



FEMINISM & BIOLOGY, GUT & MOOD: THE CASE OF STOMACH MIGRAINE

Elizabeth A. Wilson

Professor of Women's,
Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Emory University

Wednesday, February 8, 2012
Pembroke Hall, 305
172 Meeting Street, Providence
5:30 pm

Wilson will speak about her project, *Gut Feminism*, that argues for the value of biological data for feminist theory. That project shows how biology can be an ally for those of us building models of mind-body that tax the limits of Cartesian dualism. She argues not that the gut contributes to minded states, but rather that the gut is already an organ of mind: it ruminates. *Gut Feminism* explores the foundations of feminist theory within a framework that takes the so-called periphery of human bodies to be psychically alive. She focuses on the example of stomach migraine: acute and incapacitating abdominal pain, lasting hours or perhaps even days, that has no known organic cause, and that is most common in childhood. Stomach migraine, Wilson argues, illustrates the complex nature of the periphery of the body—it makes evident both the psychic character of the gut and the enteric character of mood.