

Portland State University

Winter, 2010

WS 308

Gender, Violence, and Human Rights

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Welcome to *Gender, Violence, and Human Rights*, an upper division Women's Studies course whose focus is the intersectionality of the experiences reflected in the course title. A basic understanding of each of these experiences is where this course begins. As we examine a more thorough analysis of these connections through scholarly articles written since 2001, we examine what these intersections, mean for our lives as world citizens. Today, political globalization calls upon all us to consider the impact of our choices, not only on our neighborhoods, but on the entire world, and not only for the immediate, but for generations to come.

What is gender? What is terrorism, and violence? What are human rights? Is gendering a form of socially acceptable terrorism? Is the work of human rights the ultimate form of resistance to it? What is the role of feminism? What impact does this intersection have for everyday life as you live it? What is on the horizon for the future? These are among the questions we'll explore during the term.

I welcome all political perspectives in this course. There is no expectation of any particular political ideology. What I do ask is that you keep an open mind, and heart, so that you can develop an analysis, rather than be reactive, to the various authors whose works we'll be studying together. Most important is to become aware of the framework of analysis you use in assessing these issues, and why this is your framework. Thus, it is not enough to say, "my parents taught me...." Rather, the place to start is "my parents taught me....., and I choose to continue with this way of viewing the world because I've used.....to examine it, and have come to this conclusion....."

As with all on-line courses, we will follow the basic etiquette expected in on-line work—*disagreement* in discussions, not *hostility*; no threats, abusive language or hate speech in any postings; plagiarism of any type will follow university prescribed policies. Proficiency in using Blackboard is expected.

The best way to contact me is through Blackboard email. Let me know if you have any questions. Please do not contact me at my pdx email address. It's for my administrative work, not academic. I look forward to learning with you!

## How Does This Class Work

We start with a **short essay** in which you explain your understanding of Gender, Violence/Terrorism, Human Rights. This is due on Thursday, Jan 7. It requires no research. It is your baseline statement.

Then, there is a **series of essays**, based on PSU Library electronic reserves' readings, usually included in each assignment as PDF's or URL's. This is followed by a book report at mid term, based on **Susan Gallymore's *Long Time Passing: Mothers Speak About War and Terror***. We then move into four weeks of **small discussion groups** based on the other texts for the course, *City of Widows* by Iraqi writer **Haifa Zangana**, and Afghan **Malalai Joya's *A Woman Among Warlords***. We end the term

with a book report on one of these last two books.

Please take time to review the assignment and discussion sections. We use the assignments, discussions, email, grade book mostly.

I read, and answer, Blackboard email on Mondays, Wednesdays, and either Fridays or Saturdays. All grading happens on a point system. I base grades on academic rigor, grammar, syntax, spelling, development of analysis, clarity of argument that shows understanding of the texts and ideas of the authors.

Understanding a political perspective is vastly different than simply agreeing or disagreeing with it. Be sure you grasp the

significance of this before embarking on the journey this course invites you to, namely, to more fully comprehend the role of gender in global human rights concerns.

Post all assignments in any form of MS Word. Nothing else, please!

Analyses can earn full credit. Report and summaries will not. Be sure to understand the difference! Hint—analyses tell me what I don't know—your perspective. Summaries tell me what I already know—the author's perspective!

***Discussions and the Galleymore book report are required.*** At least 500 pts must be earned from them. The remainder of the assignments are optional, based on the grade you plan to work toward. There are **more**

assignments than you need to do in order to gain the grade you plan to earn. That's so you can miss a few assignments, because, in fact we have lives, and you will miss something here and there. *Nothing is gained by doing all of the assignments.* The course design allows some flexibility. **I don't believe in being punitive because you have the audacity to have a life!**

Speaking of lives, mine simply **won't allow for acceptance of late papers.** If you miss a deadline, just get started on the next assignment. The best way not to miss a deadline is to post early. This avoids technological snafus, and arguments with the Blackboard clock.

### **Grades:**

**First assignment—worth up to 50 pts (50 pts total possible)**

**Four essays-----worth up to 100 pts each (400 pts total possible)**

**\*Galleymore Book Report—worth up to 250 pts (250 pts total possible)**

**\*Four discussions—worth up to 100 pts each (400 pts total possible)**

**Second Book Report—worth up to 250 pts (250 pts total possible)**

Final Paper-----worth up to 200 pts (200 pts total possible)

Final Essay, Revision of Baseline Statement---- (250 pts total possible)

### **\*REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS**

Final Grades:

A—at least 1100 points

B--at least 950 points

C—at least 800 points

D—at least 700 points

A minus (-) or plus (+) may be added to any grade to better indicate academic accomplishment.

Students taking this class for a P/NP must do the required assignments, in addition to earning enough additional points for a C.

### **Gender, Violence, and Human Rights**

All essay assignments due by 5pm of due date. Discussion initial postings due by 5pm on Wednesdays, and responses to the initial postings of other group members due by Saturdays, 5pm.

Week of

- Jan 4 Due on Jan 7, 5pm:  
200 words explaining your perspective on how gender, terrorism, and human rights relate to each other. Do not submit a dictionary, encyclopedia, wiki, or anyone's descriptions but your own.  
**50 pts possible**
- Jan 9, 16, 23, 30 An essay of no more than 500 words that is a brief, scholarly analysis of two assigned articles. Assignments are in the assignment box. The key questions to address each week are outlined in the instructions for each assignment.  
**Up to 100 pts each possible**
- Feb 13 Required Book Report on Susan Galleymore's *Long Time Passing*. See Assignments section for complete details. **REQUIRED ASSIGNMENT**
- Feb 20, 27 Discussions based on Zangana book. **REQUIRED ASSIGNMENT**
- Mar 6, 13 Discussions based on Joya book. **REQUIRED ASSIGNMENT**
- Mar 20 Re-evaluate your initial paper, and in 500 words, use it as a framework to explain the intersectionality of violence/terrorism, gender, and human rights. Discuss any changes you'd make to your initial paper, and explain the reasons for these changes. Full credit papers must have citations from assigned readings we studied for the essays.