Gender and War
CAS IR 518, WS 345, PO 583
Spring 2012
v1.0

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Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m., IRC 220.
Office hours: Monday, 1–2:30 p.m., Thursday, 2–3:30 p.m..

Gender and War
The course examines gender constructions in world politics (with a focus on the biological and
social determinants of aggression, violence, and war). Some topics include gender biases in
international relations theories, women in combat, homosexuals in the military, discourse,
attitudes towards war, rape, and female and male roles in the conduct of war. The course also
assesses the roles of women as leaders, actors, and objects of foreign policy.

Course Requirements
There are three course requirements:
1. Class participation (10%)
2. A midterm paper (20%);
3. A formal group presentation (30%); and
4. A final term paper (40%).

Participation is vital in this course. Course participants will therefore be expected to attend each
session, to show up on time, and to contribute arguments, criticism, and opinions to the
discussion; engaging major themes of the course on an ongoing basis.

Participants will be responsible for two papers for the course: (1) a midterm paper of 2–3 double-
spaced pages length, analyzing a current issue relating sex, gender, and war in terms of core
course concepts and theories (topics given by me in class on 20 March, due in class on 3 April);
and (2) a final paper of 12–15 double-spaced pages exploring one of the major themes of the
course in greater depth (topic chosen by you, due in class 1 May).1

In addition to mid-term and final papers, students will also make a formal group
presentation. These will take place in the final two sessions (24 and 26 April). Students will be
divided into six groups of 4–5 people on 3 April. Each group will be responsible for pulling
together a ten-minute presentation on a key theme in the course (e.g. women in combat,
homosexual military service, and women as leaders).2 A short topic selection statement (one–two
sentences) will be due to the instructor by in class on 10 April.

1 All paper assignments must be formatted double-spaced; with a twelve-point (or equivalent) font and
one-inch margins on all sides. Page limits are to be strictly observed. Title pages, bibliographies, and
endnotes will not count against page limits. Double-sided printing encouraged but not required.

2 A guide on formal presentations will be posted to our course website on 3 April.
Readings

Books (the following are required)
• Goldstein, Joshua, War and Gender (Cambridge University Press, 2003). 978-0521001809
• Wrangham, Richard and Dale Peterson, Demonic Males (Mariner Books, 1997). 978-0395877432

Articles & Book Chapters
• Ehrenreich, Barbara, et. al. "Fukuyama's Follies: So What if Women Ruled the World?" Foreign Affairs, Vol. 78. No. 1 Jan/Feb 1999), pp. 118-.

Films (Required)
• Edward Zwick, *Courage Under Fire* (1996);
• Ridley Scott, *G.I. Jane* (1997); and

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3 Available for viewing at Geddes Video Library.
Part I: Gender, Sex, and War [91]

17 JAN Session 1.1: Overview (sex vs. gender) [91]

Issues
• What is sex and what is gender?
• Are males and females different, and if so, how (if at all) do those differences matter?
• Is war a male phenomenon, why might that matter?

Assigned Readings
1. Goldstein. Gender and War, pp. 1–58. (59 pp)

19 JAN Session 1.2: the Nature of War and Killing [94]

Issues
• What is war like?
• Do males like to kill?

Assigned Readings
1. Clausewitz, On War, pp. 101–103. (3 pp)
2. Ehrenreich, Blood Rites, pp. 7–35. (29 pp)
4. Fussell, Wartime, chapter 18. (30 pp)

24 JAN Session 1.3 [100]

Issues
• Is killing natural?
• Why the obsession with war?

Assigned Readings

Part II: A Male Violence Gene? [209]

26 JAN Session 3.1 [55]

Issues
• How does biology affect our understanding of gender?
• What is violence?

Assigned Reading
Goldstein, Gender and War, pp. 128–182. (55 pp)
31 JAN Session 3.2 [164]
Issues
• Is killing a male act?
• What role do women, reproduction, status, territory and food play?

Assigned Reading
Wrangham and Peterson, Demonic Males, read chapters 1, 4, 6, and 8–12; skim other chapters. (164 pp)

Recommended

Part III: Males as Killers [173]

2 FEB Session 4.1 [67]
Issues
• Does male bonding account for why women aren't warriors?

Assigned Reading
Goldstein, Gender and War, pp. 183–250. (67 pp)

7 FEB Session 4.2 [50]
Issues
• Is violence natural for males?
• Does violence define male-ness?

Assigned Reading
Goldstein, Gender and War, pp. 251–301. (50 pp)

9 FEB Session 4.3 [56]
Issues
• Is male violence the result of socialization?
• How are males socialized to violence, what functions might that serve?

Assigned Readings
1. Ahmad and Smith, “Bullying in Schools and the Issue of Sex Difference,” pp. 70–86. (17 pp)

Recommended
Part IV: Women as Peacemakers [163]

14 FEB Session 5.1: Women as Peacemakers? [30]

Issues
• What roles do women play (or are women imagined to play) in socializing males to violence?

Assigned Reading
Goldstein, Gender and War, pp. 301–331 (30 pp)

16 FEB Session 5.2: Women as Peacemakers? [133]

Issues
• Are women naturally peacemakers or is this a role they have been socialized into?

Assigned Readings
5. McGlen and Sarkees, "Organizational Factors: Tokens in Diplomacy and War-Making," in Women in Foreign Policy, chapter 2, pp. 60–121. (62 pp)

Recommended

Part V: Women in Combat [147]

20 FEB [no class: President’s Day]

23 FEB Session 6.1 [69]

Issues
• What roles have women historically played in combat?
• Is a relative lack of physical strength decisive in explaining the distribution of the sexes on the battlefield?

Assigned Reading
Goldstein, Gender and War, pp. 59–127. (69 pp)
28 FEB Session 6.2 [78]

Issues
• Should women serve in combat?
• Which arguments for and against do you find most convincing?

Assigned Readings
6. Miller, Laura and Charles Moskos, "Humanitarians or Warriors?: Race, Gender, and Combat Status in Operation Restore Hope," pp. 615–635. (21 pp)

Recommended

Part VI: Homosexuality and Military Service [76]

1 MAR Session 7.1

Issues
• Should homosexuals be allowed to serve in the military?
• If yes, should combat units be off limits?
• How might arguments regarding homosexuals in the military affect arguments about women in combat?

Assigned Readings

Recommended
Adair and Myers "Admission of Gays to the Military: A Singularly Intolerant Act." Parameters, Spring 1993, pp. 10-19.
Part VII: The Impact of War on Females and males [195]

6 MAR [no class]

8 MAR Session 7.1: The Impact of War on Females [115]

Issues
• Women as victims of war
• Rape, genocide, sanctions, social change and movement

Assigned Readings
5. Benard, “Rape as Terror: The Case of Bosnia,” pp. 29–43. (15 pp)

13 MAR/15 MAR [spring break]

20 MAR Session 7.2 The Impact of War on Males [80]: Midterm Paper Topics Given

Issues
• Men as victims of war
• Fear of dying, killing, and their psychological impact.
• Who suffers more in war: males or females?

Assigned Readings
1. Selected Poetry from WWI (Sassoon, Graves, Owen) (5 pp)
5. Goldstein, *Gender and War*, pp. 400–402 (3 pp)

Recommended [Films]
Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930).
Part VIII: Views of Diplomacy and War [207]

22 MAR Session 8.1 [82]

Issues
- Are there general differences in how males and females/men and women, view the limits and possibilities of diplomacy?

Assigned Readings

27 MAR Session 8.2 [80]

Issues
- What accounts for observed differences in how males and females/men and women view diplomacy?

Assigned Readings

29 MAR Session 8.3 [45]

Issues
- If women ruled the world, how (if at all), might interstate affairs be better?

Assigned Readings [debate]

Part IX: International Relations Theory and Feminist Thought [183]

3 APR Session 9.1 [96]: Midterm Papers Due in Class, Presentation Groups Assigned

Issues
- How, if at all, is international relations theory gendered?

Assigned Reading
Tickner, ed. Gender in International Relations, chapters 1–3. (96 pp)
5 APR Session 9.2 [47]

Issues
• If international relations theory is masculinized, why might that matter?

Assigned Reading
Tickner, ed. Gender in International Relations, chapters 4–5. (47 pp)

10 APR Session 9.3 [40]: Presentation Topic Statements Due

Issues
• What does a feminist international relations theory look like, and how might that help or hurt us?

Assigned Readings [debate]

Part X: Societal Features and War Propensity [102]

12 APR Session 10.1: Sex Ratios and War [34]

Issues
• Under what conditions do excess males affect the likelihood of life, liberty, and prosperity?
• How might the presence of too many females affect the same things?

Assigned Reading
Hudson and Den Boer, “A Surplus of Men, A Deficit of Peace: Security and Sex Ratio in Asia’s Largest States,” pp. 5–38. (34 pp)

17 APR Session 10.2: Equality and War [68]

Issues
• In what ways does gender equality or inequality contribute to war and peace?

Assigned Readings
Part XI: Sex and War in Three Films

19 APR Session 11.1

Issues
• What are the key themes of each film? Are they dated, how and how much?
• What key course concepts are engaged in each film?
• Do you agree with each filmmaker’s point of view? Why or why not?

Assigned Films
1. Courage Under Fire (1996);
2. G.I. Jane (1997); and

Part XII: Formal Presentations

24 APR Session 12.1
• Three twenty-minute presentations (groups 1–3).
• Discussion.

26 APR Session 12.2
• Three twenty-minute presentations (groups 4–6).
• Discussion.

Part XIII: Course Conclusion [no assigned readings]

1 MAY Session 13: Final Papers Due

Issues
• A reprise of key issues and debates: nature v. nurture, tooth-to-tail, la difference?
• Are women taking over the world? If so, how; and what might we expect as a result?