Contemporary Issues in Feminism:
Gender Studies of Women, Peace and Conflict in Global Settings
Women’s Studies, WOST 4001
Mount Allison University, 2009

Dr. Marie Hammond Callaghan
Day / Time / Location: THURS. 2:30-5:20 pm, DUNN 104
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Office Hours: Tues / Thurs. 1:30-2:30 pm; Mon. / Wed. 2:30-3:30pm; OR By Appointment

Course Overview:
This course will explore contemporary international feminist scholarship on gender, violence, war and militarism with a special focus on women’s global peace activism – both within NGOs and at the United Nations. In particular, it will investigate women’s experiences and roles in a variety of conflict settings – especially in relation to social constructs of femininity and masculinity. A key focus of this course is to review critical debates on women’s relations to peace and violence and examine relevant theoretical frameworks in feminist literature including analyses of: gendered discourses on war and peace-making; feminist and nationalist perspectives; and gendered continuums of violence. Within these contexts, this course will draw upon select case studies (eg. Northern Ireland) to examine issues around women’s ‘agency’ and ‘experience’ in conflict settings - as soldiers, militants, suicide bombers, military wives, peace-makers, mothers and civilians.

By investigating women’s diverse experiences and responses to conflict, this course will provide an important ‘forum’ for debating feminist issues and perspectives on war and peace. Some fundamental questions may include:

• What is women’s relation to peace - in theory as well as in historical and contemporary practice?
• In what ways does feminist theory address women’s peace activism or militarism?
• Should feminism support women’s participation in militarism?
• Are ‘patriarchy’ and ‘militarism’ inextricably linked?
• What might feminist theorists, as well as peace studies and international relations scholars have to say about the role of ‘imperialism’ in militarism?
• How do revolutionary, nationalist / ethnic struggles for justice and self-determination challenge feminist pacifism?
• What role(s) should feminism play in transforming the social, economic and political landscapes shaping conflict?
• How do critical social factors such as class, race, ethnicity, culture, national identity and sexuality shape women’s experiences and responses in conflict settings?
• To what extent have women’s peace and social movements challenged dominant global economic, political and military systems (including the military industrial complex) in contemporary societies?
These questions and more will be pursued through a combination of lectures, videos and seminar discussions.

Prereq: Preference will be given to students completing a minor in Women’s Studies (those who have completed WOST 2001 and WOST 3001), as well as students who have third year standing with 6 credits from at least one or two of the following courses: HIST 3380, POLS/ INLR 2301, POLS 3031, and INLR 3001.

**Required Texts:**


**Reserve Readings:**
- Required and optional texts may be placed on reserve in the Library.
- Some selected readings will be placed on reserve from the further suggested readings.

**Course Evaluation:**
- Seminar Attendance / General Participation – 20 %
- Three short oral presentations / Leading seminar – 25 % - Individual due dates
- Short Critical Assignment / Book Critique – 25 % Due Feb 19
- Research Essay - Gender, Peace & Human Rights Issues - 30 % - Due 26 March

**Further Suggested Texts:**


Franklin, Ursula. The Ursula Franklin Reader: Pacifism as a Map, Toronto: Between the Lines publishing, 2006.


Seminar Format and Requirements

This seminar shall consist of weekly in-depth discussions of the central issues in the readings, in which we will analyze and critique them. All readings are to be done by class time on the day they are due. In addition to our discussion of assigned readings, this course will also include examination of relevant audio-visual material and student presentations. Note: Because this is a small senior seminar, it is imperative that students adequately prepare, attend, and participate. Only medical notes may be acceptable where illness prevents attendance / participation.

General Preparation and Participation (20%):
This course is based on extensive reading and discussion of a wide variety of material. (Students may be expected to read up to approx. 80-100 pages per week) It is imperative that students come to class prepared to discuss and analyze the material assigned for that week. This means you should have read all of the materials, taken notes on them (including noting areas where you have questions or would like clarification), and devised your own questions to stimulate group discussion. Your notes should enable you to discuss each author (by name), her/his central points, and specific examples you want to mention from her/his work. If you are making a presentation, you should have an organized plan, a sense of timing, and any appropriate handouts.

Asking Questions: Part of your preparation/participation grade will be tied to your role in leading discussion into areas that interest you. Thus, each class period, you must bring to class a written question relating to the reading material for that day. You will bring two printed copies of your question (with your name on it) to share with the class including me. Part of class time will be spent asking and discussing questions that students provide. The goals of this activity are these: 1) to involve each of you in discussion; 2) to force you to critically interact with the material; 3) to personally invest each of you in the content of the course. You will turn in your questions at the end of each period, and you will also get credit for your level of participation in class discussion. Students will be assessed on how their comments and questions reflect careful reading, comprehension of the material, thoughtful critique, and original analysis. (Simply talking in class does not necessarily constitute informed participation). You will also be expected to guide conversations toward your issues so that we can cover everyone's ideas.

Oral presentation(s) / Leading Seminar (25%)
There may be up to three short (approx. 10-15 minute) presentations per student – providing brief summaries of an article within the readings or presenting original research. A schedule of individual due dates will be compiled once classes have commenced.

Students will complete a critique of this book – engaging relevant course themes, perspectives and sources - following guidelines provided.

This paper should *draw upon any required or suggested readings in the course syllabus* relevant to discussing key themes and issues arising from the assigned book. Students are also encouraged to consult relevant materials outside this course – especially recent journal articles.

Overall, students should draw upon *at least 4 sources* (besides this text) to furnish a context for their critique of this book.

Length/ format: *6 pages (double-spaced) / 11-12 font*. This is a suggested length guideline – not including title page and works cited list.

Assignment Guidelines

A ‘critique’ of a book is *not* primarily a summary. Rather, it *analyses, comments on* and *evaluates* the work. In this course assignment, you should situate the work in the light of specific issues and theoretical concerns being discussed in the course.

Your review should show that you can recognize *arguments* and engage in *critical thinking* about the course content. Keep questions like these in mind as you read, make notes, and then write the review or critique:

1. What is the specific *topic* of the book or article? What overall *purpose* does it seem to have? For what *readership* is it written? (Look in the preface, acknowledgements, reference list and index for clues about where and how the piece was originally published, and about the author's background and position.)
2. Does the author state an explicit *thesis*? Does he or she noticeably have an axe to grind? What are the *theoretical assumptions*? Are they discussed explicitly? (Again, look for statements in the preface, etc. and follow them up in the rest of the work.)
3. What exactly does the work *contribute* to the overall topic of your course? What general problems and concepts in your discipline and course does it engage with?
4. What *kinds of material* does the work present (e.g. primary documents or secondary material, personal observations, literary analysis, quantitative data, biographical or historical accounts)?
5. *How* is this material used to demonstrate and argue the thesis? (As well as indicating the overall argumentative structure of the work, your review could quote or summarize specific passages to describe the author's presentation, including writing style and tone.)
6. Are there alternative ways of arguing from the same material? Does the author show awareness of them? In what respects does the author agree or disagree with them?
7. What theoretical issues and topics for further discussion does the work raise?
8. What are your own reactions and considered opinions regarding the work?

- Browse in published scholarly book reviews to get a sense of the ways reviews function in intellectual discourse. Look at journals in your discipline or general publications such as University of Toronto Quarterly, London Review of Books, or New York Review of Books (online at <www.nybooks.com/nyrev/archives.html>).
- Some book reviews summarize the book's content briefly and then evaluate it; others integrate these functions, commenting on the book and using summary only to give examples. Choose the method that seems most suitable according to your professor's directions.
- To keep your focus, remind yourself that your assignment is primarily to discuss the book's treatment of its topic, not the topic itself. Your key sentences should therefore say "This book shows...the author argues" rather than "This happened...this is the case."

Prepared Fall 1999 by Dr. Margaret Procter, University of Toronto Coordinator of Writing Support
Over 60 other files giving advice about university writing are available at <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing>
Research Essay on Gender, Conflict, Human Rights and Security Issues - Due 26 March
(Student Presentations on Projects – 2 April) Value: 30 %

This assignment includes a 10-12 page essay (not including title page) and a brief class presentation summarizing your research / analysis and argument.

Your paper should display an understanding of the relevant discussions and lectures provided on those issues and questions that apply to your topic. To this end, it should draw upon relevant course materials, but also reflect original research by providing at least 6-8 relevant sources independently - outside the course including at least 4 recent scholarly journals. You are particularly encouraged to consult recent journals in Women’s Studies, Feminist Theory and Feminist Perspectives in International Relations / Politics. (Please See a List of such journals below, Syllabus, pp.19-21).

Students are required to examine gender issues on any of the following topics in relation to specific global conflict settings (eg. Sudan, Post-Yugoslav States, Afghanistan etc)

An important part of this assignment, involves student analysis of key problems, debates, perspectives and strategies in the context of relevant feminist theories.

Project #1 – Gender, Armed Conflict / Post-War Reconstruction and Refugees

Project # 2 – Gendered Violence and Women’s Rights as Human Rights in War & Armed Conflict

Project # 3 – Sex Trafficking, Prostitution / Sex Work and Militarization.

Project # 4 – Feminist Critiques on Gender and Canadian Foreign Policy: National Security or Human Security?

Project # 5 – Peacekeeping and Gender Issues

Project # 6 – Gender, Militarism, and Nationalism(s)

Project # 7 – Female Soldiers / Militarization of Women in Conflict

Project #8 – Feminist / Gender Perspectives on The Global Trade in Arms (including Canada’s role) and Gender Impacts

Project # 9 – Women’s Peace Organizing: Motivations and Strategies
Possible Organizations:
The Canadian Voice of Women for Peace
Women in Black (Israel / Palestine OR Former Yugoslavia)
Greenham Common (Britain)
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
Code Pink
[Any further further details to be provided in class.]
Miscellaneous (but really important) items re: Evaluation

- This type of course requires that all participants be respectful of others' perspectives and opinions. Students who are unwilling to expand their own understandings or challenge traditional research assumptions should not take this course.

- Students are expected to attend all seminar sessions and to have completed the reading and written assignments before the class meeting.

- All written work should be either typed or word processed. Pages should be numbered and stapled together.

- Correct citation and bibliographic information should be provided any time you use the words or thoughts of another, regardless of the formality of the writing assignment. Plagiarism of any sort will result in an automatic "0" for the assignment and, possibly, for the course.

- Students are expected to purchase or find a means to use the texts, and to keep up on the readings. Students who continually fail to do the readings should drop the course.

- Students must complete all the components of the course in order to pass the course; and students must complete all term work by the beginning of the exam period.

- Students who miss assignments/components must provide medical documentation.

- No work will be marked after the grades are submitted. Arrangements must be made with the Registrar for consideration.

- It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of ‘where we are at’ on the schedule. Use the group email list I’ve set up to find out, to share information, to discuss...

- Work may be penalized 2 marks/day/late up to the total possible value of the grade for that component (also, an assignment may not be accepted after 5 days late if no medical note is forthcoming).

Please Note Well: If illness or compassionate reasons have prevented a student from submitting / completing any course work by the last day of classes, it is the student’s responsibility (not the instructor’s) for: initiating communication about the situation, for submitting medical documentation; and for making arrangements with the Registrar, in conjunction with the instructor, to complete course work or settle on a final grade. In the absence of timely and adequate communication and documentation, the instructor is not required to accommodate the student. After the examination period, a grade – based on completed work will be assigned – and the student will need to take up the matter with the Registrar. (See Academic Regulations Under Section 6 - for student responsibilities in these and related matters).
This is a tentative course schedule only, so some changes are likely.

Contemporary Issues in Feminism:
Gender Studies of Women, Peace and Conflict
Women’s Studies, WOST 4001 Course Syllabus

PART I - INTRODUCTION TO COURSE

8 Jan - Course Overview & Introductions

15 Jan – An Orientation to Critical Feminist Perspectives on Gender, Violence, Security, Foreign Policy and International Relations [Students present one article (est. 10-15 min) each]

Required Reading(s):

Articles for Individual Presentations:


Carol Cohn, ‘Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defence Intellectuals,’ Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, Volume 12, no. 4, Within and Without, Women, Gender and Theory, (Summer 1987) pp. 687-718. (On WebCT)


22 Jan – Feminist Perspectives on Gender, Power and Conflict

**Required Reading(s):**


PART II - WOMEN, CONFLICT AND MILITARISM: STRUCTURAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF VIOLENCE


**Required Reading(s):**


5 Feb – Gendered Impacts of War and Militarized Conflict: Sexual Violence, Refugees, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

**Required Reading(s):**

Articles for Individual Presentations:


12 Feb - Gender Construction(s) in Discourses of Militarism, Imperialism and Nationalism

Required Reading(s):

Special Guest Visitor: Mary Condren (PhD. Harvard) Research Associate in Centre for Gender and Women’s Studies, Trinity College Dublin, and Director of the Institute for Feminism and Religion, Ireland


Optional Reading:

PART III - WOMEN, MILITARISM AND NON-VIOLENCE: GENDERED RESPONSES / FEMINIST ACTIVISM

19 Feb – ‘Situating Women’ in Conflict: A Case Study of Class, Ethnicity and Geo-Political Location(s) in the North of Ireland

VIDEO: Titanic Town

Required Reading(s):


26 Feb - WINTER BREAK

5 March – The Nuclear Threat, Vietnam, and Other Global Conflicts: A Case Study of the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (VOW)

VIDEO: VOW: The First Thirty Years

Required Reading(s):

Barbara Roberts, ‘Women and Peace Activism in Canada’ in Beyond the Vote: Canadian Women and Politics, eds L.Kealey and J. Sangster, University of Toronto Press, 1989, pp276-308.

12 March - Women’s Anti-militarist / Resistance Movements – Part 1

Required Reading(s):


Articles for Student Presentations


19 March – Women’s Anti-militarist / Resistance Movements – Part 2

Required Reading(s):


26 March – UN Resolution 1325 – Feminist Activism for Peace, Non-Violence, Democracy and Social Justice (Research Essays Due)

Required Reading(s):


United Nations Resolution 1325 (31 October, 2000) Class Handout


Website connection for Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom
http://www.peacewomen.org/un/UN1325

2 April – Exploring Gender, Peace and Post-war Reconstruction (Brief Student Presentations on Research Essays - Gender, Conflict, Human Rights & Security)

Required Reading(s):


9 April - Course Review and Conclusion
Journals – Special Issues on Women, Gender, Peace and Conflict

Special Issue: Feminism & Peace, Hypatia, v.9, n2, Spring 1994.
Special Issue: Rethinking Women’s Peace Studies, Women’s Studies Quarterly, v23, Nos 3&4, 1995.
Special Issue: Women in Conflict Zones, Canadian Women’s Studies, v19, n4, Winter 2000.
Special Issue: Gender and Conflict in Post-Conflict Societies, International Feminist Journal of Politics

Relevant Journals for this Course include:

Alternatives: Social Transformation and Humane Government

Canadian Journal of Sociology
Comparative Political Studies
European Journal of International Relations
Feminist Studies
Foreign Policy

Gender and History
Gender and Society
Human Rights Quarterly
Hypatia

International Feminist Journal of Politics

International Studies Perspectives
International Studies Quarterly
International Studies Review
Journal of Conflict Resolution

Journal of Peace Research
Journal of Women's History

Media, War and Conflict
Millennium: Journal of International Politics
Mobilization: The International Quarterly Review of Social Movement Research
Peace and Change

Peace Research
Peace Review
Political Science Quarterly
Political Studies
Race and Class

Review of International Studies
Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society
Social Forces
Social Movement Studies: Journal of Social, Cultural and Political Protest

Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society

The Journal of Interdisciplinary History
Theory and Society
Women and Politics

Women's Studies International Forum

World Politics

WWW Sites / Articles / Documents On line:

http://www.wellesley.edu/WomensReview/archive/2004/02/highlt.html#cohn

http://www.peacewomen.org/un/UN1325/WomenandPeaceinUN.html

United Nation’s Department of Peace-Keeping Operations (DPKO)

http://www.womenwarpeace.org/supporting1325.pdf


Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. 1325 PeaceWomen E-news
http://www.peacewomen.org/
**WOST 4001 Further Suggested Readings**


Jean Benthke Elshtain, ‘Beautiful Souls and Just Warriors: The Seduction of War’ in *Women and War*.


Carol Cohn, ‘Response to Questions for Barnard Symposium on Violence,’ Political Science, Wellesley College, 2002 (?)


206.


Hirschkind, Charles ; Saba Mahmood, Feminism, the Taliban, and politics of counter-insurgency, *Anthropological Quarterly;* Spring 2002; 75, 2; pg. 339

Sinha, Mrinalini, Donna J. Guy, and Angela Woolacott, eds. “Feminisms and Internationalism” (special issue), *Gender and History* 10, no. 3 (November 1998).


Fairweather et al, ‘*Only the Rivers Run Free*: Northern Ireland, The Women’s War.

Kay Macpherson, ‘The Voice of Women’, in *Up and Doing: Canadian Women and Peace*: pp204-212,


Ala, Jacqui (2006) 'Enriching the critical discourse of feminist studies in international relations: New discussions of the roles of women in conflict, peace making and Government', *Politikon*, 33:2, 239 - 249


