GSWS 318-4 SPECIAL TOPICS IN GSWS: FAT STUDIES: ‘ADIPOSSIBILITIES’ OF FEMINIST FAT STUDIES

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Lecture: Wednesdays 9:30 - 13:20; AQ 4140

Course Description:
As a locus of privilege, discrimination, subjectivity, and sociability, fat reveals intersections of gender, sex, sexuality, race, class, ability, place, and history. This course unpacks fatness, employing feminist and queer theories of embodiment, difference, subjectivity, and social justice. We critically examine valuations of fat, “adipose tissue” (the anatomical term for fat), and body weight, shape, size, and composition, all of which are heavily circumscribed by science, medicine, society, and culture. We explore weightism, fatphobia, fat acceptance, health at every size, “obesity,” BMI, media and popular representations, moral panics, dietary guidelines, “disorders”, and other phenomena of interest to students. Recognizing the topical and controversial nature of fatness as well as the role of GSWS in transforming students into critical advocates for social change, assignments encourage students to engage in public dialogues by considering the ‘adipossibilities’ of feminist approaches to fat.

At the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Describe various feminist approaches to fat and critically analyze intersections of fatness with gender, sex, race, class, and ability
2. Engage in important public debates regarding fat, obesity, weightism, and social justice
3. Reflect upon their own assumptions about fatness vis-à-vis feminist perspectives

Educational Goals:
I Display disciplinary knowledge of core concepts of gender and sexuality.
For more detailed information please see the GSWS website: http://www.sfu.ca/gsws/courses/Educational_Goals.html

Course Texts and Courseware:
Selected readings will be posted to Canvas.

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
1. 15% Participation and attendance
2. 25% Opinion editorial; due week 4 Write a ~1200 word opinion-editorial about a contemporary issue related to fatness from feminist perspectives learned in the course
3. 25% Media Review Write a ~1200 word review of a representation of fatness in media from feminist perspectives learned in the course; due week 8
4. 35% Group or Individual Final Project
   Group Action Plan: In groups of 4-5, develop a 15-20 page action plan to transform fat politics at organization, government, or societal levels. Give a 30-minute presentation of your action plan in week 13.
   OR
   Individual Art/Expression Piece: Develop an art, expression, or performance piece that engages with fat issues addressed in the course

Prerequisite: 30 units, including 3 units in GSWS or WS or GDST.