This course looks at debates about women, gender and sexuality in the U.S. and globally in the past and present. This year the central topics are as follows:

I. Male and Female Bodies
   Bodies in relation to technologies of self-disgust, self-love, discipline and destruction.

II. Race, Gender and the Burden of History
   How social hierarchies are formed, replicated and sustained over time, with particular attention to the intersection of race and gender.

III. Men, Women and War
   Feminists and others thinking about war; Soldiers on the experience of war; Gender and the Iraq War

IV. Children and Their Families
   What do families do for (and to) children? What is parental love? How do gender theorists think about families? Can we do better?

V. Religion, Gender and Sexuality
   Why are so many new (or relatively new) religious movements so concerned about women and sexuality? Why are women drawn to them? How do gender concerns work in different faiths?

VI. Feminisms
   What are some of the major “fronts” nationally and internationally with respect to women? What are the issues? Where are the biggest challenges? What are the alliances? What about men?

Two other running sub-themes of the course will be: 1) comparisons and convergences between women in the Muslim World and the predominantly Christian United States; and 2) appropriations and adaptations of classic feminist theories and critiques by political conservatives, fundamentalists and other anti-feminist or post-feminist movements and theorists.

WAGS 11 is one of the required courses for the Women’s and Gender Studies major.

A course packet may be picked up in the Women’s and Gender Studies Office, 14 Grosvenor House. Please wait for announcements as to when (probably beginning of the THIRD week of classes). The required books are also on reserve in Frost Library for those who prefer not to purchase them.
Required Books (Available from the Jeffrey Amherst College Store):

Course Protocol

1. You are required to attend every class, and I do notice if you fail to turn up. This is a discussion course. It depends on everyone pulling their weight. Your ability to grasp the material will be compromised if you do not attend classes, and your grade will suffer. I make it to class every day; so can you.

2. Read the readings before class, not after class or right before the papers are due.

3. There will be three 5-page papers. Approximate weighting is as follows:
   - Paper 1: 25%
   - Paper 2: 25%
   - Paper 3: 30%
   Commitment to the Class 20% (this is obviously a fairly subjective measure, but it includes such factors as a) attendance b) evidence of having read the readings (or perused websites or other assignments) with care; c) contribution to class discussion.

4. There is no one “party line” in this class. Expect to encounter views with which you vehemently disagree, from other students, from the readings, and from the professor. This class is not a “safe space” and it is not intended to make you feel good or comfortable. It is intended to challenge your assumptions and to present multiple points of view on some very complex subjects. On the other hand, it behooves you to listen to people and try to find common ground before jumping on them. At the very least respect others’ right to say what they believe even if, in your view, they are wrong. Try to be aware of your own hot-button issues, and cultivate a mature style of discussion around them.

If you are feeling unhappy about things that go on in or around the class, please talk to me about it earlier rather than later, either in person or via e-mail. I can’t promise to fix it, but if I can I will.
Order of Class Discussions

Week 1
Tues. Sept. 2  Introduction

BODIES


Susan McClary, "Living to Tell: Madonna's Resurrection of the Fleshy" *Genders* 7 (1990):1-21 (TO BE PASSED OUT IN CLASS ON TUESDAY, SEPT. 2)

Susan Bordo, "Material Girl': The Effacements of Postmodern Culture" in *Gender/Sexuality Reader*, 335-358.


Week 2

Janice Boddy "Womb as Oasis: The symbolic context of Pharaonic Circumcision in Rural Northern Sudan" in *Gender/Sexuality Reader*, 309-324.

Thurs. Sept. 11  What Every Soldier Should Know, 9-10; The Hurt Locker, 11; Here, Bullet, 13; AB Negative (the Surgeon's Poem), 15-16; Eulogy, 20; This Is War Then (by Fahdil Al-Azzawi), 21; Iraqi Policemen, 30; 2000 Lbs. 42-45, in Brian Turner, *Here, Bullet* (2005) (Buy).

Please search [http://www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) using the search terms "woman suicide bomber" and be prepared to discuss what you find.
## RACE, GENDER AND THE BURDEN OF HISTORY

### Week 3
**Tues. Sept. 16**  
Valerie Miller, *Property* (2003) Entire (Buy)

**Thurs. Sept. 18**  


### Week 4
**Tues. Sept. 23**  


Amnesty International USA, *Maze of Injustice: The Failure to Protect Indigenous Women from Sexual Violence in the USA* (2007); this is a rather long report (100 pages), so I have not put it in the packet. Please read it online at the course website.

**Thurs. Sept. 25**  
Ann Laura Stoler "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race and Morality in Colonial Asia" in *Gender/Sexuality Reader*, 13-36.


### WARS

### Week 5
**Tues. Sept. 30**  

Margot Badran "Gender, Islam and the State: Kuwaiti Women in Struggle, Pre-Invasion to Post-liberation" in *Islam, Gender, and Social Change*, 190-208 (Buy)

**Thurs. Oct. 2**


**Week 6**

**Tues. Oct. 7**

Brian Turner, *Here, Bullet* (2005), read remainder of poems. In addition choose one or two that seem to you to speak to the complexities of this war (or all wars), gender, and perhaps America’s relationship to Islam, and be prepared to say why.

**Thurs. Oct. 9**


Lauren Sandler, “Iraq’s Women: Occupied Territory” *Amnesty Now* (Winter, 2003), 22-26 (Packet)


Please also Google “sexual harassment, women, Iraq” (all three words together) and “prostitution, Iraq” (two words together) and be prepared to discuss what you find.

***Midsemester Break Oct. 11-14***

**Week 7**

**Thurs. Oct. 16**

**Special Topic: Gender and Islam**

Ingrid Mattson, *The Story of the Qur’an: Its History and Place in Muslim Life* (2008), 1-4, 10-12 (Packet)

CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Week 8

Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "Lifeboat Ethics: Mother Love and Child Death in Northeast Brazil" in *Gender/Sexuality Reader*, 82-88


Week 9

RELIGION


Week 10

Film: *Unborn in the USA* (2007), dir. Stephen Fell and Will Thompson (First Run Features, USA), 105 mins. [Watch BEFORE class]

Noemie Emery "Angry White Women: The Backlash against


Family Research Council website:  

**Thurs. Nov. 6**  
***CLASS CANCELLED***

**Week 11**  
**Tues. Nov. 11**  


Lila Abu-Lughod, “Movie Stars and Islamic Moralism in Egypt.” In *Gender/Sexuality Reader*, 502-12

**Thurs. Nov. 13:**  

**FEMINISMS**

**Week 12**  
**Tues. Nov. 18**  

Please google the following: Hana Abdi; Shirin Ebadi; Persian Women Bloggers, *Zanan* women’s magazine; The Million Campaign at [http://www.4equality.info/english/spip.php?rubrique2](http://www.4equality.info/english/spip.php?rubrique2); and Iran women Olympians. Try to get a sense of the dimensions of the current Iranian feminist movement, as well as the very active and heavily promoted anti-feminist (conservative) women’s movement.
What are the issues, and what is the strategy of the Iranian government?

Thurs. Nov. 20


***Nov. 22 - Nov. 30: Thanksgiving Break***

Week 13

Tues. Dec. 2


And look at the following websites:
[http://www.fostercaremonth.org/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.fostercaremonth.org/Pages/default.aspx)


Thurs. Dec. 4

Violence Against Women Online Site

There are a number of YouTube videos on the rape of indigenous women. See if you can find some activist organizations.

A good list of body/fat acceptance blogs and sites: [http://www.bellaonline.com/articles/art42580.asp](http://www.bellaonline.com/articles/art42580.asp)

Please read some of them, and be prepared to comment on them.
There are many sites having to do with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the Iraq war. See e.g.,
http://www.ptsdmanual.com/

http://www.iraqwarveterans.org/ptsd.htm

In addition to the above, please find some activist sites dealing with issues that interest you, and be prepared to talk about and/or show them in class.

Week 14
Tues. Dec. 9 Conclusion.