

WOMEN AND HEALTH

A Preliminary Annotated Bibliography

This is not an exhaustive or even a selective bibliography. It is a list of books and documents available at the Jawaharlal Nehru Library, Bombay University Women's Studies Unit of the S.N.D.T University and with me. Some of these are available at the Feminist Resource Centre, F.R.C.H. The only criteria used is that most of these either acknowledge a broadly feminist perspective or could well contribute to it.

Sexism in Medicine and Health Care

1. Bart, Pauline. Biological Determinism and Sexism: Is it all in the Ovaries. In Biology as a Social Weapon. Burgess Publishing Co. 1977. 69-83

Shows how science in the 19th century operated in the interest of status quo. Includes a content analysis of gynaecological textbooks.

2. Doyal, Lesley and Pennell, Imogen. The Political Economy of Health. Pluto Press 1979.

Places women's health issues within a global, historical view of health and health care contributing to the emergence of a feminist perspective on health.

3. Duffin, Lorna. The Conspicuous Consumptive: Women as an invalid. In The Nineteenth Century Woman. Ed by Sara Delmont and Lorna Duffin. 1978. Croom Helm. London. 26-56

Based on content analysis of Lancet between 1850-90, a feminist analysis of women's illnesses such as consumption, neurasthenia, chlorosis, amenorrhoea and their recommended treatment.

4. Easlea, Brian. Science and Sexual Oppression. Wiedenfeld and Nicolson. 1981

The chapter on Biology, Medicine and Viriculture in 19th century Britain deals with how social myths about women's weakness and proneness to fall ill were incorporated into medicine and suit biological explanations fabricated to lend scientific credibility.

5. Ehrenreich, Barbara and English, Dierdre. Complaints and Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness. Glass Mountain Pamphlet no.2. The Feminist Press. 1973 New York. 1973

Medicine stands between biology and social policy and is one of the most powerful sources of sexist ideology in our society. This is a sociological and political analysis of the history of women's ill health and how society has dealt with the problems.

6. Jacoby, Robin Miller. Science and Sex Roles in the Victorian Era. In Biology as a Social Weapon. Burgess Publishing Co., Ann Arbor Science for the People Collective. 1977. 58-69

Examines the mutually reinforcing relationship that existed between 19th century biological theories and 19th century ideology on sex roles

7. Leibowitz, Lila. Perspectives on the Evolution of Sex Differences. In Toward Anthropology of Women edited by Rayna R. Reiter. Monthly Review Press 1975. 20-35

Counters the hypothesis that women's sex-role destiny is determined by their anatomy. Proposes a new hypothesis accounting for the evolution of physical differences.

8. Messing, Karen. Do men and women have different jobs because of their biological differences? International Journal of Health Services. 12(1):43-52, 1982

Well-researched facts and convincing arguments demolish myths -- weaker sex' myth, 'fairy fingers' myth, 'raging hormones' myth and the myth of protecting

pregnant workers —which are used to keep women in specific jobs.

9. Rothman, Barbara Katz. Women, Health and Medicine. In Women: A feminist perspective. edited by Jo Freeman. May led Publishing Co.; 2nd. edition. 1979 27-40.

An excellent analysis showing how the individualist and mechanist 'world view' of medicine directly results in medical procedures and treatment which contribute to the oppression of women.

Women's health status

10. Gupta, J.L. The problem of Burns in Women. Annals of Indian Academy of Medical Sciences, 12(4): 260- 1976

In a span of ten years more than 31 per cent of the burn victims in a Delhi hospital were women and 45 per cent children. Causes include badly designed kitchens and equipment, lack of safety devices on household gadgets

11. Jussawalla, D.J and Jain, D.K. The problem of Cervical and mammary cancer in India. Annals of Indian Academy of Medical Sciences, 12(4); 239-50, 1976

Reviews statistics from 42 hospitals in 15 states. Cancer, is the ninth cause of mortality among women in Bombay in 1971. Records the predominance of cervical and breast cancer.

12. Kulkarni, Suresh, N. Demographic and Nutritional Background of the Health status of women in India. Mimeo. Institute of Economic Growth. New Delhi

Some analysis of statistical data from 1921 on health indices with reference to women. Demonstrates that declining sex ratio is a function of health status. Sex-wise health care of population of age group 0-14 'has received little attention as compared to that given to age group 15-44. Lack of appropriate data ensures that female mortality is examined only in terms of pregnancy management.

13. Mohanty, Bidyut. Women, Disease and Death in Historical Perspective: A case study of Orissa (1881-1921). Paper presented at the Conference on Women's Studies, 1981

A very brief paper about what appears to be an exhaustive study showing that more men than women died in the 19th century. Old diseases have changed and several social factors have resulted in their intensification killing more women

14. Nathanson, Constance. Sex, Illness and Medical Care.: A review of data, theory and method. In Health, Illness and Medicine edited by Gary Albrecht and Paul.c. Higgins. 16-40

Examining data f mostly from developed countries, presents a picture of sex differences in health indices. Method of treatment of data could be a model

15. Shatrugna, Veena. Health status of women and children and the role of community health volunteers scheme. Paper presented at the Workshop on Women and Health, Bombay 1981

Briefly describes the major health problems of women and expresses a reserved approval of the community health programmes.

"if you don't eat"

16. Batliwala, Srilatha. Rural Energy Scarcity and Undernutrition: A new perspective. Economic and Political Weekly, 17(Feb.7,1982):

Relates women's undernutrition to wtheir actual 'energy expenditure obtained from a field study. Suggests that nutritional intake insufficient to make up for energy output may have long term effects such as higher morbidity, shorter life span etc.

17. Eide, Wenche B et al. Women in Food Production, Food Handling and Nutrition (with spr ref. to Africa) Food and Agricultural Organisation. Rome 1979

Critically analyses the problem of women's nutrition in the context of the history of colonialism in Africa and the political, economic and social changes and how they affected women's role in production.

18. ICMR. Anaemia in Pregnancy. Indian Council of Medical Research Bulletin. 5 (11): 1-4, 1975

Comprehensive review article on a health problem which accounts for 20 per cent maternal deaths.

19. Jayaram, Kamala. Who is Malnourished: Mother or the Woman? In Health Care care : Which way to Go. Medico Friends Circle. 1982. 57-74

Welfare activities concerning women never attempt to bring them into the main stream of developmental activity. Their nutritional status is rooted in their inferior status in society, although nutritional programmes treat them only as mothers or potential mothers. Examines effect of new technologies on women's nutritional status through changes in their employment.

"Work(outside the home) causes ill health"

20. Ansley, Fred and Bell, Brenda. Diagnosis: Work related diseases. In Science for the People. 7(5): 19-21, 34-5.

Examines working conditions of women in cotton mills in the U.S and demonstrates that 'women's illnesses' are in fact, rooted in their social location, work

21. Feminist Network Newsletter. The Sandoz Strike. In Feminist Network Newsletter 1979.1

Describes health damaging conditions of work of women in Sandoz plant.

22. SftP East Bay. Danger: Women's Work. In Science for the People. 12(2) 1980

Analysis of workplace hazards in new and traditional industries in the U.S where women work in large numbers.

23. CALL. Women and Labour Law. Committee for the Advancement of Legal Literacy

Brief introduction to welfare measures and protection afforded to working women under the Factory Act, Maternity Benefits Act and ESIS ACT.

"It's all in the mind"

24. Chesler, Phyllis. Marriage and Psychotherapy. In International Socialist Review. November 1980. 32-34

Traditional psychoanalytical theories about women are at best confused and at worst, false. The ethic of mental health is masculine. We need to seek a new, a first, psychology of women.

25. Fee, Elizabeth. Psychology, Sexuality and Social Control in Victorian England In Social Science Quarterly, 58(4): 632-46.

A well-documented article with extensive reference showing how psychology was used to impose social control as well as male bourgeois norms of sexuality

26. Mackay, Judith Longstaff. Women and Madness. Hong Kong 1979. Mimeo

A good overview of how social and cultural norms influence psychiatric diagnoses and the solution of psychiatric problems of women. The normal woman of psychiatry is an emotional, weak, passive, non-aggressive wife or mother.

Women as Healers

27. Bang, Rani. Nurses: The cursed women in Medical System. In Health Care way to Go. Medico Friends Circle. 1982. 75-90

Discusses the current distressing status of nurses in India and suggests that their low status within health care may be because of the nature of their job. Nurses have a key role to play in women's struggle.

28. Gamarnikov, Eva. Sexual Division of Labour: the case of nursing. In Feminism and Materialism. Ed by Annette Kuhn and AnnMarie Wolpe. Routledge, Kegan and Paul, London. 1978. 96-123

Under capitalism patriarchal relations are reproduced in the sexual division of labour in the health care system. The occupational ideology of nursing necessarily genderises the division of labour, associating men with science and authority and women with caring and maintenance. Contributes towards a theoretical understanding of nursing and nurses.

29. Ehrenreich, Barbara and English, Diane. Withes, Midwives and Nurses. Glass Mountain Pamphlet no.1. The Feminist Press. New York. 1973

A short feminist history of women healers from witchcraft to the rise of

scientific medicine, dominated by men.

30. Leeson, J and Gray, Judith. Women in Medicine. Tavistock Publications. 1978
Reviews historical role of women in health care and an analysis of the beginning of unionisation among nurses. Also deals with nurse-women doctor, nurse-women patient, women doctor-women patients relationships
31. Navarro, Vicente. Women in Health Care. In Health, Illness and Medicine Ed. by Albrecht and Higgins. Rand McNally, Chicago. 1979. 327-37
Describes the situation of the women in the U.S. health labour force. This can be understood in the context of an analysis of the socio-economic and political structures.
32. Saigopal, Mira. Training of Dais. In Health Care: Which way to go. Medico-Friends Circle. 1982 197-206
A critical comment on the dai training programme.

Women's Biology and its Consequences Menstruation

33. Reidgrove, June. Menstrual Cycle. In Biological Rhythms and Human Performance edited by W.P. Colquhoun. Academic Press. London. 1971. 211-40
A well-referenced study asserting that menstruation does effect performance but its extents depends on other sociological and psychological factors as shown in experimental studies and experiments on women athletes and sports
34. Shuttle, Renelope and Reidgrove, Peter. The Wise Woman: Menstruation and Everywoman. Victor Gollancz Ltd. 1978.
A complete book on a phenomena which effects half the human population and has only recently been subjected to comprehensive research. Draws from scientific psychological, mythological and anthropological, historical sources. A never before analysis.

Reproduction

35. Gorlon, Linda. Woman's Poly, Woman's Rights Penguin Books. 1977.
A socio-political history of the birth control movement in America. Sees three distinct periods in the last 100 years-- 'voluntary motherhood', legalised abortion and the period of commoditization of birth control.
36. Lahiri, Di and Konar, M. Abortion Hazards. In Journal of Medical Association of India. 66(11): 288-294. 1976
Sepsis accounts for 20% of all abortion hazards. 50 per cent of random abortions admitted were illegally induced. Data from one hospital, many years.
37. Lawrence, Virginia. Contraception. In Women's Undercurrents, U.K. 29, 26, 1978
Short but significant. Offers that the technology which provided contraceptives is a male technology. Women must infiltrate the scientific network and influence priorities and methods.
38. Newland, Kathleen. Women and Population Growth: Choice beyond childbearing World Watch Paper 16, December 1977
A critical review reassessing existing information. FP programmes do not recognise women as individuals but as mothers and yet they seek to diminish the only role that they explicitly recognise for women.
39. Rao, Kamala Gopal. Status of women in India related to the study of FP. IGBSSR Mimeo. Undated.
There exists a two-way relationship, between FP programmes and women's status which is explored here. Considers such questions as: does co contraception redefine the female role in society and alters the meaning of marital relationship
40. Rose, Hilary and Hammer, Jalna. Women's Liberation, Reproduction and the Technological Fix. In The Political Economy of Science. The Macmillan Press London. 1976

Exposes the inherent sexism of new developments in reproduction technology
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and challenges the viewpoint held by some radical feminists that technology is neutral and so can be male use of as such.

41. Savage, Wendy. Taking Liberties with Women: Abortion, Sterilization and Contraception. International Journal of Health Services. 12(2); 293-308, 1982
Analyses four areas of concern concerning reproductive freedom, based on U.K. data.
42. Savara, Mira. Women, Health and Reproduction: Some issues. Paper presented at the Women and Health workshop in 1981.
Discussion paper with a feminist perspective. Suggest action programmes.
43. Schiff, Jill. Vasectomy. Newsletter Cultural Survival. 5(4): 1981. pp8
There appears to be a link between atherosclerosis and vasectomy. Could there be a cardiovascular disease epidemic on the horizon?
44. Serlin, Renee. Contraceptives: Back to the barriers. New Scientist, July 30 281-84. 1981
An anniversary article on Marie Stopes who fought for birth control in the '30 '30s. Notes how fertility control today is surrounded by a 'morass of prejudice.'
45. Vandenbroucke, J.P. et al. Oral contraceptives and rheumatoid arthritis: further evidence for a preventive effect. Lancet. 1982 ii 839-42
Report of a case control study of women with a history of oral contraceptive use and diagnosis of probable rheumatoid arthritis or soft tissue rheumatism. Confirms earlier findings of that OC use halved rates of rheumatoid arthritis.

Obstetrics and child care

46. Cohen, Marige. Look Review of Men who control women's health by Diana Scully Reproductive Rights Newsletter, Fall 1980 20-21
Analyses the practice and training of in Ob and Gyn at two major urban hospitals.
47. Comer, Lee. The Myth of Motherhood. Spokesman Pamphlet. Undated.
A feminist critique of society's definition of motherhood.
48. Frankfort, Ellen. Vaginal Politics. Quadrangle Bros. New York. 1972
An early book on how women are breaking the medicine's grip on their bodies.
49. Haire, Doris. The cultural warping of childbirth. In The cultural Crisis of modern medicine Ed. by John Ehrenreich. Monthly Review Press. 1978. 185-200
Excellent article examines current Ob practices such as use of anaesthesia, insistence on the lithotomy position during childbirth, use of forceps etc.
50. Hewell, Mary C. Paediatrician and Mothers. In The cultural Crisis of Modern Medicine. Edited by J. Ehrenreich. Monthly Review Press. 1978 201-222
Informal content analysis exp of teaching material in paediatrics.
51. Miller, Barbara. What hospital admissions tell us about childcare in India. Syracuse University. Mimeo.
Highlights the difference in male-female care from the analysis of secondary data on hospital admission from regional and area studies.
52. Scully, Diana and Bart, Pauline. A Funny thing Happened on the Way to the Altar: Women in Gynaecology Textbooks. In The Cultural Crisis of Modern Medicine. Ed. By John Ehrenreich. Monthly Review Press. 1978. 212-28
A report on the content analysis of 28 gynaecological textbooks for sexist bias. The emphasis is on how female sexuality has been dealt with.
53. Sebastian, E.V. Health Services for Women. Annals of Indian Academy of Medical Sciences, 12(4): 222-34, 1976
Begins with a historical review of health services for women but the focus shifts to a discussion of health services for children and their mothers.

54. Sethna, N.S. Maternal and Child Health Services in India. All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health. Background paper for the ICSSR-ICMR Committee on Health and Medical Services. 1978.

Describes the development of MCH services in India, reviews the reports of committees on health and their recommendations for MCH between 1947-1968

55. Singh, Gayatri and Savara, Mira. A case study on Child Care Facilities in Metropolitan Bombay. Asian and Pacific Centre for Women and Development, 1980
Studies the functioning of a creche run by a textile mill, a balwadi programme, a mobile creche run for construction workers. Highlights drawbacks for instance, women workers given only half-an-hour to feed babies, when it takes ten minutes to get to the creche alone.
56. Singh, Shamer. Environmental hazards during pregnancy and birth defects. Annals of National Academy of Medical Sciences, 14(2): 53-65. 1978
Environmental hazards are a major or contributing factor in 65-70 per cent of birth defects. Also discusses the effects of drugs and chemicals.

Recent Issues concerning Women's health and Biology

57. Chhachi, Amrita and Sathyamala, C. A World without Women? Sex determination tests - a technology which will eliminate women. Hindustan Times. Aug. 8, 1982
Explains amniocentesis in non-medical language and offers a socio-political background to the issue.
58. Hosken, Fran P. Female Genital Mutilation in the World Today: A global review International Journal of Health Services, 11(3); 415-30, 1981.
A well-documented review of the ethical and health issues posed by female genital mutilation which affects at least 74 million women and female children
59. Minkin, Stephen. Depo-Provera: A critical analysis. Institute of Food and Development Policy. U.S.A. 1980
A comprehensive review on Depo-Provera, an injectable contraceptive, which many studies show lowers resistance to viral infection and worse, causes cancer. Attempts to clarify some of the political and economic issues involved in the ongoing controversy.
60. Sathyamala, C and Shiva, Mira. Are Hormonal Pregnancy Tests safe? Volunteer Health Association of India. New Delhi. 1982
This was a background for many other articles on the same subject appearing in newspapers and journals on or around March 8, 1982, launching the successful campaign focussing on the dangerous side effects and relative irrelevance
61. Sipe, Patricia. The wonder Drug we should know about. Science for the People 14(6):9-16, 30-32. 1982
DES or stilbestrol, prescribed to millions of women to prevent miscarriage was, in the late '60s, suspected of having caused cancer in the daughters of women who used them. Written by a DES daughter, this article discusses the history of DES but also the health issues affecting DES daughters.
62. Wilson, Mark. Bottle Babies and Managed Mothers. Science for the People, 13(1): 17-24. 1981
An analysis of the structural elements in capitalism and patriarchy which give rise to the problem of babyfood/infant formula. This is one feature of the larger problem of malnutrition, disease, oppression of women and the exploitation of the Third World. More proof that technological developments are not necessarily liberating.
63. _____, Britain: Foreign Husbands and Virginity Tests. ISIS International Bulletin, 14: 23-24, 1980
A short report on 'virginity tests' which were introduced for Asian women immigrants to Britain, and the protest actions that have taken place in Britain and in India.

Regaining Control of Health Care : Some Alternatives

64. Boston Women's Health Book Collective. Our Bodies, Ourselves. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1979. (Available from Manushi, New Delhi)

A pioneering book on women's biology, and their health written by a group of non-medical women who clarify misconceptions perpetuated by the medical system. It's an all-you-ever-wanted-to-know book which has already made history.

65. Eve's Weekly. Special issue on Health and Fitness. Eve's Weekly Ltd. March 13-19, 1982.

Mainly a 'how-to' issue with a cut-and-keep section on common ailments and emergencies, but includes a discussion of 'sensitive' topics such as psychiatric care of women and sexuality.

66. Fee, Elizabeth. Women and Health Care: A comparison of theories. International Journal of Health Services, 5(3): 397-415, 1975

Discusses three distinct approaches to women's health in the U.S -- liberal feminist, radical feminist and Marxist-feminist. May not be mutually exclusive.

67. Health for the Million. Special issue on Women and Health. Voluntary Health Association of India, New Delhi, 8(4); 1982

A representative collection of articles covering the entire range of health issues concerning women. Well researched and collated issue, Includes reports of efforts at organising women on the health front

68. ICSSR-ICMR Study Group. Health for All: An Alternative Strategy Indian Institute of Education, Pune. 1981

Incorporates a more comprehensive understanding of women's role than other similar health plan documents in the past. Attempts to view women as individuals rather than only as mothers. Does not wholly succeed.

69. Jha, Saroj.S. The development of health Education programmes for women in a Dombay Slum. Paper presented at the National Conference on Women's Studies, S.N.D.T University, 1981.

Brief description of health education programmes directed at women

70. Kay, Bonnie and Regan, Carol. Steering Clear of the Medical Mainstream. Science for the People, 14(6): 28-9, 1982

How an experiment at providing abortion services grew into an alternative health service for women in a city in the U.S.

71. Lok Vidnyan Prakashan. Stree-Aarogy (In Marathi) Lok Vidnyan Sanghatana, Pune Pune branch, 1981

Deals with women's health problems -- including infertility, VD, cancer--- in non-medical terms. An easy-to-understand booklet.

72. Parsons, Patricia and Hodne, Carole. A collective Experiment in Women's Health. Science for the People, 14(4): 9-13, 1982

Describes and successess of establishing an alternative health service for women in a town in the U.S. Offers some guidelines which may be of use

73. Prakash, Padma. Women and Health: Some issues. Paper presented at the Conference on a Perspective for a women's movement in India, Bombay.1980

A discussion paper attempting to show that health issues for women's movement in India are different from those in the West and highlighting the need for a feminist critique of 'alternative developments in health care e.g.CH,etc.

74. Sen, Iilina and Sen, Binayak. An Experimental Health course for Rural Women Paper presented at the Women and Health Workshop, Bombay 1981.

A note on the experiences of organising an experimental health course for women. Open to all women with a selection of candidates with the intention of avoiding the creation of a new hierarchical level in health care

AND MANY MORE

If there exists a comprehensive bibliography on women and health, please make it more accessible!