

GENDER & CONFLICT
CONF 399.007
SPRING 2011

Class Day and Time: Tuesday, 4.30 - 7.10 p.m.

Location: Robinson Hall B, Room # 202

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Office Hours: Mondays 5.00 - 7.00 p.m.

Introduction

This course is at the intersection of international relations, peace studies, security studies, human rights and gender studies. A large literature has accumulated around the topics of gender and international relations and, in particular, of gender, war and peace since the 1980s. This course is designed to introduce students to some of the key themes in this literature. It will first seek to explore the mainstream theories on security, the feminist perspectives on security, as well as feminist theorizing about international politics. We will then examine the gender dimensions of violence in the private and public spheres, both in wartime and "peacetime," and both by state and non-state agents. We will also analyze the ways in which a conflict is gendered in each of its phases, and what the implications are in terms of security and the building of peace. We will address specific issues such as gender-based crimes, the militarization of women, national identities, and gender in conflict zones. We will also examine the international context and the evolution of peacebuilding policies since the mid-1990s. In this respect, we will analyze the United Nations responses to the violation of women's human rights (Resolution 1325), as well as the violations of women's human rights by the UN themselves. Finally, we will explore the feminist approaches to peacebuilding (including the origins of the "ethics of care"), the emergence and the meaning of women's peace movements worldwide, as well as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transsexual and Transgendered peace activism.

A major theme that will be explored is one of the most prominent social constructions of gender: the dichotomy between the male provider/warrior and the female peacemaker/caregiver. The waging of war and the making of peace has historically depended on the maintenance of these concepts of gender. Furthermore, the inequalities and power imbalances that lead to situations of conflict, at macro and micro levels, both reflect and reinforce the fundamental inequality between men and women that has existed for most of time. Given that gender is so foundational to human behavior, it is important for students interested in peace and conflict studies to understand how notions of sexual difference, whether viewed as intrinsic to human nature or constructed according to social and environmental factors, are utilized in the rhetoric and strategy of warfare as well as to further peace efforts.

By the end of the course, students should:

1. be able to understand and assess different theories of gender and the relations and distinctions between sex and gender, masculinity and femininity
2. be able to understand, assess, and articulate the contributions of feminist theorists to international relations, war and peace

3. be able to apply theoretical understanding of gender and conflict to empirical cases
4. possess knowledge of substantive empirical material relating to a variety of gender and conflict topics including women and homosexuals in the military; the role of sexual violence in war; gender and national identity; gender and transitional justice; gender and international law; gender and peace-keeping and peace-making; and women's peace movements.

Themes:

- **Gender and conflict:** sexism, psychological development, media, marketplace, law and health (week 2)
- **Gender and Violence:** rape, domestic and cultural violence, war, small arms and terrorism (weeks 3-5)
- **Gender and Peacemaking:** post-war, peace building, mainstreaming and evidence of agency (weeks 6-9)
- **Gender, Peace, and Development** (weeks 10-12)
- **Gender and Globalization** (week 13)
- **Theories of Gender & Conflict** (weeks 14-15)

Course Requirements

1. Class Attendance & Participation (20%) – Active participation during class is expected. While missed attendance will hurt your grade, simply attending class does NOT equal participation. I expect you to arrive at each having completed all required readings, and prepared with thoughtful questions and comments on the readings. Be prepared to be called upon to answer questions at any point during the class.

This course will be conducted as a learning community seminar. Each week we will discuss, as a group, the assigned readings, exploring the implications for the field of conflict analysis and resolution and peacebuilding. Mediums will include videos, lectures, role-plays, class exercises and discussions.

2. Gender in your environment (10%) - You will be required to conduct interviews of family, friends, and “experts” in the field on various themes. Results of the interviews will be discussed with the readings.

3. Group Project (30%) - Students will be required to split up into groups and choose one of the themes covered during the class, and drawing on all class discussions, readings, presentations and other activities, **you will develop your own theory of gender and conflict** and present your own gender and conflict theory. You will also be required to write a short reflective paper. Groups will be made up of 3-4 student—no more than 4 students per group. You will be required to make presentations to your peers during the last three class sessions.

Each group will receive a “group grade” based on their presentation and reflective papers. Presentations should be informed by the book chosen by the group and external readings on

the topic of research. Groups should prepare power point presentations and additional handouts are recommended.

4. Research Paper Proposal (5%)

A 2-3 page (double spaced, Times New Roman font, one-inch margins) abstract of your final paper is due at the beginning of class on Monday, March 21st 2011. This will require the student to have given attention to what he/she will be writing on for the final paper, and should demonstrate critical and logical thought. We will discuss requirements for this paper three weeks prior to the due date.

5. Paper Requirement (35%) – Your final paper will cover material from the entire class. You are required to write a 10-12 page essay (double-spaced, Times New Roman font, one-inch margins). During the course of the semester you will be encouraged to pick a particular case, and build towards your final paper. This paper should demonstrate the student's ability to reflect on the conflict at hand using theories of analysis and change, and themes covered during the semester. Students are encouraged to refer to sources outside of those covered during the class, and are required to provide footnote/endnote references and a reference page at the end of the paper. Please note that the reference page/s is in addition to the 12-15 pages required for your final paper.

Select one topic and conduct in-depth research. Students are required to pursue at greater depth current and engaging research on a topic and present findings to the class,

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- **Gender, Peace, and Development**
- **Gender and Globalization**
- **Theories of Gender & Conflict**

You will present your research during the last three weeks of the class. The specifics of the requirements for presentations will be discussed in class. The paper is due at 4 PM on May 17th 2011. Creativity is encouraged!

Grading Policies

Many of you are probably concerned about your grades and I will do everything in my power to help you throughout the course. I will not saddle you with high expectations without sufficient support. However, as discussed above, I have high standards for your work. Assignments will be graded with the following in mind:

A: Truly outstanding work that shows creative original thinking, is nearly perfectly organized,

and flawlessly written. This level of work forces me to think hard when I read it.

B: Good work with a strong argument, sound organization, and solid writing. There are some relatively minor flaws in one or more of these areas, although the work clearly shows potential for an A level grade. Clearly above or right at the mean.

C: About average or slightly below average. An overall solid job, but with more obvious organizational, interpretive, creative, and/or stylistic problems that permeate the paper.

D: Failing by a small margin. Serious flaws in every aspect of the work: a lack of understanding of some basic principles, poor organization, and writing that makes it difficult for me to understand the author. Salvageable, however, in that it's clear the author could turn the paper into a passing grade. Usually about 20% of the grade distribution. Immediate meeting with me strongly encouraged.

F: Unacceptable and/or incomplete. Having such serious deficiencies that the student would need to start over to earn a passing grade. Immediate meeting with me required. We will discuss standards for specific assignments when the time arrives.

Class Policies and Procedures

Students are responsible for completing their individual assignments on time. Students will be penalized the equivalent of one letter increment for each day by which their assignment is late. For example, what might otherwise have been given an "A" will become an A- on the first late day, a B+ on the second day, and so on. Anything over three days late will need to be discussed with the instructor. Assignments that are overdue by more than one week will not be accepted. Do NOT make a habit of turning in your assignments late.

Extensions are granted only in extreme cases such as illness or other family emergency and only where the student in question has established a track record of completing work on time. Special arrangements can be made with the instructor in the case of a document emergency (military etc). In most such cases, I will require certification of the situation. A student's procrastination in completing his/her work is not a basis for an extension.

In this modern age, the use of the internet for discussion and dissemination of information has become commonplace. Some class announcements and readings may be posted to the class website or sent via e-mail. Students are responsible for keeping up to date with announcements and assignments placed on the site or sent via e-mail.

Any cases of plagiarism (from publishes or unpublished work) or turning in work not written by the student him or herself, will be punishable as per the university honor codes. You should all be familiar with the relevant honor codes, and I expect rigid adherence to them. George Mason University has an Honor Code with guidelines regarding academic integrity, which is designed "to promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University. (<http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/>) The Honor Code lays out strict penalties for cheating

and plagiarism. If you have any questions about these codes, read ICAR'S Academic Standards and the University's Honor Code; if you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Classroom Etiquette:

Please arrive to class on time and prepared. Please switch off your cell phones and other electronic devices. The use of laptops in class is for note-taking only. Those found checking e-mail, on facebook, skype, or any form of chat or social networking site will be invited to leave the classroom immediately.

Please remember that there are times when we will be discussing contentious and sensitive issues during the course of this class. You are encouraged to express your opinions and diverse perspectives as a class participant. However, you are strongly urged to be respectful of your peers, and mindful and sensitive of the views and perspectives of others. Please remember that others are as entitled to their perspectives and viewpoints, as are you! This is NOT a venue for inter-personal arguments.

Course Books & Readings

Required Texts and Readings:

1. The Pedagogy of Hope by Bell Hooks
2. Gender, Conflict, and Development by Tsjeara Bouta, Georg Frerks, and Ian Bannon
3. Security Disarmed: Critical Perspectives on Gender, Race, and Militarization by Barbara Sutton, Sandra Morgen, and Julie Novkov
4. In addition to the required books, there is a collection of articles, chapters and suggested other books for you to consider as you develop your presentations and papers. Be sure to read and be prepared to discuss those that are *required* the week the topic will be considered in class. The week-by-week schedule, below, includes all required readings from the collection of articles and books. I have also included a list of suggested readings, particularly for students who want to pursue particular themes or topics. All course readings will be posted on the ICAR Ning Forum. I will create a Ning Group for this class, and expect students to check the group site at least once a day.

*** Required & Recommended Readings: Reading the "required" readings is a must, whereas reading "recommended" readings is a choice.

Please note that the instructor reserves the right to change or alter the readings. Students should refer to Ning forum for updates on weekly readings.

English Language Institute

The English Language Institute offers free English language tutoring to non-native English

speaking students who are referred by a member of the GMU faculty or staff. For more information contact 703-993-3642 or malle2@gmu.edu.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center is a free writing resource that offers individual, group, and online tutoring. For general questions and comments please contact wcenter@gmu.edu or call 703-993-4491.

Weekly Class Schedule

Week 1:

- Overview of Class
- Overview of course and syllabus
- Discussion of student presentation topics

Theme I: Gender and conflict: sexism, psychological development, media, marketplace, law and health (week 2)

Week 2:

- Social constructionism: the debate, images and stories of gender
- Nature vs. Nurture

Readings:

- Ch. 1, Bouta et al, *Gender, Conflict, and Development*
- Tickner, J. Ann, *Troubled Encounters: Feminism Meets IR* in *Gendering World Politics*

Assignment:

Bring a personal experience-based case, or one that you are deeply interested in, that reflects the intersection of gender and conflict; be prepared to present & discuss it.

Class Exercise: Gendered Timeline

Theme II: Gender and Violence: rape, domestic and cultural violence, war, small arms and terrorism (weeks 3-5)

Week 3 (Feb 8): Introduction to Women, War & Peace

Readings:

- Bouta et al, *Chapter 1*

Week 4 & 5 (Feb 15 & 22): Women as victims of conflict

Readings:

- Amnesty International Report - *Maze of Injustice: The Failure to Protect Indigenous Women from Sexual Violence in the USA*
- Gottschall, Jonathan *Explaining Wartime Rape*
- Helen M. Kinsella, *Gender Grotius – Sex and Sex Differences in the Laws of War*
- Nata Duvvury et al, *Cost of Intimate Partner Violence at the Household and Community Levels*

Week 6 & 7 (March 1 & 8): Women as perpetrators of conflict

Readings:

- Bouta et al, *Gender and Warfare: Female Combatants & Soldiers Wives* (Ch. 2 in *Gender, Conflict & Development*)
- Beyler, Clara *Messengers of Death*
- Cunningham, Carla *Female Suicide Terrorism: Causes and Consequences*
- Honwana, Alcinda *Young Women* (Ch. 5 in *Child Soldiers in Africa*)
- Manchanda, Rita *Guns and Burqa: Women in the Kashmir Conflict* (Ch. 2 in *Women, War & Peace in South Asia*)

March 15 – Enjoy Your Spring Break!

Theme III: Gender and Peacemaking: peacemaking, post-war peace building, mainstreaming and evidence of agency (weeks 8-10)

Week 8 (March 22): Gender & Peacemaking

Readings:

- Bouta et al, *Gender and Formal Peace Processes* in *Gender, Conflict & Development* (Ch. 4)
- Bouta et al, *Gender, Informal Peace Processes, & Rebuilding Civil Society* in *Gender, Conflict & Development* (Ch. 5)
- Anderlini, Sanam *Getting to the Table* in *Women Building Peace* (Ch. 3)

Recommended Readings:

- McCaffrey, Katherine T., *Because Vieques is our Home: Defend It!* In *Security Disarmed*
- Eliatamby, Maneshka *Mothers Challenge Warfare* in *Women Waging War & Peace* (Cheldelin & Eliatamby)

Week 9 (March 29): Gender & Post Conflict

Readings:

- Cagan, Elizabeth *Women and Grassroots Democracy in El Salvador* in *Democratization and Women's Grassroots Movements* (Ch. 8)
- Honwana, Alicinda *Healing Child Soldiers and Their Communities* in *Child Soldiers in Africa*

- Guhathakurta, Meghna *Women's Narratives from the Chittagong Hill Tracts* in *Women, War & Peace in South Asia*

Week 10 (April 5): Gender, Justice and Post-Conflict Issues

Readings:

- Anderlini, Sanam, *Postconflict Governance and Leadership in Women Building Peace*
- Hirsch, Susan *Promises of Justice* in *Women Waging War & Peace* (Cheldelin & Eliatamby)
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Theme IV: Gender, Peace, and Development (weeks 11-12)

Week 11 (April 12): Microfinance

Week 12 (April 19): Imagining the Unimaginable

Readings:

- Bell Hooks *A Pedagogy of Hope*
- Cheldelin, Sandra and Maneshka Eliatamby *Imagining the Unimaginable* in *Women Waging War & Peace* (Ch. 16)
- Sutton, Barbara and Julie Novkov *Rethinking Security, Confronting Inequality* in *Security Disarmed*

Theme V: Gender and Globalization (week 13)

Week 13 (April 26):

Readings:

- Kirk, Gwyn, *Contesting Militarization: Global Perspectives* in *Security Disarmed*
- Scott, Scott *Breaking New ground at the UN and the World Bank* in *Developing Power*
- Tinker, Irene *Challenging Wisdom, Changing Policies: The Women in Development Movement* in *Developing Power*
- Tickner, J. Ann, *Gender in the Global Economy* in *Gendering World Politics* (Ch. 3)

Recommended Readings:

- Hussein, Aziza *Crossroads for Women at the UN* in *Developing Power*

Theme VI: Theories of Gender & Conflict & Paper Presentation (weeks 14-15)

Week 14 (May 3): Gender & Global Health Conflicts

Readings:

- Rehn, E., *HIV/AIDS, Women and War* (2002)
- http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/Resources/FeatureStories/archive/2009/20090811_Intimate_partners.asp HIV Transmission in intimate partner relationships in Asia

- http://www.globalhealth.gov/refugee/refugees_health_burmese.html (issues for Burmese); http://www.globalhealth.gov/refugee/refugees_health_liberian.html (issues for Liberians) http://www.globalhealth.gov/refugee/refugees_health_bantu.html (issues for Somali Bantu) and http://www.globalhealth.gov/refugee/refugees_health_hmong.html (the Hmong from Thailand)

Recommended Readings:

- <http://www.msmagazine.com/winter2008/DyingInBackstreets.asp> Dying in the Backstreets (in Kenya)
- <http://physiciansforhumanrights.org/library/news-2007-05-25.html> New report on HIV/AIDS in Africa first to link discriminatory beliefs against women with vulnerability to AIDS
- http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/Resources/FeatureStories/archive/2007/20070808_gender_and_AIDS_in_MENA.asp Gender and AIDS in the Middle East and North Africa
- <http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/nhqrwomen/nhqrwomen.htm> Women's health care in the US (selected findings from the 2004 National Healthcare Quality and Disparities Reports)
- http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_depth/5319702.stm Women 'form half of all migrants'

Week 15 (May 10):

Readings:

- Lee, Barbara *Gender, Race, and Militarism: Towards a More Just Alternative in Security* Disarmed
- Feldman, Leonard C., *The Citizen Soldier as a Substitute Soldier* in Security Disarmed
- Mann, Bonnie, *Manhood, Sexuality, and Nation in Post-9/11 United States* in Security Disarmed