

Syllabus
Medical History 531
Women and Health in American History

Instructor

Professor Srirupa Prasad

sprasad2@wisc.edu

Office: 1415, Medical Sciences Center

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10.45-11.45 and by appointment

This course will explore a number of issues in the history of women's health and medicine. We will not only look at how health and medicine came to influence women, but we will also try to understand how medicine and health have been "gendered". We will be sensitive to issues of race, class, ethnicity, and religion as they played a part in the emergence and distribution of health care for women. Topics included will be childbirth, maternity and women's rights, birth control, menstruation, sexuality, body images. We will talk about women's roles as physicians, nurses, and midwives. We will also look into some of the diseases that have affected women and what treatments have been available to them. The main question of the course will be- how can we talk about the complex relationship between women and health and medicine?

Required Texts

Judith Walzer Leavitt. Ed. ***Women and Health in America: Historical Readings***.
(Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999).

Audre Lorde. ***The Cancer Journals***. (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1980).

Joan Jacobs Brumberg. ***The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls*** (New York: Random House, 1997).

Course reader will be available at 7143 Social Science Building.

Course Format and Evaluation Criteria

Our meetings will follow a seminar format, based on discussions of the course readings. Your attendance and participation are vital for your class performance and grade. It constitutes 20% of your final grade.

There will be a number of written assignments. You will be writing one short reaction paper, which would constitute 20 of your grade. This paper will be based on a critical response to selected readings. You will have a midterm, the percentage of which will be 30% of your grade. The last and final assignment will be a final paper and its percentage will be 30% of the final grade.

We will discuss about the nature of these written assignments more as we proceed in the class. In compliance with the Americans Disabilities Act, I will request any student with a disability to contact me as soon as possible and facilitate educational accessibility. All such requests will be kept confidential.

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with UW policies on plagiarism and to assume full responsibility for academic integrity in all course work.

Timetable and Topics

Tuesday, January 17th: Meeting Students and mutual Introduction
Thursday January 19th: Introduction to Women and Health in American History
Tuesday January 24th: Approaches to Women and Health
Thursday January 26th: Gender in Medicine and Biology I
Tuesday January 31st: Gender in Medicine and Biology II
Thursday February 2nd: Images of Women, Gender, in Medicine
Tuesday February 7th: Menstruation
Thursday February 9th: Birth Control I
Tuesday February 14th: Birth Control II OR Film on Birth Control
Thursday February 16th: Sexuality I
Tuesday February 21st: Sexuality II

Submit First Response Paper in Class.

Thursday February 23rd: Abortion I
Tuesday February 28th: Film on Abortion
Thursday March 2nd: Abortion II
Tuesday March 7th: Menopause and Aging
Thursday March 9th: Body Projects
Tuesday 14th and Thursday 16th March: NO CLASSES DUE TO SPRING BREAK
Tuesday 21st March: Body Projects
Thursday 23rd March: Child Birth
Tuesday 28th March: Film on Child Birth or Occupational Health and Mothers
Thursday 30th March: Maternal and Child Health I

Midterm Examination Paper due in Class

Tuesday 4th April: Maternal and Child Health II
Thursday 6th April: Fitness, Body Image and Sports
Tuesday 11th April: Women as Midwives
Thursday 13th April: Women as Physicians
Tuesday 18th April: Women as Nurses
Thursday 20th April: Mental Illness
Tuesday 25th April: AIDS
Thursday 27th April: Breast Cancer
Tuesday 2nd May: Wrap Up and Evaluations

Final Papers Due on 9th May.

*Starred items to be found in the course reader.

Tuesday January 17th: Meeting Students and mutual Introduction

Thursday January 19th: Approaches to Women and Health in American History

- *Letter from Rose Williams to Mrs Lettie Mosher
- *Letters from Jane Savine to Elizabeth Gordon – 3 pages
- *Letters to the People on Health and Happiness (1855) – 6 pages
- *Sarah Pratt's Diary, 1846-7. 6 pages

Tuesday January 24th: Approaches to Women and Health in American History

Judith Walzer Leavitt, "Introduction to the Second Edition" in *Women and Health in America: Historical Readings*, edited by Judith Walzer Leavitt, 2nd Edition. (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press 1999). Page 3-8.

- *Elizabeth Fee, "Women and Health Care: A Comparison of Theories", in *Women and Health: The Politics of Sex in Medicine*, edited by Elizabeth Fee. (Farmingdale, NY: Baywood, 1983). Page 17-34.

Thursday January 26th: Gender in Medicine and Biology I

- *Emily Martin, "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles," *Signs* 16:3 (1991): 485-501.
- *Emily Martin, "Medical Metaphors of Women's Bodies: Menstruation and Menopause", in the *Woman in the Body: A Cultural Analysis of Reproduction* (Boston: Beacon Press) Page 27-53.

Tuesday January 31st: Gender in Medicine and Biology II

- *Anne Fausto-Sterling "How to Build a Man" in *The Gender/Sexuality Reader*. (New York: Routledge). Page 244-248.

- *Rosalind Pollack Petchesky, "Fetal Images: The Power of Visual Culture in the Politics of Representation" in *The Gender/Sexuality Reader*. Page 134-147.

Thursday February 2nd: Images of Women, Gender, and Medicine

- *Ludmilla Jordanova: "Medical Images of the Female Body" in *Sexual Visions*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press). Page 134-159.

Tuesday February 7th: Menstruation

- *George Wythe Cook, "Puberty in the Girl", in *American Journal of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children* 46 (1902). Page 804-807.
- *Edward H. Clark, *Sex in Education, Or a Fair Chance for the Girls* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1873). Page 61-117. (14 pages)

- Joan Jacobs Brumberg, “ ‘Something Happens to Girls’: Menarche and Emergence of the Modern American Hygienic Imperative”, in ***Women and Health***. Page 150-171.
- *Toni Cade Bambara, “A Girl’s Story” in, *Trials, Tribulation and Celebrations*. Edited by Marian Gray Secundy (Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1992). Page 65-75.

Thursday February 9th: Birth Control I

- Linda Gordon, “Voluntary Motherhood: The Beginnings of Feminist Birth Control Ideas in the United States”, in ***Women and Health***. Page 253-268.
- *John Harvey Kellogg, *Plain Facts for Old and Young* (Orig. 1877: Reprint Buffalo, NY: The Heritage Press, 1974). Page 250-270.
- *Eliza Mosher, “A Protest Against the Teaching of Birth Control” in *Medical Women’s Journal* 32 (1925) Page 36.
- *Adeline Riddle, “Birth Control”, in *Medical Woman’s Journal* 26 (1916). Page 286-288.
- *Letters from Women to the Birth Control Review, 1917-1918. (3 pages)

Tuesday February 14th: Birth Control II OR Film on Birth Control

- Andrea Tone, “Contraceptive Consumers: Gender and the Political Economy of Birth Control in the 1930s”, in ***Women and Health***. Page 306-325.
- Jessie M. Rodrique, “The Black Community and the Birth Control Movement” in ***Women and Health***. Page 293-305.

Thursday February 16th: Sexuality I

- Carl Degler, “What Ought to Be and What Was: Women’s Sexuality in the Nineteenth Century”, in ***Women and Health***. Page 192-212.
- *Carroll Smith Rosenberg, “The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth Century America”, in *Signs* 1 (1975). Page 1-29.
- *Evelyn Hammonds, “Towards a Genealogy of Black Female Sexuality: The Problematic of Silence” in, *Feminist Theory and the Body*. Edited by Janet Price and Margrit Shildrick. (New York: Routledge, 1999). Page 93-104.

Tuesday February 21st: Sexuality II

- Elizabeth Lunbeck, “ ‘A New Generation of Women’: Progressive Psychiatrists and the Hypersexual Female” in ***Women and Health***. Page 229-249.
- *Katharine Bement Davis. *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty Two Hundred Women* (New York: Harper and Bros, 1929). Page 62-78.
- *Jennifer Terry, “Lesbians Under Medical Gaze: Scientists Search for Remarkable Differences”, in *Journal of Sex Research* 27 (1990). Page 317-339.

Submit First Response Paper in Class

Thursday February 23rd: Abortion I

Leslie Reagan, “ ‘About to Meet Her Maker’: Women, Doctors, Dying Declarations, and the States Investigations of Abortion, Chicago 1867-1940”, in *Women and Health*. Page 269-292.

*Loretta Ross, “African American Women and Abortion, 1800-1970”, in *Theorizing Black Feminism: The Visionary Pragmatism of Black Women* (Routledge: London and New York, 1993). pp 259-277.

Tuesday February 28th: Film on Abortion

Thursday March 2nd: Abortion II

Rickie Solinger, “ ‘A Complete Disaster’: Abortion and the Politics of Hospital Abortion Committees, 1950-1970”, in *Women and Health*. Page 659-680.

*Rita Arditti and Shelly Minden, “ An Interview with Mirtha Quintanales, From the Third World Women’s Archives”, in *Test-Tube Women*. Edited. Rita Arditti, et al (Boston, Pandora Press, 1984). Page 119-130.

Tuesday March 7th: Menopause and Aging

*Robert A. Wilson, “The Fate of Nontreated Postmenopausal Woman: A Plea for the Maintenance of Adequate Estrogen From Puberty to the Grave”, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* 11 (1963): 347-362.

*Robert A. Wilson, “A Key to Staying Young”, in *Look* (Jan 1966): 66-73. (5 pages)

*Responses by members of the 1917 class of Smith College to a survey conducted in 1950. (2 pages)

*Letters and questionnaire responses to Women in Midstream, a branch of University of Washington YWCA, which conducted national study of menopause c. 1975. (3 pages)

Thursday March 9th: Body Projects

Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project* (Random House, 1997).

Tuesday 21st March: Body Projects (Continued)

Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project*.

Thursday 23rd March: Child Birth

*Letters from Nettie Fowler McCormack to Anita McCormick Blaine, from Anita to Nettie, and from Miss Hammond to Mrs McCormick, 1890 (McCormick Papers). (13 pages)

*Letters from Jane Savine to Elizabeth Gordon, 1846. (See Jan. 19 above)

*Charles Anthony Robinson, “Extern: How the Babies of the Slums are Brought into World”, in *Century* 115 (1882): 551-60.

Judith Walzer Leavitt, “Under the Shadow of Maternity: American Women’s Responses to Death and Debility Fears in Nineteenth Century Childbirth” in *Women and Health*. Page 328-346.

*Judith Walzer Leavitt, "Birthing and Anesthesia: The Debate over Twilight Sleep", in *Mothers and Motherhood: Readings in American History*. Edited by Rima Apple and Janet Golden (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1997). Page 242-258.

Tuesday 28th March: Film on Child Birth or Occupational Health and Mothers

*Alison L. Hepler. *Women in Labor: Mothers, Medicine, and Occupational Health in the US 1890-1980*. Pages 1-66

*Barbara Sicherman. *Alice Hamilton: A Life in Letters*. Page 153-183.

Thursday 30th March: Maternal and Child Health I

Judith Leavitt, "Gendered Expectations: Women and Early 20th Century Public Health." in *Women and Health*, Page 612-633.

*Emma Duke, "Infant Mortality: Results of a Field Study in Johnstown, PA", in *US Children's Bureau Publications*, 9 (1915). (4 pages)

*Grace Meigs, "Maternal Mortality from All Conditions Connected with Childbirth in the US", *US Children's Bureau Publications*, 19 (1917). (2 pages)

Midterm Examination Paper due in class

Tuesday 4th April: Maternal and Child Health II

*J.H. Mason Knox, "Morbidity and Mortality in the Negro Infant", in *Transactions of the American Pediatric Society* 36 (1924). (1 page).

*Molly Ladd Taylor, "We Mothers are so Glad the Day has Come: Mothers' Work and the Sheppard-Towner Act", in *Mother Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890-1930*. pp 167-196.

*Selected Letters to the Children's Bureau. pp. 329-332.

Thursday 6th April: Fitness, Body Image and Sports

*Martha Verbrugge, "Stronger in Body as well as in Mind: Physical Education at Wellesley College, 1875-1900", in *Able-Bodied Womanhood* (Oxford University Press, 1988). Page 139-61.

Margaret A. Lowe, "From Robust Appetites to Calorie Counting: The Emergence of Dieting Among Smith College Students in the 1920s", in *Women and Health*. Page 172-189.

Tuesday 11th April: Women as Midwives

*Excerpts from Martha Ballard's Diary pp.66-79.

*Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "August 1787: Exceeding Dangerously Ill" in, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812*. (New York: Vintage, 1991). Page 36-71, 372-381.

*"Official Midwife" and "Birth Practices", in *Listen to Me Good: The Life Story of an*

Alabama Midwife, Margaret Charles Smith and Linda Janet Holmes (Columbus Ohio State University Press, 1996). Page 63-112.

Thursday 13th April: Women as Physicians

Regina Morantz-Sanchez, "The Gendering of Empathic Expertise: How Women Physicians Became Empathic Than Men", in *Women and Health*, 526-539.

*Emily Blackwell Diary Excerpts, 1852-53. (10 pages)

*"Dear Mrs__," September 2, 1964 letter from unnamed medical school.

*Florence Brown Sherbon, "Women in Medicine," *The Medical Woman's Journal* (1925) Page 240-243.

*Darlene Clark Hine, "Co-Laborers in the Work of the Lord: Nineteenth Century Black Women Physicians", in *Send Us a Lady Physician: Women Doctors in America, 1835-1920*. edited Ruth Abram (W.W. Norton and Company, 1985) Page 107-120.

Tuesday 18th April: Women as Nurses

Susan Reverby, "Neither for the Drawing Room nor for the Kitchen': Private Duty Nursing in Boston, 1873-1920", in *Women and Health*. Page 460-474.

*"Duties of the Army Surgeon: Females Not Suitable for Nurses", in *American Medical Times* 3 (July-December 1861). Page 30.

Darlene Clark Hine, " 'They Shall Mount Up with Wings as Eagles': Historical Images of Black Nurses, 1890-1950", in *Women and Health*. Page 475-488.

Thursday 20th April: Mental Illness

Nancy Theriot, "Diagnosing Unnatural Motherhood: Nineteenth Century Physicians and 'Puerperal Insanity'", in *Women and Health*. Page 405-421.

Elizabeth Lunbeck, " 'A New Generation of Women': Progressive Psychiatrists and the Hypersexual Female", in *Women and Health*. Page 229-249.

Tuesday 25th April: AIDS

*Paula Treichler, "AIDS, Gender, and Biomedical Discourse: Current Contests for Meaning", in *AIDS: The Burdens of History*. Edited by Elizabeth Fee and Daniel Fox. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). Page 190-266.

*Evelynn Hammonds, "Missing Persons: African American Women, AIDS, and the History of Disease", in *Radical American* 24 (1990). Page 7-23.

Thursday 27th April: Breast Cancer

Audre Lorde. *The Cancer Journals* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1980).

Tuesday 2nd May: Wrap Up and Evaluations

Final Papers Due on 9th May.