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Gender and Health
HSOC-216
Cohen Hall 237
T/Th 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Prof. Beth Linker
Office:
Office hrs:



What does your mirror tell you about your face, your future?

Look and feel
Like a new person

Wrinkles Destroy themselves

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FOR MEN AND FOR WOMEN

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You have two ages
How old you are...
How young you look...

It's a bitter moment when a woman gazes steadily into her mirror and first admits to herself her looks are changing and that age is upon her. That may occur at 25, 30, 35, or it may only come in the thirties, but however in this case her mirror is a better guide than her complexion defied and let their age get them down. Creams through one door to aging destroyers.

Course Description:

Women's health is a constant refrain of modern life, prompting impassioned debates that speak to the fundamental nature of our society. Women's bodies are the tableaux across which politicians, physicians, healthcare professional, activists, and women themselves dispute issues as wide-ranging as individual versus collective rights, the legitimacy of scientific and medical knowledge, the role of the government in healthcare, inequalities of care, and the value of experiential knowledge, among many others. Understanding the history of these questions is crucial for informed engagement with contemporary issues.

In this class, we will explore the history of women's health in America from the colonial era to the present day. We will ask how women and physicians derived meaning from and tried to regulate women's life cycle events, reproduction, sickness, and political activism. We will interrogate the relationship between race, gender, and understandings of illness. In addition, this class will refocus attention on social and racial disparities in health by privileging the voices of black, immigrant, and working-class women. Some of the central themes we will address include the ways in which power is inscribed on women's bodies, the extent to which women resist such inscriptions, and the role of women's health on society and culture. The course proceeds chronologically, drawing from primary and secondary sources to make sense of how people in the past understood, constructed, manipulated, and defined women's health.

Course Objectives:

- Articulate major themes, patterns, and trends in the history of women's health
- Contextualize the history of gender and health within broader social, political, and cultural changes in U.S. history
- Explore the interplay between race, gender, and medicine

In addition to learning new content, we will interrogate the disciplinary tools of history. These objectives are:

- Learn to navigate a diverse array of primary source materials, including, but not limited to, textual sources, film, and visual materials.
- Refine the ability to read actively and critically
- Improve speaking and discussion skills in a small seminar setting
- Gain a sense for how history is a form of interpretation

Recommended texts for purchase:

*All books can be purchased at the Penn Book Center, 130 S., 34th Street. Please support your local, independent book stores! If purchasing these books is a financial hardship, you can find every title held at Van Pelt Library in the Rosengarten Course Reserve, ground floor east, 215-898-7561.

Marie Jenkins Schwartz, *Birthing A Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South* (2006)

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1893)

Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (1997)

Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty* (1997)
Margaret Charles Smith and Linda Janet Holmes, *Listen to Me Good: The Life Story of an Alabama Midwife* (1996)
Nancy Langston, *Toxic Bodies: Hormone Disruptors and the Legacy of DES* (2010)
Wendy Kline, *Bodies of Knowledge: Sexuality, Reproduction, and Women's Health in the Second Wave* (2010)
Audre Lorde, *The Cancer Journals* (1980)

Attendance Policy:

Class attendance is critical to this course. Unexcused or excessive absences will result in a lower grade and/or a CPN being sent to the College Office.

Course Assignments and Grading:

1. Participation and Response Papers (20%): Since this is a seminar, participation is required. This means that in addition to coming to class having completed the assigned reading, you should also come armed with your original ideas, comments, and questions ready to share with your fellow students. You will be graded on your preparation for class, your willingness to contribute to conversation, and your ability to offer thoughtful comments grounded in historical scholarship and course materials.

This class may also require a series of response papers throughout the term, depending on the level of student participation. These short (1-2 page) papers will provide you a way to expand your thinking on a particular theme or topic of discussion. These will cover an array of topics and will often ask you to consider non-textual source material.

These will be turned in at the beginning of class, hard copy, 12-point font, double-spaced. They will be graded on a ✓, ✓+, or ✓- scale.

2. Domestic Health Advice project (20%), 5 – 7 pages. Due February 23rd at the beginning of class. Hard copy, 12-point font, double-spaced. Using between two and three domestic health advice manuals, each separated by roughly a generation, discuss how an aspect of women's health has changed over time. This can be about anything; sex, motherhood, clothing, diet, pregnancy, menstruation, breastfeeding, childbirth, etc. The idea here is *not* to just take a few texts and articulate how they are different, but rather to craft an original argument about why they are so. You will be expected to draw on secondary sources, as well.

Research for this assignment will be conducted primarily in Penn's Rare Book Center, where there is a collection of health guides already curated for you. Your job is to read these with an eye for change over time and develop an original argument about why those changes (or in some cases, continuities) occurred and how they fit into broader social and cultural currents at the time. More information about scheduling research appointments and navigating the collection will be available in early February.

3. Interview Assignment (20 %), 5 – 7 pages. Due March 24th at the beginning of class. Hard copy, 12-point font, double-spaced. For this assignment, you will interview two women on their experiences with either: menstruation/puberty, breastfeeding, childbirth, or feminism, among others. To give this assignment some historical traction, one woman must be born before 1975; the other, before 1945. You must interview each woman on the same topic. In your paper, construct a narrative of change over time in which you compare the experiences of each woman and contextualize them within major course

themes.

For a good resource on how to approach your interviews, see Judith Moyer's "Step-By-Step Guide to Oral History," available here: http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html

4. Contemporary Issues Assignment (20%), 5 – 7 pages. Due on **Friday, April 22nd at 5 p.m. to Cohen Hall, room 303.** Hard copy, 12-point font, double-spaced. Over the course of the term, look for contemporary articles in newspapers or magazines that speak to a women's health concern. You can choose an issue related to those we discuss in class or it can be an outside topic. Once you have an article or set of articles, write a paper that contextualizes your articles in the historical trajectory of the topic. Your paper must have an argument about how the history of your chosen topic informs its present-day iteration.

This is an opportunity for you to explore an aspect of women's health that excites you or that you deem particularly important. Some issues you might consider are:

- Screening (prenatal, cancer, etc.)
- HPV and vaccinations
- Sexual violence and health
- Fat / thin bodies and medicine
- Women as medical practitioners
- Immigrant women's health
- Sex education
- Reproductive justice, fertility, and infertility
- Breastfeeding / breast milk substitutes
- Sexual dysfunction

5. Quizzes (20%). short quizzes will be administered during the term. These will be unannounced and are there to encourage you to keep up with the readings. Some of the questions will reflect topics and points in the "Study Questions" that accompany each set of readings. These quizzes are not intended to trick you, but rather should offer an easy grade booster.

Academic integrity policy: Using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific and proper acknowledgement constitutes plagiarism. If you are at all unsure about the appropriate form of acknowledgement in a particular situation, it is your responsibility, as stated in Penn's Code of Academic Integrity, to consult with me to clarify any ambiguities. Plagiarism in any assignment will result in a failing grade for that assignment, and may result in further disciplinary action, which may include receiving a failing grade for the course. The full text of the University's Code of Academic Integrity is available online at <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html>.

Expectations: The use of cell phones, smart phones, and laptops is **not permitted** in class. Students with disabilities who require these devices for accessibility purposes should meet with me outside class to discuss individual needs and accommodations.

WEEK 1: Introduction

January 14: Introduction & Scope of the Course

Assignment #1: Sprinkled throughout this syllabus are questions directed at you, such as "what

is your major?" and "what do you hope to get out of this class". For your first assignment, please locate ALL questions (hint: there are more than 2 and less than 10), and email your answers to me by the end of the day of Jan. 15th. This assignment will assure me that you've read through the syllabus, and it will also help me to get to know you better. I will grade this assignment like a quiz, giving full credit for locating and answering all questions.

WEEK 2: Beginnings

January 19: Theoretical Orientations

Emily Martin, "Medical Metaphors of Women's Bodies: Menstruation and Menopause," *The Woman in the Body: A Cultural Analysis of Reproduction* (2001), 27 – 53 (CP, 26 pages)

Londa Schiebinger, "Theories of Race and Gender," in *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science* (Beacon Press, 1993), 143 – 183 (CP, 40 pages)

Discussion Questions

What does an examination of women's health offer to the broader study of history, other than being politically correct?

Does language reflect or reinforce contemporary cultural stereotypes? How does discourse influence the understanding (and subsequent regulation) of women's bodies?

According to Schiebinger's historical actors, what determined different characteristics among humans? How might these understandings of race and gender shape encounters between women and medicine? What was the role women were said to play in the defining of races?

Part I: Gender and Health in the Colonial Era and Early Republic

January 21: Encounters: Bodies and Sexuality in the New World RARE BOOKS INTRO* *Pending confirmation.

Adrien Van der Donck, *A Description of the New Netherlands*, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam, 1656), trans. Jeremiah Johnson, excerpted in *Collections of the New York Historical Society*, 2nd ser., I (1941), p. 200. (CP, 1 page)

Jennifer Morgan, "'Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder': Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770," *William & Mary Quarterly* 54 (Jan. 1997), 167-92. (CP, 26 pages)

Study Questions

How does Adrien Van der Donck depict native women? How did early colonists reconcile labor with beauty among the black and native women they encountered? How does Morgan argue that ideas about "savagery" are written across women's bodies? Both Schiebinger and Morgan see race and gender as intimately intertwined: where do their arguments intersect, and where do they diverge?

WEEK 3: Decision-Making and Women's Work

January 26: Abortion and Miscarriage/

Cornelia Hughes Dayton, "Taking the Trade: Abortion and Gender Relations in an Eighteenth-Century New England Village" *The William and Mary Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (Jan. 1991): 19 – 49 (CP, 30 pages)

Study Questions

How did assumptions about gender affect legal structures in Pomfret? What is the "double standard" Dayton talks about, and how can we measure it in the power relations of colonial North America? What is the role of the physician, and how is he portrayed?

January 28: The Work of Nursing, Respectability, and the Colonial Family

William Cadogan, "An Essay upon Nursing and the Management of Children, From Their Birth to Three Years of Age," 10th ed. (Boston: Cox and Berry, 1772) (CP)

Janet Golden, "Public discourse and private relations: Wet nursing in colonial America" in *From Breast to Bottle: A Social History of Wet Nursing in America* (1996), 11 – 37 (CP, 26 pages)

Study Questions

How did colonial physicians read character in women's abilities to breastfeed? Who were the women who became wet nurses? What threats did they pose to ideas about motherhood and the family?

Part II: Race, Sex, and Science: Women's Health in the Nineteenth Century

WEEK 4: What did it mean to be a woman? Gender as a category of Illness

February 2: Enfeebled bodies, enfeebled minds

Catherine Beecher, "On Female Health in America," from *Letters to the People on Health and Happiness* (1855) (CP)

Edward Clarke, "Sex in Education, or a Fair Chance for the Girls" (1873) (CP)

Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal: Medical and Biological Views of Woman and Her Role in Nineteenth-Century America," *The Journal of American History* 60, no. 2 (Sep., 1973), pp. 332 – 356 (CP, 24 pages)

Study Questions

What is your Major? Why were upper class women in the 19th century seen as sickly? Was this designation necessarily restrictive? What does Catherine Beecher think is wrong with women's health in the mid-19th century? How is medical knowledge a form of power?

February 4: Deviant Women

“Testimony as to the Insanity of Elizabeth Packard” (1864) excerpt in *Root of Bitterness: Documents in the Social History of American Women*, 309 – 314 (CP, 5 pages)

Mary Gove Nichols, “The Murders of Marriage,” (1842) excerpt in *Root of Bitterness: Documents in the Social History of American Women*, 303 – 308 (CP, 5 pages)

Marylynne Diggs, “Romantic Friends or a 'Different Race of Creatures'? The Representation of Lesbian Pathology in Nineteenth-Century America” *Feminist Studies* 21, no. 2 (1995): 317 – 340. (CP, 23 pages).

Study Questions

According to her accusers, what made Elizabeth Packard insane? What does Mary Gove Nichols think women's physiology has to do with marriage? What is Diggs' argument and major intervention? Do you find her argument convincing? What connections can we draw from the representations of same-sex relationships (and sanctions) and the lived experiences of women at the time? Taken together, what do these readings reveal about women's sexuality in the 19th century?

WEEK 5: Regimes of Reproduction: Fertility and Childbirth

February 9: Fertility and Pregnancy

Marie Jenkins Schwartz, “Procreation,” (10 – 31) “Fertility,” (67 – 106) from *Birthing a Slave* (60 pages)

Study Questions

Why study the history of reproduction in the 19th century from a work on enslaved women's health? Can we generalize from these stories, or are they too mired in time and place?

To what extent did maintaining their own traditions of health and healing provide slaves with a measure of power? How do ideas about black women's bodies compare to the ideas we read about in Smith-Rosenberg and Rosenberg last week? Did the scientific/medical theories about gender and race that appear in these readings help create, or merely reflect, social stereotypes?

February 11: Childbirth

Schwartz, “Childbirth” from *Birthing A Slave*, pp. 143 – 186 (43 pages)

Study Questions

We can use the readings this week as a platform to assess two central debates in the history of, first, feminist history; and second, the history of slavery.

One: to what extent did women's biological realities shape their daily lives? Are women's experiences forever tied to their possession of “female” bodies that reproduce?

Two: Marie Jenkins Schwartz is making an important intervention in the question of how much power enslaved peoples (especially women) had over their bodies. In addition to working out what Schwartz is saying (and you should be able to articulate her argument in class), form your own opinions: do you buy her argument? Did slaves exercise their own forms of power that subverted the slave regime, or were these actions necessarily—fundamentally, *inescapably*—constrained by the all-encompassing system of slavery? How much control did enslaved peoples exercise over their lives?

WEEK 6*: Women's Diseases

*Each student should make a 10-min appointment with me to discuss progress on Domestic Health Project. Extra Office hours on Feb. 16th 3:00-4:00pm

February 16: Gynecology Emergent

Deirdre Cooper Owens, "Perfecting the Degraded Body: Slavery, Irish-Immigrations and American Gynaecology," *Power in History: From Medieval Ireland to the Post-Modern World*, ed. Anthony McElligot *et al.* Historical Studies 27 (Dublin, Portland 2011), pp. 167-84 (CP, 17 pages)

Schwartz, "Gynecological Surgery" and "Cancer and Other Tumors" (257 – 289) from *Birthing a Slave*, pp. 227 – 256 (61 pages)

L.L. Wall, "The Medical Ethics of Dr. J. Marion Sims: a Fresh Look at the Historical Record," *Journal of Medical Ethics*, August 2006, pp. 346-350 (CP, 4 pages)

Study Questions

J. Marion Sims: Hero? Villain? Do we care? Why or why not?

Physicians and scientists claimed that there were fundamental physiological differences between the races; yet, they used non-white bodies as sources of knowledge about white bodies. How can we make sense of this paradox? (Bonus points if you refer to readings from the first two weeks in your answer.)

Cooper Owens refers to the antebellum "superbody," or "outlawed body," of black and Irish women. Let's parse this term a little more: what does it mean to possess a "superbody?" What (or who's) purpose does it serve? Can we read resistance into the actions of those women so designated?

February 18: No class – work day / office hours for Domestic Health Advice Assignment

Part III: Citizenship, Activism, and Agency, 1880 – 1970

WEEK 7: Motherhood and the Civilizing Mission

February 23:

* Domestic Health Advice Paper DUE at the beginning of class

Miracles, Medicine, and Controlling Girls

Joan Jacobs Brumberg, "Debates Over Fasting Girls," in *Fasting Girls: The History of Anorexia Nervosa* (1988/2000) 62 – 99 (CP, 37 pages).

Study Questions

How does the manipulation of food constitute an expression of power or critique in this story? What is the role of religious belief in the creation or denial of a medical condition?

February 25: Immigrant and Scientific Mothers

Margaret M. Roche, "A Little Mothers' League," *Mother and Child* 2, no. 10 (October 1921): 455 – 458 (CP, 4 pages)

**Mother and Child* was a magazine published by the American Child Hygiene Association. Little Mothers' Leagues were intended to teach working-class and immigrant girls how to care for their younger siblings while their parents were at work.

"Americanization by Bath." *The Literary Digest*. August 23, 1913. (CP, 2 pages)

Richard Meckel, "Better Mothers, Better Babies, Better Homes," in *Save the Babies*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 124 – 158 (CP, 34 pages)

Sarah Comstock, "Mothercraft: A New Profession for Women," *Good Housekeeping* (1914), 672 – 678 (CP, 7 pages)

Rima Apple, "Mamma's scientific—she knows all the laws': Motherhood in the Early Twentieth Century," in *Perfect Motherhood: Science and Childrearing in America* (2006), 34 – 55. (CP, 21 pages)

Study Questions

Why do reformers care about the actions of immigrants? Why do they care about their hygiene, their milk, and their babies? Is this a program of social reform, or is it one of social control (or both)? Why is hygiene a marker of citizenship? Why did women need to be taught how to be mothers? What mistakes were they making, and according to whom? According to Comstock, what is the purpose of "mothercraft?"

WEEK 8: The "Modern" Woman

March 1: Bad for the Nerves: Mental Health in the Progressive Era

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1893)

+ Gilman, "Why I Wrote *The Yellow Wallpaper*" (1913) (about half a page)

Find it here: <http://csivc.csi.cuny.edu/history/files/lavender/whyyw.html>

Freud, "Miss Lucy R.," in *Studies on Hysteria, Vol II of Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (CP, 1905), 106 – 124.

Elizabeth Lunbeck, "Psychiatrists, the 'Hypersexual Female,' and a New Medical Management of Morality in the Progressive Era," in *Major Problems in the History of Medicine*, 339 – 347 (CP, 9 pages)

Study Questions:

Can you even imagine what is happening in *The Yellow Wallpaper*?

Is the narrator sick? If so, what are her symptoms? How does the narrator's relationship to the wallpaper change over time, and what does it symbolize? How does horror and gothic narrative reinforce broader themes of mental health and the domestic sphere (and vice versa) in this text? Do you think the narrator is insane? Why or why not?

What is wrong with Lucy R.? How does Freud arrive at his diagnosis? What does this fragment reveal about the social and cultural context of hysteria as a diagnosis?

Why is “sexual excess” so threatening? In Lunbeck's article, what is the relationship between psychiatry and society? How do doctors understand adolescence? How does the diagnosis of psychopathy map onto the experience of so-called 'deviant' women in the antebellum era that we read about a few weeks ago?

March 3: The “Modern” Body on Display: Fitness, Beauty, and American Culture (Domestic Health Advice Assignment due at the beginning of class)

Brumberg, Ch. 3 “Perfect Skin” and Ch. 4 “Body Projects,” in *The Body Project*, pp. 57 – 138 (81 pages)

Kathy Peiss, “Beauty Culture and Women's Commerce,” in *Hope in a Jar*, 61 – 96 (CP, 35 pages)

Study Questions:

What is the shift from 'external' to 'internal' controls, and what does it reveal about how girls' bodies are regulated in society? When does attention to bodily appearance transition from healthy to unhealthy? Who decides? How does the changing consumer culture of the Progressive Era influence the production and consumption of beauty products?

SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS

WEEK 9: Mid-Century Anxiety and Sexuality

March 15: Menstruation and Adolescent Sexuality

Brumberg, Ch. 2 “Sanitizing Puberty: The American Way to Menstruate” and Ch. 5 “The Disappearance of Virginity,” pp. 27 – 56 and 139 – 192 (82 pages)

“A Fox Woman Comes of Age,” from *The Autobiography of a Fox Indian Woman*, ed. and trans. Truman Michelson, *40th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1918-19* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1925), pp. 303 – 309 (CP)

Suggested Viewing: Watch *The Story of Menstruation* (1946) here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_19qhlHFxUM&feature=email

Viewing Guide: Think about contemporary advertisements or educational materials about menstruation and reflect on what its presentation implies about women's bodies. How is menstruation talked about today? How does it compare with the 1940s version?

Study Questions

What do you hope to get out of this course? What is the role of media and commercial interest in how women think about their bodies? How do relationships between women influence experiences during puberty?

Where do adolescent girls get information about sexuality? What role does sex education play in how girls conceive of — and experience — their bodies? How does race or class influence this information, both in its delivery and its reception?

March 17: Anxiety and the Diagnosis of Discontent

Donald Cooley, “The New Nerve Pills and Your Health,” *Cosmopolitan* (January 1956), 68 – 75 (handout, 7 pages)

Betty Friedan, “The Sexual Solipsism of Sigmund Freud,” *The Feminine Mystique*, (1964), 103 – 125 (CP, 22 pages)

→ Images from the history of tranquilizers. Before class, visit this interactive timeline of benzodiazepine advertisements targeting women between 1950 and 1980:

<http://www.jsonline.com/watchdog/246234931.html>.

If that link doesn't work, it's also available here:

<http://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline/latest/embed/index.html?source=0ApXkjam7QBodGFGcmhWRTJ3UIBmRmxqWFh0azZTSMc&font=Bevan-PotanoSans&maptype=toner&lang=en&height=650>

These ads appeared in medical journals. If you can find a way to zoom in, do take the time to read the fine print on each advertisement, it's worth it. As you look at these images, try to ascertain what they tell us about a) the dangers of anxiety, not just to women, but to society at large; b) the promise of tranquilizers (again, think big here: what is being fixed in addition to women themselves?); and c) idealized visions of womanhood. Come to class having thought about these questions and be prepared to refer to these images to bolster your claims.

Suggested Viewing: Watch *The Three Faces of Eve* (1957) at home. You can watch it on youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SOxxf8zJt9M>. If the link does not work for you, the DVD is on reserve at Van Pelt. This film, which was based on a novel by two psychiatrists, depicts a woman who is diagnosed with dissociative identity disorder.

Viewing Guide: Consider the following, along any other reactions or thoughts you have:

1. What characterizes the relationship between Eve and her psychiatrist?
2. What indicates to the viewer that Eve is sick, and what indicates that she is cured? Which version of Eve are we supposed to be rooting for and why?

Study Questions

Do you consider yourself a feminist? How would you define feminism? Why is Betty Friedan critical of the use of tranquilizers and “helpers” for women? On what medical and scientific foundations does the use of tranquilizers rest? What constructions of gender does it assume? What does anxiety have to do with citizenship in the mid-20th century?

WEEK 10: Mid-Century Reproduction

March 22: Reproductive Health and Black Women

Smith, *Listen To Me Good*, Ch. 2 “Pregnancy,” Ch. 3 “Official Midwife,” and Ch. 4 “Birth Practices” (77 pages)

Study Questions

What were the key challenges of rural healthcare? What do we learn from studying childbirth and midwives in Eutaw, Alabama? Is this a story that could happen anywhere, or is it unique to the American South?

March 24: Abortion

* Interview Paper Assignment DUE at the beginning of class

“The Most Remarkable Abortion Story Ever Told,” Jane, *Hyde Park-Kenwood Voices*, June 1973. Available here: <https://www.uic.edu/orgs/cwluherstory/CWLUFeature/Remarkable1.html>

Wendy Kline, “Learning from the Uterus Out: Abortion and Women's Health Activism in Chicago,” *Bodies of Knowledge*, pp. 65 – 96 (31 pages)

Leslie Reagan, “Specter of Tragedy,” in *Dangerous Pregnancies: Mothers, Disabilities, and Abortion in Modern America* (2010), pp. 55 – 104 (CP, 49 pages)

Suggested Viewing: *If These Walls Could Talk* (1996). This film depicts three abortions: one in 1952, one in 1974, and one in 1996. Watch the film and consider some (or all) of the following:

Viewing Guide: Compare and contrast each woman's experience across the years depicted. Who are the supporting characters? What is the role of friendship, doctor-patient relationship, and marriage in this film? How can we read class and race into these stories? This movie, like any primary source, contains an argument that reflects the time of its production. How is abortion depicted in the mid-90s, and what does that tell us about the political climate at that moment? Read the film like you would read a text: in addition to language, think about tone, music, lighting, cinematography, etc. and how the film's production reinforces its larger argument.

Study Questions

How did abortion become a feminist topic for reform? What were the fault lines dividing activists on the issue? How—and why—do a woman's reasons for getting an abortion factor into this debate?

What role does media play in constructing the threat of disease, and how does abortion become a legitimate solution?

WEEK 11: Treatments

March 29: Birth Control

Dubois, Johnson, and Schuyler, “A Negro Number,” *Birth Control Review* 16 (1932): 163-167 (CP, 4 pages)

Dorothy Roberts, excerpt from Chapter 2, “The Dark Side of Birth Control,” in *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty* (1997), pp. 56 – 89. (33 pages)

Study Questions

What kinds of people did eugenicists and birth control advocates think should be having children?
What were the perceived threats posed by poor or black people to society?

March 31: Healthier, with Hormones (Interview Assignment due at the beginning of class)

Robert A. Wilson, “A Key to Staying Young” *Look* (January 11, 1966) (handout)

Langston, Ch. 3, 4, and 6 (“Help for Women Over Forty;” “Bigger, Stronger Babies,” and “Growing Concerns”) *Toxic Bodies*, 28 – 60 and 83 – 111 (60 pages)

Study Questions

How did ideas about women's life cycles feed into the marketing of synthetic hormones, and vice versa? What impeded legislative action against DES, despite the scientific knowledge of its adverse effects?

Part IV: Empowerment? 1970 – Present

WEEK 12: Knowing and Altering Women's Bodies

April 5: Knowledge and Practice: Women's Health Lived and Represented

Audre Lorde, *The Cancer Journals* (1980), Parts II and III.

S. Lochlann Jain, “Cancer Butch” *Cultural Anthropology* 22, no. 4 (2007): 501 – 538. (CP, 37 pages)

Study Questions

Why doesn't Lorde wear a prosthesis after her mastectomy? What, ultimately, does she want to achieve in this work?

Why does the fight against breast cancer accrue so much attention and activism compared to other diseases? Is the experience of breast cancer different from other forms of cancer (women's or otherwise)? How, further, do women's experiences diverge based on their political or sexual orientations? And finally, what's wrong with pink?

April 7: Plastic Surgery

Elizabeth Haiken, “The Michael Jackson Factor: Race, Ethnicity, and Cosmetic Surgery,” in *Venus Envy: A History of Cosmetic Surgery* (1997), 175 – 227 (CP, 52 pages)

Study Questions

How do ideas about race or ethnicity frame ideals of beauty? Is ethnic neutrality something to be lauded or criticized?

WEEK 13: Contraception and Childbirth in the Late 20th Century

April 12: Regulating Drugs and Bodies: the Pushback Against Medical and Scientific Authority

Wendy Kline, “Bodies of Evidence: Depo-Provera and the Public Board of Inquiry,” *Bodies of Knowledge*, pp. 97 – 125 (28 pages)

Jacqueline Wolf, “Epidural Anesthesia and Cesarean Section: The Question of Choice, 1970s to the present,” in *Deliver Me From Pain: Anesthesia and Birth in America* (2009), 168 – 196 (CP, 28 pages)

Study Questions

What does the history of pill research reveal about the connections between gender and scientific research? How does activism factor into drug regulation, and vice versa? What do you hope to understand better concerning gender and health?

How does technical knowledge and medical authority affect the experiences of late-20th century women?

April 14: Modern Midwifery

Smith, “Last Days,” *Listen to Me Good*, 134 – 156 (22 pages)

Kline, “Choices in Childbirth: A Modern Midwife's Tale,” *Bodies of Knowledge*, 127 – 155 (28 pages)

Study Questions

What is “natural childbirth?” What drives the natural childbirth movement? What is the role of expertise in the birthing room? What characterizes the professional relationship between lay midwives and nurse-midwives? How does folk medicine interact with hospital practice in Smith's account?

WEEK 14: Work Week

April 19: No class – work day / office hours for Contemporary Issues Assignment

April 21: No class – work day / office hours for Contemporary Issues Assignment

*******April 22: Contemporary Issues Paper DUE, 5pm, Cohen Hall, Room 303 (please place a**

hard copy of the paper in my mailbox; the office closes promptly at 5pm)

WEEK 15: Criminalizing Reproduction in the late 20th century

April 26: Policing and Pathologizing the Womb / Wrap Up

Rebecca Kluchin, “Sterilizing Unfit Women,” in *Fit to be Tied* (2009), 73 – 113 (CP, 40 pages)

Roberts, excerpts from Chapters 3, “From Norplant to the Contraceptive Vaccine, pp. 104 – 138, and Chapter 4, “Making Reproduction a Crime,” *Killing the Black Body*, pp. 150 – 201 (87 pages)

Watch this news segment on Project Prevention, an organization that pays drug addicts to get sterilized. Find it here: <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/video/controversial-program-sterilizes-addicts-11916941>

Study Questions

Who was most likely to be sterilized in the past and why? How about today? What is the perceived connection between birth control, reproduction, and social problems?