RADICAL REPRODUCTION:
THE PROMISE & PERILS OF REPRODUCTIVE BIOTECHNOLOGY
(Seleccion Topics in Women’s & Gender Studies)

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Montclair State University
Office: Dishon Hall Room 441
Course # WMGS 302:01, Spring 2013
Office Hours: MW 7—8:15 a.m. & 1—3 p.m.
Class Meets: Mon & Weds 11:30 a.m.—12:45 p.m.
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A credit adjustment is available for this course from the Political Science and Law Department, as a substitute for POLS 214. (Please see Dr. Jack Baldwin, Chair POLS, for adjustment paperwork.)

Course Description

This course will give students the opportunity to apply various feminist & LGBTQ analytical frameworks to the current field of reproductive biotechnology. Students will explore the positive and empowering potential of new reproductive biotech, but will also look closely at the ways these technologies can be used to exploit and disempower. Students will learn about the global market in "reproductive outsourcing" of various reproductive products & procedures (such as sperm donation, egg donation, IVF, sex-selection, PGD, gestational surrogacy, and cloning). Gestational surrogacy, a classic case of "reproductive outsourcing," offers relatively wealthy parents-to-be the opportunity produce embryos from their own (or purchased) genetic material using IVF, and have the embryos gestated cheaply by a surrogate in India. (Typically, and Indian surrogate costs 1/3 less than a surrogate in the U.S., and there are reports of impoverished Indian surrogates being coerced into surrogacy.) In the past decade in India, this "womb rental" has become a huge (and largely unregulated) growth industry, which—although legal—has raised concerns among feminist ethicists (and human rights advocates)

Other course topics will include the different ways gamete banks recruit & pay sperm and egg donors in the U.S., and then market the resulting gendered “products” to potential clients. We will consider the various rights-conflicts and legal concerns that ARTs can raise among the parties involved. Students will be encouraged to consider the possibility that cloning technology could eliminate the need for men in reproduction (allowing the creation of an all-female society); or that combinations of fertility biotechnologies can be used as avenues for GLBTQ family-creation (undermining heteronormativity). Particular attention throughout the course will be given to the ways in which language is presently used to cloak and elide certain aspects of fertility biotechnology, or to maintain power relationships, or to further the fertility industry's marketing goals. (A few examples: The fertility industry uniformly refers to individuals selling their eggs and sperm as "donors" rather than "purveyors" or "sellers"; fertility specialists call the procedure by which excess implanted embryos are eliminated in utero after a multiple embryo transfer as "selective reduction" rather than abortion; and the term "surrogate mother" has been recently abandoned by the industry in favor of the more neutral--or possibly dehumanizing--term, "gestational carrier.")

The issues raised by various reproductive biotechnologies will give students a chance to test the theoretical frameworks they have learned in previous WMGS courses against current practices, and to come to their own conclusions about what types of regulation or deregulation would be most empowering to the various parties using these technologies.
Required Texts

- Naomi R. Cahn, *Test Tube Families: Why the Fertility Market Needs Legal Regulation*
- Nancy Lublin, *Pandora's Box: Feminism Confronts Reproductive Technology*
- Debora L. Spar, *The Baby Business: How Money, Science, and Politics Drive the Commerce of Conception*
- Rene Almeling, *Sex Cells: The Medical Market for Eggs and Sperm*
- Julia Derek, *Confessions of a Serial Egg Donor*

In addition to the required texts listed, there are a number of required readings and articles for this class on MSU Library E-Reserve.

How to Access Electronic Reserves (E-Reserves) for this Class

Go to Montclair Blackboard. Once you are in Blackboard, log in. [Do this by entering your Username and Password (i.e. your NetID—the same username and password you use to access your Montclair webmail account) and then click Login.]

Click on the tab labeled Content Collection.

Along the left side of the page that opens, click Library Content. (Be sure to choose LIBRARY content, or you will not get a full listing of the readings.)

Look to the middle of the page, and click the folder labeled eReserves.

When the eReserves folder opens, it will display a list of the various courses you are taking this semester. To access the reserve readings for this class, click on WMGS302_01SP13.

A list of all the readings for this class will appear. Select the specific reading you wish to view by clicking on the title of that reading.

Be sure to PRINT OUT a copy of the reading to bring with you to class on the appropriate day.

Grading and Class Requirements

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<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
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<td>Weekly Reading Quizzes</td>
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Notes on Class Requirements and Grading Procedures:

1. **QUIZZES:** There will be short weekly quizzes on the assigned readings. Quiz dates are listed in the “Schedule and Assignments” section below. These quizzes will be given at the beginning of the appointed class meeting. Students are permitted to drop their 2 lowest quiz scores or to skip 2 quizzes. However, please be advised that absolutely no “make up” quizzes will be given. If a student misses a class or is late on a quiz day, the missed quiz will count as one of the 2 “free” quizzes.

2. **ESSAYS:** The two 5-7 page essays will be due on the dates listed in the “Schedule and Assignments” section below. Essays will be collected at the beginning of the appointed class meeting. See “Late Assignment Policy,” below.

3. **A NOTE ON PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism (presenting anyone else’s words or ideas as your own) is a very serious offense. Students found guilty of plagiarizing ANY portion of a paper will receive an “F” for the paper, and will not be given an opportunity to re-write it. At the professor's discretion, the student may also be given a failing grade for the entire course. In addition, every instance of plagiarism will be officially reported to the Dean of Students, the WMGS Director, & the Chairperson of the student’s “home department” (if the student is not a WMGS major). A record of the event will be kept on permanent file.

Late Assignment Policy:

All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the assigned date. Any assignment handed in late will be lowered by ½ letter grade per day.

Class Etiquette:

1. **Electronic Devices:** To facilitate meaningful discussion, please turn off all cell phones & electronic devices (such as tablets & computers) and place them out of sight during class. Exceptions will be made for emergency situations (like a family member in the hospital, etc.). If you find yourself with such extenuating circumstances, and need to keep your cell phone or other electronic device on one day, please quietly tell me before class begins and put your phone on its most discrete vibrating or ringing setting. If it is necessary for you to take a call during class, please quickly and quietly leave the room before answering.

2. **Please arrive to class on time.** Arriving late disrupts class. As you know or will soon find out, parking is very tight here on campus. If you drive to school, budget plenty of extra time to find a space before class. If you find yourself in the unfortunate position of arriving late, please be as quiet as possible when entering class.

3. **In class discussions, remember to be respectful of fellow students and the professor.** Lively discussions, heated debates, and intelligent critiques are very welcome in class! Just make sure to criticize arguments, not the people who make them.
Schedule and Assignments:
(This schedule is tentative. If certain books and/or films are unavailable due to limited printing or permissions issues from the filmmakers, substitutions will be made in the course of the semester.)

JANUARY

*THINKING ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY*

23 (Wed) First Meeting: Introduction, Procedures, Course Overview

28 (Mon) QUIZ #1

Women & the Fertility Frontier: The Current State of Reproductive Biotechnology
Lisa Mundy, Chs. 1—2 Everything Conceivable (“The New Reproductive Landscape” & “Women and the Dilemmas of Modern Motherhood”), pp. 3—60

30 (Wed)

“Reprogenetics”: Legal & Ethical Frameworks for Evaluating Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART)
John A. Robertson, “The Presumptive Primacy of Procreative Liberty” (e-reserve)
Naomi R. Cahn, Test Tube Families, Ch. 7 (“Barriers to Conception”), pp. 133—144
Bonnie Steinbock, “A Philosopher Looks at Assisted Reproduction” (e-reserve)

FEBRUARY

4 (Mon) QUIZ #2

Technophilia/Technophobia: Feminist Frameworks for Evaluating ARTs
(Who Has the Power? Who Controls the Technology?)

Radical Feminism: Power, Reproduction, & Revolution
Shulamith Firestone, The Dialectic of Sex (on reserve)

6 (Wed) *IMAGINING & EVALUATING POSSIBLE USES OF ARTS*

Building “Better” Humans: Genetic Manipulation & Enhancement

11 (Mon) QUIZ #3

Improving Children: Raising the Bar for a “Healthy” Baby
“Better Children,” Ch. 2 in Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness, pp. 30-65. (e-reserve)

13 (Wed)

Sample essay topics for essay #1 will be distributed in class today.
(Essay #1 will be due in 2 weeks, on Feb 27th.)

18 (Mon) **QUIZ #4**

*Global Implications of Pre-Implantation Genetic Diagnosis (PGD): Prenatal Testing & Sex-Selection Across Cultures*

Bioethics in a Cultural Context Ch 14: Sex Selection, pp. 247—261


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20 (Wed) *GAMETE DONATION—COMPARING THE MARKET IN EGGS & SPERM*

WHEN IS A “DONATION” REALLY A “SALE”? AND DOES IT MATTER?*


25 (Mon) **QUIZ #5**


**Assignment:** Do a Google search for “egg donor” & “sperm donor.” What do you find? (Investigate cost, “products” and procedures available, locations, etc. What can you surmise about the race, class, gender, and ethnic & social backgrounds of the various parties involved in sperm & egg transactions? Who is being marketed to, and what is being marketed? In what ways—if any—do the results vary from country to country? Print out a small selection of the relevant, interesting, or surprising information you find, and come to class prepared to discuss your findings.)

27 (Wed) **ESSAY #1 DUE**

*Study Questions for the Midterm will be distributed in class today*


**Recommended Supplemental Reading:**

**Recommended Background Reading:**
Bioethics in a Cultural Context Chs. 11—12 (on e-reserve as Bioethics&CultureCh11-12ARTs.pdf)

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**MARCH**

4 (Mon) **NO QUIZ** *D.I. (DONOR INSEMINATION), SPERM DONATION, & SPERM DONOR OFFSPRING*

*Sperm Markets—Who’s Buying, Who’s Selling, and What is being Sold?*
Lisa Mundy, *Everything Conceivable*, Ch. 5 (“Sperm Bank Helps Lesbians Get Pregnant!”) pp. 108-126

6 (Wed) MIDTERM EXAMINATION IN CLASS

11 (Mon) SPRING BREAK—CLASS DOES NOT MEET
13 (Wed) SPRING BREAK—CLASS DOES NOT MEET

18 (Mon) Making the Grade: One Sperm Donor’s Perspective
David Plotz, “My Short, Scary Career as a Sperm Donor,” from The Genius Factory (on e-reserve)

20 (Wed) Sperm Donor Offspring (D.I. Children)
FILM: Offspring (dir. Barry Stevens), first ½ of film (in-class)

Amy Harmon, “Hello, I’m Your Sister. Our Father is Donor 150” New York Times, November 20, 2005 (e-reserve)

Recommended Supplemental Reading: Mundy, Everything Conceivable, Ch 7 (“Single Mothers by Choice”) pp. 154—176 [A chapter on D.I. Families & the Donor Sibling Registry]
Recommended Supplemental Reading: Naomi R. Cahn, Test Tube Families, Ch. 6 (“Donor Identity”), pp. 114—129
Recommended Supplemental Viewing: Donor Unknown: Adventures in the Sperm Trade (This documentary is about Donor 150 in Harmon’s NYTimes article. A preview is available on YouTube at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ijZjET7b8E0. A copy of the documentary is in the library on reserve for this class in the AV room in the basement.)

25 (Mon) QUIZ #7
FILM: Offspring (dir. Barry Stevens), remainder of film (in class) + class discussion

Recommended Supplemental Readings:
Lisa Mundy, Everything Conceivable, Ch. 8 (“ART and the Rights of the Child), pp. 177—204
Naomi R. Cahn, Test Tube Families, Ch. 12 (“Finding Out”), pp. 215—234

27 (Wed) *EGG DONATION—ONE DONOR (SELLER) IN-DEPTH PERSPECTIVE*
Julia Derek, Confessions of a Serial Egg Donor, Chs 1—11, pp. 5—117

APRIL

1 (Mon) QUIZ #8
Julia Derek, Confessions of a Serial Egg Donor, Chs 12—21, pp. 121—229

3 (Wed) *OUTSOURCING THE WOMB: SURROGACY IN THE GLOBAL MARKETPLACE*
A.R.T. Goes Global—the Reproductive Marketplace & the Body as Commodity


8 (Mon) QUIZ #9

Wombs for Rent (Really Cheap) in India

FILM: Google Baby (dir. Zippy Brand Frank), first ½ of film (in class)

Assignment: Do a Google search for “surrogate mothers” & “international surrogacy”? What do you find? (Investigate cost, “products” and procedures available, locations, etc. What can you surmise about the race, class, gender, and ethnic & social backgrounds of the various parties involved in surrogacy transactions? How are the websites laid out? What is being marketed & what is not being marketed? Is there anything noteworthy about the language used? In what ways—if any—do the results vary from country to country? Print out a small selection of the relevant information you find, and come to class prepared to discuss your findings.)

10 (Wed)

FILM: Google Baby (dir. Zippy Brand Frank), remainder of film (in class) + class discussion

France Winddance Twine, Outsourcing the Womb: Race, Class, and Gestational Surrogacy in a Global Market (sections III “Becoming a Gestational Surrogate” & IV “Google Babies: Class, Colorism, and Consumer Culture”) (e-reserve)

15 (Mon) QUIZ #10

FILM (if possible, pending approval): Made in India (dir. Rebecca Haimowitz & Vaishali Sinha)

Recommended Background Reading:
Bioethics in a Cultural Context Ch. 12. (This reading is on e-reserve as Bioethics&CultureCh11-12ARTs.pdf. The PDF includes chapter 11 as well as chapter 12.)

17 (Wed)

Sample essay topics for essay #2 will be distributed in class today. (Essay #2 will be due in 2 weeks, on May 1st)

FILM (if possible, pending approval): Made in India (dir. Rebecca Haimowitz & Vaishali Sinha)

The professor’s personal copy of this film will be placed on reserve in the library AV room during the spring 2013 semester. Students wishing to buy this film for their own personal viewing are encouraged to do so. This is particularly recommended for those writing their papers on surrogacy. “Personal use” DVDs of the film are available for purchase for $25.00 from the following site: http://www.madeinindiamovie.com/get-the-film.html

In class discussion: Surrogacy, Race, Class, and Consumerism
22 (Mon) **QUIZ #11**  
**THE FUTURE OF REPRODUCTIVE BIOTECHNOLOGY: CLONING AS A FORM OF ASSISTED REPRODUCTION**

*Human Cloning: History, Politics, and Scientific Background*  
*The U.S. Position: President’s Council on Bioethics*  
Human Cloning and Human Dignity, pp. XXXIX—LXII (“Executive Summary”) and pp. 23—81  
(Chapters 2,3,4: “Historical Aspects of Cloning,” “On Terminology,” “Scientific Background”)  
*Full text of this report is available online at:*  
http://bioethics.georgetown.edu/pcbe/reports/cloningreport/index.html

24 (Wed)  
**Argument Against Cloning—The “Yuck” Factor**  

29 (Mon) **QUIZ #12**  
**Cloning Rights & Reasons to Clone Humans**  
Kass & Wilson, *The Ethics of Human Cloning*, pp. 61-100 (e-reserve)

**Cloning as a Reproductive Option for Would-Be Parents in GLBT Community**  
William N. Eskridge, Jr & Edward Stein, “Queer Clones” in Clones and Clones, ed. Nussbaum & Sunstein (e-reserve)  
Carson Strong, “Cloning and Infertility,” in *The Human Cloning Debate* (on e-reserve)  
Timothy F. Murphy, “Entitlement to Cloning: Response to Strong,” in *The Human Cloning Debate* (on e-reserve)

**MAY**

1 (Wed) **ESSAY#2 DUE**  
**Implications for Women: Global Commercial Market in Cloned Stem Cell Technologies**  
Suzanne Holland, “Beyond the Embryo: A Feminist Appraisal of the Embryonic Stem Cell Debate.” (e-reserve)

*Suggested Supplemental Reading:*  

6 (Mon) **NO QUIZ**  
Catch Up Day  
Study Questions for the Final Exam will be distributed in class today

13 (Mon) **FINAL EXAMINATION**  
*Monday, May 13, from 1:00—3:00 p.m., in our regular classroom*