WS 302-4 – Special Topic: Gender and Health

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Lecture: Tuesdays AQ 3159 8:30 am – 12:20 pm
Thursdays AQ 3003 8:30 am – 12:20 pm
Office hours: Thursdays 13:00 – 14:00 AQ 5092

Course Description:
This course explores gender and health from a feminist intersectional perspective, noting the ways in which ‘health’ is shaped by gender as well as race, class, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, and so on. We begin with an examination of the gender politics of medicine from a historical perspective and go on to consider the sexual division of health care today. We then explore a range of contemporary issues in gender and health including: gender and the pharmaceutical industry, gender and health inequalities, health and environmental racism, and the identity politics of health movements. After noting impressive gains made by grassroots movements such as the women’s health and HIV/AIDS movements, we end by critically assessing the shift towards corporate sponsored health movements, for example, the ‘pink ribbon’ breast cancer movement.

Course Texts and Courseware:
Courseware package

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
Participation 20 % (includes attendance, class participation, and a class presentation)
Midterm 25 % (In Class 6)
Research Essay 30 %
Final Take Home Review Essay 25 % (Due in Class 12)

Course:
Class 1: Introduction
Class 2: The Gender Politics of the Professionalization of Health Care: Doctors Versus Midwives
Class 3: Mid Century Gender and Medical Control
Class 4: The Sexual Division of Health Care
Class 5: New Reproductive Technologies
Class 6: In Class Midterm Exam
Class 7: Gender and Big Pharma
Class 8: The Feminization and Racialization of Health Inequalities
Class 9: Environmental Racism and Health
Class 10: The Rise of Health Movements
Class 11: From Grassroots to Corporate Sponsored Health Movements: The Case of Breast Cancer (Take Home Exams Assigned)
Class 12: Take Home Essays Due

Prerequisites: 6 credit hours in Women’s Studies including WS 101 and/or WS 102 or WS 100.