

WGS 1421. Medical Management of the Female Body

Thursdays, 1-3 pm, Sever Hall 212

Prof. Sarah Richardson

srichard@fas.harvard.edu

Office hours: Wednesdays, 10-12 am, Boylston Hall G-26, by online appointment

Course overview

This upper-level seminar examines how Western medical knowledge, practices, and institutions define female health and normality and manage diseased and gender-variant female bodies. We will explore how medicine conceives of the female body as a medical problem or mystery and consider how race, class, and sexuality inflect medical conceptions of the female body. Topics include "female maladies," medicalization of childbirth and the pregnant body, medical management of transgender and intersex bodies, medical conceptions of ideal body weight and fitness, gender norms and cosmetic surgery, women and disability, and pharmaceutical marketing toward women. Limited enrollment; Instructor's permission and application required.

Course readings

All readings are posted on the course website in PDF form or as web links. Please bring them to class along with your reading notes.

Course requirements

20%	Attendance and participation: Vigorous, attentive, and constructive participation in class discussion and respectful listening; demonstration of deep reading and thoughtful, engaged approach to course readings and concepts; 100% attendance expected except for illness; more than 2 absences for any reason, including illness, may result in being dropped from the class.
20%	In-class presentation: 15-minute PowerPoint presentation outlining key concepts from the day's readings, framing discussion questions, and effectively using images, multimedia, and textual analysis. See guidelines. Advance consultation with the professor is required.
20%	Discussion board postings: Weekly 1-page reading response posting on the course discussion board by 12 noon before each class: must meet guidelines provided in handout for length and content. You may skip 1 posting.
40%	Research paper of 15 pages: 4-page paper proposal and 1-page bibliography due March 20; Final due May 9; requires a meeting with the professor. See guidelines.

Class schedule

Date	Topic
Jan. 27	Welcome, Introductions, and Course Overview <i>Presentation sign-ups on the course website – Friday, Jan. 28</i> Assessing the Women's Health Movement Schiebinger 1999, "Medicine" Inborn 2006, "Defining Women's Health: A Dozen Messages from More than 150 Ethnographies" Epstein 2007, "Sex Differences and the New Politics of Women's Health" <i>Recommended:</i> http://awomanisnotapreexistingcondition.com/ http://www.nwhn.org "Women's Health: Does Medical Research Shortchange Women?" <i>CQ Researcher</i> 2003 Epstein 2007, "The Rise of Resistance: Framing the Critique of the Standard Human" Legato 2002, "Eve's Question: 'How Am I Different from Adam?'"
Feb. 3	Women's Maladies Today and Yesterday Foucault, Michel. Selections from <i>Discipline and Punish</i>. In <i>The Foucault Reader</i>. Ed. Paul Rabinow. New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 170-213. <i>Focus on "The Means of Correct Training" and "Panopticism," pp. 188-213</i> Poovey 1987, "'Scenes of an Indelicate Character': The Medical 'Treatment' of Victorian Women" Lunbeck 1994, "Hysteria: The Revolt of the 'Good Girl'" Ware 1992, "Suffering and the Social Construction of Illness: The Delegation of Illness Experience in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome" <i>Recommended:</i> Gilman 1899, "The Yellow Wallpaper" http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/GilYell.html Jordanova 1989, "Medical Images of the Female Body" Showalter 1993, "Chronic Fatigue Syndrome" Wailoo 1997, "'Chlorosis' Remembered: Disease and the Moral Management of American Women"
Feb. 10	Childbirth and Mothering Martin 1987, "Medical Metaphors of Women's Bodies: Birth" Jordan 1993, "The Achievement of Authoritative Knowledge in an American Hospital Birth" Litt 2001, "Taking Science to the Household: Scientific Motherhood in Women's Lives"

	Blum 1999, "From Sacred to Disembodied Motherhood: Breastfeeding with the Experts and the State" Recommended: Balsamo 1999, "Public Pregnancies and Cultural Narratives of Surveillance" Roberts 1997, "Making Reproduction a Crime" Roberts 2009, "Race, Gender, and Genetic Technologies: A New Reproductive Dystopia?" Jordan 1993, "Birthing Systems and Change" Handwerker 1999, "Medical Risk: Implicating Poor Pregnant Women" Stabile, "Shooting the Mother: Fetal Photography and the Politics of Disappearance" Fox and Worts 1999, "Revisiting the Critique of Medicalized Childbirth" Richie 1999, "The Social Construction of the 'Immoral' Black Mother" Blum 1999, "'Mother to Mother' in La Leche League" Kukla 2006, "Ethics and Ideology in Breastfeeding Advocacy Campaigns"
Feb. 17	Gender and Genitals: Medical Management of Intersex Kessler 2009, "The Medical Construction of Gender: Case Management of Intersexed Infants" Chase 1999, "Surgical Progress Is Not the Answer to Intersexuality" Dreger et al. 2005, "Changing the Nomenclature/Taxonomy for Intersex: A Scientific and Clinical Rationale" Levy 2009, "Either/Or: Sports, sex, and the case of Caster Semenya" Hillman 2008, "Special," "Opinion," and "Condition" Recommended: Dreger 1999, "A History of Intersex: From the Age of Gonads to the Age of Consent" Chase 1998, "Hermaphrodites with Attitude: Mapping the Emergence of Intersex Political Activism" Wilson and Reiner 1999, "Management of Intersex: A Shifting Paradigm"
Feb. 24	Women and Desire: Medical Management of Female Sexuality <i>This class will be rescheduled for an evening session this week.</i> Lunbeck 1994, "Women as Hypersexual" Wynn and Trussell 2006, "The Social Life of Emergency Contraception in the United States: Disciplining Pharmaceutical Use, Disciplining Sexuality, and Constructing Zygotic Bodies" Leclerc-Madlala 2001, "Virginity Testing: Managing Sexuality in a Maturing HIV/AIDS Epidemic" Bell 2005, "Genital Cutting and Western Discourses on Sexuality" Fishman 2004, "Manufacturing Desire: The Commodification of Female Sexual Dysfunction" Allen 2009, "'Restless Vagina Syndrome': Big Pharma's Newest Fake Disease" Recommended: Legato 2002, "Sexual Dysfunction"

	Tuana 2004, "Coming to Understand: Orgasm and the Epistemology of Ignorance" "HPV Vaccine: Should it be mandatory for school girls?" <i>CQ Quarterly</i> Tiefer 1994, "The Medicalization of Impotence: Normalizing Phallocentrism" "The Kindest Cut: In Colorado, a surgeon helps restore feeling--and so much more--to victims of female genital mutilation," <i>Newsweek</i> http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/blogs/sexist/2010/03/04/rubber-barons-why-doesnt-your-boyfriend-know-jack-about-contraception/ What do Women Want? http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/25/magazine/25desire-t.html
Mar. 3	Menstruation, PMS, and Menopause Martin 1987, "Medical Metaphors of Women's Bodies: Menstruation and Menopause" Mamo and Fosket 2009, "Scripting the Body: Pharmaceuticals and the (Re)Making of Menstruation" Zita 1988, "The Premenstrual Syndrome: 'Dis-easing' the Female Cycle" Ferguson and Parry, "Rewriting Menopause: Challenging the Medical Paradigm to Reflect Menopausal Women's Experiences" Krieger et al. 2005, Hormone replacement therapy, cancer, controversies & women's health: historical, epidemiological, biological, clinical and advocacy perspectives "Menopause, as Brought to You by Big Pharma," <i>New York Times</i> 2009 Recommended: Dan 2004, "What have we learned? An Historical View of the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research" Loshny 2004, "From Birth Control to Menstrual Control: The Launch of the Extended Oral Contraceptive, <i>Seasonale</i>" Johnston-Robledo 2006, "Kiss Your Period Good-Bye": Menstrual Suppression in the Popular Press" Caplan 2008, "Pathologizing Your Period" O'Grady 2002, "Is Menstruation Obsolete?" Steinem 1986, "If Men Could Menstruate" Figert 1995, "The Three Faces of PMS: The Professional, Gendered, and Scientific Structuring of a Psychiatric Disorder" Martin 2009, "Premenstrual Syndrome, Work Discipline, and Anger" Tavris, "Misdiagnosing the Body: Premenstrual Syndrome, Postmenstrual Syndrome, and Other Normal 'Diseases'" Lock 1998, "Anomalous Ageing: Managing the Postmenopausal Body" Watkins 2007, "1992: The Year of the Menopause" and "Meno-Boomers: Another Generation Confronts Estrogen" Winterich 2003, "Sex, Menopause, and Culture: Sexual Orientation and the Meaning of Menopause for Women's Sex Lives" Woods 1998, "Menopause: Models, Medicine, and Midlife" Hillyer 1998, "The Embodiment of Old Women: Silences" Worcester 2004, "Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT): Getting to the Heart of the

	Politics of Women's Health?" Lewis 1993, "Feminism, the Menopause and Hormone Replacement Therapy"
Mar. 8	Breast Cancer: Illness Narratives and Pink Ribbons Young 1990, "Breasted Experience" Lorde 1997, "Breast Cancer: Power vs. Prosthesis" Ehrenreich 2001, "Welcome to Cancerland" Finally A Women's Movement Men Can Get Behind: http://contexts.org/socimages/2009/12/09/finally-a-womens-movement-men-can-get-behind/ Recommended: Sered and Tabory 1999, "'You are a Number, Not a Human Being'" Yadlon 1997, "Skinny Women and Good Mothers: The Rhetoric of Risk, Control, and Culpability in the Production of Knowledge about Breast Cancer" Aronowitz 2001, "Do Not Delay: Breast Cancer and Time, 1900-1970" Solomon 1991, "The Politics of Breast Cancer" http://www.bcaction.org http://www.mamm.com/
Mar. 20	Final paper proposal due by 12 midnight - dropbox
Mar. 24	Women and Disability Duffy 1996, "Making Choices" (poems) Garland-Thomson 2002, "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory" Wilkerson 2002, "Disability, Sex Radicalism, and Political Agency" Thomas 1997, "The Baby and the Bath Water: Disabled Women and Motherhood in Social Context" Thomas 2001, "Medicine, Gender, and Disability: Disabled Women's Health Care Encounters" Recommended: http://www.bbc.co.uk/ouch/ Shakespeare, Gillespie-Sells, and Davies 1996, "Barriers to Being Sexual" Papers from Queer Disability Conference at SFSU 2002 http://www.disabilityhistory.org/dwa/queer/proceedings.html
Mar. 31	Women, Depression, and Mental Illness Tavris 1994, "Misdiagnosing the Mind" Blum 2004, "Gender in the Prozac Nation: Popular Discourse and Productive Femininity" Cauchon-Wirth 2000, "A Dangerous Symbolic Mobility: Narratives of Borderline Personality Disorder." In <i>Pathology and the Postmodern: Mental Illness as Discourse and Experience</i>, edited by Dwight Fee, Sage Press.

	Recommended: Wilson 2006, "The Work of Antidepressants: Preliminary Notes on How to Build an Alliance Between Feminism and Psychopharmacology" "Treating Depression: Is effective treatment available?" <i>CQ Researcher</i>
Apr. 7	Fitness and Fatness McKinley 1999, "Ideal Weight/Ideal Women: Society Constructs the Female" Ernsberger 2009, "Does Social Class Explain the Connection Between Weight and Health?" Cogan 1999, "Re-evaluating the Weight-Centered Approach toward Health" Boero 2009, "Fat Kids, Working Moms, and the 'Epidemic of Obesity': Race, Class, and Mother Blame" Kirkland 2011, "The Environmental Account of Obesity: A Case for Feminist Skepticism" Recommended: Bell and McNaughton 2007, "Feminism and the Invisible Fat Man" "A long-delayed missive on "childhood obesity," from a onetime obese child": http://www.fatshionista.com/cms/index.php?option=com_mojo&Itemid=69&p=362#comments Sobal 1995, "The Medicalization and Demedicalization of Obesity" Royce 2009, "The Shape of Abuse: Fat Oppression as a Form of Violence Against Women" Giovanelli and Ostertag, "Controlling the Body: Media Representations, Body Size, and Self-Discipline" Gaesser 2009, "Is 'Permanent Weight Loss' an Oxymoron?" "Obesity Epidemic: Can Americans change their self-destructive habits?" <i>CQ Researcher</i> "The surprising reason why being overweight isn't healthy" <i>CNN.com</i> 2010 To Cure a Fat Child is Not a Simple Matter: http://contexts.org/socimages/2010/01/14/to-cure-a-fat-child-is-not-a-simple-matter-1967-psa/ Solovay and Rothblum 2009, "No Fear of Fat" Germov and Williams 1999, "Dieting Women: Self-Surveillance and the Body Panopticon" Heyes 2006, "Foucault Goes to Weight Watchers"
Apr. 14	Beauty, Cosmetic Surgery, and Eating Disorders Gilman 1999, "Judging by Appearances: What is Aesthetic Surgery?" Heyes 2009, "Diagnosing Culture: Body Dysmorphic Disorder and Cosmetic Surgery" Brumberg 2000, "Anorexia Nervosa in the 1980s" Gremillion 2003, "Crafting Resourceful Bodies and Achieving Identities" Recommended: Goodman 1996, "Culture, Cohort, and Cosmetic Surgery"

	Balsamo 2009, "On the Cutting Edge: Cosmetic Surgery and New Imaging Technologies" "Cosmetic Surgery: Are Tougher Safety Regulations Needed? <i>CQ Researcher</i> Edelman, "Why Is Dolly Crying? An Analysis of Silicone Breast Implants in America as an Example of Medicalization" Founding Fathers: http://photo.newsweek.com/2010/4/money-makeovers-for-founding-fathers.html?gt1=43002 "Eating Disorders: Is Societal Pressure to Be Thin to Blame?" <i>CQ Researcher</i> Gremillion 2003, "'Typical Patients Are Not 'Borderline'': Embedded Constructs of Race, Ethnicity, and Class" Lager and McGee 2003, "Hiding the Anorectic: A Rhetorical Analysis of Popular Discourse Concerning Anorexia" O'Connor 1995, "Pictures of Health: Medical Photography and the Emergency of Anorexia Nervosa"
Apr. 21	No class – make up class on April 28
Apr. 28	The Transgender Body Hausman 1992, "Demanding Subjectivity: Transsexualism, Medicine, and the Technologies of Gender" Raymond 1994, "Therapy as a Way of Life: Medical Values versus Social Change" Serano 2007, "Coming to Terms with Transgenderism and Transsexuality," "Before and After: Class and Body Transformations," and "Deconstructive Surgery" Dreger 2009, "Gender Identity Disorder in Childhood: Inconclusive Advice to Parents" Recommended: Raymond 1994, "'Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Transsexualism" Garber 1992, "Spare Parts: The Surgical Construction of Gender" Halberstam 1998, "Transgender Butch: Butch/FTM Border Wars and the Masculine Continuum" Roen 2002, "Either/Or and Both/Neither: Discursive Tensions in Transgender Politics" Lane 2009, "Trans as Bodily Becoming: Rethinking the Biological as Diversity, not Dichotomy" Scott-Dixon 2009, "Public Health, Private Parts: A Feminist Public-Health Approach to Trans Issues" "Transgender Issues: Should gender-identity discrimination be illegal?" <i>CQ Researcher</i> http://srtp.org http://www.switchhitter.net http://makezine.enoughenough.org/trans.html http://takesupspace.wordpress.com http://stufftransmenlike.wordpress.com http://www.glaad.org/dayofremembrancekit http://www.boingboing.net/2010/01/11/some-recommended-tra.html#more
May 9	Final paper due to professor by midnight - dropbox

Course guidelines

Course website:

The course website is a primary tool for this course and will contain the discussion forum and all of the required readings. Please check the site frequently.

Class announcements:

Announcements will be posted on the course website. Special announcements will be sent to your Harvard email account. You are responsible for checking the course website and your Harvard email regularly.

Class attendance:

This is a small discussion-based course that requires your on-time attendance and full participation. More than two absences or late arrivals *for any reason* may lead to dismissal from the course.

Office hours:

Please visit me regularly in office hours during the semester. If you are absolutely unable to attend the scheduled office hours, please email me to set up a time to meet.

Email:

Please keep email to a minimum and keep your emails brief and professional. Visit me in office hours if you have detailed questions about the assignments or readings. Do not rely on email for last minute questions.

Technology policy:

If a laptop or similar technology will benefit you in the classroom and you can use it without being disruptive, you are welcome to use it. Please use your judgment. Consider the positives and negatives for you and your learning style. Attend carefully to your participation in the class discussion. I recommend disconnecting your wifi. Please disable any sounds. The class expects the professor to step in if technology use becomes disruptive.

Statement on disabilities:

If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester regarding reasonable and appropriate academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course.

Statement on academic honesty:

Academic dishonesty (cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, facilitating dishonesty) is prohibited and will lead to dismissal from the course and referral to Harvard disciplinary procedures.

Guidelines for Course Requirements

Participation

This is a student-centered seminar in which participation and intensive discussion is essential. Class participation is a central element of this course and will frame my evaluation of your academic performance.

Requirements:

- Consistent on-time attendance
- Completion of assignments by due date - requests for extensions and late assignments are *not* looked upon well
- Bring course readings and notes to class and show evidence of deep reading, preparation, and critical thinking
- Participate vigorously, constructively, and attentively in class discussion
- Generous and invested contributions to course discussion board
- Meeting with professor in office hours

Class Presentation

Each class will begin with a student presentation. The goal of these presentations is to enrich the class discussion with your perspectives and expertise, provide an opportunity to learn effective use of PowerPoint technology, sharpen your oral presentation skills, and improve your comprehension of the material by teaching it to others.

Sign-ups will be on Feb. 3. In consultation with the professor, you will design a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation outlining key concepts for the day's topic and framing discussion questions. Your presentation should effectively use images, multimedia, and textual analysis. *Requires advance meeting with professor.*

Requirements:

- Set up meeting with professor - meet at least 1 week in advance
- Careful reading of the materials
- Email your PowerPoint file to the professor by 10 am the day of your presentation

Presentation elements:

- Interest the audience in the topic and share what you found interesting, surprising, new, or provocative
- Briefly outline the key concepts from the day's readings
- Define any key terms
- Briefly outline controversies and debates
- Relate to themes and concepts from the course as a whole
- IMPORTANT: Use images, multimedia, and textual analysis of quotations from the reading to facilitate understanding (make sure to include citations)
- Close with one important question that you hope the class will engage
- Maximum of 15 minutes (~10 slides)

Evaluation of your presentation will be based on the following elements:

- *Preparation*: Were you prepared? Is it obvious that you read closely and tried to get help if you needed it?
- *Clarity*: Was your presentation clear? Did you attempt to simplify complex concepts? Was your presentation organized and well thought-out?
- *Content*: Did you address all of the items above? You don't necessarily have to include all of them, but you should try to follow the basic outline.
- *Discussion*: Did your presentation facilitate the discussion? How did you answer questions from the professor and the class?
- *Oral communication and presentation style*: Did you speak loud enough? Slow enough? Clear enough? Did you have good eye contact with your audience? Were you responsive to the audience? Was your presentation engaging and interesting?
- *Effective use of PowerPoint technology* (IMPORTANT): Did the visual presentation enhance and enliven your talk? Did you find novel and relevant images and multimedia?

Discussion board postings

Due: 12 noon the day of each class

Our class discussion board will permit the continuation of discussion outside of class and provide an opportunity for you to formulate questions and responses to the readings prior to class. These brief, *informal* written reading responses will also help you identify topics, themes, questions, and material for your final project.

Requirements:

- Post *at least* one item by 12 pm before each class
- Minimum of one type-written page or 500 words (or two 250-word posts)
- Posting must reference readings and evidence critical, original engagement with the texts
- You may skip 1 post with no consequences for your grade
- You are encouraged to be active in the discussion forum and respond to others' posts. These additional postings need not conform to length/content requirements of the required posts.

Final paper or project

12-15 page research paper. Requires 4 page proposal with bibliography and advance meeting with professor.

The objective of the final paper is to allow you to pursue mastery and in-depth research in an area of special interest to you. The paper should engage your passion as well as your critical and creative faculties, and it should represent in conception and final product the interdisciplinary sources, methods, and debates at the heart of this course.

Prior to writing your proposal, meet with the professor to discuss. Then write a 4-page (double spaced) proposal laying out your question, the importance of this question to you, the sources and methods you will use, the feasibility of the project in the time allotted, and a brief outline or project plan. Provide a separate annotated bibliography, properly formatted, with at least 8 valid academic sources (these may be from our course materials). Under each citation, write a 1-2 sentence summary of the thesis of the source and its relevance to your project.

The professor will respond to your paper or project proposal. You may be asked to revise certain aspects of your plan based on this feedback. Your final project should be a polished realization of your proposal. The final version is due to the professor on May 9.

Writing guidelines:

- Advance an original argument or analysis using only your own ideas
- State your thesis clearly
- Use specific examples, quotations, and details to support your argument
- Clean grammar and spelling

Formatting guidelines:

- ~15 pages of main text and bibliography with minimum of 8 sources
- MS Word .doc format
- References are not included in the page count
- Provide complete citations in a consistent, recognized academic citation style of your choice
- Double-spaced
- 12 pt Times New Roman font
- 1 inch margins
- Name and page number on the upper right header of each page