WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAM

SPRING 1992   MARY MADSEN
EVENING       Lec. Tue. 18:30-20:20
              Tut. Tue. 20:30-21:20

W.S. 001-3

ISSUES IN WOMEN'S HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE

This course looks at Western medicine and our modern health care system - how it happened, how it shapes our views of health, disease, and the kinds of medical treatment women receive. A feminist, historical perspective documents the decline of women healers with the rise of male "experts" as the health care authorities. Modern medicine is almost exclusively a masculine domain (women comprise only 10% of North America's medical practitioners), yet women have become the major consumers of a health care system that doesn't meet their needs - women average 25% more visits to the doctor than men; take 50% more prescription drugs than men; and are admitted to hospitals much more frequently than men. This increasing ratio of women patients reflects not only the inadequate care women receive, but the need for a re-examination of the whole North American approach to health care generally and specifically to the need for increased control and responsibility by women for their own health.

The course is divided into three sections:

PART I: A FEMINIST SOCIOLOGY OF MEDICINE.

1. The Historical Perspective: Women as Healers
2. Medical Ideology
3. The Drug Industry: Profits, Politics and Victims
4. Medical Research: Male Prestige
5. Iatrogenic Diseases: Medically-Caused Illnesses

PART II: WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUES.

6. Contraceptive Choice
7. Birth Control - Political Perspectives
8. Birth Control - Personal Choices
9. The P.M.S. Controversy
10. Menopause: Treatment of Natural Female Processes

PART III: INFORMED CHOICE.

11. Women's Health Collectives
12. Alternative Health Resources
13. Self-Help and Collective Power

And possible visit to Women's Health Collective (over)
REQUIRED READING


Worcester, Nancy and Marianne H. Whatley (ed), Women's Health: Readings on Social, Economic and Political Issues, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison, 1988

ASSIGNMENTS

15% Attendance, Participation and Readings
30% Health Journal
30% Research Paper, 10-12 pages
25% Final Exam - in examination period

THIS COURSE MAY BE APPLIED TO THE CERTIFICATE IN LIBERAL ARTS

Note * This course does not count toward the WS minor.

TUTORIALS WILL BE HELD DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASSES