

Gender, Violence, and Inequality

WGSS 496/696

American University

May 11 – June 25, 2015

Online

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About your Professor

Name: Mahri Irvine, PhD

Email: mirvine@american.edu

Website: www.mahri-irvine.com

Cell Phone: 240-462-6214 (please, no texting!)

Office Hours: By appointment. We can meet by using Skype or Google Hangout, or talk on the phone.

Communication Policies

I will do my best to respond to your emails or phone calls in a timely manner. Please plan for at least a 24-hour response time. With this short summer class, you need to plan ahead when you contact me if you have problems with an assignment. I communicate primarily through email. You are responsible for regularly checking your AU email for messages that I will send regarding our course.

I will try to provide you with feedback on your submitted assignments within three days.

Course Description

This course investigates links between gender, inequality and violence, and explores the gendered dimensions of violence within inequitable social contexts. In this class, students will critically examine how social, political, and economic structures create violent and inequitable circumstances for individuals and communities. Students will also explore how cultural belief systems influence conceptions about gender, sexuality, violence, power, and control. This class will examine the dynamics of gender-based violence within diverse communities, exploring the impact of race, class, sexual orientation, and immigrant status on issues related to the impact of violence, survivors' healing processes, legal justice, and violence prevention programs.

Trigger Warning

We will discuss many potentially upsetting topics during our time together. It is your responsibility to look through the syllabus *in advance* and notify me if you think you might become triggered or overly upset by certain topics. Please contact me immediately if you feel that you will have difficulties completing assignments because of emotional or psychological distress. If you do become triggered or experience challenges during the semester, it is your responsibility to let me know ASAP so I can help you access appropriate resources.

If you need to talk to somebody, you can call 1-800-656-HOPE at any time! (24/7!)

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Understand and explain the gendered dimensions of violence and inequality.
2. Understand and explain how specific political and economic structures create or contribute to gender-based violence.
3. Understand and explain how cultural belief systems create or contribute to gendered inequalities.
4. Understand and explain intersecting forms of oppression in relation to gender, violence, and inequality.

Learning Outcomes (Course Content)

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Identify and explain how cultural belief systems, economic systems, and socio-political systems influence people's decisions to commit gender-based violence, and people's perceptions of victims and perpetrators.
2. Describe the rates of gender-based violence in the United States, and explain how different forms of violence overlap or connect.
3. Describe the psychological and physical impact of gender-based violence on victims, and how intersecting oppressions affect victims in different ways.
4. Identify and analyze the various social and legal challenges that survivors of gender-based violence face, and provide recommendations for solving these challenges.
5. Identify and evaluate effective strategies or campaigns for preventing violence.
6. Identify and explain how this class has impacted your intellectual growth and your emotional wellbeing.

Learning Outcomes (Skills)

7. Clearly and logically articulate your opinions and arguments by developing well-organized papers and presentations.
8. Synthesize information drawn from class readings, films, lectures, and class activities to develop well-informed ideas and opinions about gender, violence, and inequality.
9. Strengthen your critical thinking skills by making connections and exploring similarities and differences between the theories and research presented by authors, film makers, classmates, and your professor.

Time Commitment and Workload

This class requires the same amount of time as a regular course of study – but it might *feel* like more work because we are dealing with a condensed format. You will receive about 8 hours of instruction from me every week (in the form of online activities, lectures, and documentaries), and I will expect you to work on assignments and readings for 12 hours each week. All total, you should plan on committing approximately 20 hours each week for this class. Graduate students may spend even more time on this class because their writing assignments are more intensive.

You should expect a steady workload throughout this session. This is a reading- and writing-intensive course. Be prepared to read a substantial number of pages each week.

Important note: once you fall behind in an online class, it is **extremely** difficult to catch up. I recommend creating a very structured schedule for yourself so that you commit to specific times to work on this class.

Course Guidelines and FAQs

When do I show up for class?

You have a great deal of independence in this class: as with all classes, you get to select the times you will do the readings and work on homework assignments. You also get to select the times you go online to listen to lectures, watch documentaries, and participate in discussion boards or other online activities. You should definitely check every Monday morning for each week's discussion topic and assignments. In our syllabus, you will see all of the due dates and checkpoints for assignments.

How do I participate?

We will use the Blackboard Discussion Board quite a bit in this class, but rather than just posting responses to prompts, you will often need to engage in some type of data analysis, or post up a presentation that you have created, and respond to your classmates' presentations or data analysis. In this class, we will strive to create a collegial, friendly, and intellectual environment through our Discussion Board activities. See the Participation assignment sheet in the Appendix of this syllabus for more information.

How is our Blackboard course organized?

You will find all of the weekly readings, lectures, documentaries, and Discussion Board links in each weekly folders. Because you get to choose which weeks to write response papers, you will submit your response papers in the Submit Response Papers folder.

How does a typical week work?

Before our semester starts, I will post up all of the assignments, readings (except for books), and links to documentaries. I will post the lectures as soon as I complete them.

Each week starts at 12:00 am EST on Mondays, and each week ends at 11:59 pm EST on Sundays.

Each week will involve the same elements:

- Every Monday morning, you should go to Blackboard to see the topic(s) for the week, instructions for the Discussion Board, and other assignments. Check the Announcements section first. You should get started on our readings as soon as possible, because this class has a heavy reading load.
- By 6:00 pm EST on Wednesdays, your response to a documentary (or webinar) is due.
- By 6:00 pm EST on Thursdays, your Most Meaningful Reading response is due.
- By 6:00 pm EST on Friday, your response to a classmate's Most Meaningful Reading response is due.
- By 6:00 pm EST on Friday, your response papers are due.

Do you know if I participated online?

The Blackboard system is a great example of Big Brother technology! The system can tell me who logs in, how long, and what they have done. However, I hope to not have to use reports to track your participation – instead, I will mostly rely on your Discussion Board activity and your other assignments to gauge your participation.

Will we ever meet each other in person?

It is very likely that we may never meet each other face-to-face. I live in Indianapolis, so we are separated by many miles! However, there are many opportunities for us to talk with each other. Please feel free to arrange meetings with me by telephone, Skype, or Google Hangout. And of course, I will make comments on your assignments.

Is this online format easier or more difficult than a regular class?

This class requires the same amount of time as a regular course of study – but it may *feel* like more work because we are dealing with a condensed six-week format. You should expect a steady workload throughout this session, and remember: once you fall behind in an online class, it is extremely difficult to catch up. I recommend creating a very structured schedule for yourself so that you commit to specific times to work on this class.

What can students expect from Dr. Irvine?

Dr. Irvine will strive to:

- create a challenging and engaged learning environment
- encourage students to learn about new ideas and concepts, develop their intellectual abilities, and strengthen their critical thinking skills
- encourage students to critically think about how cultural values have influenced their knowledge and understanding of gender-based violence
- give students clear assignment guidelines and grading rubrics
- provide students with helpful feedback about their writing and their ideas
- when requested, meet virtually with students to discuss their work

What does Dr. Irvine expect from her students?

During this course, students should:

- read the syllabus carefully and plan out their schedules to meet all deadlines
- refer to the syllabus and assignment sheets if they have easily-answered questions about due dates or course requirements
- commit to following the course guidelines
- interact with other students and Dr. Irvine in a respectful, mature, and thoughtful manner
- contact Dr. Irvine immediately if they are having difficulties with the materials, or other issues in life, which might negatively impact their grades or class participation
- practice basic netiquette: when emailing Dr. Irvine, use a form of address like, “Dear Professor Irvine” or “Hi Dr. Irvine”, and include a relevant subject line for every email
- prepare themselves for dealing with emotionally difficult subjects, monitor their emotional states of mind, and regularly practice self-care
- respect the privacy of the classroom environment: do not distribute class-related emails, activities, lectures, etc. to other people without the explicit written consent of their classmates and/or Dr. Irvine. In other words, everyone should treat their classmates and professor with respect and professional courtesy

How is this class a community?

This class is a community because we are all in this together – we will be discussing emotionally disturbing, and intellectually challenging, ideas and concepts. Many of the topics we discuss may be upsetting, triggering, or emotionally charged. A diversity of opinions contributes to an intellectually challenging classroom environment. The success of the class as a whole depends on each person supporting, encouraging, and respecting other people in the class. Please respect the privacy of your peers. You must ask for your classmates’ explicit written permission if you want to share their presentations, words, or ideas, etc. with people outside of our class.

Required Textbooks and Materials

You can access all of our course readings through Blackboard; the readings will be posted in each weekly folder. Citations for the readings are listed at the end of this syllabus.

Online and Campus Resources

I want you to succeed in this class! If you start feeling overwhelmed or anxious from this class or because of other life events, please consider contacting these resources:

Academic Support and Access Center:

In addition to using the resources available in this course's department, all students may take advantage of individual academic counseling, skills workshops, tutor referrals, Supplemental Instruction, and writing appointments in the [Academic Support and Access Center](#).

- (202) 885-6225
- MGC 243

Center for Diversity & Inclusion:

The [Center for Diversity & Inclusion](#) is dedicated to enhancing LGBTQ, Multicultural, First Generation, and Women's experiences on campus and to advance AU's commitment to respecting & valuing diversity by serving as a resource and liaison to students, staff, and faculty on issues of equity through education, outreach, and advocacy. In addition to visiting in person or calling, the center can be reached via email at cdi@american.edu.

- (202) 885-3651
- MGC 201 & 202

Counseling Center:

The [Counseling Center](#) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

- (202) 885-3500
- MGC 214

Dean of Students Office:

The [Dean of Students Office](#) offers one-on-one meetings to discuss academic, adjustment, and personal issues that may be interfering with a student's ability to succeed academically. The DOS office also verifies documentation for students who have medical or mental health issues that cause them to be absent from class.

- (202) 885-3300
- Butler Pavilion 208

Disability Services:

If you wish to receive accommodations for a disability, please notify me ASAP with a letter from the Academic Support and Access Center. As accommodations are not retroactive, timely notification at the beginning of the semester, if possible, is requested. Any accommodations for assignments or exams (such as extra time) must be arranged at least fourteen days prior to the exam.

- 202-885-3360
- MGC 243

Sexual Assault Resources:

If somebody sexually assaults you, there are many people who can give you help and support:

- Daniel Rappaport, Sexual Assault Prevention Coordinator: 202-885-3055 or rappapor@american.edu
- National Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (online chat: www.rainn.org)
- DC Rape Crisis Hotline: 202-333-7273
- Public Safety: 202-885-3636
- Police and Hospital: 911

Writing Resources:

The [Writing Center](#) offers free, individual coaching sessions to all AU students. In your 45-minute session, a student writing consultant can help you address assignments, understand the conventions of academic writing, and learn how to revise and edit your own work. The Center offers appointments on the hour from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, and 3 to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Call or go to the [Writing Lab scheduling website](#) to arrange a session.

- (202) 885-2991
- First Floor of Bender Library

Emergency Preparedness for Disruption of Classes

In the event of an emergency, American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of an emergency, students should refer to the AU Student Portal, the AU Web site for [Emergency Preparedness](#) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/ college-specific information.

Assignments

Detailed assignment information and grading rubrics are at the end of this syllabus. You will submit most of your assignments (papers or presentations) in Blackboard. You will submit your final research presentation on You Tube or Vimeo (your choice).

Assignment	Percent of Grade	Deadline
Participation	30%	
a) Introduction	a) 2%	a) May 12 by 6 pm
b) Responses to Documentaries (5)	b) 10%	b) Each Wed. by 6 pm
c) Meaningful Reading Posts (6) and Responses to Classmates (6)	c) 18%	c) Each Thurs. and Fri. by 6 pm
Response Papers (3)	30%	Fridays by 6 pm
Personal Reflection Essay	10%	June 19 by 6 pm
Research Project and Presentation	30%	June 22 by 6 pm

Grading Scale

93% - 100%	A	(amazing!)	77% - 79%	C+	(meh)
90% - 92%	A-	(wonderful!)	73% - 76%	C	(ugh)
87% - 89%	B+	(very, very good!)	70% - 72%	C-	(oh, dear)
83% - 86%	B	(good)	60% - 69%	D	(very, very bad)
80% - 82%	B-	(pretty good)	0% - 59%	F	(a waste of tuition)

Late Policy

All assignments are due on the time and day listed on the syllabus. I may accept late assignments in the case of *documented* transportation or medical emergencies (at my discretion). If you start working on an assignment and realize you will have difficulties finishing it in time, you should talk to me *immediately* for advice. If you contact me just a few hours before an assignment is due, it is extremely unlikely that I will give you an extension.

Academic Integrity Code and Ethical Conduct

Please do not commit any acts of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, falsification, and resubmission of work. All of these forms of dishonesty ultimately hurt you, because you will not actually be learning our course content or strengthening your writing or thinking skills if you just steal someone else's ideas or words. Additionally, when you act dishonestly, you will weaken other people's trust in your character and your abilities. Being dishonest will ultimately do you more harm than good: cheating isn't worth it! If you have questions about how to properly paraphrase other people's ideas or statements, if you do not know how to properly use citations/references, or if you do not know when to use quotation marks, please ask me, a librarian, or someone else for help.

Standards of academic conduct are governed by the University's Academic Integrity Code. By enrolling in the university and registering for this course, you acknowledge your familiarity with the Code and pledge to abide by it. All suspected violations of the Code will be immediately referred to the Office of the Dean. Disciplinary action, including failure for the course, suspension, or dismissal, may result. Additional information about the Code (i.e. acceptable forms of collaboration, definitions of plagiarism, use of sources including the Internet, and the adjudication process) can be found in a number of places including the University's *Academic Regulations*, *Student Handbook*, and Academic Integrity Code website. If you have any questions about academic integrity or standards of conduct in this course, please discuss them with your instructor.

Schedule of Class Meetings

Here is our schedule of classes for the semester. This section will provide you with a quick overview of what you need to do each week. You can find detailed information about the assignments in the Assignments folder.

Week 1: May 11 – May 17

Topic: **Violence and Inequality: Foundational Concepts**

Readings	Films	Lectures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cavanagh• Fanflik• Little/Kantor• Logan/Walker• Trammell	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Power and Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Numbers: GBV Statistics• Basic Concepts about IPV, SV, and Stalking

Assignments	Format	Due Date
1) Introduction	1) Discussion Board	1) May 12
2) Response to Doc.	2) Discussion Board	2) May 13
3) Meaningful Reading <i>and</i> Response to Classmate	3) Discussion Board	3) May 14 <i>and</i> May 15
4) Response Paper (if applicable)	4) BB Submission	4) May 15

Week 2: May 18 – May 24

Topic: Cultures of Violence: Impact of Cultural Values and Beliefs on Survivors and Perpetrators

Readings	Films	Lectures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anderson/Umberson • Bavelas/Coates • Deming, et. al. • Foubert, et. al. • Weitzman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rape, Battering, and Stalking Cultures

Assignments	Format	Due Date
1) Response to Doc.	1) Discussion Board	1) May 20
2) Meaningful Reading <i>and</i> Response to Classmate	2) Discussion Board	2) May 21 <i>and</i> May 22
3) Response Paper (if applicable)	3) BB Submission	3) May 22

Week 3: May 25 – May 31

Topic: Race, Immigration, and Racism

Readings	Films	Lectures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falcon • Pierce/Koepplinger • Kuokkanen • Potter • Tamborra 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rape in the Fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women of Color Feminisms and Intersectionality

Assignments	Format	Due Date
1) Response to Doc.	1) Discussion Board	1) May 27
2) Meaningful Reading <i>and</i> Response to Classmate	2) Discussion Board	2) May 28 <i>and</i> May 29
3) Response Paper (if applicable)	3) BB Submission	3) May 29

Week 4: June 1 – June 7

Topic: Sex, Violence and Capitalism: The Inequalities of Prostitution

Readings	Films	Lectures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farley, et. al. • Kotrla • Kramer • Miriam • Raphael and Shapiro 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Young Girls or • Tricked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural Violence • Feminist Debates about the Sex Industry

Assignments	Format	Due Date
1) Response to Doc.	1) Discussion Board	1) June 3
2) Meaningful Reading <i>and</i> Response to Classmate	2) Discussion Board	2) June 4 <i>and</i> June 5
3) Response Paper (if applicable)	3) BB Submission	3) June 5

Week 5: June 8 – June 14

Topic: Heteronormativity and LGBTQ Erasures

Readings	Films	Lectures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Davies/Hudson • Gentlewarrior • Girshick • Hardesty • Oliffe, et. al. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look Past the Labels webinar • Kicked Out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV in LGBTQ Communities

Assignments	Format	Due Date
1) Response to Doc.	1) Discussion Board	1) June 10
2) Meaningful Reading <i>and</i> Response to Classmate	2) Discussion Board	2) June 11 <i>and</i> June 12
3) Response Paper (if applicable)	3) BB Submission	3) June 12

Week 6: June 15 – June 21

Topic: Changing Cultures: Anti-Violence Struggles

Readings	Films	Lectures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DeGue, et. al. • Fisher, et. al. • Parra-Cardona, et. al. • Plummer/Klein • Schwartz/DeKeseredy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackson Katz TED Talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Prevention, Bystander Intervention, and Risk Reduction

Assignments	Format	Due Date
1) Response to Doc.	1) Discussion Board	1) June 17
2) Meaningful Reading <i>and</i> Response to Classmate	2) Discussion Board	2) June 18 <i>and</i> June 19
3) Response Paper (if applicable)	3) BB Submission	3) June 19
4) Personal Reflection Essay	4) BB Submission	4) June 19

Final projects are due June 22 by 6 pm on Blackboard!



<http://static.guim.co.uk/sys-images/Guardian/Pix/pictures/2013/1/1/1357044457307/Delhi-protest-for-gang-ra-006.jpg>