In this unit we study how biomedical knowledge and practice have shaped understandings of sex difference, gender and sexuality over time. We also study how cultural, social and political expressions and problems of gender have influenced biomedicine and public health practice and knowledge. This unit is historically oriented, exploring largely modern (that is, post 1800) examples from Australian, European and US history. It is organised in three blocks. First we look at the medical reinventions of bodily difference from the early modern period to the early twentieth century: anatomical, evolutionary, racial, hormonal, sexological. In the second block we think about the practice of medicine and health: gender and the institutions and interventions of psychiatry and psychoanalysis; of obstetrics and midwifery; of early women doctors; and the explosive feminist politicisation of sexually transmitted diseases from 1860 onwards. In the third block we think about public health, biopolitics, and population management including the significance of reproductive sex to twentieth century nation-states; the Australian history of eugenics, public health, and race; and the global programs of sterilisation and contraception in the post World War II period.

Objectives
• to familiarise students with histories and theories of sex and gender, understood through western bio-medicine;
• to historicise in detail recent feminist theory on sex and race difference and embodiment;
• to offer students a broad knowledge of the history of modern medicine;
• to extend and refine students’ capacity to read critically;
• to extend student’s abilities to communicate these critical skills effectively (orally and in writing).

Assessment

1. Summary and critical evaluation 1
   Due at tutorial week 5, 25 August
   In 400 words only, summarise (about 100 words) and critically evaluate (300 words) any one article from weeks 1-5.

2. Summary and critical evaluation 2
   Due at tutorial week 9, 22 September
   In 400 words summarise and critically evaluate any one article from Weeks 6-8
3. Essay 2,500 words       60%
Due **Friday 31 October** by 5 pm

Course Reader: Available from the Copy Centre (ask for WMST2006 reader: identical)

Program of Lectures

Week 1: Monday 28 July
Introduction

**BLOCK ONE: Medical Science Invents Sexual Difference**

Week 2: Monday 4 August
Anatomies of Sexual Difference: pre-modern, renaissance, enlightenment

Week 3: Monday 11 August
Difference and evolutionary theory: Victorian debates

Week 4: Monday 18 August
The Discovery and Invention of Hormones: the ‘essence of difference’ in the early twentieth century

Week 5: Monday 25 August
Sexology: medical theorising on desire, gender identities and sexuality

**BLOCK TWO: Practices**

Week 6: Monday 1 September
Bodies and Minds: 19th century psychiatry and psychoanalysis

Week 7: Monday 8 Sept.
Obstetrics and Midwifery, historically and sexually considered

Week 8: Monday 15 September
Women’s Health, Women Doctors, Women’s Hospitals

Week 9: Monday 22 September
Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Feminism and Biomedicine

**BREAK: 29 September - 3 October**

**BLOCK THREE: Population and Biopolitics**

Week 10: Monday 6 October
Medicine and colonialism. **Reading only: public holiday**

Week 11: Monday 13 October
Population, the state and the nation:

Week 12: Monday 20 October
Eugenics, Race and Sex

Week 13: Monday 27 October
Technologies of population: organising ‘world health’

Tutorials
Week 1:
Introduction: lecture only, no tutorial

BLOCK ONE: Medical Science Invents Sexual Difference

Week 2: beginning 4 August
Anatomies of Sexual Difference: medieval, renaissance and enlightenment perceptions
Much of this course is about different imaginings, different historical perceptions of, bodies. As a way into the content of sex and medicine, as well as into this theoretical idea, we will look at medieval and early modern perceptions of sex difference. These are often entirely unfamiliar ways of understanding bodies and sex. We look at the tradition of anatomy and the representation of men’s and women’s bodies as well as some of the therapeutics from the period. We will examine the historical contention that there used to be one sex, and in the modern period (post 1800) there were two.


Week 3: beginning 11 August
Difference and evolutionary theory: Victorian debates
From the late eighteenth century natural philosophers increasingly theorised about sex difference in terms of race difference. ‘Race’ in many ways, is an invention of this period. This week we will read historical work on evolutionary theory and the reconstitution of sex difference which it entailed.

Week 4: beginning 18 August
The Discovery and Invention of Hormones: the ‘essence’ of difference
In the early twentieth century new practices of ‘organotherapy’ prefigured the discipline of endocrinology. Hormones were being discovered and sex difference was being reinvented again. This week we will look at the kinds of masculinity and femininity implicated in the early hormone research and clinical practice. Much of this early research shaped later twentieth century popular as well as scientific (mis)perceptions about the nature of sex and gender, as well as leading to crucial technological and pharmaceutical innovations.


- Anne Fausto-Sterling, ‘Do Hormones really exist’ in her *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*, Basic Books, 2000

Week 5: beginning 25 August.
Sexology: medical theorising on desire, gender identities and sexuality
Summary 1 due at this tutorial
Sex differentiation has also been determined historically in terms of object of desire: gender, sex and sexuality are mutually constitutive and ‘difference’ is apparent within as well as between sexes in gendered ways. Medicine has often been implicated in shaping the contours of this field. This week we look at the new discipline of sexology, emerging in the 1890s which was interested in the ‘pathologies’ of sex and gender, and which constructed epistemologies and categories of ‘normal’ and ‘abnormal’.

Week 6: beginning 1 September
Bodies and Minds: early psychiatry and psychoanalysis
NB History and Gender Studies students have an in-class test 10-11. Lecture will commence at 11-12.

This week we look at men, women, asylums and ‘lunacy’ in the Victorian period, and the place of ‘the woman question’ in the development of psychology. The connections between the female body and mind were constantly speculated upon and this shaped gendered conduct as well as political philosophy on relative capacities of men and women. Hysteria was a central problematic in early psychiatry and we will explore in tutorials early twentieth century psychoanalysis as a new mode of therapy, and a new way of understanding gendered and sexual conduct and relations.


Week 7: beginning 8 September
Obstetrics and Midwifery, historically and sexually considered

While much historical writing has been interest in the patient — the recipient of medical practice — as embodied and gendered, practitioners, of course, are always embodied too. Over the next two weeks we examine closely the debates about gender, sexuality and the clinical encounter. The gender of the practitioner was heatedly discussed over the field of obstetric practice, especially in the mid nineteenth century.

- Alison Bashford, ‘Pathologising the Practitioner: Puerperal Fever in the 1860s’ in her *Purity and Pollution*, Macmillan, 1998. If you have purchased the book, read also ch. 7

Week 8: beginning 15 September
Women Doctors, Women’s Hospitals, Women’s Health,

In the middle of the nineteenth century, medicine was in many ways an unregulated business. Part of the process of its regulation was the question of the sex of practitioners. If women were to practice, was this to be similarly or differently to men? This week we examine the unexpected ways in which women’s medical practice played out, and the institutions which resulted from and partly constituted the field of women’s health.

Week 9: beginning 22 September
Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Feminism and Biomedicine
Summary 2 due at this tutorial
Venereal diseases (syphilis and gonorrhoea) have been major public health problems, and their management has been highly politicised. This week we study the connections between early feminism and what was then called ‘contagious diseases’, including the prominence of the problem of venereal diseases in the movement for women’s citizenship. We will also look at the preventive and treatment regimes which problematised and criminalized certain women as conduits of disease. This week our readings are primary documents. We will discuss how historians might analyse these texts


BREAK 29 September- 3 October
Work hard on essays this week and next week

BLOCK THREE: Population and Bio-politics

Week 10: beginning 6 October
Public health, colonialism and gender: reading week
One medical sociologist has written that ‘the power to govern is often presented as the power to heal’ (C. Waldby, AIDS and the Body Politic). Public health and medicine has often been a vehicle for, as well as an objective of, imperialism and colonial governance. This is a reading week only. No lectures or tutorials due to public holiday.


Week 11: beginning 13 October
Reproduction, population, the state and the nation
This week we think about the modern problematisation of ‘population’: health, birth-rates, infant and maternal mortalities rates, fecundity and so forth. Foucault called this ‘biopolitics’. Especially from the late nineteenth century and through the twentieth century, national governments, women’s groups, as well as experts in the human, biological and social sciences have been invested in practices, policies and effects of reproduction and reproductive sex.

Week 12: beginning 20 October
Eugenics, Race and Sex
Eugenicists were concerned with the ‘quality’ and to some extent the quantity of the future population (in any given national, racial or imperial community). This week we will think carefully about eugenics in Europe, the US and Australia and the connections to public health departments, to women’s groups and to racial imaginings of nations.


Week 13: beginning 27 October
Technologies of population: sterilisation, contraception and ‘world health’

The history of twentieth century attempts to implement birth control at individual, family, communal, national and global levels is a fascinating study in ‘governmentality’: in which attempts are made to bring the governance of the self and governance of the nation/community/globe into alignment. As coercion, as ‘education’, or as ‘liberation’ the policies and technologies of population management have exercised many governments as well as international governing and humanitarian bodies, such as the Rockefeller Foundation and the World Health Organization. The readings compare the social and political significance of population/birth control in India and in the US in the period 1950-1970 when the oral contraceptive was developed.

• FILM Deepa Dhanraj, *Something like a war*, Channel Four/Australian Film Institute, 1993.
Essays: 2,500 words
Due: Friday 31 October by 5pm
Submit: at the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry Office, Old Education Blg.
With cover sheet complete
Copy: you must keep a copy of your essay
Late penalties: These accumulate immediately – see Gender Studies website/handbook policy. For equity reasons I will be applying late penalties consistently without exception. Too much work/other essays will not work as a reason to avoid a late penalty. Only with medical or counselling documentation will I lift the penalty.
Plagiarism: dishonest academic work is easy to spot and will not be assessed. It is your responsibility to read the University policy on Academic Honesty.

Choose one of the following:

1. Analyse the perceptions of gender in the early twentieth century journal *The Eugenics Review* (in Burkitt-Ford Library Stack)

2. Family Planning Australia emerged from the Racial Hygiene Association of the interwar years. Discuss the history of contraception over the 20th century, in relation to feminism, race and nationalism.

3. ‘Late nineteenth century ‘hysteria’ is late twentieth century ‘anorexia’’. Do you agree?

4. Discuss the relation between colonialism and Enlightenment theorising on gender and sexuality.

5. How has feminist and/or post-structuralist theory influenced recent history of medicine?

6. In what ways does Foucault’s ‘biopolitics of the population’ (HoS, 139) need to be understood as gendered and raced?

7. Discuss the relation between early twentieth century sexology and early twentieth century feminism.

8. What were the gendered identities of early women doctors? In what ways did this shape their perceptions of women’s medical practice?

9. Sex/Gender/Sexuality. In what ways is the history of these concepts also part of the history of medicine?

10. In what ways have the history of ‘venereal disease’ management and the management of HIV/AIDS been connected?
Further reading for essays and take-home exams

This further reading list is a preliminary guide only. There is much, much more to read. I have categorised it broadly, and one category does not necessarily ‘match’ one essay topic. Resources for any of the above questions can be found in several different categories below. Use your common sense and knowledge acquired during the course to research your topic.

A note on primary sources: One of the legacies of the University of Sydney being a ‘fine’ colonial university, is a valuable and extensive collection of especially British 19th century books, pamphlets, periodicals and rare documents. You should use these as much as possible in your research. For example, there are 45 original Havelock Ellis books in the Library, and many others by equally significant writers in sexology, eugenics and ‘the woman question’ for example, Mary Scharlieb, Roy Devereux, Elizabeth Sloan Chesser. Browse the computer and card catalogue (which still reveals some gems), and spend time browsing the shelves as well.

Also familiarise yourselves with the 19th and early 20th century British, American and colonial periodicals in the Fisher Stack 052s. For example, if you choose to do an essay on feminism and venereal disease, you should look (at the very least) in the British periodical The Nineteenth Century. Its index will reveal just how topical the issue was: use some of this material in your essay. The Burkitt-Ford (public health) library has runs of many 19th and 20th century medical journals, which you can browse through any time in the Stack there. For example, The Eugenics Review. The Medical Library has complete runs eg. of the Australasian Medical Journal, Intercolonial Medical Journal, Medical Journal of Australia, The Lancet and British Medical Journal, all of which have indexes making primary research ‘easy’ and fascinating. Explore and enjoy.

Scholarly journals include: Journal of the History of Biology, Medical History, Journal of the History of Sexuality, representations, Bulletin of the History of Medicine, Social History of Medicine, Journal of Women’s History, Health and History, signs, history of psychiatry. In searching for other articles, go to the search engine Clio (through Fisher Library site) and enter keywords in both Historical Abstracts and America: history and life.

On medicine, culture and history


Deborah Lupton, The Imperative of Health; Public health and the regulated body, Sage, 1995.

On 18th, 19th and 20th century biomedicine, science and gender:


Londa Schiebinger_The mind has no sex? Women in the origins of modern science, 1989.


Bonnie B. Spanier, Imperial Science: Gender Ideology in Molecular Biology, Indiana University Press, 1995


On gynecology, obstetrics and midwifery

Katharina Rowald (ed.) Gender and Science: Late 19th Century Debates on the Female Mind and Body, Thoemmes. 1996.


See essays on early obstetrics by Ludmilla Jordanova’s books (see above)

J. Miriam Benn, Predicaments of Love, Pluto Press, 1992. See chapter 15


On gender, medicine and colonialism


Harriet Deacon, ‘Racism and Medical Science in South Africa’s Cape Colony in the mid to late Nineteenth Century’, Osiris, 15, 2000.

On gender, psychiatry and psychoanalysis
Denise Russell, Women, Madness and Medicine, Polity, 1995.

On population and eugenics
Carol Smart, ‘Disruptive bodies and unruly sex’ in Carol Smart (ed.), Regulating Womanhood, 1992.
Greta Jones, Social Hygiene in Twentieth Century Britain, Croom Helm, 1986.
On contraception
Vimal Balasubrahmanyan, 'Women as targets in India's family planning policy' in Rita Arditti et al (eds.), Test-Tube Women,
Nellie Kanno, 'Lesotho and Nepal: The Failure of Western "Family Planning" ' in Reconstructing Babylon: 1991

On sexuality and history

On new reproductive technologies, gender and medicine
Michelle Stanworth, 'Birth Pangs' in M. Hirsch and E. Fox Keller (eds.), *Conflicts in Feminism*, 1990.

**On sexually transmitted diseases**
Judith Williamson, 'Every Virus Tells a Story' in Erica Carter and Simon Watney (eds.) *Taking Liberties: 1989*
Mary Spongberg, *Feminising Venereal Disease*, Macmillan.
Kay Saunders and Helen Taylor, "To Combate the Plague": the Construction of Moral Alarm and State intervention in Queensland During World war II*, *Hecate*, 14, 1988.
Judith Smart, ‘Sex, the state and the “scarlet scourge”: Gender, citizenship and venereal
disease regulation in Australia during the Great War’, Women’s History Review, 7,
1998.
M. Stolberg, ‘Self-Pollution, Moral reform, and the Venereal Trade’ Journal of the History
of Sexuality, 9, 1999.
Gregg Meyer, ‘Criminal Punishment for the Transmission of Sexually Transmitted

On Women’s Health and Women Practitioners
Emily Martin, The Woman in the Body: A cultural analysis of reproduction, Beacon
Janet McCalman, Sex and suffering: women’s health and a women’s hospital,
Charles Rosenberg, ‘Florence Nightingale on Contagion: the hospital as moral universe’
N. Theriot, ‘Women’s voices in nineteenth-century medical discourse: a step toward
deconstructing science’ Signs, 19, 1993.
Mary Ann Elston ‘Women and Anti-vivisection in Victorian England, 1870-1900’ in N.
Rupke ed. Vivisection in Historical Perspective, Croom Helm, 1987
Regina Morantz-Sanchez, ‘Re-reading Elizabeth Blackwell’ in Ann-Louise Shapiro (ed.)
Alison Bashford, ‘Separatist Health: Meanings of Women’s Hospitals in England and
Australia, c. 1870-1930’ in Lilian R. Furst (ed.) Climbing a Long Hill: Women