Course Description
This seminar investigates the significance of contemporary and historical issues of social, political, and cultural conflicts conducted through the language of gender. How do such conflicts constitute women, and what do they tell us about societies, cultures, and politics? Why do social, political and cultural conflicts so often center on women and women’s bodies? How do we analyze the ethical discourses employed in such conflicts? How do we best create change in response to such conflicts?

Learning Objectives
1) To develop a clear sense of the complexities involved in gendered controversy;
2) To learn to do feminist political and ethical analysis of controversial issues;
3) To do in-depth research of a specific issue, so as to develop one’s own analysis;
4) To begin to understand different means for creating social change in relation to controversial issues.

Requirements
1) Reading and Class Discussion. Each student must read all of the assigned materials and be prepared to discuss them in class [10 points].
2) Writing. Students will write three papers during the semester. i) a short (2 pgs, single-spaced) explication paper based on one of the readings for the first section of the course due Friday, Feb. 15 [15 points]; ii) a short research paper based on some aspect of the controversy over “welfare reform” in 1996 due Friday, March 15 [20 points]; and iii) a long (10-12 pages) research paper on a controversial issue of the student’s choosing, with approval from the professor due Monday, May 6 [40 points]; iv) proposals for the topics [5 points] are due on April 11.
3) Presentation: Students will participate in a group presentation [10 Points] that will serve as the basis for class discussion in one of the weeks after spring break. Students will sign up for the presentation groups on February 28.

Readings
Readings for the course are available through CourseWorks.

COURSE OUTLINE

January 24
Week 1: Introduction

SECTION I: FEMINIST ETHICAL AND POLITICAL THEORY
January 31
Week 2: Women, Gender, Sexuality: Intersections and Assemblages
-Afsaneh Najmabadi, “Beyond the Americas: Are Gender & Sexuality Useful Categories of Historical Analysis?” *Journal of Women’s History* 18 (Spring 2006): 11-21
February 7
Week 3: Power: Assemblage, Biopower, Hegemony, Neoliberalism

February 14
Week 4: Ethics

February 15 EXPLICATION PAPER DUE IN DROPBOX, 5:00 PM

SECTION II: CASE STUDY OF GENDER & CONTROVERSY: WELFARE REFORM
February 21
Week 5: The Welfare State: History of an Assemblage

February 28 SIGN-UP FOR GROUP PRESENTATIONS
Week 6: Gendered Controversy: Welfare Reform

March 7
Week 7: Research & Data
MEET IN BARNARD LIBRARY FOR RESEARCH TUTORIAL

March 14
Week 8: Politics and Ethics: Welfare Reform: Capital and the State

March 15: SHORT PAPER DUE IN DROPBOX, 5:00 PM

SPRING BREAK

SECTION III: ISSUES & ASSEMBLAGES
March 28
Week 9: Reproductive Justice/Sex/Education

April 4
Week 10: Health Care/HIV-AIDS

**April 11 PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH PAPERS DUE**

**Week 11: Caring/Labor**

**April 18**

**Week 12: Immigration/Incarceration**

**April 25**

**Week 13: Animal Ethics/Environmental Justice**

**May 2**

**Week 14: Conclusion**

**May 6: RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN DROPBOX, 5:00 PM**