

**GWS/ANTH/SOC/CPH 487**  
**FEMINIST INTERPRETATIONS OF HEALTH**  
**Professor Monica J. Casper**  
**Fall 2013**



**COURSE TITLE AND NUMBER**

GWS / ANTH / SOC / CPH 487

“Feminist Interpretations of Health”

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSE**

This course examines “health” as a site of social, biopolitical, cultural, and moral concern for feminist theory and activism. We will investigate how “concerns” for and about health are framed and interpreted, by whom, and for what ends, while simultaneously unpacking the concept of “health” and related terms. The course is especially focused on the ways that “women’s health” has been constructed and deployed, and the ways that health intersects with feminist and other struggles for social justice. The course begins with feminist theories of health and then moves through various feminist configurations and articulations of health. Topics include the history of women’s health, discursive and geographic circulations of health materials, sexual and reproductive technologies, social movements organized around health, cultural representations (and specifically documentary films), and local/global health practices. Throughout, we will be attentive to the ways sexuality, gender, class, race, ethnicity, (dis)ability, geography, and “difference” writ large are constructed through women’s health practices and feminist critiques. What, we ask, can “feminist interpretations of health” tell us about both health and feminism?

**LOCATION AND TIME**

Tuesday / Thursday 2 – 3: 15 PM

Physics & Atmospheric Sciences Bldg. (PAS) 414

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Professor Monica J. Casper

GWS 110

925 N. Tyndall Avenue

Tucson, AZ 85721

(520) 626-9158

mjcasper@email.arizona.edu

[www.monicajcasper.com](http://www.monicajcasper.com)

Office Hours: Thursdays 11 AM – Noon; by appointment



## EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, you should:

- Understand and be able to define key terms (e.g., health, feminism, embodiment)
- Know key definitions, categories, critiques, theorists, and controversies that comprise “feminist interpretations of health”
- Understand and be able to discuss at least one health “problem” using a feminist lens
- Comprehend and compare various discursive and cultural representations of health
- Situate “health” and “feminism” within broader historical, social, political, and cultural frameworks
- Situate “women’s health” and “bodies” within broader historical, social, political, and cultural frameworks
- Discuss the possibilities and limits of “feminism” and “feminist theory” for conceptualizing and critiquing health
- Explore new frontiers for your own engagement with feminisms and health

## REQUIRED TEXTS

There are four required books in this course available from the UA Bookstore:

Davis, Kathy. 2007. *The Making of Our Bodies, Ourselves: How Feminism Travels Across Borders*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Ehrenreich, Barbara and Deirdre English. 2011 [1969]. *Complaints and Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Feminist Press at CUNY.

Murphy, Michelle. 2012. *Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Feminism, Health, and Technoscience*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Turshen, Meredith. 2007. *Women's Health Movements: A Global Force for Change*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

There are also several required articles available on D2L.

And a few recommended books:

Bell, Susan E. 2009. *DES Daughters, Embodied Knowledge, and the Transformation of Women's Health Politics in the Late Twentieth Century*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Boston Women's Health Book Collective. 2011. *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. Touchstone.

Clarke, Adele E. and Virginia L. Olesen. 1998. *Revisioning Women, Health and Healing: Feminist, Cultural, and Technoscience Perspectives*. Routledge.

Roberts, Dorothy. 2012. *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Crete Race in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: New Press.

Schulz, Amy J. and Leith Mullings, eds. 2005. *Gender, Race, Class, and Health: Intersectional Approaches*. Jossey-Bass.

Solinger, Rickie. 2013. *Reproductive Politics: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press.

White, Evelyn C., ed. 1994. *The Black Women's Health Book: Speaking For Ourselves*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Seal Press

### **COURSE FORMAT AND TEACHING METHODS**

This course is a seminar with in-class discussion. D2L will be utilized as a supplement to classroom learning.

### **REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED KNOWLEDGE**

This is an upper-division "senior" seminar. Students are expected to have strong analytical, reading, and writing skills. Prior exposure to concepts in Gender and Women's Studies will be presumed; GWS-305 "Feminist Theories" or a similar course is strongly encouraged.

## ASSIGNMENTS

*Note: One point = one percent*

1. **Class Participation.** As you might expect, in an intense advanced seminar it is imperative that you attend all class meetings. We will be covering a great deal of intellectually demanding material and attempting to engage it as fully as possible; therefore your committed participation is crucial. Active participation—that is, not just showing up, but being prepared to discuss the readings and ideas and actually discussing them—will be worth 10% of your final grade.

10 points	Perfect attendance; quality contribution every class meeting
9 points	Enthusiastic, well-prepared participation at least 28 times
8 points	Thoughtful and reasonably prepared at least 24 times
7 points	Adequate verbal/written engagement at least 20 times
6 points	Semi-attentive, minimally participatory at least 16 times
5 points	Disinterested, uncommunicative presence at least 12 times
4 points	Distinterested, uncommunicative presence at least 8 times
3 points	Distinterested, uncommunicative presence at least 6 times
2 points	Distinterested, uncommunicative presence at least 4 times
1 point	Distinterested, uncommunicative presence at least 2 times
0 points	Never showed up

2. **Discussion Board.** Throughout the first half of the semester, there will be 5 discussion board forums on D2L, focused on topics related to the readings. You are required to post to each of these forums, dialoguing with your colleagues about the material. Each discussion is worth 6% of your grade (30% total). A grading rubric for discussion posts is available on D2L. To receive full credit for each post, you must respond to the original question, as well as any follow-up questions posed by your classmates, in sufficient depth and quantity to indicate that you've read and are engaging with the material. When responding to posts, use people's names so that we know what issues/concerns you're following up on. Questions will be posted on Tuesdays after class on the following dates: 9/10, 9/24, 10/1, 10/8, and 10/22. **Responses will be due on Friday by midnight on 9/13, 9/27, 10/4, 10/11, and 10/25.** After each forum closes, no new posts will be accepted although the forum will still be visible.
3. **Mid-Term.** The mid-term will be distributed on October 15. It will be a take-home exam comprised of three short essay questions based on material covered up until that point. The mid-term answers should be typed, proofed, and double-spaced. These should be submitted to me via D2L or email **no later than class time on October 22**. The mid-term is worth 15% of your final grade.
4. **Final Project:** Each student will be required to submit a final project in this course, chosen from among the following three options:

A. **JOURNAL.** Option 1 is to create a journal selecting a specific health problem, technology, or “disease” to focus on throughout the semester. The idea here is that you will choose something to reflect upon throughout the course, such as HIV/AIDS or genital surgery or mandatory vaccination or the Pill. The journal should take account of your chosen topic through the various theoretical lenses and perspectives we’ll engage in class. The journal can take any form you choose (including digital), but it should offer critical reflection alongside creativity. You may integrate narrative, images, essays, journal entries, creative writing, poetry, news coverage, media, objects, and/or other materials into your journal. You will give an oral presentation about your journal during one of our final class sessions. Journal topics will be due by October 17. The journal is worth 45% of your grade and will be **due on or before December 10**. No late assignments will be accepted.

- OR -

B. **ANALYTICAL PAPER.** Option 2 is to write a 15-page analytical paper on a topic related to the course. The paper could do any of the following: analyze a specific “disease,” issue, or health problem using literature and ideas from the course; analyze a topic related to your own thesis or applied research, but using material/ideas from the course; offer a synthetic, critical review of several readings from class; innovate theory in the field of feminist health studies; or anything else you choose and I approve. You will give an oral presentation about your paper during one of our final class sessions. Topics will be due by October 17. The analytical paper is worth 45% of your grade and will be **due on or before December 10**. Note that I am willing to review drafts of the paper with enough advance notice. Papers should be typed, double-spaced, and formatted consistently throughout (in CMS, APA, or MLA style). No late assignments will be accepted.

- OR -

C. **CRITICAL BOOK REVIEW.** Option 3 is to write a 15-page critical book review that incorporates ideas and material from the class. Your review should offer an intellectual, theoretical engagement with the book you’ve chosen, first providing a summary and then analyzing the book through a “feminist health studies” lens. I would expect that the review would demonstrate a firm grasp of the book’s content, while also illustrating your knowledge of ideas, theories, and theorists of feminism and health. You may select for review one of the books listed below, or a book of your own choosing that I approve. Your topic/book will be due by October 17. You will give an oral presentation about your paper during one of our final class sessions. The book review is worth 45% of your grade and will be **due on or before December 10**. Reviews should be typed, double-spaced, and formatted consistently throughout (in CMS, APA, or MLA style). No late assignments will be accepted.

### Books eligible for review:

- Bell, Susan E. 2009. *DES Daughters, Embodied Knowledge, and the Transformation of Women's Health Politics in the Late Twentieth Century*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Joffe, Carole. 2010. *Dispatches from the Abortion Wars: The Costs of Fanaticism to Doctors, Patients, and the Rest of Us*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Morgan, Lynn. 2009. *Icons of Life: A Cultural History of Human Embryos*. Berkeley: UC Press.
- Roberts, Dorothy. 1998. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. New York: Vintage.
- Silliman, Jael, Marlene Gerber Fried, Loretta Ross, and Elena Gutierrez, eds. *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice*. South End Press.

### GRADING POLICY/DISTRIBUTION

Class Participation	10%
Discussion Board Posts (5 x 6%)	30%
Mid-Term	15%
Final Project	45%
Total	100%

#### Grading scale:

- A = 90% and higher
- B = 80-89.9%
- C = 70-79.9%
- D = 60-69.9%
- E = less than 60%

Also see: <http://catalog.arizona.edu/policies/984/grade.htm>

Requests for incompletes (I) and withdrawals (W) must be made in accordance with university policies, which are available at <http://catalog.arizona.edu/2012-13/policies/grade.htm#I> and <http://catalog.arizona.edu/2012-13/policies/grade.htm#W> respectively.

### HONORS CREDIT

Students wishing to contract this course for Honors Credit should email me to set up an appointment to discuss the terms of the contract and to sign the Honors Course Contract Request Form. The form is available at <http://www.honors.arizona.edu/documents/students/ContractRequestFrom.pdf>.

## **LATE WORK POLICY**

As a rule, work will not be accepted late except in cases of documented emergency or illness. You may petition me in writing for an exception if you feel you have a compelling reason for turning work in late.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

UA's policy concerning Class Attendance and Administrative Drops is available at: <http://catalog.arizona.edu/2012-13/policies/classatten.htm>.

The UA policy regarding absences on and accommodation of religious holidays is available at: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/religiousobservanceandpractice>.

Absences pre-approved by the UA Dean of Students (or Dean designee) will be honored. See: [http://uhap.web.arizona.edu/chapter\\_7#7.04.02](http://uhap.web.arizona.edu/chapter_7#7.04.02).

Participating in the course and attending seminar and other course events are vital to the learning process. As such, attendance is required at all scheduled class meetings. Students who miss class due to illness or emergency are required to bring documentation from their healthcare provider or other relevant, professional third parties. Failure to submit third-party documentation will result in unexcused absences.

## **CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR**

To foster a positive learning environment, students may not text, chat, make phone calls, play games, read the newspaper, or surf the web during class. Students are asked to refrain from disruptive conversations with people sitting around them. Students observed engaging in disruptive activity will be asked to cease this behavior. Students who continue to disrupt the class will be asked to leave lecture or discussion and may be reported to the Dean of Students. Bottom line: don't be a jerk.

Some learning styles are best served by using personal electronics, such as laptops and iPads. These devices can be distracting to other learners. Therefore, people who prefer to use electronic devices for note-taking during class should use one side of the classroom.

The Arizona Board of Regents' Student Code of Conduct, ABOR Policy 5-308, prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the University community, including to one's self. See: <http://policy.arizona.edu/threatening-behavior-students>.

## **NOTIFICATION OF OBJECTIONABLE MATERIALS**

This course includes material about bodies, health, sexuality, and reproduction. Although course content may be deemed offensive by some students, such materials are important for the learning process. Students are not excused from interacting with such materials, but they are certainly encouraged to express well-formed opinions that express those objections and their reasons for them.

## **ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

It is the University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. You are also welcome to contact Disability Resources (520-621-3268) to establish reasonable accommodations. For additional information on Disability Resources and reasonable accommodations, please visit <http://drc.arizona.edu/>.

If you have reasonable accommodations, please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss accommodations and how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate.

Please be aware that the accessible table and chairs in this room should remain available for students who find that standard classroom seating is not usable.

## **STUDENT CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are encouraged to share intellectual views and discuss freely the principles and applications of course materials. However, graded work/exercises must be the product of independent effort unless otherwise instructed. Students are expected to adhere to the UA Code of Academic Integrity as described in the UA General Catalog. See: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity>.

The University Libraries have some excellent tips for avoiding plagiarism available at: <http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html>.

According to Section D (6) (a) of the University's Intellectual Property Policy (which is available at [http://www.ott.arizona.edu/uploads/ip\\_policy.pdf](http://www.ott.arizona.edu/uploads/ip_policy.pdf)), faculty own the intellectual property for their course notes and course materials. The instructor holds the copyright to his/her lectures and course materials, including student notes or summaries that substantially reflect them. Student notes and course recordings are for individual use or for shared use on an individual basis. *Selling class notes and/or other course materials to other students or to a third party for resale is not permitted without the instructor's express written consent.* Violations to the instructor's copyright are subject to the Code of Academic Integrity and may result in course sanctions. Additionally, students who use D2L or UA email to sell or buy these copyrighted materials are subject to Code of Conduct Violations for misuse of student email addresses.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS**

- 1) UA Non-discrimination and Anti-harassment policy:  
<http://policy.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/Nondiscrimination.pdf>
- 2) UA Academic policies and procedures are available at:  
<http://catalog.arizona.edu/2012-13/policies/aaindex.html>
- 3) Student Assistance and Advocacy information is available at:  
<http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/studentassistanceandadvocacy>

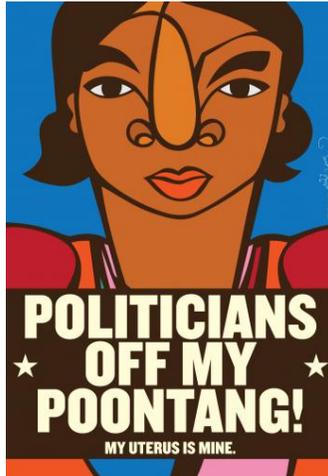
## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

<http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/ferpa/default.htm>

## **SUBJECT TO CHANGE STATEMENT**

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policy, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**



August 27

Course Business  
Introductions  
Overview of Syllabus

## **THEORIES**

August 29

Leith Mullins and Amy J. Schulz, 2005, "Intersectionality and Health: An Introduction," in D2L

Marcia Inhorn, 2006, "Defining Women's Health: A Dozen Messages from More Than 150 Ethnographies," in D2L

September 3

Adele E. Clarke and Virginia L. Olesen, 1998, "Revising, Diffracting, Acting," in D2L

Marcia C. Inhorn and K. Lisa Whittle, 2001, "Feminism Meets the 'New' Epidemiologies: Toward an Appraisal of Antifeminist Biases in Epidemiological Research on Women's Health," in D2L

September 5

Nancy Tuana, 2006, “The Speculum of Ignorance: The Women’s Health Movement and Epistemologies of Ignorance,” in D2L

Gillian Einstein and Margrit Shildrik, 2009, “The Postconventional Body: Rethorizing Women’s Health,” in D2L

Tasha Dubriwny, 2013, “Theorizing Postfeminist Health,” in D2L

## HISTORIES

September 10

Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, *Complaints and Disorders*, pp. 1-93

**Due: Journal/Paper/Review Topics**

September 12

Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, *Complaints and Disorders*, pp. 94-173

September 17

Jessica Arons and Madina Agénor, 2010, “Separate and Unequal: The Hyde Amendment and Women of Color,” in D2L

Hampshire College, PopDev Program, “Population Perspectives in Context,” in D2L

September 19

No Class—Professor Casper out of town.

## CIRCULATIONS

September 24

Kathy Davis, *The Making of Our Bodies, Ourselves*, pp. ix-81

September 26

Kathy Davis, *The Making of Our Bodies, Ourselves*, pp. 82-165

October 1

Kathy Davis, *The Making of Our Bodies, Ourselves*, pp. 166-212

## TECHNOLOGIES

October 3

Adele E. Clarke and Monica J. Casper, 1996, "From Simple Technology to Complex Arena: Classification of Pap Smears, 1917-90," in D2L

*or*

Monica J. Casper and Adele E. Clarke, 1998, "Making the Pap Smear Into the 'Right Tool' for the Job: Cervical Cancer Screening in the U.S., circa 1940-95," in D2L

October 8

Monica J. Casper and Laura M. Carpenter, 2008, "Sex, Drugs and Politics: The HPV Vaccine for Cervical Cancer," in D2L

*or*

Laura M. Carpenter and Monica J. Casper, 2009, "A Tale of Two Technologies: HPV Vaccination, Male Circumcision, and Sexual Health," in D2L

*or*

Laura M. Carpenter and Monica J. Casper, 2009, "Global Intimacies: Innovating the HPV Vaccine for Women's Health," in D2L

October 10

Kara W. Swanson, 2009, "Human Milk as Technology and Technologies of Human Milk: Medical Imaginings in the Early Twentieth Century United States," in D2L

*or*

Narin Hassan, 2010, "Milk Markets: Technology, the Lactating Body, and New Forms of Consumption," in D2L

October 15

Bree Kessler, 2009, "Recruiting Wombs: Surrogates as the New Security Moms," in D2L

*or*

Dorothy E. Roberts, 2009, "Race, Gender, and Genetic Technologies: A New Reproductive Dystopia?" in D2L

**Mid-Term Distributed**

## MOVEMENTS

October 17

Meredeth Turshen, *Women's Health Movements: A Global Force for Change*, pp. xi-60

October 22

Meredeth Turshen, *Women's Health Movements: A Global Force for Change*, pp. 61-153

**Due: Mid-Term**

October 24

Meredeth Turshen, *Women's Health Movements: A Global Force for Change*, pp. 154-219

## REPRESENTATIONS

October 29

In-Class Viewing: [Rachel's Daughters](#), by Allie Light and Irving Saraf

October 31

In-Class Viewing: [Jane: An Abortion Service](#), by Kate Kirtz and Nell Lundy

[NB: Video streaming into the classroom at 2:05 PM, so please be on time]

November 5

In-Class Viewing: [No Woman, No Cry](#), by Christy Turlington Burns

November 7

No Class—Professor Casper out of town.

## ENTANGLEMENTS

November 12

Michelle Murphy, *Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Feminism, Health, and Technoscience*, pp. vii-24

November 14

Michelle Murphy, *Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Feminism, Health, and Technoscience*, pp. 25-67

November 19

Michelle Murphy, *Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Feminism, Health, and Technoscience*, pp. 68-101

November 21

Michelle Murphy, *Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Feminism, Health, and Technoscience*, pp. 102-149

November 26

Michelle Murphy, *Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Feminism, Health, and Technoscience*, pp. 150-181

November 28

**No class—Thanksgiving**

## **CONCLUSIONS**

December 3

Final Projects

December 5

Final Projects

December 10

Final Projects  
Wrap-Up

**Due: Final Projects (Journals, Papers, Reviews)**