



School of Interdisciplinary Studies, UT-Dallas
MOTHERHOOD AND THE TECHNOLOGICAL WOMB

Spring 2013

Course # GST 4325-001

Monday/Wednesday: 2:30 – 3:45 p.m.

Location: HH 2.502

“Each time a new technological development is hailed the same question arises: is this liberation or oppression in a new guise? To answer this we need to know more about reproductive technologies than the newscasters tell us. Who are the developers, the promoters, the ‘experts’? Who benefits—which sex, which class, which race? How much does it cost and who is going to pay? Why is it so hard to get accurate information? WOMEN are the targets of all this manipulation, but we are not in control; neither at the professional level neither as scientists or doctors, nor at the personal level as consumers...”

-- Rita Arditti and Renate Duelli Klein, “Introduction” in *Test-Tube Women: What Future for Motherhood?* London: Pandora Press, 1984, p. 2.

PROFESSOR CONTACT INFORMATION

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Tuesdays and Thursdays—11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
and by appointment (please email to arrange)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Since the formal founding of the medical field, there have been a number of technological “advances” in reproductive medicine. Such developments have brought about a number of results—some intended, others unforeseen—and have forever and dramatically altered human reproduction, including the process (conception, gestation, labor, and delivery), its outcomes (human offspring, but there are others), and our attitudes toward all aspects of human reproduction.

This course will focus on the relationship between medical/scientific technologies and meanings of human reproduction. In addition to exploring the history of reproductive technologies (from those that seem relatively low-tech by contemporary standards to more elaborate equipment, drugs, and related procedures), we will also investigate how various interventions and reproductive technologies have influenced the social, emotional, legal, political, and economic aspects of reproduction. Furthermore, we will analyze how access to such technologies has been (and continues to be) influenced by race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, marital status, and other social group identities. While much of our discussion will focus on the U.S., we will regularly examine the use of reproductive technologies in other contexts throughout the world including both industrialized and developing nations.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Identify the components of female and male human reproductive anatomy;
2. Define various medical terms as related to reproductive medicine;
3. Explain technological/scientific procedures used in reproductive medicine;
4. Describe how reproductive medicine has changed over time, particularly in relation to the development of specific reproductive technologies;
5. Demonstrate the connections between economic, legal, social, political, and related aspects of reproductive technologies;
6. Discuss the ways in which attitudes about gender, race, sexuality, social class, ability, and other identities influence reproduction and reproductive medicine.

Students will also be provided with opportunities to enhance their skills in the following areas:

1. Critical thinking and analysis;
2. Written communication (both formal and informal);
3. Oral communication (both formal and informal);
4. Academic research.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

The following books are required for this course. They are available for purchase at the UTD bookstore. You are also likely to find both new and used copies via various online sources.

- Block, Jennifer. *Pushed: The Painful Truth About Childbirth and Modern Maternity Care*. Publisher: De Capo Press, 2008.
- Gaskin, Ina May. *Birth Matters: A Midwife's Manifesta*. Publisher: Seven Stories Press, 2011.
- Spar, Debora L. *The Baby Business: How Money, Science, and Politics Drive the Commerce of Conception*. Publisher: Harvard Business Press, 2006.

There are also a variety of journal articles, news articles, and other required readings for this course. These are marked as “available on eLearning” on the course syllabus and they can be accessed via the course eLearning site under the “Learning Modules” tab in the folder marked “Additional Course Readings.”

SUGGESTED COURSE MATERIALS

Although not required, it is suggested that you have a **USB drive** or some other reliable method of saving the work you produce for this course.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

Your final grade in this course will be determined in accordance with your performance on the following:

ATTENDANCE (100 points): Lectures, discussions, small group activities, and the other work we do from day to day are integral to your success in this course. Attendance will be taken every day. You should strive for perfect attendance and miss class only in rare and unavoidable circumstances. It is expected that you will arrive to class on time and stay for the entire class session. Work assigned for this class carries no less priority than work you may have to complete for any other class or your job. Material and information will be presented in the classroom that cannot be replicated outside the classroom or made up at a later date. If you miss a class for any reason, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate and find out all assignments, content, activities, and changes in due dates covered in class. Final attendance grades

are calculated as follows: if you are present for 100% of class session, you will earn 100 attendance points; if you are present for 70% of class session, you will earn 70 attendance points.

PARTICIPATION (100 points): Class participation involves demonstrating preparedness for class and engagement with readings, videos, or other materials by:

- summarizing key points from the assigned material
- offering comments and observations
- asking and answering questions
- making connections between various readings
- presenting alternative explanations and perspectives
- drawing on your experiences (as appropriate)
- participating in small group activities
- being an attentive listener
- respecting the viewpoints and values of others.

Class participation is a vital part of your learning process because this class revolves around discussion and group activities. It will be very difficult to do well in this course if you fail to participate actively. Individuals who fail to participate in an active, engaged manner will earn a low participation grade as will those who dominate discussion to the point that other voices and viewpoints are silenced. If I notice that you are hesitant to participate in our class discussions, I will make it a point to provide you with opportunities to join the discussion. Please note that participation points are somewhat connected to attendance—in other words, if you are present for only 70% of class sessions, you cannot earn more than 70 participation points.

EXAMS (300 points total): You will complete two exams in this course. The first exam will focus on female and male reproductive anatomy and is worth 100 points. The second exam will focus on medical and reproductive terminology and is worth 200 points. Exams are closed book but are based solely on the anatomy charts and terminology lists posted in the “exams” folder on eLearning.

READING RESPONSES (6 x 25 points each = 150 points): In order to help you prepare for class discussions and simultaneously facilitate a more cooperative learning environment, course participants will be divided into 2 groups (Last names A-M are in group A, last names N-Z are in group B) with each individual asked to prepare a 2-page response to the assigned readings (6 times during the semester, or roughly every other week). Responses will be shared with other course participants during our in-class discussions.

For each reading response, you must:

1. demonstrate that you’ve completed the assigned readings;
2. provide a thoughtful analysis of/reaction to the assigned readings; and,
3. properly cite course readings (both in-text and via works cited page).

Due dates for each group are clearly indicated on the course syllabus. Reading response papers will only be accepted electronically via the course eLearning site and must be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m. on the date which they are due.

BOOK REVIEW & PRESENTATION (50 points): Working in small groups (2-3 people), you will select a recent academic book (published/produced 2010 to present) and after thoroughly reading it, create a 15-minute presentation in which you provide a review of the book including an overview of the book as well as an assessment of its strengths and limitations. More detailed instructions about this assignment will be distributed in the early weeks of the semester.

There are 700 points possible in this course as determined by the assignments described above:

- Attendance (100 points)
- Participation (100 points)
- Exams (1 @ 100 points + 1 @ 200 points = 300 points)
- Reading Response Papers (6 x 25 points each = 150 points)
- Book Review & Presentation (50 points)

Final course grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

| <u>Points</u> | <u>Grade</u> |
|---------------|--------------|
| 630 – 700 | A range |
| 560 – 629 | B range |
| 490 – 559 | C range |
| 420 – 489 | D range |
| 419 and below | F |

COURSE & INSTRUCTOR POLICIES

Assignment Format

Your assignments **must** adhere to the following formatting requirements (unless noted on an individual assignment handout):

- The following information must be included (single-spaced) at the top left margin of the first page only: your name, the title of the assignment, the course name and number, my name, the date submitted.
- All margins must be 1 inch.
- Font of your document should be Times New Roman, 12-point type.
- The body/content of your document must be double-spaced.
- Choose a standard citation style—APA, MLA, or Chicago.
- Graphics, tables, and illustrations need to be clearly identified and explained.
- Documents must be free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.
- Sources must be documented and/or quoted appropriately in the text as well as in the References/Bibliography at the end of your document.

NOTE: Failure to adhere to formatting requirements may result in your assignment being considered “incomplete” and, therefore, unacceptable.

Late Work: Deadlines are a serious matter. Missed deadlines cause delays and administrative headaches. In the professional world, they can also compromise professional reputations and careers. For these reasons, late or incomplete work is not acceptable in this course. Technological problems are not valid excuses for late work, so plan accordingly. Moreover, no late or makeup submissions will be accepted.

Extra Credit: I do not curve individual items, nor do I offer “extra credit” work or “special consideration” to allow students a chance to raise their grade. If a personal situation arises during the semester that may affect your classroom performance, please talk to me sooner rather than later. If you wait until the end of the semester, I won’t be able to help you. However, I can work with you more easily if you speak to me when the situation arises.

Classroom Citizenship: All members of our classroom learning community are expected to communicate in a civil, respectful, and professional manner. Disagreement is acceptable (and even expected in college-level courses); disrespect, however, has no place in this or any classroom.

Technology Requirements: The course is taught using eLearning, and you should develop the habit of checking both eLearning and your UTD email often for assignments and announcements. Reliable and frequent internet connectivity is indispensable. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to the course through eLearning for the duration of the semester. Failure to check UTD or eLearning email, errors in forwarding email, and email bounced from over-quota mailboxes are not acceptable excuses for missing course-related emails or

announcements.

Additionally, to protect your privacy rights, I will only send email through your official UTD email address or eLearning email. If you send me an email from a non-UTD email account, I will not respond.

Classroom and Equipment Use Policies: **No laptops, cell phones, pagers, or other electronic messaging services may be used in the classroom**. I recognize that many of us carry cell phones and other electronic communication devices so we can be contacted in the event of emergencies or other serious situations. During class time, however, I expect all members of our classroom learning community to turn these off or set them to vibrate/silent.

A Note for Students who are Parents: If circumstances arise that necessitate your absence from class—such as the illness of your child, the closing of your child’s daycare center due to inclement weather, etc.—please contact a classmate as soon as possible so you can stay up-to-date with course material and activities. However, please note that attendance policies and grading are the same for ALL students.

For information about UTD academic policies, including student conduct and discipline, incomplete grading policy, and similar matters, please visit:

<http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

COURSE CALENDAR

Introductions and Beginnings

- Week 1**
- January 14:**
- Introduction to course, policies, assignments, expectations
 - Introductions to one another—Who are we? Why are we here? Goals? Interests?
- January 16:**
- Jordan, “Buscando la Forma: An Ethnography of Contemporary Maya Childbirth” (pp. 15-44, eLearning)
 - Lecture/Discussion: “The Continuum: Natural and Assisted Birth”

Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Childbirth

- Week 2**
- January 21: No Class, MLK Jr. Day**
- January 23:**
- Block, “Introduction” (pp. xvii–xxv in *Pushed*)
 - Block, “Ch. 1: Arranged Birth” (pp. 1-44 in *Pushed*)

The Shift from Midwives to Physician-Assisted Childbirth and Forceps Technology

- Week 3**
- January 28:**
- Wertz and Wertz, “Midwives and Social Childbirth in Colonial America” (pp. 1-28, eLearning)
 - Leavitt, “Science Enters the Birthing Room—The Impact of Physician Obstetrics” (pp. 36-63, eLearning)
 - **Group A-- Reading Response #1**
- January 30**

- Leavitt, “Overcivilization and Maternity—Differences in Women’s Childbirth Experiences” (pp. 64-86, eLearning)
- In-Class Video Viewing/Discussion: “Assisted Baby Delivery” (youtube)
- In-Class Video Viewing/Discussion: “Forceps Delivery” (Medical Videos)
- **Group B—Reading Response #1**

Week 4

February 4 (Dr. Jillian in London)

Exam #1: Female and Male Reproductive Anatomy

Pain Relief During Childbirth

February 6 (Dr. Jillian in London—eLearning discussion required)

- Cassidy, “Ch. 4: Pain Relief” (pp. 77-102, eLearning)
- Cunningham, et. al., “Obstetrical Anesthesia” (pp. 444-463, eLearning)
- In-Class Video Viewing/Discussion: “Epidural & Spinal Anesthesia” (youtube)
- In-Class Video Viewing/Discussion: “Epidural Procedure” (youtube)

Week 5

February 11

- Wertz and Wertz, “The Wounds of Birth: Birthpain and Puerperal Fever” (pp. 109-131, eLearning)
- Leavitt, “Birthing and Anesthesia: The Debate Over Twilight Sleep” (pp. 147-164, eLearning)
- Video Viewing and Discussion: “Labor Pain Relief” Methods
- **Group A—Reading Response #2**

Contraception

February 13

- Cunningham, et. al., “Contraception” (pp. 673-697, eLearning)
- Pollock, “Refusing to Take Women Seriously: ‘Side Effects’ and the Politics of Contraception” (pp. 138-152, eLearning)
- **Group B—Reading Response #2**

Week 6

February 18

- Hartmann, “Shaping Contraception Technology” (pp. 173-188, eLearning)
- Washington, “The Black Stork” (pp. 189-215, eLearning)
- In-Class Video Viewing and Discussion: “The Pill”

Fetal Imaging and Fetal Surgery

February 20

- Williams, et. al., “Women as Moral Pioneers? Experiences of First Trimester Antenatal Screening” (pp. 1983-1995, eLearning)
- Taylor, “A Fetish is Born: Sonographers and the Making of the Public Fetus” (pp. 187-210, eLearning)
- **Group A—Reading Response #3**

Week 7

February 25

- Balen and Inhorn, “Son Preference, Sex Selection, and the ‘New’ New Reproductive Technologies” (eLearning)
- Kale, “It’s a Girl—Could be a Death Sentence” (eLearning)
- Video Viewing and Discussion: “Gendercide: Sex Selection in America (part 4)”

February 27

- Golombeck, et al., “Maternal Morbidity after Maternal-Fetal Surgery” (eLearning)
- Knopoff, “Can a Pregnant Woman Morally Refuse Fetal Surgery?” (eLearning)
- **Group B—Reading Response #3**

Week 8

March 4

- Holmes, “Fetal Surgery for Posterior Urethral Valves: Long-Term Outcomes” (eLearning)
- Video Viewing and Discussion: “Open Fetal Surgery: Past, Present, & Future”

March 6

Exam #2: Medical and Reproductive Terminology

March 12 & 14—No Class/Spring Break

Gamete Donation

Week 9

March 18

- Ahuja, et al., “Money, Morality, and Medical Risks: Conflicting Notions Underlying the Recruitment of Egg Donors” (eLearning)
- Pearson, “Health Effects of Egg Donation May Take Decades to Appear” (pp. 1-3, eLearning)
- In-Class Video Viewing and Discussion: “Eggsploitation”

The “Business” of Producing Babies

March 20

- Spar, “Chapter 1: The Quest to Conceive” (pp. 1-30 in *The Baby Business*)
- Spar, “Chapter 2: A Cluster of Cells” (pp. 31-67 in *The Baby Business*)
- **Group A—reading response #4**

Week 10

March 25

- Spar, “Chapter 3: Renting Wombs for Love and Money” (pp. 68-96 in *The Baby Business*)
- Spar, “Ch. 4: Designing Babies” (pp. 97-128 in *The Baby Business*)
- In-Class Video Viewing and Discussion: segments from “Wombs for Rent”

Higher-Order Multiple Births

March 27

- Blickstein and Keith, “The Spectrum of Iatrogenic Multiple Pregnancy” (pp. 1-8, eLearning)
- Chasen, “The Natural History of Higher Order Multiples” (pp. 21-34, eLearning)
- **Group B—Reading Response #4**

Week 11

April 1

- Selections from Keith, “Higher-Order Multiple Gestations,” (eLearning) including: Introduction, Risks of Higher-Order Multiple Gestations, Antenatal Care, Delivery, Final Recommendations.
- Videos on quintuplets, sextuplets, septuplets, octuplets, etc.
- “MOST” video—“Reality for Multiple Birth Families” (youtube.com)

Modern American Birthing Experiences

April 3

- Block, “Chapter 2: The Short Cut” (pp. 45-72 in *Pushed*)
- Block, “Chapter 3: Denied Birth” (pp. 73-108 in *Pushed*)
- In-Class Video Viewing/Discussion: “A Baby Story” (TLC)
- **Group A—Reading Response #5 Due**

Week 12

April 8

- Block, “Chapter 4: Consequences” (pp. 109-149 in *Pushed*)
- Block, “Chapter 5: Mothers’ Helpers” (pp. 149-176 in *Pushed*)

Midwifery

April 10

- Gaskin, *Birth Matters: A Midwife’s Manifesta*, including:
 - Chapter 1, “The Importance of Birth and Birth Stories”
 - Chapter 2, “Second-Wave Feminism, Birth, and Motherhood”
 - Chapter 3, “Sexuality and Birth”
- **Group B—Reading Response #5 Due**

Week 13

April 15

- Gaskin, *Birth Matters: A Midwife’s Manifesta*, including:
 - Chapter 4, “A Brief Look at the History of Midwives”
 - Chapter 5, “Technology and Empowerment”
 - Chapter 6, “Gathering the Power of Sisterhood”
 - Chapter 7, “What’s a Father-to-be to do?”
- **Group A—Reading Response #6 Due**

April 17

- Gaskin, *Birth Matters: A Midwife’s Manifesta*, including:
 - Chapter 8, “My Vision for the Future”
 - Chapter 9, “The Kind of Obstetrics I Miss, and its Great Defenders”
- Video Viewing and Discussion: “Ina May Gaskin on *Birth Matters*”

Doulas

Week 14

April 22

- *DONA* (Doula International) website (www.dona.org), including the following sections (all under the “for mothers and families” tab):
 - “What is a doula?”
 - “Why hire a doula?”
 - “Doula FAQs”
- Possible Guest Speakers: Practicing doulas from the DFW area
- **Group B—Reading Response #6 Due**

April 24

- Video Viewing and Discussion: “The Business of Being Born”

Week 15

April 29—Book reviews/presentations

May 1—Book reviews/presentations