

PHL 870
Seminar in Philosophy of Health Care
A History of Feminist Bioethics

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Wednesdays, 7:00-9:50
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In Canada and the U.S., the bioethics movement and second-wave feminism both began in the late 1960s, but the two discourses had little to say to one another for the better part of two decades. The few essays by feminists published up to that time in the premier journal in bioethics, the *Hastings Center Report*, dealt solely with ethical issues surrounding women's reproductive functions. All that has changed. The 1990s saw a steady stream of conferences, monographs, anthologies, and essays in learned journals that examine bioethical issues through a feminist lens, and now there is a burgeoning literature. In this seminar we will read some of this literature, to get a better idea of what feminist theory has to offer bioethics—and vice-versa. Texts for the course include Susan Sherwin's *No Longer Patient*; Susan M. Wolf, ed., *Feminism and Bioethics: Beyond Reproduction*, Dorothy Roberts's *Killing the Black Body*, and Rebecca Kukla's *Mass Hysteria*. Seminar participants will do a presentation of one of the readings and lead the discussion for that meeting, for a fourth of their final grade. The seminar paper counts toward the other three-fourths of the grade.

Calendar

Aug. 29. What is feminist bioethics?

Sept. 5. **Sherwin**, *No Longer Patient*, Intro., "Understanding Feminism," "Ethics, 'Feminine Ethics,' and Feminist Ethics," "Feminism and Moral Relativism," "Toward a Feminist Ethics of Health Care."

Sept. 12. **Sherwin**, *No Longer Patient*, "Abortion," "New Reproductive Technologies," "Paternalism," "Research"

Sept. 19. **Sherwin**, *No Longer Patient*, "Ascriptions of Illness," "Medical Constructions of Sexuality," "Gender, Race and Class in the Delivery of Health Care."

Sept. 26. **Wolf, ed.**, *Feminism & Bioethics: Beyond Reproduction*, Intro., **Sherwin**, "Feminist and Bioethics," **Tong**, "Feminist Approaches to Bioethics," **Mahowald**, "On Treatment of Myopia: Feminist Standpoint Theory and Bioethics."

Oct. 3. **Wolf, ed.**, *Feminism & Bioethics: Beyond Reproduction*, **Roberts**, "Reconstructing the Patient: Starting with Women of Color," **Dresser**, "What Bioethics Can Learn from the Women's Health Movement," **Purdy**, "A Feminist View of Health," **Merton**, "Ethical Obstacles to the Participation of Women in Biomedical Research."

Oct. 10. **Wolf, ed.**, *Feminism & Bioethics: Beyond Reproduction*, **Faden, Kass, and McGraw**, “Women as Vessels and Vectors: Lessons from the HIV Epidemic,” **Wolf**, “Gender, Feminism, and Death: Physician-Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia,” **Asch and Geller**, “Feminism, Bioethics, and Genetics,” **Nelson and Nelson**, “Justice in the Allocation of Health Care Resources: A Feminist Account.”

Oct. 17. ASBH annual meeting. Seminar does not meet.

Oct. 24. Guest seminar leader: Ann Mongoven. Rituals surrounding abortion in Japan.



. *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal*, **Little**, “Why a Feminist Approach to Bioethics?” **Carse and H. Nelson**, “Rehabilitating Care,” **J. Nelson**, “Measured Fairness, Situated Justice.” *Journal of Clinical Ethics*, **H. Nelson**, “Knowledge at the Bedside: A Feminist View of What’s Happening with This Patient.”

Nov. 7. **Roberts**, *Killing the Black Body*, Intro., “Reproduction in Bondage,” “The Dark Side of Birth Control,” “From Norplant to the Contraceptive Vaccine.”

[Friday, Nov. 9. Grant Gillett gives the Martin Benjamin Lecture in bioethics]

Nov. 14. **Roberts**, *Killing the Black Body*, “Making Reproduction a Crime,” “The Welfare Debate,” “Race and the New Reproduction.”

Nov. 21. Thanksgiving eve. Seminar does not meet.

Nov. 28. **Kukla**, *Mass Hysteria*, “Introduction: Impressionable Bodies,” “Imbibing the Love of the Fatherland,” “Splitting the Maternal Body.”

Dec. 5. **Kukla**, *Mass Hysteria*, “The Uterus as Public Theater,” “Separation Anxiety,” “Intimacy, Vulnerability, and the Politics of Discomfort,” “Fixing the Boundaries of Mothers’ Bodies.”

Seminar papers are due no later than 5:00 p.m. Friday, Dec. 14.