988:240 Gender and Science

T/Th 3:55-5:15 / HSB 204

Prof. Kyla Schuller

An introduction to many of the ways feminists engage with the sciences, this course examines ways that feminists have critiqued the production of scientific knowledge as well as ways that contemporary critical analyses of gender, race, and sexuality draw on scientific research. Taking both an historical and theoretical perspective we will investigate how dynamics of race, gender, and sexuality shaped specific episodes in the history of science, such as nineteenth-century race science and the practice of eugenics. We will also look at contemporary scientific practice, examining topics including the cultural attitudes toward women scientists, ideas about homosexuality in animals, and feminist theories of evolution. The course covers both the ways that science has historically been used to reinforce practices of race, gender, and sexuality inequality, as well as the ways that a variety of feminists have turned to science as an asset to the political and intellectual project of feminism. Throughout we will examine science in many genres: histories of science, fictional writing, documentary film, and feminist theory, among others. Students will write two short papers and take a midterm and final examination.