasize a particular part or occupation of the human body. I wanted it to almost feel like the body was on a stage and a spot light was being cast on the specific parts that were being analyzed. I really tried to look at the body in sections and parts first and then as a whole in the conclusion section of my piece. Another reason for the lighting was to emphasize the body and not the identity of the people. I didn't want people to look at the pictures and say that is a picture of so and so doing such and such. I wanted viewers to look at the pictures and

see a human body performing an action. I hope that this will in turn lead them to make the realization that their body could perform the same action.

Choosing what images to photograph was a large part of the work for this project. As the project progressed, I thought of hundreds of different poses and illustrations to photograph that could be added. I could have made this a life long project if I wanted, but in the interest of time, I tried to limit myself to 5-6 different illustrations per section. Some of these single illustrations consisted of up to 6 pictures for animation purposes. I chose my specific concepts to illustrate for a few reasons. First, they were some of the easiest to illustrate with a camera and lights in the lighting studio. Second, they were capable of being done using the models I could find. There were actually a few more pictures I really wanted to add to the final project, but I couldn't take them because I lacked the necessary models. Thirdly, I didn't want to confuse people by trying to illustrate concepts they didn't understand. I know most people have not studied the body as in-depth as I have and could be very confused if I tried to illustrate certain concepts such as the electrical processes of the body that allow communication between the brain and the rest of the body or the physiological processes that makes a muscle contract. Lastly, I wanted to illustrate concepts that people would relate to and that would provoke them to think about themselves and their own bodies. For example, illustrating that the body digests food and uses the nutrients to produce energy for itself is a concept people could easily relate to and understand on a basic and photographic level.

1  **The Human Body:**

A Machine

A Work of Art

A Temple

A Miracle

2  **Angelique Tooley**

Honors Thesis 2005

3  **A Machine**

The human body performs mechanical, chemical, and electrical processes that keep us alive and functioning.

4  **A Machine**

5  **A Machine**

- The body is also capable of excreting the food that it was unable to use.

6  **A Machine**

- A muscle contraction can apply force in only one direction, so muscles can only perform pulling actions. Muscles require help from another muscle or an external force to elongate.

7  **A Machine**

- Because a muscle can only “pull,” muscles are organized in groups that contribute to perform a range of movements.

8  **A Machine**

- The knee is one of the larger and more complex joints in the body.

9  **A Machine**

- Support and distribute the weight of the body
- Provide leverage for movements such as walking

10  **A Machine**

- Humans are the only animals capable of standing completely erect due to the design of our back and pelvis.

11  **A Work of Art**

The interior of the body may be built like a machine creating function, but the exterior of the body is built like a work of art creating form.

12  **A Work of Art**

- Every body is a beautiful composition of shape, form,

13  **A Work of Art**

- Even the smallest parts of the body can create a unique composition.

14  **A Work of Art**

- Just by changing the position of the body...

15  **A Temple**

The human body allows us to express and store the workings of our mind and soul.

16  **A Temple**

- The body allows us to learn and store all forms of data, and to recall and use that data when needed.

17  **A Temple**

- The body allows us to feel emotions, and communicate emotions to others through body language.

18  **A Temple**

- The body can be used as a tool for practicing faith.

19  **A Miracle**

Our bodies are designed to create, grow, birth, and feed offspring to continue the human race.

20  **A Miracle**

- The human body is capable of initiating the creation of a new human life on its own.

21  **A Miracle**

22  **A Miracle**

- The female body specifically is capable of carrying, birthing, and feeding offspring.

31  **Thank You**

- Ken Heinen-Advisor
- Models
 - Elizabeth Curet

- Tiara Kincade
- Meaghan Molsberry
- Shea Parkes
- Billy Ratliff
- Ryan Sparrow

Honors Thesis Speech

The following is the introductory speech I gave at my thesis presentation to prepare the audience for the presentation and get them into the proper mind set for the images and information they were about to see.

Introduction:

Everyday people perform a variety of activities. People sleep, eat, read, think, walk, do all kinds of activities. Most of us perform these daily activities, without even thinking about them. Most of us don't have to think to do these activities. For example, we don't think about smacking the off button on the alarm clock and rolling out of bed in the morning. We may think about how much we don't want to roll out of bed, but we don't think about how our body performs these actions. I'm going to ask you *now* to think. How are we able to do all these things and more? By using your body. Your body allows you to do all the things you do everyday. Think about what your body is capable of doing. Think about what your body allows you to do. Think of what your body means to you.

In my thesis I have used photography as a medium of study to demonstrate for you what I see are the four main capabilities of the human body. With my pictures, I will portray the body's capabilities as a machine, a work of art, a temple, and a miracle.

The following is the conclusion speech of my presentation. I read this speech allowed during the last slide of my presentation while the audience watched the final pictures to conclude my purpose and ideas.

Conclusion:

Our bodies are a medium, a gift, given to us so we can be who we are. We are all given this same medium through which we are able to experience life. What we do with this gift

determines who we are as an individual. What you experience with this body, what actions you perform with this body, what thoughts and feelings you hold within this body all make you, *you*. Without a body, you couldn't experience things, you couldn't be who you are, and you wouldn't be here now. But, in order to use the body to its fullest potential, we must understand, appreciate, care for, and be aware of our own bodies. Then we will truly be able to live.

Honors College Project Proposal

Angelique Tooley

303-06-08752

Project Title: The Human Body: A Machine, A Work of Art, A Miracle, A Temple

1. The Honors project should broaden your educational experience through independent work that adds to your knowledge and develops your talents. How will your project help you accomplish these objectives and add to your personal goals? Why, in short, do you want to do this project?

I started my college career with a photojournalism major and a dance minor. As time progressed I changed my mind about what I wanted to do with my life and decided that after college I wanted to go into the field of massage therapy along with yoga and spa work. It was a little late in my college career to change my major entirely, and there is no massage therapy major at Ball State, so I decided to switch to a general studies major with my photojournalism and dance as emphases. I decided to use all this knowledge and experience I gained at college in the fields of photography, dance, and health courses to help me study something that would be beneficial to me in my future plans. I chose to use my photography as a medium to study the human body and its parts and functions. This project will help me use my knowledge of photography to demonstrate my knowledge of the human body and how it works, while also helping me learn more about the body for future use.

2. I plan to sign up for HONORS 499 in the Fall 2004 semester.

3. What will be the outcome of this project?

In completion, this project shall be a series of digital pictures displayed in a slideshow format with a brief description of each picture illustrating what area of the body it is portraying and why I chose to use that body part. I will have a formal presentation of the final project where I can personally present the slideshow and explain the pictures. I should have around 20-35 pictures in total. If time and money permits I would like to also try and have prints made of the pictures with written descriptions for display somewhere on campus.

4. Objectives or Thesis

I will use photographic illustrations to display four different perceptions of the human body that I feel are important. My perceptions include: a machine, or the body as a functioning mechanism that allows us to move and operate; a work of art made up of lines and shapes working in harmony; a miracle, or a reproducer allowing the creation of one human being inside another; and a temple, or the keeper of our emotions, personality, mind, and our soul. My audience will be universal because I believe most people today take their bodies for granted, and I believe my project might help remind people that their body is a gift that needs care.

5. Project Description

I will be using about 30 different pictures of people's bodies to illustrate each of the four perspectives. The pictures will be taken digitally in the photojournalism studio in the Art and Journalism building. I will have to plan my shots, find the people to pose for the pictures, light them, edit the pictures, and compile the slideshow with the proper description for each picture. I plan on editing all the pictures to be in black and white with solid black backdrops. The pictures will all be of either individual body parts such as a leg or foot, or a combination of body parts that work together such as the arm, shoulder, and back. None of the pictures will show a person's entire face or body. I don't want people to look at these pictures and see a person, I want them to see the human body and the sum of its parts. I am trying to illustrate that though everyone is different, everyone's bodies are composed of water, tissues, and cells allowing us to operate, breath, and live irregardless of gender, race, or ethnicity.

The pictures I will take to illustrate the body as a machine will focus on the engineering of the body's structure, such as the hand, the knee joint, and the shoulder joint. I will work with blur shots and stop action shots to show the range of movement and the capabilities of these joints.

The pictures I will take to illustrate the body as a work of art will consist mostly of pictures of the human form. I want to show how the body is compiled of numerous shapes and lines all working in harmony to display a work of art. My biggest inspiration for these shots will be ancient Greek and Roman art. The Greeks and the Romans loved the beauty of the human form. They used it frequently in paintings and especially in sculpture. I plan on taking pictures that mimic some of this artwork. For example, the attitude pose from the statue of the God Hermes and the foot from the artwork of athletes and Achilles.

The pictures I will take to illustrate the body as a miracle will focus on the creation of human life from the joining of two cells inside the body that are fed, incubated, and multiplied to produce another living organism. I want to use pictures of a pregnant woman's belly, pictures of the woman's body that is designated for childbirth such as the hips, and pictures of small babies' body parts such as hands and feet.

Finally, the last section I will take pictures to illustrate is the human body as a temple. The focus of these pictures will be to show our body as the temple that houses and protects our emotions, our mind, and our soul. These pictures will be the most artistic of the project because they will be my interpretations of showing the body housing the mind and soul. Right now I am envisioning for this part of the project silhouettes, pictures of hands, and pictures of the eyes.

6. State the importance of this project.

The importance of this project to me is to become more familiar with the body, its parts, its function, and its uses. In my future career I will be working with other people's bodies, as well as my own, everyday. Having this information on the human body will allow me to help myself and others appreciate the human body and care for it properly. I also hope that other people will take away from this project a sense of appreciation of their bodies and everything it does for them.

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