

Women, War and Politics: Gender In Politics and Violence

POL-2096/ IR-2041: Spring 2025

Dipin Kaur

Class Meeting: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3- 4:30 pm
AC04 -LR 303

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5- 6 pm
Sign up at: <https://calendly.com/dipin-kaur/officehours>

Teaching Assistants: Ritvi Jain, Riya Ray Chaudhry

Teaching Fellow: Rupal Rupali

Course Description

In this course, we will be leveraging the concept of and debates around gender as effective lenses to understand (a) political participation and representation, and (b) contexts affected by political violence. While it is well-established that male bodies make up the majority of decision-makers and participants in quotidian electoral politics, the same logic applies to contexts affected by conflict and war. Conventionally, male bodies are at the forefront of decision-making about whether to go to war, and on the frontlines of said wars as fighters.

In the last few decades, however, these constructions of masculinity and femininity have come to be questioned. Instead, the understanding that gender affects the way in which we see and make sense of the world around us – and that men and women experience and affect wartime and electoral dynamics differently – has come front and center. In the same spirit, we will focus on the role of women in political decision-making and participation; their role both as perpetrators of violence as combatants (and terrorists), as victims and as survivors of male-victimizing atrocities; the militarization of gendered bodies and the impact of gender-based violence in armed conflict.

Finally, we will reflect on the gendered aspects of gender in resistance to political violence, peacekeeping and rebuilding societies after war. As we cover each theme, we will pay particular attention to what feminists have described as intersectionality and the continuum of violence, from the “private” to the “public” sphere, from the militarization of everyday living to overt violent conflict. In addition, we will pay attention to whether different approaches to tackling gender inequality in South Asian contexts have been effective.

Assignments and Grading Rubric: (20 + 20 + 5+ 15 + 5 + 35 = 100%)

1. Weekly In-Class Reflections (20%) – due weekly on Mon/ Wed 11:59 pm, depending on the readings you are addressing, for any 10 weeks of the course.

For each week, select a film, TV show, or news article, and analyze the ways in which it relates to min. 2 readings for the week – does your chosen piece of media substantiate/ contradict/ nuance the claims in the readings? This should be SHORT (150 words max) and no AI should be used in writing this assignment. These are due on Monday 11:59 pm (for Tuesday’s readings) or on Wednesday 11:59 pm (for Thursday’s readings) on the day prior to the class meeting. Students will be expected to post on Canvas/ Classroom for any 10 weeks of the course.

2. In-class Midterm Assignment: (20%) on March 6

The midterm will take place on Thursday, March 6, during class time. The exam will last 1 hour and 15 minutes, during which time students will answer a set of multiple-choice questions and 2 long answer questions in a closed book format.

3. Periodical Pop Quizzes (5%) (1% each, a total of 5 quizzes - all post midterm)

Six lectures through the semester will be followed by a short, multiple-choice quiz drawn either from the week's readings or the content of that day's lecture. These quizzes are meant to serve as low-stakes attention checks that would allow you to better absorb otherwise expansive course material. Quizzes will not be intimated in advance and can only be taken in person in that class session. We will count the best of 5 quizzes for the final grade – you miss a quiz because you were absent in class on a particular day, you have one opportunity to make up for it. Beyond that date, you will forgo the 2%.

4. Class Attendance + Participation (7.5 + 7.5 = 15%) and In-Class Reading Presentation (5%)

Aside from being present (see attendance policy below), students are expected to take part in discussions as part of class activity. In addition, all sessions will start with a student's presentation (of MAX 3 mins per student), based on class readings and case studies selected by students. Please sign up for a set of reading(s), posted on excel.

5. Final paper (30% for final paper, +5% for memo) - Memo (5%) due on April 10 at 11:59 pm, Final Paper (30%) due May 8 at 11:59 pm

As the final submission for the course, you will work on a 2,500-3,500 word research paper (exclusive of footnotes/endnotes and bibliography).

Pick either (a) a conflict that has taken place in the world in the last 10 years, or (b) an election that has concluded in the last 5 years.

Prepare a report on who the main stakeholders/ actors are, what the manifesto/ ideology is, whether both sides have external assistance or are being observed by foreign bodies. Then, reflect on the following: what has the role of women been in this society? Have they participated in the conflict/ election? Have their issues been represented? How has the election/ conflict affected their participation in society?

For this assignment, you will be evaluated on (1) your ability to identify an interesting case and treat gender as a lens to analyze it, (2) your ability to structure your paper in a clear, logical and coherent manner, (3) your ability to assemble secondary material and (4) your ability to connect the case to the larger themes addressed in the course.

(Quick note on Scholarly vs. Popular Sources: <https://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources/scholarly-vs-popular-sources>)

This paper is due on May 8, 2025, at 11:59 pm. NO extensions will be allowed beyond this date. Starting this time, the standard grading policy (see below) will apply.

Course Structure, Schedule, and Readings:

Week 1– Tue, Jan 21 and Thu, Jan 23: Course Introduction and Concepts: Gender, the State, and Intersectionality

[Jan 21: *Class Introduction, no assigned reading*]

1. (Jan 23) Srinivasan, Amia. "The Right To Sex." Chapter 1: "The Conspiracy Against Men"
2. (Jan 23) Htun, Mala. "What it means to study gender and the state." *Politics & Gender* 1.1 (2005): 157-166.
3. (Jan 23) Havinsky, Olena. "Intersectionality 101".
<https://resources.equityinitiative.org/bitstream/handle/ei/433/2014%20Hankivsky%20Intersectionality%20101.pdf> (A fun primer to break down a key concept)

Recommended Readings:

- Brewer, Sierra, and Lauren Dundes. "Concerned, meet terrified: Intersectional feminism and the Women's March." *Women's Studies International Forum*. Vol. 69. Pergamon, 2018.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0277539517301449>

- Waylen, Georgina, Karen Celis, Johanna Kantola, and Laurel Weldon. 2013. "Introduction: Gender and politics: a gendered world and a gendered discipline." In *Oxford Handbook of Gender and Politics*. Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Hill, Patricia Collins and Valerie Chepp. "Intersectionality." *The Oxford handbook of gender and politics*. (2013): pp 1-20 out of the 35-page chapter.
- Mügge, Liza M., and Silvia Erzeel. "Double jeopardy or multiple advantage? Intersectionality and political representation." *Parliamentary Affairs* 69.3 (2016): 499-511.

Week 2 – Tue, Jan 28 and Thu, Jan 30: Gender roles and Political Representation: Do women have different preferences as political participants? How do they view themselves?

1. (Jan 28) Read **ANY two** of the following:
 - (a) "How Indians View Gender Roles in Families and Society" <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/03/02/how-indians-view-gender-roles-in-families-and-society/>,
 - (b) Chaudhry, Anirvan. "How the BJP wins over women." <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/04/how-the-bjp-wins-over-women?center=india&lang=en>,
 - (c) The Myth of the Woman Vote <https://frontline.thehindu.com/politics/indian-women-voters-myth-gender-vote-bank-analysis-2024/article68950045.ece>
2. (Jan 28) Goyal, Tanushree. "Representation from below: How women's grassroots party activism promotes equal political participation." *American Political Science Review* 118.3 (2024): 1415-1430.
3. (Jan 30) (a) Prillaman, Soledad Artiz. "Strength in numbers: how women's groups close India's political gender gap." *American Journal of Political Science* (2017). (b) Especially interesting in light of research on gender in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections: Kumar, Rithika. "What Lies Behind India's Rising Female Voter Turnout." CEIP. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/04/what-lies-behind-indias-rising-female-voter-turnout>
4. (Jan 30) Haider, Erum A., and Irfan Nooruddin. "Well-Behaved Women: Engendering Political Interest in Public Opinion Research." *Comparative Political Studies* 57.12 (2024): 2046-2079.

Recommended Readings:

- Chhibber, Pradeep. "Why are some women politically active? The household, public space, and political participation in India." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 43.3-5 (2002): 409-429.
- Khan, Sarah. "Count Me Out: Gendered Preference Expression in Pakistan"

Week 3 – Tue, Feb 4 and Thu, Feb 6: Descriptive Representation, Caste, and Gender in Politics: (Why) does political representation matter?

1. (Feb 4) Mansbridge, Jane. "Should blacks represent blacks and women represent women? A contingent" yes"." *The Journal of politics* 61, no. 3 (1999): 628-657.
2. (Feb 4) Dube, Leela "Caste and Women" in *Gender and Caste: Contemporary Issues Indian Feminism*. New Delhi: Zed Books, 2005.
3. (Feb 4) Paik, Shailaja. *The vulgarity of caste: Dalits, sexuality, and humanity in modern India*. Stanford University Press, 2022. Chapter 1.

[Feb 6 – I will not be on campus, and classes will not meet. Please catch up on the readings for next week, we have covered quite a bit of theoretical ground.]

Recommended Reading:

- Ahuja, Amit, and Susan L. Ostermann. "Crossing caste boundaries in the modern Indian marriage market." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 51 (2016): 365-387.
- Paik, Shailaja. "Dalit feminist thought." *Routledge Handbook of Gender in South Asia*. Routledge, 2021. 55-69.
- Mohanty, Chandra Talpade "Under Western Eyes" and "Under Western Eyes: Revisited"

Week 4 – Tue, Feb 11 and Thu, Feb 13: Women as Political Leaders and Policymakers: Under what conditions do women end up as policymakers? What are the implications of female leadership in politics? Do quotas help women access leadership positions?

1. (Feb 11) Jalalzai, Farida, and Mona Lena Krook. "Beyond Hillary and Benazir: Women's political leadership worldwide." *International Political Science Review* 31.1 (2010): 5-21.
2. (Feb 11) Read/ listen to **any TWO** of the following quick resources:
 - (a) Kesavan, Mukul. "The Solitude of Female Politicians in South Asia" *Al Jazeera*. 20 Dec. 2016.
 - (b) Khan, Sarah. "Women in Electoral Politics: An Account of Exclusion" in eds. Mufti, Siddiqui and Shafqat. (2020). *Pakistan's Political Parties: Surviving Between Dictatorship and Democracy*. Georgetown University Press.
 - (c) Listen to this podcast on Bhumi Purohit's work:
<https://www.discoursemagazine.com/politics/2021/11/04/ideas-of-india-female-leaders-and-bureaucratic-resistance/>.
 - (d) Krook, Mona Lena. "Violence against women in politics." *Journal of Democracy* 28, no. 1 (2017): 74-88.
3. (Feb 13) (Feb 20) Brulé, Rachel E. *Women, power, and property: The paradox of gender equality laws in India*. Cambridge University Press, 2020. Chapter 1.
4. (Feb 13) Karekure-Ramachandra, Varun, and Alexander Lee. "Do gender quotas hurt less privileged groups? Evidence from India." *American Journal of Political Science*

Recommended Readings:

- Bhavnani, Rikbil R. "Do electoral quotas work after they are withdrawn? Evidence from a natural experiment in India." *American Political Science Review* 103.1 (2009): 23-35.
- Krook, Mona Lena. "Contesting gender quotas: dynamics of resistance." *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 4.2 (2016): 268-283.
- Fox, Richard L. and Jennifer L. Lawless. 2004. "Entering the Arena? Gender and the Decision to Run for Office." *American Journal of Political Science* 48 (2): 264-280.
- Chattopadhyay, Raghavendra, and Esther Duflo. "Women as policy makers: Evidence from a randomized policy experiment in India." *Econometrica* 72.5 (2004): 1409-1443.
- *Performing Representation: Women Members in the Indian Parliament*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Crowder-Meyer, Melody. "Baker, bus driver, babysitter, candidate? Revealing the gendered development of political ambition among ordinary Americans." *Political Behavior* 42, no. 2 (2020): 359-384.

Week 5 – Tue, Feb 18 and Thu, Feb 20: Perceptions and Policies of Women as Leaders How do publics and other politicians view women in positions of political power?

1. (Feb 18) Davidson-Schmich, Louise K., Farida Jalalzai, and Malliga Och. "Crisis, gender role congruency, and perceptions of executive leadership." *Politics & Gender* 19.3 (2023): 900-907.
1. (Feb 18) Teele, Dawn Langan. "Forging the Franchise." *Forging the Franchise*. Princeton University Press, 2018. Chapter 1.

2. (Feb 18) Lawless, Jennifer L. "Women, War, and Winning Elections: Gender Stereotyping in the Post-September 11th Era." *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 57, no. 3, 2004, pp. 479–90. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3219857>
3. (Feb 20) Humayun, Fahd. "Gendering hawkishness in the war room: Evidence from Pakistani politicians." *Journal of Peace Research* (2024): 00223433231211762.

**Week 6 – Tue, Feb 25 and Thu, Feb 27: Queer IR + Gender and Security/ Militarism:
[Guest lecture by Rupal on Feb 25]**

1. (Feb 25) Butler, Judith. *Precarious life: The powers of mourning and violence*. verso, 2004. Chapter 3 "Precarious Life" (skim Chapter 1 if possible)
2. (Feb 25) Puar, Jasbir K. *Terrorist assemblages: Homonationalism in queer times*. Duke University Press, 2018. Chapter 1 "Homonationalism and Biopolitics" and Chapter 2 "Abu Ghraib and U.S. Sexual Exceptionalism".
3. (Feb 27) Sjoberg, Laura, and Caron E. Gentry. *Mothers, monsters, whores: women's violence in global politics*. Zed Books, 2007. Read Chapter 3: "Triple Transgressions at Abu Ghraib." Pp. 58-87 (+ Skim Introduction if possible/ interested)
4. (Feb 27) These resources introduce you to some of Enloe's Important Arguments, read/ listen to **ANY ONE** of the following:
 - a. Enloe, Cynthia. "The Curious Feminist." Pp. 99-130 (starting from "All the Men are Militias"), or
 - b. WATCH: Cynthia Enloe Unpacking Gender as an Apology for Militarism: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zMmdEprkwMg&ab_channel=PoliticalStudiesAssociation

Recommended Reading:

- Cockburn, Cynthia. "War and security, women and gender: an overview of the issues." *Gender & Development* 21.3 (2013): 433-452.
- Enloe, Cynthia. "All the Men are in the Militias, All the Women are Victims ...," In *The Women and War Reader*, 1998.
- Duijkema, Claske. 2001. *Why study Gender and Conflict Together? An enquiry in the relationship between the two concepts*. http://www.irenees.net/bdf_fiche-analyse-801en.html
- Zarkov, D. "From Women and War to Gender and Conflict? Feminist Trajectories." *Oxford Handbook of Gender and War*. 2017.
- Moon, "Gender, Militarization, and Universal Male Conscription in South Korea," *W&WR*, 90-100
- Klein, Uta. "'Our Best Boys' The gendered nature of civil-military relations in Israel." *Men and Masculinities* 2.1 (1999): 47-65.
- Bérubé, Allan. *Coming out under fire: The history of gay men and women in World War II*. Univ of North Carolina Press, 2010. Foreword, Introduction, Chapter 1.
- Cohn, Carol, and Cynthia Enloe. "A conversation with Cynthia Enloe: Feminists look at masculinity and the men who wage war." *Signs: journal of women in culture and society* 28.4 (2003): 1187-1207

Week 7 – Tue, Mar 4 and Mar 6: Gender and Security/ Militarism contd.

1. (Mar 4) Young, Iris Marion. "The logic of masculinist protection: Reflections on the current security state." *Signs: journal of women in culture and society* 29.1 (2003): 1-25.
2. (Mar 4) Carpenter, R. Charli. "'Women and children first': Gender, norms, and humanitarian evacuation in the Balkans 1991–95." *International Organization* 57.4 (2003): 661-694.

MIDTERM REVIEW: Last 20-30 mins of class on March 5
MARCH 6: IN CLASS MIDTERM EXAM

Week 8 –SPRING BREAK, Classes do not meet.

Week 9 – Tue, Mar 18 and Thu, Mar 20: Gender in Policing and the Army

1. (Mar 18) Sukhtankar, Sandip, Gabrielle Kruks-Wisner, and Akshay Mangla. "Policing in patriarchy: An experimental evaluation of reforms to improve police responsiveness to women in India." *Science* 377.6602 (2022): 191-198.
2. (Mar 18) Jassal, Nirvikar. "Gender, law enforcement, and access to justice: Evidence from all-women police stations in India." *American Political Science Review* 114.4 (2020): 1035-1054.
3. (Mar 18) SHORT article on women as police personnel in Pakistan: Brohi, Nazish. "Footsteps in a Marked House: The Complex Role of Women in Pakistan's Police Force." December 20, 2018. <https://www.guernicamag.com/footsteps-in-a-marked-house-the-complex-role-of-women-in-pakistans-police-force/>
4. (Mar 20) MacKenzie, Megan, and Alana Foster. "Masculinity nostalgia: How war and occupation inspire a yearning for gender order." *Security Dialogue* 48.3 (2017): 206-223.

Week 10: Mar 25 and 27: Women as combatants, Gender in Violence

1. (Mar 25) Alakoc, Burcu Pinar. "Femme fatale: The lethality of female suicide bombers." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43.9 (2020): 796-814.
2. (Mar 25) Read **BOTH** of the following quick resources about the experiences of women as combatants in different conflict contexts: (a) Colombia - Alpert, Megan, "To Be a Guerilla, and a Woman, in Colombia" <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/09/farc-deal-female-fighters/501644/> and (b) Assam: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2018/03/07/reframing-female-agency-in-insurgency-womens-voices-from-assam/>
3. (Mar 27) Loken, Meredith, and Hilary Matfess. "Introducing the Women's Activities in Armed Rebellion (WAAR) project, 1946–2015." *Journal of Peace Research* (2022): 00223433221128340.
4. (Mar 27) Revkin, Mara Redlich, and Elisabeth Jean Wood. "The Islamic State's pattern of sexual violence: Ideology and institutions, policies and practices." *Journal of Global Security Studies* 6.2 (2021): 1-20.

Recommended Readings:

- (Feb 27) Viterna, Jocelyn. (2006). "Pulled, Pushed, Persuaded: Explaining Women's Mobilization into the Salvadorian Guerilla Army." *American Journal of Sociology*: 112(1): 1-45.
- Duijkema, Claske. 2001. *Why study Gender and Conflict Together? An enquiry in the relationship between the two concepts.* http://www.irenees.net/bdf_fiche-analyse-801en.html
- Goswami, Roshmi, "Of revolution, liberation and agency: aspirations and realities in the lives of women combatants and key women members of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)", Heinrich Böll Foundation Publication, September 2015, pp. 1 – 24.
- Cohen, Dara Kay. "Explaining rape during civil war: Cross-national evidence (1980–2009)." *American Political Science Review* 107.3 (2013): 461-477.

Week 11 – Apr 1 and 3: The Dynamics and Consequences of Women as Political Actors in Protest and Social Movements

1. (April 1) Alvarez, Sonia E. "Translating the global: Effects of transnational organizing on local feminist discourses and practices in Latin America." *Meridians* 1.1 (2000): 29-67.
2. (April 1) Zia, Ather. *Resisting disappearance: Military occupation and women's activism in Kashmir*. University of Washington Press, 2019. Chapter 4: Gendered Resistance in Kashmir.

3. (April 3) Kayali, Liyana. "Transformative incrementalism: Palestinian women's strategies of resistance and resilience amid gendered insecurity and neoliberal co-optation." *Security Dialogue* (2024): 09670106241226653.
4. (April 3) Read **any TWO** of the following quick resources:
 - (a) Women and India's Farmer Protests: <https://msmagazine.com/2021/12/17/india-farmer-protests-women-gender/>
 - (b) Women and India's Anti-CAA Protest: <https://theprint.in/features/protests-ended-but-shaheen-baghs-young-muslim-women-have-been-launching-daily-mutinies/1266064/>
 - (c) State Response to the 2022 Protests in Iran: <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/23/middleeast/iran-executing-way-out-of-trouble-mime-intl/index.html>

Recommended Reading:

- Batool, Essar, Iqbal Butt, Samreen Mushtaq, Munaza Rashid, and Natascha Rather. *Do You Remember Kunan Poshpora?*. Zubaan, 2016. Preface and Chapter 1.
- Dancygier, R., Egami, N., Jamal, A. and Rischke, R. (2022), *Hate Crimes and Gender Imbalances: Fears over Mate Competition and Violence against Refugees*. *American Journal of Political Science*, 66: 501-515. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12595>
- Aretxaga, Begoña. *Shattering silence: Women, nationalism, and political subjectivity in Northern Ireland*. Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Kaur, Mallika. *Faith, Gender, and Activism in the Punjab Conflict*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2019. 57-92.

Week 12 - Apr 8 and 10: Gender, Violence, and Post-Conflict Reconstruction

1. (April 8) Krause, Jana, Werner Krause, and Pii Bränfors. "Women's participation in peace negotiations and the durability of peace." *International interactions* 44.6 (2018): 985-1016.
2. (April 8) Karim, Sabrina, and Kyle Beardsley. *Equal opportunity peacekeeping: women, peace, and security in post-conflict states*. Oxford University Press, 2017.
3. (April 10) Arostegui, Julie. "Gender, conflict, and peace-building: how conflict can catalyse positive change for women." *Gender & Development* 21.3 (2013): 533-549.
4. (April 10) Hughes, Melanie M., and Aili Mari Tripp. "Civil war and trajectories of change in women's political representation in Africa, 1985–2010." *Social forces* 93.4 (2015): 1513-1540.

Recommended Readings:

- Pathak, Munmi. "Warrior Mothers: Narratives of Women from the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 22.9 (2021): 271-284.
- Nicole Pratt and Sophie Richter-Devoe 2011. "Critically Examining UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 13(4):489-503.
- Krause, Jana, Werner Krause, and Pii Bränfors. "Women's participation in peace negotiations and the durability of peace." *International interactions* 44.6 (2018): 985-1016.
- Torre, Suzanna. "Claiming the public space: the mothers of Plaza de Mayo." *Public Space Reader*. Routledge, 2021. <https://www.susanatorre.net/wp-content/uploads/Claiming-Public-Space.pdf>
- The Legacy of "Comfort Women" in WWII Japan: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/14/opinion/comfort-women-japan-south-korea.html>

Week 13 - Apr 15 and 17: Gender and Other Forms of Violence

1. (April 15) Roychowdhury, Poulami. *Capable women, incapable states: Negotiating violence and rights in India*. Oxford University Press, 2020. Chapter 1, "Introduction."

2. (*April 15*) Lazarev, Egor. "Laws in conflict: legacies of war, gender, and legal pluralism in Chechnya." *World Politics* 71.4 (2019): 667-709.
3. (*April 17*) Read **BOTH** short articles on Violence against Women in South Asia:
 - Pande, Rohini. 2015. "Keeping Women Safe: Addressing the Root Causes of Violence Against Women in South Asia." *Harvard Magazine*
 - Borker, Girija. "Perceived risk of street harassment and college choice of women in Delhi" *Vox Dev.* 1 Oct. 2018.
4. (*April 17*) Lee, Myunghee, and Amanda Murdie. "The global diffusion of the# MeToo movement." *Politics & Gender* 17.4 (2021): 827-855. Also interesting from the recent news on the post-#metoo era: "Blake Lively, Justin Baldoni, and the Collapse of the Hollywood #MeToo Era." Jan 2025.

Week 14: April 22 and April 24 – Labor Force Participation/ Gender and Right Wing Movements/ Gender and Technology/ any other topic people would like to address and Course Conclusion

[Readings to be assigned based on class preference on topic]

[Apr 24: Course Conclusion, no assigned reading]

Final Paper Due on Thursday, May 8, 11:59 pm.