

Syllabus CONF 707 – Distance Learning Course
Gender and Violence
Summer 2015 (May 18 – June 20)

Meeting place: Blackboard 9.1
Weekly schedule: Each week runs Monday-Sunday starting on May 18, ending June 20
Instructors: Dr. Leslie Dwyer
Email: ldwyer2@gmu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment (via telephone, email, Skype)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines gender-based violence and the gendered dimensions of violent conflict. Drawing upon a trans-disciplinary range of social theories and materials from both U.S. and international contexts, it will investigate themes including the social construction of gender, intersectionality and feminist politics, gender and post-conflict peace-building, wartime sexual violence, militarism and gender, and the gendered dynamics of power.

At the heart of this course is a commitment to questioning assumptions about the very nature of gender and violence. Does “violence” consist only of forcible acts, as defined by legislation and international interventions meant to address problems such as domestic violence or wartime rape? What happens if we instead view violence as comprising structures of gendered inequality and narratives of gendered constraint, phenomenon that may involve no direct physical assault, but nevertheless have serious material effects on bodies and lives? We likewise will question our taken-for-granted framings of “gender.” Is gender something socially imposed on individuals or a script for behavior bestowed at birth by nature? How do individuals’ actions and interactions reinforce social constructions of gender that manifest in personalities, attitudes, behavior, self-understandings and cultural forms? How do gender and violence intersect to influence the trajectory of violent conflict and limit the potential for resolution and justice?

This course is not a lecture course. Rather, it is an intensive graduate seminar designed to promote collaborative, critical dialogue. Participants are expected to participate in discussions and exercises on a weekly basis, having thoroughly absorbed and reflected on the week’s readings and media materials.

COURSE MATERIALS

All reading and media materials are required. The instructor will facilitate class discussions based on the assumption that all students have read, watched and reflected on all the required materials. Many readings and media materials will offer arguments that you have may strong reactions to, whether positive or negative. That is intentional in the class design. In addition, students should be aware that the course addresses explicit materials and concepts, including violence, gender, sexuality, bodies, rape, and sexual assault. If you feel unable for any reason to engage with this material, consider not taking this course. In addition, due to the sensitivity of the material, it is crucial that we maintain a safe and supportive classroom environment. While diverse and critical perspectives on our course materials are expected and encouraged, all

participants in this course should commit to engaging with each other with the utmost respect. Questions and counterarguments are welcome; expressions of sexism, racism, homophobia or transphobia are not.

COURSE LOGISTICS

This course will use a distance learning format; the primary meeting space will be on Blackboard 9.1. We will also use other means of keeping in touch such as email, telephone, and Skype. This is a rigorous course. In a typical week students will be expected to:

- Read approximately 100-150 pages and discuss these readings with your instructor and classmates
- Participate in online activities and review video and multimedia materials
- Work on assignments to be submitted through Blackboard according to the assignment schedule.

Though the course delivery method is different, this online course should take you the same amount of time or more to complete as a typical S-CAR graduate-level course. Because this class is accelerated, you should **expect to spend 20 to 25 hours on coursework each week** (this includes the time you would have spent in a classroom). It is critical to keep up with weekly requirements. We will provide a folder each week in our Blackboard course to specify required activities and assignments (available by clicking on ‘Course Contents’ on the course menu in Blackboard).

Blackboard:

We will use Blackboard 9.1 for the course. Additional guidance on individual assignments and discussion questions will be posted there. Use the Blackboard assignment drop box to submit your work for grading. Please visit our Blackboard site regularly.

Access Blackboard 9.1 by following these steps:

1. Go to <http://mymason.gmu.edu>.
2. Login using your NETID and password,
3. Click on the ‘Courses’ tab.
4. Double-click on CONF 707: Gender and Violence under the “Blackboard 9.1 Course” heading.

Instructor-Student Communication:

Please feel free to email me with questions or concerns. I will respond to your emails within 48 hours (although we may be in different time zones!). If I will be away from email for more than two days, I will post an announcement in the Blackboard course folder.

Before sending an email, please check the following (available on your Blackboard course menu) **unless the email is of a personal nature:**

1. Syllabus

2. Help forum (Feel free to respond to other students in the Help forum if you know the answer.)
3. Blackboard videos on how to use Blackboard features
4. Blackboard Q&A, and
5. Technology Requirements.

Mason EMAIL

- Mason requires that Mason email be used for all courses. I will be sending messages to your Mason email and you are responsible for making sure you have access to these messages.
- You may forward your Mason email to other accounts but always use your Mason e-mail when communicating with me to allow verification of your identity.
- You are required to check your Mason email account regularly and to keep your mailbox maintained so that messages are not rejected for being over quota.
- When you email me, be sure to include **CONF707** at the beginning of the subject heading to alert me that I have received a message from one of my online students.

PARTICIPATION

Expectations for Participation:

Your grade for participation will be based upon the quality and consistency of your contributions to our class discussions. In your discussion posts each week, you should be prepared not only to summarize what you have read and to discuss the authors' main points, but to provide a critical perspective on our texts and their relation to other social theories and to issues of conflict analysis and resolution, both broadly and in particular settings. The questions you should be asking yourself as you read for class include: What are the authors' main concerns? How are they framing key theoretical concepts? Are their arguments logically compelling? How can we relate their arguments to the field of conflict analysis and resolution? How might they help us to better understand particular post-conflict social landscapes? What might be left out of a particular analysis that it would be important to explore? A superlative evaluation for participation will require you to regularly contribute your ideas to our discussion, as well as to serve as a generous interlocutor for your seminar colleagues. In other words, it is not the quantity of your contributions but the quality that matters most, as well as your ability to raise issues that spark collaborative consideration, and to listen openly to others' perspectives.

Netiquette For Online Discussions: [\[1\]](#)

Our discussion should be collaborative, not combative; you are creating a learning environment, sharing information and learning from one another. Respectful communication is important to your success in this course and as a professional. Please re-read your responses carefully before you post them so others will not take them out of context or as personal attacks. Be positive to others and diplomatic with your words and we will try our best to do the same. Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be easily misconstrued.

[1] Netiquette prepared by Charlene Douglas, Associate Professor, College of Health & Human Services, GMU.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS COURSE

Hardware:

You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and to a fast and reliable broadband Internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content and a headset with a microphone is recommended for the best experience. For the amount of Hard Disk Space required to take a distance education course consider and allow for:

1. The storage amount needed to install any additional software and
2. Space to store work that you will do for the course.

If you are considering the purchase of a new computer, please go to <http://compstore.gmu.edu/pdfs/TechGuide.pdf> to see recommendations.

Software:

This course uses Blackboard as the learning management system. You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the myMason Portal. See [supported browsers and operating systems](#). Log in to [myMason](#) to access your registered courses. Some courses may use other learning management systems. Check the syllabus or contact the instructor for details. Online courses typically use [Acrobat Reader](#), [Flash](#), [Java](#) (Windows), and [Windows Media Player](#), [QuickTime](#) and/or [Real Media Player](#). Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Anti-Virus software for free at <http://antivirus.gmu.edu>.

Students using Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch http://support.apple.com/kb/VI54?viewlocale=en_US about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.

Note: If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

Hardware or software required for this course or program may be available for purchase at [Patriot Computers](#) (the University's computer store that offers educational discounts and special deals).

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

MasonLive/Email:

Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly.

For accessibility and privacy, the university, school, and program will send communications to students solely through their Mason email account—students should respond accordingly (See <https://thanatos.gmu.edu/masonlive/login>).

Patriot Pass:

Once you sign up for your Patriot Pass, your passwords will be synchronized, and you will use your Patriot Pass username and password to log in to the following systems: Blackboard, University Libraries, MasonLive, myMason, Patriot Web, Virtual Computing Lab, and WEMS. [See <https://password.gmu.edu/index.jsp>].

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester (See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).

Work Ethic:

CONF 707 is designed as a collaborative learning experience. It is important that students participate in every class and that they contribute actively to groups and class discussions. Please participate enthusiastically in group activities while respecting the opinions and valuing the work of other group members. You will be disappointed in this class if you focus on individual effort alone.

Course Policies:

Late assignments or “incomplete” grades will be given only in exceptional cases of personal or immediate family crisis. You MUST discuss the possibility of such arrangements with the instructor beforehand rather than waiting until an assignment is due. Failure to complete an assignment on time without prior discussion will result in a failing grade for that particular assignment.

Honor Code and Plagiarism:

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. You can find a copy of the Honor Code at academicintegrity.gmu.edu. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. With specific regards to plagiarism, three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor.

S-CAR requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. S-

CAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it.

As the instructor for the course, I will regularly use GMU's electronic plagiarism check software to scan students' work for plagiarism. In accordance with GMU's regulations, I will refer all cases of suspected plagiarism directly to GMU's Honor Committee. Please note the seriousness of this issue, and if you have ANY QUESTIONS AT ALL about what might constitute plagiarism please discuss them with me.

University Policies:

Students must follow the university policies. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>].

Responsible Use of Computing:

Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing>].

University Calendar:

Details regarding the current Academic Calendar. [See <http://calendar.gmu.edu>].

University Catalog:

The current university catalog. [See <http://catalog.gmu.edu>].

STUDENT SERVICES

Writing Center:

The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. (See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>). ESL Help: The program was designed specifically for students whose first language is not English who feel they might benefit from additional, targeted support over the course of an entire semester. (See http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/?page_id=10).

University Libraries:

University Libraries provides resources for distance students. (See <http://library.gmu.edu/distance>).

Counseling and Psychological Services:

The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu>].

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the "Buckley Amendment," is a federal law that gives protection to student educational records and provides students with certain rights. [See <http://registrar.gmu.edu/privacy>].

GRADING

Students will be assessed and grades assigned based on 3 short assignments due throughout the course; participation in weekly discussions and activities; and one cumulative semester paper, due following the final week of the course.

Assignments will be assessed for substance, clarity, creativity and analytical rigor. Your work on each assignment should reflect your ability to apply materials covered in the course to real world conflicts and draw connections between analytical frames presented in the course (eg: bring materials “into dialogue” with one another).

Grading Scale (points)

A 100-93

A- 92-90

B+ 89-87

B 86-83

B- 82-80

C 79-70*

F <70*

*Please note that many Mason graduate programs have minimum grade expectations that require students to achieve a grade of B- or higher to remain in good academic standing. Please consult with your department for specific information.

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS

Detailed descriptions of each of these assignments are located in each of the respective weeks in which the assignment is due. Learning Unit in Blackboard. Additionally, an overview may be viewed at the “Overview of Assignments” in the “Course Content” section of the Blackboard site.

Assignment	Points	Approx. Time for Completion	Due Date
Interview and Auto-Ethnographic Reflection	15	5-10 hrs	Saturday, May 30, 2015
Representations of Gender	15	5-10 hrs	Wednesday, June 10, 2015
Persuasive Briefing	20	15-20 hrs	Friday, June 19, 2015
Cumulative Semester Paper	25	5-10 hrs	Saturday, June 27, 2015
Participation	25	3-5 hrs per week	Ongoing
Total	100		

Interview and Auto-Ethnographic Reflection- Due May 30

Students will interview (either in person or via Skype) a person of their choosing on the topic of “how gender and structures of gendered inequality manifest in individual lives.” After reflecting upon their interview process and findings, they will apply theories learned in the course to write an analysis. They will then add a reflection on how their own gendered position shaped their interview experience, providing a lens through which to apprehend, assume, misrecognize or empathize with their interviewee.

Representations of Gender and Violence- Due June 10

Students will choose a publicly-circulating representation of gender – e.g. a photographic or other visual image, a music or video clip, a call to action or advertisement – and analyze how it frames gender and violence and how it aligns with particular relations of power. They will also create a “counter-image” reworking the gendered representation. Students will briefly share their images and counter-images in class before submission of the written paper.

Persuasive Briefing- Due June 19

“Gender issues are of secondary importance in peace-building – they can be addressed later, after the conflict is over and the peace agreement is signed. Raising them now risks alienating the parties to peace.” Students who go into the field will hear such positions articulated again and again. For this assignment, students will be party to a high-level “meeting” via in-class simulation, and will work together in teams to draft memos drawing upon scholarly sources and other evidence to argue for continued funding to gender and peace-building programs within the U.S. government.

Cumulative Semester Paper- Due June 27 by 11:59p.m.

You will prepare a (15-25 pages, double spaced) term paper covering: a) how your understandings of gender and violence have shifted as a result of materials covered in the course; and, b) how this reframed conception of gender and its relationship to violence can be applied practically to your intended professional or academic work. This paper will draw upon major theories and themes covered in the course, stating how these materials have contributed to your conception of gender and violence. This is not only a reflective paper; it should offer scholarly analysis of theories of gender and violence and draw on course materials.

REQUIRED READINGS & COURSE CONTENT

Urvashi Butalia, 2000. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Durham: Duke University Press. (Available for purchase at GMU Arlington Campus bookstore)

Susan Brison, 2003. *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Available for purchase at GMU Arlington Campus bookstore)

Cynthia Enloe, 2014, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*. 2nd Edition. University of California Press.

Other material for the course will be available on Blackboard under the “Course Content” tab.

Videos and Lectures are available on the course Blackboard site under “Course Content”. Each week’s respective videos and lectures are available by clicking in the Unit for the week (i.e.: Unit 1 corresponds to week 1 of the course).

WEEK 1 (MAY 18-MAY 24): Seeing Through a Gendered Lens/Why Gender Matters in Conflict

Week 1 Videos:

- Welcome to the Course- Leslie Dwyer
- Course Expectations and Syllabus
- How to Take This Course
- “Why Does Conflict Analysis and Resolution Need a Theory of Gender?”

Week 1 Readings:

- Cheldelin, Sandra I. and Maneshka Eliatamby. 2011. “Overview and Introduction.” In *Women Waging War and Peace: International Perspectives of Women’s Roles in Conflict and Post-Conflict Reconstruction*. S. Cheldelin and M. Eliatamby, eds. Pages 1-12.
- Enloe, Cynthia 2004. “Being Curious About our Lack of Feminist Curiosity.” In *Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pages 1-10.
- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. Available at: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>
- U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. December, 2011.

Week 1 Media:

- “Secretary Clinton Marks the 10th Anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.” Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wR5Gn8wxda0>
- UN Women, “Side by Side – Women, Peace and Security.” Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a2Br8DCRxME>
- Episode from PBS Series, *Women, War and Peace*, “War Redefined” (52 minutes) (Link in Blackboard)

WEEK 2 (MAY 25-MAY 31): The Social Construction of Gender

Week 2 Readings:

- Bourdieu, Pierre. 2004. “Gender and Symbolic Violence.” in *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*. N. Scheper-Hughes and P. Bourgois, eds. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. Pages 339-342

- Butler, Judith 1999. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge. Pages vii-44 (Includes 1999 preface, 1990 preface, and Section 1).
- Pascoe, C. J. 2012. *Dude, You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pages 1-21, 84-113.
- West, Candace and Don H. Zimmerman. 1987. "Doing Gender." *Gender & Society* 1: 125-151.
- Anne Fausto-Sterling 2000. "That Sexe Which Prevaileth" and "Of Gender and Genitals." In *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*. New York: Basic Books, Pages 30-77.
- Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 139-67.

Week 2 Videos:

- Film: "XXXY." Available at: <http://vimeo.com/66443054>
- Judith Butler, "Your Behavior Creates Your Gender" (3:01)
 - Available at: <http://youtu.be/Bo7o2LYATDc>
- Clip from "Examined Life" (14:23)
 - Available at: <http://youtu.be/k0HZaPkF6qE>

WEEK 3 (JUNE 1-JUNE 7): Sexual Violence

Week 3 Readings:

- Narayan, Uma 1997. "Cross-Cultural Connections, Border-Crossings and 'Death-by-Culture'" in *Dislocating Cultures*, pp. 83-117.
- Susan Brison, 2003. *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [BOOK – STUDENTS SHOULD PURCHASE]
- Cheldelin, Sandra I. 2011. "Victims of Rape and Gendercide: All Wars." Pp. 12-36 in *Women Waging War and Peace: International Perspectives on Women's Roles in Conflict and Post-Conflict Reconstruction*.
- Cohen, D., Hoover Green A. and Wood, J. 2013. "Wartime Sexual Violence: Misconceptions, Implications and Ways Forward." USIP.
- Diken, Bulent and Carsten Bagge Lausten, "Becoming Object: Rape as a Weapon of War." *Body and Society* 11(1):111-128.

Week 3 Media:

- Film, "I Came to Testify" (link available on Blackboard)

WEEK 4 (June 8-June 14): The Gender of War

Week 4 Readings:

- Enloe, Cynthia, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases* (Book: Students should purchase)
- Gill, Lesley. 1997. "Creating Citizens, Making Men: The Military and Masculinity in Bolivia." *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 12, No. 4: 527-550.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 1998. "Maternal Thinking and the Politics of War." In *The Women and War Reader.*, L. Lorentzen and J. Turpin, eds. New York: NYU Press. Pgs. 227-33.

Week 4 Videos:

- Clip, "GI Jane"
- Lecture, Cynthia Enloe at GMU
- Film: "The Invisible War"

WEEK 5 (June 15-June 20): Moving Forward

Week 5 Readings:

- Urvashi Butalia, 2000. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Durham: Duke University Press. [BOOK – STUDENTS SHOULD PURCHASE]
- Theidon, Kimberly 2007. Gender in Transition: Common Sense, Women and War. *Journal of Human Rights* 6:453-478. [AVAILABLE ON E-RESERVES]
- Nicole Pratt and Sophie Richter-Devoe 2011. "Critically Examining UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 13(4):489-503.

Week 5 Media:

- Film: "Pray the Devil Back to Hell"
- Film: "Earth"