The course aims to increase awareness of topics, theories, issues, methodologies, and debates at the intersection of feminist theorising and the study of international relations. It is geared to students who specialise in politics/international relations and gender/women’s studies, as well as related fields like sociology, geography, languages, and law. The course generally aims:

To provide tools for analyzing experiences, events and patterns of conflict and cooperation in today’s world.

To provide students of international relations and related fields with an introduction to the theories and debates highlighted in gender/women’s studies that have been introduced into IR.

To provide students of gender/women’s studies with an understanding of the several topics and ways that feminist thinking has influenced international relations (IR) and been resisted by it.

To help students appreciate new issues and modifications in IR that have resulted from taking account of gender/feminist research (or not taking it on, as the case may be).

To enable students to see and analyze the gender implications in contemporary international politics, especially events pertaining to war, human rights, and global political economy.

The course this year is offered in tandem with activities of the Touching War program I am directing at the university (HYPERLINK "http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/events/touchingwar/" http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/events/touchingwar/). Some of you will be familiar with that program and might have attended one or more of the seminars, films, or workshops that were held in the autumn term. The emphasis of Touching War is physical and emotional aspects of war, or war as experienced by a range of people touched by it from afar or up close. Feminists explore physical and emotional phenomena from various gender perspectives, and we will find that they hold complex views about the social institution of war.

Course Format

The course primarily takes a seminar format, with weekly sessions conducted around a theme and pertinent readings. Students this term will also engage Touching War speakers and films. The topics for the course are those that are both timely and well-covered by feminist IR analysis. Some of the readings present theory and some pose a current events issue for analysis. Students use the tools that the readings, speakers, films and discussions provide to probe perplexing events in the world, to identify areas where traditional IR analysis is useful for gender analysis or weak, and to recognize where feminist thinking is strong or deficient in taking on the international. I
encourage students to think as deeply as they can about the topics and readings in the class. If that entails relaying personal experiences and reactions, that is fine as long as students work to go beyond the personal to analyze the personal as international. It is important to take an active and engaged approach to the course and keep up on contemporary international politics, bearing in mind that a few required readings can provide only a minimum standard of knowledge on complex topics.

Assessment

Assessment for this course is based on:

Participation –regular demonstration that one has critically considered the topic of the week, read the required pieces and thought about them, attended required sessions, and engaged guest speakers from the Touching War program when applicable. A mark of 65+ for participation is possible only if you have fulfilled all those aspects at a high standard. A mark above 75 is only possible if students consistently demonstrate that they have read something from each recommended reading list. 20%

A 5,000 word essay on a topic of your choice. All essay topics and titles are to be agreed in advance with the instructor. 80%

Topics in the Course:

Week 1 (Jan 14): Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Thinking about women, gender, war, and conventions of thought and analysis
Week 2 (Jan 21): Mother, Monster, Whore as Strategies of Political Influence
Week 3 (Jan 28): Sightings in War and Post-Conflict Zones I
Week 4 (February 4): Sightings in War and Post-Conflict Zones II
Week 5 (February 11): IR, the State, and Gender: Who’s the Monster?
Week 6 (February 18): Independent Reading and Essay Work
Week 7: (February 25): IR, the UN, and Gender: Humanitarian Intervention, Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, Protecting Mothers?
Week 8 (March 4): Are Human Rights Women’s Rights Too?
Week 9 (March 11): Development:WID, WAD, GAD
Week 10 (March 19,20): Women: Armed and Dangerous? The Monsters Return

DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE
Part I: Women and “Women” in Feminism and International Relations

Week 1: Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Thinking about women, gender, war, and conventions of thought and analysis

In this first session we consider course organization, objectives, and requirements and then begin to consider some of the ideas that run through the course. To start the process, we consider a very contemporary case of woman as soldier in Iraq: is she a mother, monster, a whore, or…?

Required Readings:


Laura Sjoberg and Caron Gentry, Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Women’s Violence in Global Politics (Zed Press, 2007), chapters 1-3, pages 1-87.

Recommended Reading:


Joshua Goldstein, How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa (Cambridge University Press, 2001).


Week 2: Mother, Monster, Whore Strategies of Political Influence

This week we have two guest speakers who discuss seemingly opposite strategies of “feminist” political influence in international relations, using their own research as the basis of their presentations. “Code Pink” draws attention to its message using ultra-feminine (whore-ish?) props. Women in South Asian militant groups advocate violent overthrow of existing political arrangements. The session addresses the question of what kinds of women feminists support, only the “good” ones or all of them? And it raises issues around whether feminists generally avoid
studying war as a pervasive social institution because they disapprove of it. Our guest speakers are Cami Rowe and Swati Parashar, advanced PhD students in Politics/IR.

**Required Readings:**


Other readings to be provided by the guest speakers

**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 3: Sightings in War and Post-Conflict Zones: Issues of marginalization I**

Women and gender relations are often marginalized in the study of international relations or stereotyped in the ways Sjoberg and Gentry suggest. In journalistic accounts of wars, women can be heard and seen mostly as two sides of the dichotomy grieving mothers/whores. The Touching War program for January has us considering the experiences of war through the eyes, pen, and lenses of war journalists. Some might think that journalists are “whores” of war who make their living off the miseries of others. Or is it that war journalists can risk their own lives in order to give people in war zones an opportunity to be seen and heard? We have a chance to raise these questions and others as we consider the views of visiting war-area journalists. A standard feminist question raised by Gayatri Spivak can be framed in new ways: Can the subaltern not just speak but present herself in war?

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended Reading:**


Veena Das, Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary (University of
Week 4: Sightings in War and Post-Conflict Zones: Issues of Marginalization II

We can compare what war journalists describe about women in war zones with what feminist IR analysts have written about women, war and margins. Ten years after Enloe writes about margins as places of silence, how does a younger scholar, D’Acosta, depict marginalization in the case of women raped in the 1971 civil war that created Bangladesh? The larger question is how identity is affected by war. And alongside Spivak’s question of the 1980s --can the subaltern woman speak or is she condemned to silence in international relations? –we now ask questions about how to hear her speak to IR and how to engage her thoughts.

Required Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Charlotte Hooper, “Masculinities in Transition: The Case of Globalization,” Chapter 3 in Marianne Marchand and Anne Sisson Runyan, eds., *Gender and Global Restructuring*
Part II: Looking Hard at International Relations in Light of Mothers, Monsters, and Whores

Week 5: IR, the State, and Gender: Who’s the Monster?

Having considered questions of marginality and stereotypes around women, gender and war, we step back and consider key interfaces of those terms with the field of IR. Unlike feminist analysis, IR takes the sovereign nation-state as the basic unit of international relations and assumes that states act to protect their territories and people. Feminists query the ways the state has been conceptualized in IR (is it gendered?), the importance of the state relative to individuals and groups, and whether the state is a protector or not of women and progressive agendas. We can ask: why are states so important in much of IR? In what ways does feminist IR contest that importance? Have the nature of the contestations changed or remained the same over the years?

Required Readings:


**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 6: Independent Reading and Essay Work**

**Week 7: The UN, Security, and Gender: Humanitarian Intervention, Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, Protecting Mothers?**

During the Cold War period of international relations, the UN security agenda was strongly influenced by the conflict between the so-called free world led by the USA and the so-called communist world led by the Soviet Union. It was during that period that the UN instituted peacekeeping (forces) as a strategy to manage armed conflict. With the collapse of the USSR, the agenda shifted in significant ways towards the protection of people from the harm that states of all kinds can do to them. In the 1990s, several wars and genocidal assaults saw the UN grappling with when and where it might endorse military intervention as a way of protecting threatened groups, a practice we call humanitarian intervention. This week the focus is on the UN as protector, not of states so much as of threatened people. Who is it protecting, how, and with what consequences? How important is it to include analysis of masculinity(ies) in feminist analysis of humanitarian conflicts?

**Required Readings:**

*Sandra Whitworth,* *Men, Militarism & UN Peacekeeping* (Lynne Rienner, 2007), chapters 1 and 2 (“The Costly Contradictions of UN Peacekeeping,” and “Narratives of Peacekeeping, Past and Present”), pp. 11-52.

**Recommended Readings:**


Chesterman, Simon (2002), *Just War or Just Peace? Humanitarian Intervention and International Law* (Oxford University)


Welsh, Jennifer, ed., (2006), *Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations* (Oxford University)

**Week 8: Are Human Rights Women’s Rights Too?**

Feminists have long been concerned with those who suffer discrimination, oppression, or invisibility. That concern intersects with the international relations topic of human rights – whose rights are those? Who suffers and in what ways? At issue is how agencies of international relations can advance human rights sensitively and effectively. We therefore consider arguments for and against universal human rights versus identity or group rights. Along the way we ask how Nussbaum uses the term ‘human development’ and what happens when someone does not approve of the rights accorded their group and speaks against them? Is she a monster, whore, mother or something else? Where does she fit? Does the feminist emphasis on appreciating difference work against strong ethical positions on human rights?

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended Readings:**


Week 9: Development: WID, WAD, GAD

One of the many areas where feminist analysis has had an impact on international relations is in the theory and practices of overseas development. Where development thinking once rested content to talk in abstract economic terms about development, from the 1970s on it has had to confront people and groups affected by development, primarily women. Through a series of successful Decade of Women conferences organized through the UN, the feminist movement advanced a number of positions on what development means for women and how it can be gendered against them. This session focuses on the three major answers to those questions posed by development feminism from the 1970s to the present and the consequences of each.

Required Readings:


**Christine Sylvester**, “Bare Life as a Development Studies/Postcolonial Problematic,” *Geographical Journal*, vol 172, 1, 2006, pp. 66-77.

Recommended Readings:


Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale* (Zed, 1086).

V. Spike Peterson, “Rewriting (Global) Political Economy as Reproductive, Productive, and


**Week 10: Women: Armed and Dangerous? The Monsters Return?**

This week we return to the terrain of gender, women, and war to consider at close range the question of militant, armed, fighting and/or working women in globalized international relations. We are fortunate to have with us three of the best feminist IR scholars doing work in the area of war studies: Laura Sjoberg, Megan MacKenzie, and Elina Penttinen. We will be hosting them for an intensive examination of cutting-edge issues and methodologies around the main question: what are these women armed with, why, and how dangerous are they?

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


**Additional Feminist/Gender/IR Works of Note**

**Ann Tickner**, *Gender in International Relations* (Columbia University Press, 1992)


**Brooke Ackerly, Maria Stern and Jacqui True**, eds., *Feminist Methodologies for International Relations* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).


**Relevant Events from the Touching War Program**

**January:**

Roundtable Discussion: with War Journalists: Malachi O'Doherty, Belfast broadcaster, reporter, and writer about conflict in Northern Ireland; Jillian Edelstein, award-winning photographer and photojournalist with experience in Bosnia, Kosovo, Nicaragua and South Africa

28 January 2009, 5.00 pm, room TBC

Keynote Speaker: Professor Annabelle Sreberny Global Media and Post-National Communication, SOAS. "Framing Iran for War," 29 January 2009, 4.00 pm Institute for Advanced Studies meeting room 2/3

Workshop: Living and Remembering War

Explores methodological & ethical issues involved in documenting experiences and memories of conflict, both individual and collective. A variety of approaches from oral history, literacy studies, discourse analysis, ethnography and educational action research will be presented. Speakers have worked in a range of international contexts with children and adults. A common
theme in the presentations is to consider the practical implications: how can these approaches to research help us understand and further peace building processes and education in post-conflict societies?

Programme for event
23 January 2009, 9-5.00 pm. Institute for Advanced Studies meeting room 2/3. To register for this event please click here.

Films:

March: Women: Armed and Dangerous?
Roundtable: Is War a Masculine Site?
Megan MacKenzie, Women in Public Policy, Harvard, Elina Penttinen, Tampere Peace Research Institute, Laura Sjoberg, Political Science, Virginia Tech, Cristina Masters, Manchester University. 19 March 2009, 4-6.00 pm. Institute for Advanced Studies meeting room 2/3

Workshop: The War Question for Feminists with all of the above plus Corinna Peniston-Bird (History), Swati Parashar and Cami Rowe (Politics/IR). 20 March 2009, 10-5.00 pm. Institute for Advanced Studies meeting room 2/3.

Films:

April: Bodies of War
Keynote Speaker: Brigitte Holzner, Director of Gender and Development, Austrian Development Agency. 2 April 2009, 4.00 pm, Institute for Advanced Studies, meeting room 2/3
Workshop: Where Are the Bodies of War? 3 April 2009, Institute for Advanced Studies, meeting room 2/3
Participants include Holzner, Athina Karatzogianni (Hull), Adi Kunstman (Liverpool John Moores), Pat Noxolo (Loughborough), Lindsey Moore and Jayne Steel (English and Creative Writing), Swati Parashar (Politics/IR). 4 April 2009, 9-5.00 pm. Institute for Advanced Studies, meeting room 2/3