

Gender Violence: Anthropological Perspectives

Anthropology 3328/Women's and Gender Studies 3328
J-Term 2019 January 7-16, 2019 (no weekend classes)
9am-12pm & 1pm-4pm
Location: TBD

Professor Nia Parson
Office Location: Heroy Hall 405
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Phone: 214/768/2932
Office Hours: Upon request

PROFESSOR BIOGRAPHY

Professor Parson, a full-time faculty member in the Department of Anthropology, developed and has taught this course multiple times, and students have reviewed the course highly. She has conducted research and published on intimate partner violence in Chile, where she lived for two years, and among Latin American immigrants in Dallas and New Jersey. In addition to other texts, students will read parts Professor Parson's book, *Traumatic States: Gendered Violence, Suffering and Care in Chile* and will have the opportunity to engage with her in discussions of her firsthand experience with anthropological knowledge production.

SOME BENEFITS OF THIS CLASS

- * **Health and Society Major** elective
- * **Women's and Gender Studies Minor** elective
- Fulfills Pillar: IIC level 2
- Fulfills Proficiencies: Oral Communication, Human Diversity
- Fieldtrips to organizations and institutions focused on gender based violence in the Dallas area.
- In-class speakers from Dallas-area organizations and officials working on gender based violence.
- Discuss and debate crucial current issues in a small seminar setting, not often possible in a regular semester course.
- Learn how psychological trauma is cultural.
- Learn first-hand about on-going, Dallas-based, local efforts to solve gender based violence in intimate relationships.
- Be inspired by the many interventions into partner violence against women throughout the world.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Gendered violence, in various forms, shapes individual and collective experiences, material realities and psychological states. Power is always central. Culture is often blamed. This course examines gendered violence against women and its personal and inter-personal effects, as well as interventions on intimate, local, and global scales. We will explore how cultural patterns, gendered expectations of femininity and masculinity, economic arrangements, and other facets of social life are implicated in gender-based violence. The course also examines some of the global and local-level responses to gender-based violence, which have shifted the landscape of gender-based violence. These include women's movements, United Nations frameworks, and national laws. Central issues throughout the semester include an examination of the various forms of gender-based violence against women, the power relationships involved, and the effects of various forms of gendered violence on bodies and minds. We will also think about how we can understand the perpetrators of gendered violence. We will examine how global frameworks around gender violence are mobilized in local contexts and by local groups and individuals, the role of the state and non-state actors in confronting gender violence within intimate relationships. The course also addresses how anthropologists represent violence and its destructive effects on individuals and societies. We will discuss some of the crucial ethical considerations around what it means to bear witness to gender violence. We will also explore how "experience-near" ethnography can contribute to our understandings of gendered violence and its effects.

REQUIRED TEXT

- Merry, Sally Engle. 2009. *Gender Violence: A Cultural Perspective*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Critical Reflections (25%)

You will write in-class response papers each day at the beginning of class. Here, you will have the chance to thoughtfully reflect on the material for the day as well as material we have already covered. This will help you prepare to actively discuss the materials with your classmates and Dr. Parson.

Class Participation (25%)

Regular contributions to the conversation in class are required because this is not a lecture course. I am running the class as a seminar, where your discussion of the issues raised in the readings is crucial. **If you have trouble speaking up in class**, please discuss this directly with Dr. Parson, either during office hours or after class. Attendance is crucial and **more than 1 3-hour period of unexcused absence could result in a failing grade for the course.**

Assignments leading to final project (20%)

You will complete these assignments during class time. You will work in groups to collaborate on assignments such as the following. Not every student will do each and every of these assignments. The idea is to collaborate!

1. Construct a survey of SMU students about sexual assault on campus.
2. Obtain statistics about sexual assault on SMU campus.
3. Review media of various kinds in terms of sexual assault on college campuses and in particular about sexual assault on SMU's campus.

Collaborative Final Project (30%)

You will complete this project during class time. Create either a presentation, a video, a blog or an activity to illuminate issues of gender-based sexual assault at SMU or other college campuses. Your main audience will be students just like you. Draw from course materials to construct your project. You will present them on the last day of the class. You will do frequent in-class collaborative work on your projects. No out of class time is required.

COURSE SCHEDULE

To complete prior to the first day of class:

- **READ**
 - Merry Ch. 1: Introduction
- **FIND** the following AND bring to the first day of class:
 - 5 recent media representations of issues related to violence and/or gender/sex/sexuality. These can be news articles, images, videos, blogs, advertisements, social media, etc.
 - Note where you found these sources—what is the source of these sources?
 - We will work with these on the first day of class.
- **WATCH**
 - *Gender Revolution: A Journey with Katie Couric*, Available at Films on Demand on the SMU Library website (need to enter your student credentials)
https://fod-infobase-com.proxy.libraries.smu.edu/p_ViewVideo.aspx?xtid=138020
 - *Tough Guise 2*, Available on Kanopy Database on the SMU Library website.
<https://smu.kanopy.com/video/tough-guise-2>

MONDAY, JANUARY 7

FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS: GENDER/SEX/SEXUALITY AND VIOLENCE

Is gender central to understanding violence?

Establish shared understanding of gender/sex and culture as we use these terms in anthropology. Beginning to explore some of the patterns that give rise to violence for men and women differently.

Evaluating key sources of information in the age of “Fake News.”

WHAT CAUSES VIOLENCE? IS IT BIOLOGY? IS IT CULTURE?

Why study violence?

- **IN-CLASS FILMS**

- *The Brain*, David Eagleman, PBS, Episodes 2, 3, 5 (available for rent via Amazon.com)
- How different are male and female brains? Ep.5 Brain myths exploded: Lessons from Neuroscience 32 mins, 2017
- *Power and Control: Domestic Violence in America*, by Peter Cohn

How do we create civil discourse about violence and other uncomfortable topics?

- **IN-CLASS FILMS**

- *The Hunting Ground* 2015
- *Dishonored*, by Sigrun Norderval and Gard A. Andreassen (IDD 5486)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 8: TRAUMA AND RIGHTS

- **READ PRIOR TO CLASS:**

- Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, Brief Excerpt TBA
- Merry, Ch. 4 Gender Violence as a Human Rights Violation

- **IN-CLASS FILMS**

- *Women's Rights as Human Rights* / International Center for G. Published: New York, N.Y.: Films Media Group, [2013], c1996. (26 min.)
- *Passionate Politics: The Life and Work of Charlotte Bunch* (Fondren Library Catalog)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9: CREATING CULTURES AGAINST VIOLENCE

INVITED GUEST: Health Promotion at SMU

RESOURCES FOR PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION:

http://www.ncdsv.org/ncd_linksvideos.html

- **READ PRIOR TO CLASS:**

Merry, Ch. 3 Punishment, Safety, and Reform: Interventions in Domestic Violence

- **IN-CLASS FILMS (select excerpts):**

- *Sisters in Law* 2005

- *Private Violence* (HBO documentary, 2014)
- *Behind Closed Doors* (BBC Documentary)
- *Power and Control* (legal excerpts)
- *Domestic Violence* Wiseman (possible legal system excerpts)
- *Macho*, by Lucinda Broadbent (IDD 06052)

- **DISCUSSION OF CLASS PROJECT**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10: RACIALIZATION, RACISM, RACE, CLASS

- **READ PRIOR TO CLASS:**
 - Merry, Ch. 5 Poverty, Racism, and Migration
- **IN-CLASS FILMS**
 - *Race: The Power of An Illusion* (excerpts of Episodes 1-3)

FRIDAY, JANUARY 11: MIGRATION, DISPLACEMENT, DISRUPTIONS

- **READ PRIOR TO CLASS:**
 - Adelman, Madelaine 2004 “He Has Me Tied with the Blessed and Damned Papers”: Undocumented-Immigrant Battered Women in Phoenix, Arizona *Human Organization* 63(2): 162-172
 - Bourdieu, Pierre and Wacquant, Loïc. 1992. “Symbolic Violence” From *An Invitation to Reflective Sociology*, pp. 167-8, 170-3. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- **IN-CLASS FILMS**
 - *Señorita Extraviada*, IVS 08399
 - *Train to Nowhere*

MONDAY, JANUARY 14: ARMED CONFLICT AND INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

- **READ PRIOR TO CLASS:**
 - Merry, Ch. 7: Women and Armed Conflict
- **IN-CLASS FILMS**
 - *Rape in the Congo*
 - *The Invisible War*

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15

IN-CLASS PROJECT DAY

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16

FINAL PRESENTATIONS

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Analyze different theoretical or interpretive perspectives in the study of individual, social, cultural, political, or economic experiences. (Level 2)
- Evaluate critically the research outcomes and theoretical applications in

- the study of individual, social, cultural, political, or economic experiences. (Level 2)
- Describe how the social construction of gender across cultures is fundamental to many experiences of violence.
- Write a well-crafted explanation of how violence impacts subjectivity.
- Give particular examples from ethnographic materials we read in the course of how national and global legal structures are involved in intimate, gendered violence.
- Recognize and point out issues of gendered violence in current news articles.
- Express informed ideas about how to counter gendered violence in various spheres.

PILLAR

Individuals, Institutions and Cultures (Level 2)

Student Learning Outcomes

3. Students will be able to analyze different theoretical or interpretive perspectives in the study of individual, social, cultural, political, or economic experiences. (Level 2)
4. Students will be able to evaluate critically the research outcomes and theoretical applications in the study of individual, social, cultural, political, or economic experiences. (Level 2)

PROFICIENCIES AND EXPERIENCES

Oral Communication

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to select and use appropriate forms of evidence in a public presentation.
2. Students will be able to design verbal messages to suit particular audiences and purposes.
3. Students will be able to use visual cues (such as presentation software, staging, props, costumes, makeup, and gesture) to enhance a public presentation.

Human Diversity

Student Learning Outcome

1. With respect to issues related to race, ethnicity, gender, or societies in the developing world, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society, including the ways in which these conditions influence individual or group status, treatment, or accomplishments.

COURSE POLICIES

Absences/Missed Assignments: Absences are excused for a debilitating illness or death in the family, and religious holidays. Notify Professor Parson in case of extenuating circumstances that force you to be absent. *Written documentation* (i.e., by healthcare provider or funeral director) must be presented to the Professor upon your return in order to make up any missed work or in-class quiz. If you fail to notify me and fail to provide the necessary documentation, you will not be allowed to make up the work.

Students should review notes, handouts, and assignment instructions with the Professor and/or a classmate for days missed, as you will be held responsible for this material.

Disabilities, Accommodation, and Religious Observance: Southern Methodist University provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you need academic

accommodations for a disability, you must first contact Ms. Rebecca Marin, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities (214-768-4563) to verify the disability and establish eligibility for accommodation. Then you should schedule an appointment with the Professor to make appropriate arrangements. If you feel you have a disability but elect not to verify the disability under SMU policies, I will not be able to provide you with special accommodations (including extensions or extra exam time). If you have a conflict with the course schedule for religious reasons, please discuss it with the Professor within the first 2 weeks of classes.

Ethical Actions

You must follow the SMU Honor Code at all times. You must sign each of your assignments with a statement that says you have upheld the Honor Code. See below for Honor Code.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism, cheating, inappropriate consultation of peers or their work, any other form of academic misconduct, and failing to report evidence of others' misconduct are all Honor Code violations. Penalties are outlined in the Honor Code and may include anything from a zero for the assignment to dismissal from school. Students are expected to prepare work independently, cite any work (quotes or ideas) that is not their own, submit original work (i.e., not already submitted for any other class), and to neither give nor receive assistance in examinations. If you are uncertain about whether an activity or piece of work compromises your academic integrity, you should speak to the Professor before submitting it.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HONOR COUNCIL OF SMU

PREAMBLE AND DEFINITIONS We, the students of Southern Methodist University, with the approval of the Provost and the Dean of Student Life, establish the Honor Council to uphold the standards of academic integrity set forth in the Honor Code. Acts punishable under the code include, but are not limited to the following:

ACADEMIC SABOTAGE Intentionally taking any action which negatively affects the academic work of another student.

CHEATING Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

FABRICATION Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

FACILITATING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of the Honor Code.

PLAGIARISM Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

The general principles for all honest writing can be summarized briefly. Acknowledge indebtedness:

1. Whenever you quote another person's actual words.
2. Whenever you use another person's idea, opinion, or theory, even if it is completely paraphrased in your own words.
3. Whenever you borrow facts, statistics, or other illustrative material - unless the information is common knowledge. Plagiarism also encompasses the notions of citing quotations and materials from secondary sources that were not directly consulted in the preparation of the student's work, and copying the organizational and argumentation structure of a work without acknowledging its author.