Women, War and Resistance, WGS 345/WGS 445/PAX 345

DePaul University, Spring 2014

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Office Hours: MW 2:30-4:00 pm

Course Description:

This course aims to make feminist sense of contemporary wars and conflicts. It analyzes the intersections between gender, race, class, and ethnicity in national conflicts. The class traces the gendered processes of defining citizenship, national identity and security, and examines the role of institutions like the military in the construction of femininity and masculinity. The course focuses on the gendered impact of war and conflict through examining torture, mass rape, genocide, and refugee displacement. It analyzes the strategies used by women’s and feminist movements to oppose war and conflict, and the gendered impact of war prevention, peacekeeping, and post-war reconstruction. The class draws on cases from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa. The class is interdisciplinary and gives equal weight to theory and practice while drawing on writings by local and global activists and theorists.

Class Requirements:

Students in addition to reading the course material, attending screening sessions, and participating in class discussion will monitor at least one conflict zone using several media outlets and trace the representation of gender, war and conflict. The course requirements also include 1 class presentation, 5 papers, and a final research paper. Papers constitute 50% of the evaluation, the final research paper constitutes 30% of the evaluation, class presentations constitute 10% of the evaluation, and class participation and constitute 10% of the evaluation.

Course Policies:

Attendance: You are expected to attend class regularly. More than one absence during the term will seriously affect your final grade.

Printing: All class material should be printed double-sided in order to save on paper and protect the environment.
Reading Material

Reading materials will consist of various handouts and supplementary material will be distributed in class and posted on D2L. A detailed class schedule will be handed out separately.

Required Books


Recommended Books


Films [Recommended—some will be screened in class]


Calling the Ghosts, 1996, 63 minutes.

Carry Greenham Home, Beeban Kidron and Amanda Richardson, 1983, 66 minutes.


Frontline: The Torture Question, 2005, 90 minutes.

Frontline: The Triumph of Evil, 1999, 60 minutes.

Frontline: Truth, War, and Consequences, 2003, 90 minutes.
• Frontline: Rumsfeld’s War, 2004, 90 minutes.

• Occupation Dreamland, 2005, 78 minutes.

• Officer and a Gentleman, 1982, 122 minutes.

• Saving Private Ryan, 1998, 170 minutes.

• The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, 1983, 62 minutes.

• The Official Story, 1986, 112 minutes.

• The Vienna Tribunal, 1994, 48 minutes.

**Other Course Information:**

Policy On Grading: This course requires the careful reading of several autobiographical texts and supplementary readings as well as the completion of essay assignments. In the determination of grades, quality will prevail regarding content, organization and language usage. Letter grades (based upon a 4.0 scale using value points as indicated in the University Bulletin) will be used in the evaluation of major assignments. The framework below outlines the principles upon which grades will be determined in conjunction with guidelines for specific assignments: A designates work of extraordinarily high quality; B, work of high quality; C, work of satisfactory quality; D, work which does not meet minimum satisfactory requirements; and F, work that is not submitted, is very poorly done, or plagiarized. For details regarding the grading rubric regarding written work, consult the “Addendum to Grading Policy” which is distributed along with this course syllabus. Note: All assignments must be completed for a grade C or better.

Students should be aware that in this course, the quality of writing and clarity of expression will be a significant component of assessing written assignments. In this regard, in addition to content and organization, the development of ideas, and ability to state and sustain an argument, clarity of expression, standard grammar usage, spelling, diction and syntax will be the bases upon which written work is evaluated. Your ideas and thinking are important and so is the manner in which you express them. Therefore, I strongly recommend that the writing of assignments not be left to the last minute; instead, students need to allow sufficient time for drafting, proof reading, editing and revision of their work. Students are cautioned against turning in first drafts and hastily done work. This is to avoid careless errors in grammar and typographical mistakes along with serious problems in language use and development of ideas that will be evident.
Expectations: Students are expected to attend all sessions of the course, be on time (repeated lateness and/or unexcused absences beyond one class session will result in the lowering of one’s final grade as deemed appropriate), come prepared having read all assigned readings, and actively participate in class discussions and activities in the interest of developing a community of open exchange and learning. In discussions as well as for written assignments, students are to draw upon the readings and incorporate ideas in reflections, commentaries and assignments so that ideas expressed are informed by the literature. The goal is that students develop critical understandings of the material. In this regard, the hope is that everyone will reflect upon the power of stories, personal voice, and the political and historical importance of personal narratives and transnational feminist frameworks. Graduate students will be required to take responsibility for leading discussions on supplementary readings and their written work will be held to standards commensurate with expectations for graduate work.

Instructional Methods: There will be short lectures, discussions, video screening, and guest speakers—the latter dependent upon availability.

Plagiarism: Students and faculty at DePaul University and the Department of Women and Gender Studies are committed to academic integrity and will not tolerate any violation of this principle. Academic honesty is the cornerstone of teaching and learning. Academic dishonesty is, in most cases, intellectual theft. It includes, but is not limited to, providing or receiving assistance in a manner not authorized by the instructor in the creation of work to be submitted for evaluation. This standard applies to all work ranging from daily homework assignments to major exams. Students must clearly cite any sources consulted, not only for quoted phrases but also for ideas and information that are not common knowledge. Neither ignorance nor carelessness is an acceptable defense in cases of plagiarism. It is the student’s responsibility to follow the appropriate citation format. As is indicated in DePaul’s Student Handbook, instructors must refer every act of academic dishonesty to the Associate Dean, and violations may result in failure in the course, suspension, or expulsion.
WGS 390/490/MLS 441 Schedule of Class Activities
Spring 2012

1/6-8  Week 1  Orientation to the course.
Introduction to contemporary and traditional approaches.

1/13-15  Week 2  Reading: Various Articles
Intro. Frontline Feminisms
Intro. Feminism and War
After Shock excerpts
Militarization and Violence Against Women in the Middle East Ch. 1-2

1/20-22  Week 3  Feminism & War: Confronting U.S. Imperialism [1st Half]

1/27-29  Week 4  Feminism & War: Confronting U.S. Imperialism [2nd Half]
Team-teaching:
Essay 1 due--- 5:00pm in D2L Dropbox [10 points]

2/3-5  Week 5  Frontline Feminisms pages 3-205.
Team-teaching:
2/10-12 Week 6 Frontline Feminisms pages 206-end.
Team-Teaching:
Essay 2 due---5:00pm in D2L Dropbox [10 points]

2/17-19 Week 7 Feminists Under Fire [1st half]
Team-teaching:

2/24-26 Week 8 Feminists Under Fire [2nd half]
Team-teaching:
Essay 3 due---5pm D2L Dropbox [10 points]

3/3-5 Week 9 Women Waging War and Peace [ALL!!!]
Team-Teaching:
Essay 4 due---5pm D2L Dropbox [10 points]

3/10-12 Week 10 Women War Peace [ALL!!!]
ALL students presenting research projects

3/18 FINAL ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE!!! By midnight in Dropbox [40 points]