Women’s Studies Department
Simon Fraser University
Fall 1997

W.S. 204-3 Women, Science and Technology (S & T) Marilyn MacDonald
Day - Burnaby Campus

The use of science as a way of knowing has changed radically from the Middle East and Meso America
of five thousand years ago, through its waxing and waning in the Aegean, in China, and in India, to the
current pan-global situation. This change has occurred in terms of the ideology, the body of accepted
knowledge, and the institutions (both formal and informal) of science; and has co-evolved with changes in
technology.

Historically and currently, women have been and are active participants in science, but only after
overcoming numerous barriers. In the first stages of a feminist analysis of S & T, we discover our
foremother practitioners. In the second stage, we looked for space for women in the existing structures.
Now we question the nature of S & T, and how it fits within a more holistic and equitable world view.

In the 1990’s, science and technology are equated with prosperity, progress, power and security, and a
relatively small elite make decisions that affect all aspects of our lives. By understanding the relation of
gender to science, engineering and technology, we can move toward their transformation and reclamation.

This course examines some of the social, political and economic consequences for women of the
development of a global system of science and technology. A survey of feminist critiques of this system
will focus on such topics as the place of science in education, the evaluation of the appropriateness of
technologies, the nature of evidence, and strategies for empowerment in relation to research and
development.

Required reading:
Press. ISBN 0919-890962

ISBN 0253-208106

Evaluation:
Journal (tbd) 15%
Research Paper (10-12 pages) 25%
Presentation 10%
Midterm test 20%
Interview 10%
Case History Analysis (in class) 5%
Final examination (scheduled) 15%

Designated credit:
This course may be designated 3 (elective) lower division credits in Engineering Science.

Students may apply to the Communication Department to have this course designated as 3 lower division
credits toward their lower division major requirements.