

WOMEN, WAR AND THE MIDDLE EAST
WST 360 #5216, Spring 2007, NAU

Women's Studies Program

Northern Arizona University

Spring 2007

Hours: Monday, 5 pm to 7:30 pm

Room: SBS West 103

Instructor: Philippa Winkler PhD

Email: Philippa.Winkler@nau.edu. Through VISTA, WebCT

Office: SBS West 276

Office hours: Friday 9 am to 11 am or by appointment.

This course draws on history, current events and feminist consciousness to explore women's struggles while living under wartime conditions in the Middle East region. This course surveys conflicts involving the United States, the United Kingdom, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Israel/Palestine and Iran. Because of the US and UK' intertwined military campaigns in the region, course content will also focus on Afghanistan and North African countries such as Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

One theoretical starting point is that war, whether perpetrated by nation-states, militias or individuals, is linked to, and sustained by, domestic, sexual and structural violence. This leads us to question how women's identities are constructed in the pursuit of nationalism, resources and capital by competing patriarchies. Above all, this course will transcend stereotypes of 'grieving mother' and 'veiled victim', images which reinforce in Western minds the supposed need to civilize 'backward' societies in Islamic countries. We will learn about women as active social agents -- citizens, activists, theorists, combatants, heads of households, workers, and civic and political leaders.

Learning Objectives

WST 360 is a liberal studies course in the Cultural Understanding block with a thematic focus on Valuing Diversity in the Contemporary World. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Obtain an overview of Middle East her-story
- Deconstruct the Eurocentric notion that women in the West are more liberated than those in the Middle East
- Appreciate the nature and scope of women's ideological and activist response to armed conflict
- Improve the basic skills of critical thinking and effective writing, the verification of claims, and the examination of underlying assumptions.

Course Structure and Approach

The class is conducted as a mixture of lectures and debates, based on readings, handouts, speakers, and films. Student assignments are posted on VISTA. Participation is fundamental to learning. Assignments may be used to develop and expand on the final Research Paper and Presentation. This course will take the Study Action Group approach which pays attention to the process of engagement as well as the content of the subject. Therefore attention will be paid to students' subjective and affective reactions to course content.

Please note: This course makes extensive use of VISTA. Prompts for assignments will be delivered to students via VISTA email only. All assignments are to be entered into a VISTA Assignment Box; some assignments are also to be handed in 'hard copy' in class. Additional weblinks and files will be placed in VISTA folders by the instructor during the course of the semester. All correspondence with the instructor is on VISTA. Therefore, it is the students' responsibility to pay attention to discussion boards, student publications, announcements, prompts, time/date deadlines, expanded readings, video links and other course content on VISTA.

You are strongly advised to save all VISTA assignments as documents on your personal computer.

Assignments past the due dates will not be accepted and assignment deadlines on VISTA will not be extended. unless proof of a medical or institutional excuse and/ or emergency is supplied by the student.

The instructor reserves the right to change the content of the syllabus. Lectures may not always reflect weekly readings, in order to cover the most current situations in the Middle East.

Required Texts

Available at NAU Bookstore, Flagstaff

Mehta, Sunita, Women for Afghan Women, Shattering Myths and Claiming the Future, New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2002

Readings on VISTA.

RECOMMENDED DATABASES, BLOGS, LINKS

Middle East Studies Internet Resources

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/mideast/cuvlm/women.html>.

<http://www.nawalsaadawi.net/statements.htm>

<http://arabwomanblues.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.distel.ca/womlist/womlist.html> (list of global women's organizations, including Middle East)

COURSE SCHEDULE

The instructor reserves the right to change course content and schedule.

WEEK ONE

Monday January 15

NO CLASS

WEEK TWO

Monday January 22

Introduction to Course Themes and Content

Students are assigned countries in the region.

WEEK THREE

Monday January 29

Understanding Islam Through the Lens of Gender

DUE: Reading Question. See prompt on VISTA.

Speaker: Sayeed Ahmed

Dudley, William, Ed, Chapter Three "What is the Status of Women Under Islam"? in Islam: Opposing Viewpoints, Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2002

Lippman, Thomas W, "The Prophet Muhammad" Chapter 2 in Understanding Islam, An Introduction to the Muslim World, New York: Penguin, 2002

Wadud, Amina, "A'ishah's legacy – the struggle for women's rights within Islam" New Internationalist 345, May 2002, <http://www.newint.org/issue345/legacy.htm>

WEEK FOUR

Monday February 5

Women's Her-Story

DUE: Bring images of women in a Middle Eastern country (including Afghanistan) assigned to you, with a brief description of the social and political meaning of women's dress. See prompt on VISTA.

Ahmed, Leila "Veiling Made its first appearance..." Women and Gender in Islam, Historical Roots of a Modern Debate, Part One, Yale University, 1992, pgs 220-225

Lerner, Gerda, Chapter 4 'The Woman Slave' Chapter 4 and 'Veiling the Woman' Chapter 6 from The Creation of Patriarchy, Oxford University Press, 1986.

Bernard, Lewis, "Social and Cultural Barriers" Chapter 3, from What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response, Oxford University Press: 2002

Shaarawi, Huda, "Pan Arab Feminism" 1944, in Badran, Margot and Cooke, Miriam, Eds, Opening the Gates, A Century of Arab Feminist Writing, Indiana University Press, 1990.

WEEK FIVE

Monday February 12

Islamic Feminism, Activism and Human Rights

DUE: Bring to class and summarize on VISTA, an example of women's activism in your assigned country in the Middle East including Afghanistan, that 'fits' this week's readings. See full prompt on VISTA.

Lecture Notes in VISTA Folder: Categories of Islamic Feminism

Women for Afghan Women, Foreword and Introduction

Moghissi, Haideh, Women, War and Fundamentalism in the Middle East, Social Science Research Council (UK), 2001, www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/moghissi.htm

Fernea, Elizabeth Warnock "Islamic Feminism Finds a Different Voice" American Foreign Service Association, n/d, <http://www.afsa.org/fsj/may00/fernea.cfm>

Badran, Margo, "Islamic Feminism: What's In A Name?" Al-Ahram Weekly On-Line, 17-23 January 2002, Issue No 569
<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2002/569/cu1.htm>

Written statement by the General Arab Women's Federation at the UN Commission on Human Rights:
[http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.CN.4.2003.NGO.267.En?OpenDocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.2003.NGO.267.En?OpenDocument)

Nidal El Saadawi's website: <http://www.nawalsaadawi.net/statements.htm>

WEEK SIX

Monday February 19

Feminist Definitions of Terrorism

DUE: Research Questions. See prompt on VISTA.

Koufa, Kalliopi K, Special Rapporteur, "Terrorism and human rights, Progress Report" the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, 53rd Session, 27th June, 2001 (E/CN.4/Sub.2/2001/31),
<http://www.webcom.com/hrin/parker/terrorism.pdf>

Statement by International Educational Development Inc, at the Commission on Human Rights, Sixty-first session, Agenda item 11, 2006
<http://www.webcom.com/hrin/parker/comm05item11.html>

Everest, Larry, "Germ Warfare, America's Weapon of Mass Destruction" Chapter 6 in Oil, Power and Empire, Iraq and the U.S. Global Agenda, Monroe: Common Courage Press, 2004.

Johnson, Chalmers "The Institutions of American Militarism" Chapter 4 in The Sorrows of Empire, Militarism, Secrecy and the End of the Republic, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2004.

WEEK SEVEN

Women's Status: Iran

Monday February 26

Saffarzadeh, Tahereh, "Negotiating Boundaries" from Milani, Farzaneh, Ed, Veils and Words, The Emerging Voices of Iranian Women Writers, Syracuse University Press, 1992, pgs 153-158

Nafisi, Azar, Reading Lolita in Tehran, New York: Random House, 2004, pgs 167-172

Burke, Jason, "The Afghan women who saw freedom ebb away"

The Observer (UK), September 30, 2001

<http://observer.guardian.co.uk/waronterrorism/story/0,,560740,00.html>

Moghadam, Fatemeh Eteman, "The political economy of female employment in postrevolutionary Iran" in Joseph, Suad and Slyomovics, Susan, Eds, Women and power in the Middle East, Philadelphia, PA : University of Pennsylvania Press, c2001.

HQ1726.5 .W659 2001 IN LIBRARY

Anonymous, "Tank Girls: The Frontline Feminists" Interactivist Infoexchange, 28th December 2004,
<http://info.interactivist.net/article.pl?sid=05/01/03/191242&mode=nested&tid=6&tid=1>

About Shirin Ebadi, Iranian Noble Peace Prize Winner:

Hadizadeh, Kathy, "One Noble Peace Prize Winner and Multiple Views", La Prensa, October 24, 2003,
<http://www.laprensa-sandiego.org/archieve/october24-03/persa.htm>

WEEK EIGHT

Monday March 5

DUE: Book Report

Women for Afghan Women

Discussion in class.

WEEK NINE

Women's Status in Iraq

Reading Question: See prompt on VISTA.

Monday March 12

al-Sharqi, Amal, "The Emancipation of Iraqi Women," in Niblock, Tim, Iraq: The Contemporary State, Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd, 1982.

Farouk-Sluglett, Marion, "Liberation or Repression? Pan-Arab Nationalism and the Women's Movement in Iraq," in Hopwood, Derek et al, Eds, Iraq, Power and Society, St Anthony's College, Oxford and Reading: Ithaca Press, 1993 .

Nagy, Thomas J, "Safeguarding 'our' American children by saving 'their' Iraqi children: Gandhian transformation of the DIA's genocide planning, assessment, and cover-up documents" from Ismael, Tareq Y and Haddad, William W, Iraq, the Human Cost of History, London: Pluto Press, 2004, pgs134-166 (about Gulf War I, 1991)

Ditmars, Hadani, Chapter 15, "Dancing in the Dark" in Dancing in the No-Fly Zone, A Woman's Journey Through Iraq, Northhampton, Mass: Olive Branch Press, 2006 (written about post-occupation Iraq, 2003)

McNutt, Kristen, "Sexualized Violence Against Iraqi Women by US Occupying Forces", A Briefing Paper, International Educational Development, Inc, Presented to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 2005 Session, March, Geneva.

WEEK TEN

Monday March 19

Lebanon

Research Question: See full prompt on VISTA. Research health and other impacts on women's lives, resulting from the Israeli-Lebanese war of 2006

Shehadeh, Lamia Rustum, "Women in the Lebanese Militia," p 145-167 from Women, War in Lebanon, University Press of Florida, 1999,

Maksidi, Jean Said "Teta, Mother and I" Chapter 1 in Joseph, Suad, Intimate Selving in Arab Families, Syracuse University Press, 1999

Frank, Libby, Whose Wars Are They, Anyway? Israel Pulls the Trigger, the U.S. Pulls the Strings, *Peace and Freedom*. Philadelphia: Fall 2006. Vol. 66, Iss. 2; p. 5

Anomymous, "Dispatches from the Middle East: WILPF Women on the Ground" *Peace and Freedom*, Philadelphia: Fall 2006. Vol. 66, Iss. 2; p. 14

WEEK ELEVEN

SPRING BREAK Monday March 26 – NO CLASS

WEEK TWELVE

Monday April 2

Women's Peace Activism in Israel/Palestine

DUE: See prompt on VISTA. Research the life and actions of women peace activists working in Israel/Palestine

Nasir, Abia, "Liberation Through Justice",. *Women's World*. Kampala: Jun 30, 2004, Iss. 38; pg. 29

Cohen, Anat, "Israel, Being Friends with the Enemy", *Women's Feature Service*, New Delhi: Apr 06, 2004.

Cohen, Anat , "Israel: Four Mothers Against War" *Women's Feature Service*. New Delhi: Aug 14, 2006.

Sabir, Nadirah Z., "Waging PEACE" Azizah. Atlanta: Aug 2003. Vol.3, Iss. 1; pg. 24

WEEK THIRTEEN

Monday April 9

International Women's Peace Activism in Middle East Conflicts

Urner, Carol Reilley , WILPF, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Push for Empire, *Peace and Freedom*, Philadelphia: Spring 2005. Vol. 65, Iss. 1; p. 6

Abdo, Nahla, "Women, War and Peace: Reflection from the Intifada", *Women's Studies International Forum*, Volume 25, Issue 5, Pages 585-593 (September-October 2002) -- <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?>

"Palestinian Women Political Prisoners and Detainees In Israeli Jails" by Women Against Occupation, Canada, October 25, 2001.
<http://nonprofitnet.ca/wao/wao.php?show&179>

"Palestinian and Israeli Women Peace Activists", Addresses to the United Nations Security Council, Awakened Woman, July 1, 2002.
http://www.awakenedwoman.com/peace_security.htm

Starhawk, "The Boy Who Kissed the Soldier: Balata Camp"
<http://www.undercurrents.org/middleeast2.htm>

World Organization Against Torture , "Letter of Support for Palestinian Women on International Women's Day, 7th March 2002
<http://www.hrea.org/lists/hr-headlines/markup/msg00237.html>

WEEK FOURTEEN

The Challenges of Diversity: Feminism and Nationalism

Monday April 16

Sabbagh, Suha "Palestinian Feminism and Nationalism" Part Six in [Arab Women, Between Defiance and Restraint](#), New York: Olive Branch Press, 1996.

Bunch, Charlotte, "The Challenges of Global Feminism and Diversity" in Dekoven, Marianne, [Feminist Locations, Global and Local, Theory and Practice](#), New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001 p 129-146

WEEK FIFTEEN

Monday April 23

Presentations

WEEK SIXTEEN

Monday April 30

Presentations

WEEK SEVENTEEN

Monday May 7

Presentations

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

- ***Methods of Assessment***

1. Familiarity with the material presented in class and in the readings will be demonstrated through continued class participation.
2. Reading and Research Questions are designed to allow students to engage critically with a wide variety of feminist theories, topics and themes.

- **Timeline of Assessment (see syllabus for deadlines)**

Class Participation and Attendance.

This includes leading class discussions, formulating questions, sharing insights, active listening and engagement with the class process. Using the week's readings as a descriptive and thematic guide, students will be expected to summarize these key findings and analysis in class. As more familiarity is gained with the issues/concepts under examination, and as more feedback is received from the instructor, students are expected to cogently develop, state, explain the theories of ecofeminism, taking into account the diversity of global, historical, and domestic factors that may account for a specific position.

Reading Questions and Related Research

These must be submitted on Vista shell for WST 360. The instructor will provide regular feedback. Students are encouraged to meet individually with the instructor to discuss progress made during the semester.

Final Project/Paper

This is a research paper based on course content. You are also encouraged to exercise your imagination in developing original research, an activist project or an artistic/literary endeavor. Prompt to be distributed in class. Includes a 15 minute oral presentation with visual aides, in class.

Students may use this exercise to participate in an internship with an independent news program and/or with a UN-accredited nongovernmental organization.

Grading System

Total points= 200

Class participation/attendance = 40

10 Reading/Research Questions = 100

Final Research Paper and Oral Presentation= 60

A- 180 to 200
D- 130 to 139

B-160 to 179
E- 120 to 129

C- 140-159
F-below 120

Course Policy

Make-up exams, re-writes and late papers will be allowed only in the case of a documented medical emergency

Assignments will be handed out to students during the first five minutes of class.

Attendance Students will be expected to sign an attendance record.

Nobody will be penalized for the observation of religious holidays (which must be noted as such in the attendance record, by the student). Students had the right not to include their names on the attendance record, and an alternative arrangement must be established with the instructor.

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated.

All absences from class must be documented via a prior e-mail and documentary evidence given to the instructor (unless in a situation beyond the student's control)

Students must communicate via e-mail using the Dana account, which is NAU's official means of communication. Students must email through Vista shell.

Incomplete grades will be given only for documented medical emergencies and must be negotiated. A contract must be written four weeks before final grades are DUE. Students must complete assigned work 11 months after the course has ended.

Dropping after the deadline is allowed only in a medical emergency or a work/study conflict.

Changes in the syllabus will be announced in class and on Vista shell. It is the students' responsibility to check for all course-related announcement on Vista.

