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Course Description:
In the 1992 book: Risk society: Towards a new modernity, Ulrich Beck discusses power in developed countries as the ability of an individual and of society, to control their exposure to risk. He also introduces gender as a dimension from which to analyse risk.

Beginning with theories from the field of feminist science studies this course we will explore the concept of gendered risk and the governance of the body. More specifically we will try to answer questions of how gender is situated within a ‘risk society’ and how these assumptions regarding who is responsible for the individual body are enacted via science, societal norms and public policy. Several case studies we will be used to explore the following sample questions:

- How has risk discourse labelled breast cancer as an individual responsibility and how has this influenced corporate and public policy?
- How have scientific and cultural norms influenced international policies regarding assisted reproduction and abortion?
- How have risk ideologies influenced the introduction of vaccines, in particular the HPV vaccine and the connection to STIs and cancer?
- How do sociobiological and cultural ideas influence our norms and laws regarding gendered violence?
- What risks are associated with pregnancy and how does individual agency affect groups such as young teenage mothers?

Course Texts and Courseware:


(Additional readings will be available online)

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
Exam 20 %
Annotated Bibliography and Paper Proposal 30%
Case Study Paper 30%
Final Exam 20%

Prerequisite: 30 units