

Phil 4730F/9730A: Feminist Bioethics

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Feminist bioethics aims to develop approaches to bioethics that are responsive to structural inequalities that affect women's health and the health of other marginalized people across the globe. It has opposed dominant understandings of basic concepts in bioethics—autonomy, informed consent, health or disease, trust, justice, embodiment, and the like—and has created new understandings. In this course, we will focus on how feminist bioethicists have theorized about these key concepts. Thus, we will explore what it means from a feminist perspective to respect the autonomy of patients, to obtain informed consent, to be healthy or diseased, to foster trust in health care professional-patient relationships, to protect the conscience or integrity of health care professionals and patients, and so on. Although our discussion will centre on concepts, we will also delve into some practical problems in bioethics, ones that feminists have tackled and that arise in such areas as assisted reproduction, public health, and the medical treatment of disability.

(Other concepts: risk, reproductive rights, family or parenthood)