Professor Nia Parson
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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.

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 TEXTS


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Critical Reading Reflections (20%)
You will write in-class response papers each day at the beginning of class when readings are assigned for that day. Here, you will have the chance to thoughtfully reflect on the material for the day. This will help you prepare to actively discuss the materials with your classmates and Dr. Parson.

Class Participation (20%)
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.

Current News Blogs (20%)
Each student will collect 8 current news articles about gender-based violence and write brief analyses of the articles to submit to a class blog.

Field Notes (20%)
Students will examine the portrayal of men and women in various media (websites; magazines; blogs; billboards; TV news, ads and shows; newspapers)

Final Presentation (20%)
COURSE SCHEDULE

JANUARY 8
INTRODUCTIONS:
WHAT CAUSES VIOLENCE? IS IT BIOLOGY? IS IT CULTURE?

What causes violence? Exploring the intersections of anthropology and neuroscience
Explore what gives rise to human violence across cultures in terms of the neuoroscientific theories on the underpinnings of violence.

- The Brain, David Eagleman, Episodes 2, 3, 5
- FILM: Passionate Politics
- FILM: Power and Control, by Peter Cohn

JANUARY 9:
Gender Violence, Culture and Human Rights: Key Issues and Debates

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.

GUEST SPEAKER

- Dishonored, by Sigrun Norderval and Gard A. Andreassen (IDD 5486)
- Merry
  o Ch. 1: Introduction
  o Ch. 4 Gender Violence as a Human Rights Violation
  o Ch. 6: Violent "Cultural” Practices in the Family

- Discussion of anthropological methods: Engaged Observation
JANUARY 10:
SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, MASCULINITIES AND VIOLENCE

- GUEST SPEAKER: VISIT FROM DALLAS BASED INSTITUTION
- In-class Film: Tough Guise, 2

Recommended Reading (not required): 2006 UN In-depth study on all forms of violence against women
- FILM: Macho, by Lucinda Broadbent (IDD 06052)

JANUARY 11:
MIGRATION AND INTERRELATED FORMS OF VIOLENCE

- GUEST SPEAKER: VISIT FROM DALLAS AGENCY
- Film: Train to Nowhere
- Merry, Ch. 5 Poverty, Racism, and Migration
- Film: Señorita Extraviada, IVS 08399


JANUARY 12:
A.M.: FIELDTRIP TO DARCC RAPE CRISIS CENTER AT PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL
P.M.: DEBRIEFING, DISCUSSION

JANUARY 16:
LEGAL INTERVENTIONS
FIELDTRIP
- FILM: Sisters in Law 2005
- Merry, Ch. 3 Punishment, Safety, and Reform: Interventions in Domestic Violence

JANUARY 17:
HEALTH
- Parson, excerpts (will distribute)
Discussion: What futures do you envision for gendered violence in various contexts?
- GUEST SPEAKER: VISIT FROM DALLAS BASED NGO
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.