

Women, Religion, and Representation in an Age of Globalization

INRL 621 01 (22569)/WGSS 621/REL 827/AMST 862

Th 1:30-3:20

Luce 203

Spring 2009

Professor Laura Wexler

Office: WLH 314

Office Phone: 432-0848

Office Hours: TBD

E-mail: laura.wexler@yale.edu

Professor Sally Promey

Office: BK 025/ISM N210

Office Phone: 203-432-6264

Office Hours: By

appointment

E-mail: sally.promey@yale.edu

Graduate Associate

Perin Gurel

Office Hours: By appointment

E-mail: perin.gurel@yale.edu

I. Course Description

In recent years, the rapid dissemination of visual images has become an important form of mass communication with widespread political implications for governments and NGOs. Gendered and racialized representations, often invoking highly charged religious and/or nationalist symbols, guide political debates and struggles over cultural and economic globalization. This course takes an interdisciplinary approach to examining issues of religion, gender, representation, and globalization with special attention to the ways in which the practices of religion in women's daily lives impact and are impacted by globalization and the ways in which those effects and interventions are represented in visual culture.

II. Course Requirements

A. Readings: This class is designed to address interdisciplinary research in the scholarship of the visual cultures of religion, gender and globalization. A key requirement for this course is the students' critical engagement with assigned readings. Every student in the class is responsible for completing each week's reading assignment before the class meeting. Individual students will lead discussion of texts; all class participants will contribute to analysis and discussion each week.

B. Discussion Leadership and Reader Responses: Students assigned to leadership roles for each week's readings will come to class prepared to facilitate discussion. It may be useful to think of this task as, in part, a critical review of the reading in question. In addition to summarizing and critiquing key aspects of the author's argument, discussion leaders will be expected to engage the class in conversation on closely related subjects. Students in leadership roles will arrange to make available in class, and when relevant, *reproductions of major images*

or objects under discussion.

For any given class session, each student not assigned a discussion leadership role for that session is expected to post reading responses on the class server, to come to class having read the week's set of responses by other class participants, and to prepare for class a question for discussion, based on these readings and responses.

C. Semester Presentation and Paper: Each student will conduct research on a topic directly related to the seminar's constellation of subjects. In the second half of the semester students will present their research in class and, at semester's end, turn in a final research paper.

III. Course Grades

Grades will be earned for performance in three areas:

Discussion leadership, reader responses, and overall class participation (30%)

Presentation of research in class (30%)

Final paper (40%)

IV. Books to be purchased (Available at Labyrinth Books)

1. David A Bailey and Gilane Tawadros, ed. *Veil: Veiling, Representation, and Contemporary Art* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003).
2. Neloufer de Mel, *Militarizing Sri Lanka: Popular Culture, Memory and Narrative in the Armed Conflict* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007).
3. Erika Doss, *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials: Toward a Theory of Temporary Memorials* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008),
4. Simon Wiesenthal, *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness* (New York: Schocken Books, 1998).

All other readings (book chapters and articles) will be available online through the class website.

V. Course Calendar and Readings

**Th 15 Jan. Introduction to the Course
Defining Terms I**

Readings:

-Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of US Imperialism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 1-14

- Shu-Mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations Across the Pacific* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 1-23.

- Melanie McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and US Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 266-307.

Highly Recommended:

- James Elkins, *The Object Stares Back* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997), 11-46.

Th 22 Jan. Defining Terms II

Readings:

- "What is in a Name? Meanings and Usages of Gender," In *KeyConcepts: Gender by* Harriet Bradley (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), 14-26.
- Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91.5 (1986): 1053-1075.
- Kutlug Ataman, "Women Who Wear Wigs," *Art Journal* 58.4 (1999): 30-35.
- Sally M. Promey, "The 'Return' of Religion in the Scholarship of American Art," *Art Bulletin* 85 (September 2003), 581-603. *Read the Section on "The Secularization Theory of Modernity," 584-587.
- Tracy Fessenden, "'The Secular' as Opposed to What?" *New Literary History* 38.4 (2007): 631-636.
- Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of US Imperialism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 52-93.

Highly Recommended:

- Mino Moallem, "Transnationalism, Feminism, and Fundamentalism," in *Women, Gender, and Religion: A Reader*, edited by Elizabeth A. Castelli (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 119-45.
- Jonathan Z. Smith. "Religion, Religions, Religious," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, edited by Mark C. Taylor (University of Chicago Press, 1998), 269-84.
- Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), Chapter 7, "Pedagogies of the Sacred: Making the Invisible Tangible," 287-331.

Th 29 Jan. Museums: Power, Friction, Representation

Readings:

- Corrine Kratz and Ivan Karp, Introduction to *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, edited by Ivan Karp, Corrine Kratz, Lynn Szwaja and Tomas Ybarra-Frausto (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 1-30.
- Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Exhibitionary Complexes," in *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*, edited by Ivan Karp, Corrine Kratz, Lynn Szwaja and Tomas Ybarra-Frausto (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 35-45.
- Melanie McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and US Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), "King Tut, Commodity Nationalism, and the Politics of Oil, 1973-1979," 125-154.
- Vijaya Nagajaran, "Hosting the Divine: The Kolam in Tamilnadu," in *Mud, Mirror, and Thread:*

Folk Traditions of Rural India, edited by Nora Fisher (Ahmedabad: Mapin Publishing Pvt LTD, 2008), 192-203.

Highly Recommended:

- Richard Slotkin, "Buffalo Bill's 'Wild West' and the Mythologization of the American Empire." In *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, eds. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 164-181.

Th 5 Feb. Veiling, Representation, and Contemporary Art

Readings:

- Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem* (University of Minnesota Press, 1986): Chapter 1, "Orient as Stereotype and Phantasm," and Chapter 2, "Women From the Outside: Obstacle and Transparency," 3-16.
- Joan W. Scott, "The Banning of Islamic Head Scarves in French Public Schools." *French Politics, Culture and Society* 23 (2003): 106-127.
- Alev Cinar, *Modernity, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey: Bodies, Places and Time* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), Chapter 2, "Clothing the National Body: Islamic Veiling and Secular Unveiling," 53-98.
- David A Bailey and Gilane Tawadros, ed. *Veil: Veiling, Representations, and Contemporary Art* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003). All, especially Reina Lewis, "Preface," 6-14; David A Bailey and Gilane Tawadros, "Introduction," 18-38; Zineb Sadira, "Mapping the Illusive," 56-72.

Th 12 Feb. Erika Doss: The Emotional Life of Public Memorials

Readings:

- Erika Doss, *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials: Toward a Theory of Temporary Memorials* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 52pgs.
- Erika Doss, "War, Memory, and the Public Mediation of Affect: The National World War II Memorial and American Imperialism," *Memory Studies* 1. 2 (2008): 227-250.
- Erika Doss, "Spontaneous Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning in America," *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art, and Belief* 2.3 (2006): 294-318.

Th 19 Feb. Kathryn Lofton: Oprah, Women, Religion, and Globalization

Readings:

- Kathryn Lofton, "Public Confessions: Oprah Winfrey's American Religious History," *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, "The Oprah Winfrey Talk Show and Civil Society," 18.1 (March 2008), 51-69.
- Kathryn Lofton, "Missionary Accessory: Leadership Academies and Big Gives," Chapter from *Oprah: The Gospel of an Icon* (Chapter to be provided by author).
- Inderpal Grewal, *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms* (Durham, NC:

Duke University Press, 2005.) Chapter 5 “Transnational America: Race and Gender after 9/11,” 196-220, and Chapter 3 “Traveling Barbie: Indian Transnationalities and the Global Consumer,” 80-121.

Th 26 Feb. Noura Saleh Alturki and Andrea K. Blanch: Gender and Representation

Readings: Guest lecturers will assign readings.

Th 5 Mar. Student presentations

Th 12 Mar. SPRING BREAK; No Class Session.

Th 19 Mar. SPRING BREAK; No Class Session.

Th 26 Mar. Neloufer de Mel: Popular Culture, Memory and Narrative

Readings:

- Neloufer de Mel, *Militarizing Sri Lanka: Popular Culture, Memory and Narrative in the Armed Conflict* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2007).

Th 2 Apr. Student presentations

4:00-6:30pm: Robert Crusz, Sri Lankan Film Series (Attendance strongly encouraged).

Th 9 Apr. Student presentations

4:00-6:30pm: Robert Crusz, Sri Lankan Film Series (Attendance strongly encouraged).

Th 16 Apr. Film Screening and Q&A by Helen Whitney

Readings:

- Simon Wiesenthal, *The Sunflower: On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness* (New York: Schocken Books, 1998).

- Sharon Lamb, “Women, Abuse, and Forgiveness: A Special Case,” In *Before Forgiving*:

Cautionary Views of Forgiveness in Psychotherapy, edited by J.G. Murphy and Sharon Lamb (London: Oxford University Press, 2002), 155–171.

- Sally Engle Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 113-133.

Dinner at Laura Wexler's house with director Helen Whitney

Th 23 Apr. Student presentations