The body is a big sagacity, a plurality with one sense, a war and a peace, a flock and a shepherd.
-Friedrich Nietzsche

The human body has continued to captivate intellectuals of the arts and sciences throughout history, whether through an aesthetic or physiological study of its structural form and internal mechanisms or in an attempt to comprehend the complexities of the mind that reside within the biological machine. Literature, art, music, film, and storytelling often turn our attention to these ideas of the body, and their inquiries into the physical body and the mind have framed our universal conceptions of health and disease while also giving rise to myriad variations on the notions of bodily normality and abnormality. The body becomes a receptacle for our non-corporeal collective and individual identities, divisions, and prejudices. Sick or well, beautiful or ugly, powerless or powerful, the body is the site of competing visions that structure our perceptions of its physical form and its philosophical and social signification. While we frequently favor the “normal” and thereby reject the “abnormal”, it is the bodily abnormalities that best explore and question our definitions and interpretations of the body. Reflection on these bodily deviations not only elucidates what we consider to be normal and why, but it also destabilizes conventional distinctions between the typical and the atypical, between conformity and deviancy. The 23rd Annual Symposium of the Graduate Association of French and Italian Students seeks to investigate various representations of the deformed or deviant body in order to explore what constitutes our formulation of health (normality) and disease (abnormality).

We welcome submissions from all applicable disciplines that shed light on the ways in which we can “reform” our general conceptions of the body through the lens of the deviant or otherwise “deformed” body.
Suggested topics include, but are not limited to:

**The Sick Body:**
- Physical illnesses, epidemics, disabilities, doctors and medicine
- Mental illnesses, neuroses, psychoses, the mentally ill as Other, treatment, therapy, the fragmentation of the self
- Medical or societal definitions of the healthy and unhealthy human body

**The Ugly Body:**
- Aesthetic conceptions of the body in artistic, visual, literary and cinematographic forms
- Physical deformities, monstrosities, the grotesque
- Fragmentation, bodily manipulation or transformation

**The Sexual Body:**
- Queer studies and the queering of the body, sexuality, transsexuality
- Gender studies, Woman as Other, masculinities and feminities, social or physical gendered roles
- Eroticism, fetishism, masochism

**The Powerless Body:**
- Crimes against the individual, crimes against humanity, genocide, persecution, destruction of the body
- Politics, authority, regulation of the body
- Effects of colonialism, occupation, wars on the body

We invite abstracts in English ranging from 200 – 250 words that relate to or expand upon the topics suggested above. Papers will be limited to 20 minutes and must be presented in English. In your abstract, please include name, email address, academic affiliation, and AV requests. Along with your abstract submission, please suggest the category or categories to which you feel your submission is best suited.

Please address inquiries and abstract submissions to Theresa Pesavento and Tina Petraglia at gafissymposium2010@gmail.com. Abstracts must be received no later than February 1st, 2010. For further information, please visit http://frit.lss.wisc.edu and click on the GAFIS link.