

Politics of gender and identities
in Muslim countries and communities:
Colonial legacies, religious fundamentalisms and feminist strategies

Professor:	Anissa Helie
Course:	WOMENSST 294A
Course Time:	Tuesdays/Thursdays - 9:30- 10:45
Course Location:	Bartlett Hall, Room 203
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Class 1 / 31 Jan 2006: Introduction, Course Overview

In this class, we will examine the various issues that will be addressed during the course, review the syllabus and consider the different types of sources being used, as well as the teaching methods and course requirements. We will also hear about participants' expectations and discuss whether these are likely to be met.

Class 2 / 2 Feb 2006: Gender

Readings:

- Center for Women's Global Leadership, Rutgers University: New Jersey, Factsheet, 2001. (Hand Out)
- Judith Lorber, "Night to His Day' - The Social Construction of Gender", *Paradoxes of Gender*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994, pp.13-36.
Available at AC/Main and MH/Main as HQ1075 .L667 1994
- Allan G. Johnson, "Patriarchy, the System - An It, Not a He, a Them, or an Us", *Women's Lives - Multicultural Perspectives*, Gwyn Kirk and Margo Okazawa-Rey (eds), 1998, (2004), pp.25-32. (Hand Out)

Class 3 / 7 Feb 2006: Gender, Identities and Social Locations

Readings:

- Charlotte Bunch, "Human Rights at the Intersection of Race and Gender", *Women at the Intersection - Indivisible Rights, Identities and Oppressions*, CWGL, 2002, pp.111-119.
- R. W. Connel, "The Social Organization of Masculinity", *Masculinities*, Berkeley: University of California, 1995, pp.67-86.
Available at MH/Main and HC/Stacks and AC/Main as HQ1088 .C66 1995
- Judith Ortiz Cofer, "The Story of My Body", *Women's Lives - Multicultural Perspectives*, Gwyn Kirk and Margo Okazawa-Rey (eds), 1998, (2004), pp.130-135.
- Dorothy Allison, "A Question of Class", *Women's Lives – Multicultural Perspectives*, Gwyn Kirk and Margo Okazawa-Rey (eds), 1998, (2004), pp.78-85.
- Surina A. Khan, "The All-American Queer Pakistani Girl", *Women's Lives – Multicultural Perspectives*, Gwyn Kirk and Margo Okazawa-Rey (eds), 1998, (2004), p.162-163.

Recommended Readings:

- Joanna Kadi, "Moving from Cultural Appropriation towards Ethical Cultural Connections", *Women's Lives - Multicultural Perspectives*, Gwyn Kirk and Margo Okazawa-Rey (eds), 1998, (2004), pp.90-95.

Class 4 / 9 Feb 2006: Gender Roles, Collective Identities and Colonialism

Readings:

- Mervat Hatem, "Through Each Other's Eyes - The Impact on the Colonial Encounter of the Images of Egyptian, Levantine-Egyptian, and European Women, 1862-1920", *Western Women and Imperialism*, Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel (eds), Indiana Press University, 1992, pp. 35-61.
Available at AC/Main or HC/Stacks or MH/Main or SC/Neilson as HQ1587 .W471992
- Barbara Ramusack, "Cultural missionaries, maternal imperialists, feminist allies: British women activists in India, 1865-1945", *Western Women and Imperialism*, Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel (eds), Indiana Press University, 1992, pp. 119-137.
Available at AC/Main or HC/Stacks or MH/Main or SC/Neilson as HQ1587 .W47 1992

Recommended Readings:

- Londa Schiebinger, "Theories of Gender and Race", Feminist Theory and the Body. A Reader, Janet Price and Margrit Shildrick (Eds.), Edinburgh University Press, 1999, pp.21-31.
Available at MH/Main or SC/Neilson as HQ1190 .F4633 1999

Class 5 / 14 Feb 2006: Class, Race, Gender and Cultural Claims in Colonial Contexts

Group Exercise: "Blairland"

Readings:

- Sarah Graham-Brown, The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860/1950
- Images of Women, Quartet Book, London, 1988, (or New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), Introduction, pp.4/35.
Available at AC/Main or HC/Stacks or MH/Main or SC/Art at HQ1726.5 .G73 1988
- Anissa Helie, "Between 'Becoming M'Tourni' and 'Going Native': Gender and Settler Society in Algeria", Unsettling Settler Societies - Articulations of Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Class, Nira Yuval-Davis and Daiva Stasiulis (Eds), Sage, 1995, pp.263-290. (Hand Out)

Class 6/ 16 Feb 2006: Class, Race, Gender and Schooling in Colonial Contexts

Finalizing collective drafting/ Group Exercise: "Blairland"

Groups presentations + Hand in of final drafts

Readings:

- Kuni Jenkins, Kay Morris Matthews, "The Political Socialization of Maori Women in New Zealand through Schooling Policy and Practice, 1867-1969", Women's History Review, Vol. 7, N°1, 1998, pp.85-105.

Class 7/ 21 Feb 2006: Construction and Imposition of Identity: The Case of "Muslim Women"

NOTE: This week, 21-23 Feb, is the deadline to choose your take-home essay's topic

Readings:

- Ann Elizabeth Mayer, "Cultural Particularism as a Bar to Women's Rights: Reflections on the Middle Eastern Experience", WLUML Dossier 16, 1996, pp.21-32.

You can download the entire WLUML Dossier 16 at <http://wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd%5B87%5D=i-87-3204>

- Willy Jansen, "Dumb and Dull - the Disregard for the Intellectual Life of Middle Eastern Women", *Thamyris* Vol.3 N2, *Mythmaking from Past to Present* (Special issue "Gender in the Middle East: Transnational Connections and Contestations"), Amsterdam, 1996, pp.237-260.

Available at AC/Main as BL300 .T48

- Homa Hoodfar, "The Veil in Their Minds and On Our Heads: The Persistence of Colonial Images of Muslim Women," *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital*, ed. By Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd (1997), pp.248-79.

Available at SC/Neilson or AC/Main as HC59.72.C3 W67 1997

Film: "Islamic Conversations" interview with Leila Ahmed (25 mns)

Class 8 / 23 Feb 2006: Politico-Religious Movements and Imposition of Identities

Readings:

- Gita Sahgal and Nira Yuval-Davis, Introduction: "Fundamentalism, Multiculturalism and Women in Britain", *Refusing Holy Orders*, WLUML, 2000, pp.7-31.

Available at MH/Main as BL980.G7 R43 1992, or you can download the entire publication at <http://www.wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd%5B87%5D=i-87-3023>

- Sonia Correa, "Religious Fundamentalism and Secular Politics: different sides of a single thought", in *DAWN* Jan. 2004 (Special Supplement for the World Social Forum 2004). <http://www.dawn.org.fj/publications/DAWNInforms/supplwsfjan04.pdf>

Recommended reading:

- Marjorie Griffin-Cohen, "What Women Should Know About Economic Fundamentalism", *Atlantis*, Vol. 22-1, pp.97-107. <http://www.sfu.ca/~mcohen/publications/women/women.pdf>

Video clip:

"Your Mouth is Fundamental Against Fundamentalisms" Campaign (Articulation Feminista Marcosur, 2002, 6-7 mns)

Class 9 / 28 Feb 2006: The Global Nature of Fundamentalist Politics

Readings:

- Meredith Tax, "World Culture War", The Nation, May 17, 1999.
<http://www.thenation.com/doc.mhtml%3Fi=19990517&s=tax>

- M. A. Hélie-Lucas, "What is your tribe? Women's Struggles and the construction of Muslimness", WLUML Dossier 23-24, July 2001.

[http://www.wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd\[87\]=i-87-2789](http://www.wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd[87]=i-87-2789)

Note: this article also appears in Religious Fundamentalisms and the Human Rights of Women, Courtney W. Howland (ed), New York: Palgrave, 2001.

Available at SC/Neilson as K3243 .R45 2001

- Surf the website of the Saffron Dollar Campaign: <http://stopfundinghate.org/index.shtml>

- Nira Yuval-Davis, "Jewish Fundamentalism and Women's Empowerment", Refusing Holy Orders, Refusing Holy Orders, WLUML, 2000 (or London: Virago Press, 1992. pp. 202-229).

Available at MH/Main as BL980.G7 R43 1992, or you can download the entire publication at
<http://www.wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd%5B87%5D=i-87-3023>

- Frances Kissling, "Fundamentalism in the Roman Catholic Church", Faith, Summer 2003.
<http://ilrs.org/faith/f2k3.2.html#article%204>

Recommended Readings:

- Gerrie ter Haar, "Religious Fundamentalism and Social Change – A Comparative Enquiry", The Freedom to Do God's Will – Religious Fundamentalism and Social Change, Gerrie ter Haar and James J. Busuttil (Eds.), Routledge: London/New York, 2003.

Available at AC/Main from 01-18-2005

- H.L. Seneviratne, "The Monk's New Robes - Buddhist Fundamentalism and Social Change", The Freedom to Do God's Will – Religious Fundamentalism and Social Change, Gerrie ter Haar and James J. Busuttil (Eds.), Routledge: London/New York, 2003.

Available at AC/Main from 01-18-2005

<p>Class 10 / 2 March 2006: Fundamentalist Politics: Focus on Women's Bodies and Use of Sexual Violence</p>
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Readings:

- Zarkov, Dubravka, "The Body of the Other Man: Sexual Violence and the Construction of Masculinity, Sexuality and Ethnicity in the Croatian Media", Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence, Caroline N. O. Moser and Fiona Clark (Ed), pp. 69-82.

- WHRLC/ WLUML, Shadow Report on Algeria to CEDAW Committee, 1999, 24p.
[http://www.wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd\[87\]=i-87-3008](http://www.wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd[87]=i-87-3008)

- International Initiative for Justice in Gujarat (IIJ), Threatened Existence – A Feminist Analysis of the Genocide in Gujarat, 2003, Chapter 3, “Centrality of Sexual Violence and Sexuality in the Hindutva Project”, pp.33-46.

<http://www.onlinevolunteers.org/gujarat/reports/iijg/2003/chapter3.pdf>

Recommended Reading:

- Urvashi Butalia, “A question of silence: Partition, Women and the State”, Gender and Catastrophe, Ronit Lentin (Ed), pp.92-109.

Class 11 / 7 March 2006: Fundamentalist Politics - Unholy Alliances

Readings:

- Lynn Freedman, “The Challenge of Fundamentalisms”, Reproductive Health Matters, No8, November 1996, pp. 55-69.

Available at HC/Stacks as QP251 .R34

- Jennifer Butler, “‘New Sheriff in Town’: The Christian Right Nears Major Victory at the United Nations”, PublicEye, Political Research Associates, Summer 2002.
http://www.publiceye.org/magazine/v16n2/PE_Butler2.html

Class 12 / 9 March 2006: Women as Supporters of Fundamentalist/ Right-Wing Movements

Readings:

- Paola Bachetta and Margaret Power, Right-Wing Women from conservatives to extremists around the world, Routledge, NY/London, 2002, Introduction, pp.1-15.

Available at AC/Main or SC/Neilson or MH/Main as JC573 .R55 2002

- Tanika Sarkar, “A will to violence”, November 2002, 3p.

<http://www.indiatogether.org/women/violence/will2viol.htm>

- Sharifat Zaleha binti Syed Hassan, “Strategies for Public Participation – Women and Islamic Fundamentalism in Malaysia”, The Freedom to Do God’s Will– Religious Fundamentalism and Social Change, Gerrie ter Haar and James J. Busuttil (Eds.), Routledge: London/New York, 2003, pp.49-74.

Available at AC/Main from 01-18-2005

- Banerjee, “Hindu Nationalism and the Construction of Woman – The Shiv Sena Organises Women in Bombay”, Women and Right-Wing Movements - Indian Experiences, Tanika Sarkar and Urvashi Butalia (eds), Zed Books: London/ New Jersey, pp.217-231.

Available at MH/Main as HQ1742 .W588 1995

- REAL Women of Canada, “Feminist Fists Flying at the UN”, July-August 2000, 4p.
http://www.realwomenca.com/newsletter/2000_July_August/article_4.html

Recommended Readings:

- Kathleen M. Blee, “The Gendered Organization of Hate: Women in the US Ku Klux Klan”, Bachetta and Power, Right-Wing Women from conservatives to extremists around the world, Routledge, NY/London, 2002, pp.101-114.

Available at AC/Main or SC/Neilson or MH/Main as JC573 .R55 2002

- Azza Karam, “Islamisms and Feminisms in Egypt: Three Generations of Women's Perspectives”, Women and Right-Wing Movements – Indian Experiences, Tanika Sarkar and Urvashi Butalia (eds), Zed Books: London/ New Jersey.

Available at MH/Main as HQ1742 .W588 1995

Class 13 / 14 March: Diversity of Experiences - Multiplicity of Approaches: Common Values?

Readings:

- Margot Badran, Feminists, Islam, and Nation: Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt, Princeton, 1994, introduction, pp.3-27.

- Nadjé Al-Ali, Secularism, gender and the state in the Middle East: The Egyptian women's movement, Cambridge/ New York, 2000, introduction., pp.1-18.

Film: “Four women of Egypt” (Dir. Tahani Rached, 1997, 90 mns)

Class 14 / 16 March: Mid-Term Evaluation

TBC (to be confirmed)

--- / 21 March & 23 March: Spring Break

**Class 15 / 28 March: Women Opposing Fundamentalist Projects: Feminist Strategies –
The WLUML network**

NOTE: Today, March 28th, is the deadline to hand in your response journal.

Readings

- WLUML, Plan of Action, 1997, 24p. [http://wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd\[87\]=i-87-3007](http://wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd[87]=i-87-3007)
- WLUML website, especially sections “News & Views” and “Publications”.
<http://wluml.org/english>
- Farida Shaheed, Controlled or Autonomous: Identity and the Experience of the Network Women Living Under Muslim Laws, WLUML Occasional Paper 5, July 1994, 16 p.
[http://wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd\[87\]=i-87-16379](http://wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd[87]=i-87-16379)

Recommended Readings:

- Amrita Basu, “Globalization of the local/ Localization of the Global: Mapping Transnational Women's Movements”, Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives, Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim (eds), NY, Routledge 2003, pp. 68-77

Available at SC/Neilson as HQ1190 .F46346 2003

**Class 16 / 30 March: Women Collectively Resisting Fundamentalisms: Feminist Strategies –
the Experience of WLUML (II)**

Readings:

- Louisa Ait Hamou, “Women’s Struggle against Fundamentalism in Algeria: Strategies or a Lesson for Survival?”, Warnings Signs of Fundamentalisms, WLUML (Imam, Morgan and Yuval-Davis, eds), 2004, pp.117-124.
- Farida Shaheed, “Constructing Identities: Culture, Women’s Agency and the Muslim World”, International Social Science Journal N.159, March 1999, pp.61-73.
- WLUML, Knowing Our Rights – Women, family, laws and customs in the Muslim world, “Introduction” and “International Synthesis of the W&L Programme”, 2003, 360p., pp.15-25.
(Hand Out)

Class 17 / 4 April : Women Resisting from Within – Individual Strategies

Readings:

- Elfiam Gheyntanchi “Chronology of Events Regarding Women in Iran since the Revolution of 1979”, in WLUML Dossier 23-24: July 2001
[http://wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd\[87\]=i-87-2796](http://wluml.org/english/pubsfulltxt.shtml?cmd[87]=i-87-2796)

- Azar Nafisi, “Tales of subversion: women challenging fundamentalism in the Islamic Republic of Iran”, Religious Fundamentalisms and the Human Rights of Women, Courtney W. Howland (ed), New York: Palgrave, 2001.

Available at SC/Neilson as K3243 .R45 2001

Film: “Divorce Iranian style” (Dir. Kim Longinotto & Ziba Mir-Hosseini, 1998, 76 mns)

Class 18 / 6 April : Discussion on film shown during previous class

Group discussion on “Divorce Iranian style” screening.

Class 19 / 11 April: Debates about Dress Codes: Issue of the “Veil in France”

Readings:

- Rachel A. Bloul, “Victims or Offenders? ‘Other’ Women in French Sexual Politics”, Embodied Practices - Feminist Perspectives on the Body, Kathy Davis (Ed.), pp.93-109.

Available at AC/Main or MH/Main or SC/Neilson as BF697.5.B63 E53 1997

- Patrick Weil, “A nation in diversity: France, Muslims and the headscarf”, March 2004, 6p.
<http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-5-57-1811.jsp>

- Ali Ahmad Said (Adonis), “Hijab for the Head or Hijab for the Mind?”, June 2003, 3 p.
http://www.nmhschool.org/tthornton/adonis_on_veil.htm

- Shahrzad Mojab, ““Muslim” women and “western” feminists: the debate on particulars and universals”, Monthly Review, 1998.

http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1132/is_7_50/ai_53590414

- Recommended reading:

Fadwa El Guindi, Veil: modesty, privacy, and resistance, Publisher Oxford, UK; New York, NY: Berg, 1999.

Class 20 / 13 April: Representation, Identity and Dress Codes

Film: “Under One Sky – Arab Women in North America Talk about the Hijab” (40 mns).

Class 21 / 18 April: Advising Day

NOTE: Today, April 18th, is the deadline to hand in your take-home essay (5-7 pages)

Discussion on issues raised by participants' journals

Class 22 / 20 April: Gender Roles in Contemporary Societies: Queers and Feminists as Disruptive/ Threatening “Others” - The Challenge of Sexual Rights

Readings:

- Ayesha Imam, “The Muslim Religious Right (‘Fundamentalisms’) and Sexuality”, Women and Sexuality in Muslim Societies, WWHR/New Ways, 2000 , 455p., pp.121-140.

Available at SC/Neilson as BP190.5.S4 W66 2000

- Scott Long, Anatomy of a Backlash: Sexuality and the “Cultural” War on Human Rights, Human Rights Watch, January 2005, 11p. <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k5/anatomy/1.htm>

- Gurdwaras and Same-Sex Marriages, January 2005, 1p.

http://www.worldsick.org/news/press_releases/05-01-18.htm

- Prabhjot Singh, “Canadian MP backs same-sex marriages”, Tribune News Service, January 2005, 1p. (Hand Out)

- Carolyn-Jayne Vincent, “Lesbians, gay men and Christian fundamentalism”, Women Against Fundamentalism Journal no.8 1996, pp.6-7.

<http://waf.gn.apc.org/journal8p6.htm>

- Germaine Geer, “Is the pope a feminist?”, The Guardian, August 5, 2004, 5p. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,,1276145,00.html>

- John Hooper and Tania Branigan, “Pope warns feminists”, The Guardian, July 31, 2004, 3p. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,1273102,00.html>

Recommended Readings:

- “Gays & Lesbians in Movies: shot, dead, insane or evil”, Film chronology.
<http://home.surewest.net/lcountry/cliche.html>
- Robert Wintemute, "From 'Sex Rights' to 'Love Rights': Partnership Rights as Human Rights" in Nicholas Bamforth (ed.), Sex Rights, Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2005, pp.186-291.

Class 23 / 25 April: Sexual Rights and Violence – Nationalisms & Fundamentalisms

Readings:

- Al Fatiha, “Homosexuality and Same-Sex Acts in Islam”, Factsheet.
<http://www.al-fatiha.org.pamphlet.html>
- FannyAnn Eddy, “Testimony before the Commission on Human Rights”, (Geneva, April 2004)
<http://hrw.org/english/docs/2004/10/04/sierra9439.htm>
- Stasa Zajovic, “Religious Fundamentalisms and Repression of Reproductive and Sexual Rights”, Warnings Signs of Fundamentalisms, WLUML (Imam, Morgan and Yuval-Davis, eds), 2004, pp.155-161.

Recommended Readings:

- IGLHRC/ CWGL, Written Out - How Sexuality is Used to Attack Women's Organising, 2000, 148p. (reedited March 2005)
<http://www.iglhrc.org/files/iglhrc/reports/Written%20Out.pdf>

Films:

- Clip Beograd Pride (2002, 4-5 mns)
- “Homophobia in Namibia” (Special Assignment, South African documentary, 2001)

Class 24 / 27 April: Legitimized Violence Against LGBT in Muslim Countries and Communities

Readings:

- “I Exist – Lesbian and Gay Middle Eastern Community in the US”, Press Kit, 1p.
http://www.unlearninghomophobia.com/iexist_presskit/IEexist.Info.pdf
- Human Rights Watch, In a Time of Torture: The Assault on Justice In Egypt's Crackdown on Homosexual Conduct, 2004. Browse at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/egypt0304/>

- Amnesty International, Crimes of hate, conspiracy of silence - Torture and ill-treatment based on sexual identity, 2001.

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/engACT400162001>

- Film:

“I exist - Voices from the Lesbian and Gay Middle Eastern Community in the US”, (Eyebite Productions, 2002, 58 mns)

Class 25 / 2 May: Discussion on film shown during previous class

NOTE: April 25th is the deadline to hand in the written summary of your oral presentation (2-3 pages)

Class 26 / 4 May: Threats and survival: the increasing visibility of the LGBT movements in Muslim countries and communities

Readings:

- Anissa Helie, “Holy Hatred”, in Reproductive Health Matters, Vol.12, No 23, May 2004, Special issue “Sexuality, Rights and Social Justice”.

Available at HC/Stacks as QP251 .R34, or check at <http://www.afrol.com/features/10270>

- Hasan Shafiqullah, “Stop Being a Tomboy - The Story of a Muslim Transsexual from Pakistan”, in Trikone Magazine, 10 October 2001.

- Liz Ercevik Amado, “Sexual and Bodily Rights in the Middle East and North Africa – Conference Report”, Reproductive Health Matters, Vol.12, No 23, May 2004, Special issue “Sexuality, Rights and Social Justice”, pp.125-128.

- Angus McDowall/ Stephen Khan, “The Ayatollah and the transsexual”, The Independent (UK), 25 November 2004.

http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/story.jsp?story=586427

- A Call by the Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies on the 10th Anniversary of the Fourth Women’s World Conference, March 2005. (Hand Out)

- Yacoub Islam, “Dissident Sexualities: Muslim and Gay in the UK”, 2004, (7p.).

<http://www.muslimwakeup.com/sex/archives/2004/12/002546print.php>

- “Behind the Mask: website magazine on lesbian and gay affairs in Africa”. Browse the website’s section “Africa by country” and check a few of the Muslim countries listed (see especially “laws covering homosexual activities” and relevant articles). <http://www.mask.org.za/>

Recommended readings:

- Transsexual Alliance of the Kingdom of Jordan, website.

<http://www.the-sisterhood.net/transsexualallianceofthekingdomofjordan/index.html>

- Elizabeth Khaxas, “Organising for Sexual Rights: The Namibian Women’s Manifesto”, Holding On to the Promise: Women’s Human Rights and Beijing +5”, Center for Women’s Global Leadership, 2001, pp.60-65.

- Stephen O. Murray, Will Roscoe (Eds), Islamic Homosexualities - Culture, History , and Literature, New York University Press, 1997, 331p.

Available from AC/Main or MH/Main or SC/Neilson as HQ76.3.I75 M87 1997

Class 27 / 9 May: Country case study – Pakistan

NOTE: Today, May 9th, is the deadline to hand in your end of term evaluation (1-2 pages)

Class 28 / 11 May: Country case study – Algeria

Class 29 / 16 May: End-term evaluation/ Reflections on the course / Farewell

Course Requirements

Politics of gender and identities in Muslim countries and communities: Colonial legacies, religious fundamentalisms and feminist strategies

Format:

This class will consist of a mix of lectures, working groups and seminars. Emphasis is placed on contemporary texts, both analytical and media articles reflecting current developments. Visual material such as documentary films and photographic materials will also be used.

The course requires you to complete the following 6 assignments:

- Regular attendance and participation in class;
- Group work: in class writing assignment
- Reading response journal
- Analytical paper: at-home essay (5-7 p.)
- One oral presentation in class and written summary (2-3 p.)
- Short end of term evaluation (1-2 p.)

Grading:

Grades will be finalized as follows:

Class Participation (attendance will be taken)	10%
Group work: in class writing assignment	15%
Reading response journal	25%
Analytical paper: at-home essay	25%
Oral class presentation and written summary	15%
End of term evaluation	10%

Requirements:

1) Attendance and participation in class

Students are expected to attend classes consistently and to actively participate throughout the course. The readings assigned for each class will give you an opportunity to analyze a variety of documents. You must complete the readings before each class and engage in group discussions – this means coming to class ready with a few questions related to the required texts.

2) Group work: in class writing assignment

On Tuesday February 14th, you will break into small groups and be given a short writing assignment. This collective drafting exercise will be presented to the class by each group during the following class. I will also collect your final versions on that day, Thursday February 16th.

3) Reading response journal

You are required to keep a journal of the important issues that the (required – not the recommended) readings and films shown in class raised for you. Your journal should demonstrate that you have read the readings/ view the films and you should briefly synthesize the main focus/ argument of a given article or film.

However, the journal should not be a synopsis of the material you have read or viewed, but, rather, your personal responses to the readings and films. (You can also, when relevant, refer to

the class discussions). You will briefly discuss your thoughts about the main argument(s): Did you agree or disagree? Why? What was it about this article/ film did you thought was important or unimportant? How did it relate to your own experience? Did it alter your perspective in any way? Are there any questions you are left with?

Entries should be made for each class of the first half of the semester (i.e. the first 13 classes, including the class on March 14, 2006). You can if you wish discuss all the texts listed in the syllabus - but you may also select *at least* two of the readings assigned for a given class and focus only on these. When viewing films, I strongly recommend that you take notes, or that you write up your thoughts immediately afterwards.

Your journal entries for each reading/ film should be approximately one-paragraph in length but can be up to half a page. Please make sure that for each entry, you specifically indicate the class theme, as well as include reference to the title and authors of the texts you discuss.

The journal should be typed (preferably in 12p.), single-spaced and leaving sufficient margins; pages should be numbered.

The complete journal is due on the first class after the Spring Break – i.e. Class 15, on March 28th. No late submission will be accepted. However, out of the 13 classes your journal is meant to cover, you may submit entries for only 11 classes – so that you need not worry if you were sick or missed a class.

4) Analytical paper: at-home essay

We will not have in-class exam but you are expected to write an essay at home on any one of the topics listed below. The proposed topics relate to issues of identities, feminist/ LGBT strategies and religious fundamentalisms - yet do not focus exclusively on Muslim countries and communities.

Writing this essay will require you to research (published and/or web-based) sources and to present a critical analysis of the sources you will have identified. You should use at least 3 different sources. Make sure your thesis is presented in a logical way: the paper should have a coherent structure and be written in a serious yet engaging style.

Essays should be typed (12p.), double-spaced and leave sufficient margins. The length required is 5-7 pages, including the bibliography.

Essays should be handed in on April 18th, 2006. Note that Week 4 (classes 7/8, i.e. February 21st-23rd) is the deadline to inform me about which topic you have chosen – you can either email me or use the sign up sheet we will circulate during class.

Choose one of the following topics:

a) Introduction of “Shari’a Tribunals” in Canada

A legal proposal recently debated in Canada (2004-5) relates to the introduction and use of Muslim religious laws to settle family and inheritance disputes.

- Your paper should highlight briefly the social/ political contexts. You may also want to elaborate on issues such as: actors involved, justifications and counter arguments; potential impact of this legislation on Canadian women from Muslim backgrounds as well as larger political implications (for example in terms of alliances of secular states with religious minorities leaders).

- One good resource is the Canadian Council of Muslim Women website (which lists various press articles that have covered the issue and also provides information related to the CCMW's own lobbying) <http://www.ccmw.com>

b) Profile of one of the three NGOs listed below

Your paper should first give a brief historical background of the NGO you have chosen to focus on: which political context gave impetus to it? What are its main goals? You can then address questions such as: What is the NGO constituency characterized by? How does it achieve its stated objectives? Was there a discernable change in terms of direction/ tactics over time (and if so why)? What are the main strategies being used? How relevant/important this NGO appears to be, in your eyes, in terms of producing a voice that counters the dominant mainstream discourse?

- Catholics For a Free Choice (in USA or Latin America – as Catholicas Por El Derecho De Decidir)

You can find information of various campaigns launched by CFFC on their website at <http://www.catholicsforchoice.org/> You could also search further information by googling names such as Frances Kissling (President) or Serra Sippel (Senior Associate).

- Bat Shalom (Israeli feminist/ anti-militarist group, in alliance with Palestinian women)

You can find information on the following website www.batshalom.org and by googling names such as Galia Golan or Gila Svirsky. You can check as well the Coalition of Women for a Just Peace (see for example <http://nonprofitnet.ca/wao/wao.php?show&68>)

- Al-Fatiha USA (an advocacy/ lobbying group for LGBT Muslims and their allies)

As this group is newer than the two above, it may be less easy to locate information in one given site. The group's website does not necessarily reflect the scope of activities undertaken by Al-Fatiha USA, but it is a good start – check at <http://www.al-fatiha.org/> [Beware if you google not to simply type “Al-fatiha” as this refers to the opening chapter of the Qu’ran and will lead you to religious sites that may well not support LGBT rights; type at least “Al-fatiha LGBT”] Try also googling names such as Faisal Alam (founder and former director).

See also entries in <http://www.antenna.nl/~waterman/alfatiha.html>

http://www.tegenwicht.org/16_imams/al_fatiha_en.htm

<http://www.ukgaynews.org.uk/Archive/2004aug/1401.htm>

<http://www.sodomylaws.org/world/egypt/egnews165.htm>

<http://www.sodomylaws.org/world/egypt/egnews123.htm>

http://www.glaad.org/publications/archive_detail.php?id=3089

5) One oral presentation in class (10-15 minutes) and written summary

At the beginning of the semester, you will be asked to select one topic (related to a specific class' focus) which interests you particularly, in order to prepare an oral presentation on this issue. We will circulate a sign up sheet around the 2nd week of the course – so do look closely at the syllabus beforehand. As several students may be interested in the same topic, it is likely that you will be paired with another and will need to work together.

It is fine for presenters to simply discuss the readings assigned for this given class – but you are encouraged to do additional research on the issue at stake and present your findings to the class. Your presentation should last 10 to 15 minutes and be coherent as well as well structured. You should try to avoid reading your notes and make efforts to involve your audience.

In addition, you will write up a short summary (2-3 p., double space) of how you prepared for the oral presentation, how you felt it went in terms of your "performance" before the class. This should also include reference to the challenges involved, remaining questions you may have and a critical assessment of how you handled this assignment.

The summary is due in class a week after your oral presentation – and in any case no later than May 9th for those presenting during end of semester classes.

6) End of term evaluation

The required length for this last assignment is 1-2 p. only. Deadline is May 9th, 2006.

You are asked to:

- 1) assess how the course covered various issues;
- 2) explain whether it has helped further your understanding or contributed to alter your analysis and, if so, in what ways;
- 3) if relevant, identify either potential gaps or areas of interest you would have liked to see further developed / addressed in more detail.

Be honest: both praises and criticisms are welcome!