

GENDER AND WAR

HONR 109/ POLS 109/ WS 145

Spring Semester 2007

MW 12:30-1:45 MER 202

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Course Description

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Most theories of international relations treat war as gender neutral. Mainstream international relations scholarship, while diverse in many respects, shares a basic assumption that gender is irrelevant to understanding the causes of war, the ways in which states mobilize their populations for war, and the consequences of wars. Despite this assumption of gender neutrality, war is, in fact, a highly gendered phenomenon. Socially constructed norms of masculinity and femininity have been used by nation-states to mobilize their populations for war and to create soldiers, typically out of young men. Nation-states must go to great lengths to train their soldiers to kill, and the construction of a militarized masculinity is a key component in state efforts to achieve this objective. Nation-states also use femininity to mobilize support for war. States have relied on social and cultural depictions of supportive mothers and faithful wives of soldiers to mobilize support for war. Similarly, state depictions of innocent women as a class of people especially vulnerable to external military threats also have been used in wartime rhetoric to mobilize public support for military operations.

In addition to serving as a tool for mobilizing war support and creating soldiers, gender contributes to war's divergent effects on men and women. While men are more likely to serve as combatants, women are more likely to serve in support roles (nurses, aid workers etc.) Women and children make up a higher proportion of civilian casualties and war refugees and also are more likely to be victims of rape in war whereas men are more likely to suffer as combatants. The effects of war on men vary from country to country. They may be forced to fight in political systems that do not have volunteer armies, and as combatants or potential soldiers it is harder for them to get refugee status. As soldiers, they may be treated as heroes in popular wars but reviled if wars are unpopular. For men serving in the upper echelon of the military (and high-ranking military officials are primarily men), military service can be a path to political power, a path generally denied to women. These differential effects of war on men and women can be explained largely by socially constructed gender identities that define men's and women's wartime roles in different ways.

With this background in mind, this course addresses the relationship between gender and war. In particular, it will explore the question of whether men are naturally more violent and aggressive than women and how answers to this question relate to the prevalence of war in the international system. The course also will examine the differential ways in which men and women are affected by the war system and will consider the role of women and gender norms in peace movements. The course will focus primarily on women as agents who actively participate in, support, and condone war, women who actively oppose war and mobilize for peace, and women who become victims of the war system. Because men and masculinity play such a prominent role in war throughout history, the course also will explore the varying roles that men from different cultures and classes play in the war system and the way in which masculine gender norms have been used to perpetuate the war system.

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

The Honors Program at Drake University, as one of its central objectives, seeks to answer two fundamental questions: 1) What do we know? and 2) How do we know it? In this course, we will broadly seek to answer these two questions in reference to themes regarding gender and war in world politics. Additional course-specific objectives include the following:

1. To gain an understanding of the wide range of theories, in both international relations and feminist thought, that seek to explain the causes of war.
2. To examine the diverse ways in which women and men experience war, as perpetrators, victims, and often simultaneously as both victims and perpetrators.
3. To examine the way in which socially constructed gender identities perpetuate militarism and war in the international system.

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Research Papers and Group Presentations (40%): Students will be required to complete an independent research project examining a topic related to gender and war. Final papers should be 25-30, double-spaced pages with standard fonts and margins. The research project will comprise 40% of your final grade and consists of the following elements:
 - a. Group Presentations (10%): Paper topics will be categorized according to general themes (gender and peace movements, sexual violence in war, women in combat etc.), and students will be assigned to groups based on these categories. During the final section of the course, each group will be responsible for teaching class on one day. Students may rely on information from their individual research papers in developing group presentations, but my expectation is that you will not simply read or present your own papers. Rather, I want you to work together as a group to find creative ways to present your findings and to generate class interest and discussion. We will do one of two things for these presentations: 1) students will post drafts of their papers on our course website to be read by the class, and then we will discuss these papers during the class session for your group; OR 2) students will identify readings that the class will need read to prepare for class on the day your group is presenting. We will discuss as a class which option students prefer. Your grades on these presentations will be

based, in part, on peer evaluations of your contributions to the group. You will need to complete peer evaluation forms for each member of your group. These forms are available under the Course Documents tab on the Blackboard course website.

b. Research Papers (30%): Drafts of your research papers will be due on April 11. These drafts should represent significant progress towards completion of your project. By this time, I will expect you to have completed most of your research. You should have identified and gathered relevant reading material and any internet sources that will help you. You should have completed most of your reading by this time. You should have a detailed paper outline and a full, if incomplete, draft of the paper. Revised research papers will be due at the end of the semester and will be worth 30% of the final course grade. Although your grades will be based primarily on the quality of your final submissions, I will consider the completeness and quality of your rough drafts in making judgments about your grades on this assignment. Grades on late papers will be lowered by 1% point per day. (Note: this deduction means 1% point off your final course grade per late day.)

2. Two current events analytical papers (30%): I will require you to submit two 7-10 page (typed, double-spaced with standard margins) papers in which you analyze major news events that have unfolded during that section of the course that are pertinent to the subject matter of our course. In these papers, you should identify and comment on current events that demonstrate connections between gender and war in world politics. You should consider the extent to which major current events support or contradict arguments we are reading in class. This assignment, then, is designed to encourage you to make connections between "real-world" events and the scholarly arguments we are reading in class. You will be required to complete two current events analytical papers (one at midterm and one at the end of the semester.) Each current events analytical paper will be worth 15% of your final course grade. Grades on late current events papers will be lowered by one percentage point of your final course grade per day.

3. Final Take-Home Exam (20%): Students will be required to complete a final take-home essay examination. I will provide students with a question that requires them to reflect on the cumulative knowledge they have gained throughout the course. The question will require students to think analytically about the course material and to integrate information and supporting evidence from readings, discussions, films, and group presentations. These exams will be worth 20% of the final course grade. The take-home exams will be graded for content, grammar, and style. I also will expect you to incorporate explicit references to the required readings and other course materials.

4. Class attendance and participation (10%): Class attendance and participation will be worth 10% of the final course grade. In regards to attendance, you will be allowed one unexcused absence. After that, your participation grade will be lowered by 1% point off of your final course grade for each unexcused absence. An absence is excused only in the case of personal illness or family emergency. You must notify me in advance for your absence to be excused, and I may require you to document your illness or emergency. (Student athletes, musicians etc. also will be excused to participate in university-sponsored events but must provide me with the appropriate documentation forms.) Arriving late to class is rude both to the instructor and other students. If you arrive late to class without a valid excuse, I will count you as absent for that day.

In regards to class participation, students should come to class prepared to ask and answer questions on the assigned readings and to relate these readings to broader course themes. Honors Program courses are intended to provide an intensive, discussion-based learning experience, and the format for this class will be based on this expectation. Student questions and discussion will provide the vital core of this

course. Very little formal lecture material will be provided. The success of this course will depend on everyone coming to class fully prepared to discuss the assigned material and to relate this material to the larger topics we are considering in class.

You need to participate actively in the class, but you should not attempt to dominate class discussion. I expect that students often will disagree with each other and with me. I will encourage an atmosphere in which we are free to challenge and criticize each other's arguments, but I expect all of us to be respectful and civil in our disagreements. Your participation grade will reflect the extent to which you come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings and other course materials in a thoughtful, productive, and civil manner. I reserve the right to give "pop-quizzes" at any time during the semester. I have done so in the past when students are not prepared for class.

5. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is the act of trying to pass off someone else's ideas, words, thoughts or inventions as one's own. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional, but it is a violation of academic integrity in either case. You must acknowledge your use of other's work when you quote them word for word (you must use quotation marks in the case of direct quotations), paraphrase, borrow ideas, incorporate factual information from someone else's work, or rely on another person's organization of material. You do not need to provide citations for common knowledge, but it is better to err on the side of caution if you have any doubts. If your paper includes information that is not cited and/or I suspect plagiarism, I will not grade your paper until you provide satisfactory documentation of your sources. If I discover a case of cheating or plagiarism, I will impose the most serious penalty allowed under university regulations and contingent on the nature of the violation. In cases of egregious and intentional plagiarism or cheating, I will fail you in the course and reserve the right to make recommendations for additional penalties at the level of the college or university. See the statement on Academic Honesty and Integrity at the Department of Politics and IR homepage for further details. Also, see me if you still have questions about academic dishonesty.

GRADING SCALE

- A 90-100 (Excellent)
- B 80-89 (Good)
- C 70-79 (Satisfactory)
- D 60-69 (Poor)
- F 0-59 (Failure)

See my statement on Basic Grading Standards under the Course Documents tab on the Blackboard course website.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Joshua Goldstein, *War and Gender* (Cambridge University Press, 2001)
2. Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers* (University of California Press, 2000)
3. Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2003)
4. Additional readings will be available in a course packet.
5. Current events at both the domestic and global levels often involve serious policy debates over issues related to gender and war. Thus, your understanding of the political and social context of the course material will be enhanced if you keep abreast of current events. I will not require you to subscribe to a

specific newspaper. However, you should follow current events through the media of your choice. Note: certain choices are likely to be wiser than others. National daily newspapers, such as The New York Times or The Christian Science Monitor, provide far more thorough international and domestic coverage than local dailies. You also can obtain at least basic information in some weekly newsmagazines or by following CNN. In addition to these examples, most national newspapers and television networks maintain on-line sources of news.

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READING ASSIGNMENTS AND SCHEDULE

The following reading and assignment schedule is tentative. Because this course is reading and discussion-intensive and due to the emphasis on active student participation in the course, we will assign additional readings and adjust the schedule as necessary. Readings not in our assigned texts, reader or handouts are available online. Simply click on the links in the syllabus below,

Part I An Introduction to Gender and War: Basic Concepts and Theories

1/17 Introduction to course

1/22 Film: The Beauty Academy of Kabul; Read the following sources of information on Afghanistan: CIA World Factbook: Afghanistan, Human Rights Watch, Afghanistan: Security Council Upcoming Mission, Human Rights Watch, The Taliban's War on Education.

1/24 Discussion of film and assignment of roles for reading of Lysistrata.

1/29 Reading Aristophanes' Lysistrata; In addition to reading the play, you should also read this introduction to the play and study guide.

1/31 Discussion of Lysistrata; Goldstein, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-38); Enloe, Preface and Chapter 1; possible visit to art exhibit on Cuban women and the revolution at Anderson Art Gallery?

2/5 Gender and Images of Women and Men in War; Goldstein, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-38); Enloe, Preface and Chapter 1

2/7 Theories of International Relations: Realism, Marxism, Liberalism, Idealism: Read my essay on Gender and World Politics available under the Course Documents tab on the Blackboard course website.

2/12 Goldstein, Chapter 1 (pp. 38-58)

2/14 READER: Elshtain, "Is There a Feminist Tradition on War and Peace?"; Zur and Morrison, "Gender and War"; Goldstein, "John Wayne and GI Jane"

Part II Women and Men as Actors in War

2/19 Goldstein, Chapter 2; Enloe, Chapter 2; possible showing of film, Rosie the Riveter

2/21 Goldstein, Chapter 2; Enloe, Chapter 2; READER: Rubin, "Gen X"

2/26 Enloe, Chapter 5

2/28 Meet in Research Groups; I will be at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association

Part III Gender and the Causes of War

3/5 Enloe, Chapter 6

3/7 Enloe, Chapter 7

3/12 Goldstein, Chapter 3

3/14 Goldstein, Chapter 4

3/19-3/23 Spring Break, no class

3/26 READER: Excerpts from Grossman, On Killing

3/28 Goldstein, Chapter 5; Film: Sir! No Sir!

4/2 Goldstein, Chapter 5; READER: Excerpts from Baker, Nam; Broyles, "Why Men Love War"; Finish film and discussion of masculinity and war

Part IV Gender and the Consequences of War

4/4 Goldstein, Chapter 6; Enloe, Chapter 4

4/9 READER: Excerpts from Carpenter, 'Innocent Women and Children': Gender, Norms, and the Protection of Civilians

4/11 Enloe, Chapter 3; Drafts of research papers due.

4/16 READER: DeLaet, "Gender and Justice"; DeLaet, "Theorizing Justice for Children Born of War"

Part V Group Presentations

4/18 Group 1

4/23 Group 2

4/25 Group 3

4/30 Group 4

5/2 Goldstein, Chapter 7; Enloe, Conclusions; READER: Delbanco, "War College"; Course Evaluations; Final Papers due

Take-home final exams due no later than midnight on May 10, 2007.