

PSC 3261 - Gender and Politics: Theories & Concepts

Introduction

This course introduces students to the theoretical and conceptual bases of gender and politics. It will focus on liberal, socialist and radical feminist thinking along with an introduction to the impact of feminist scholarship on the study of society, politics and culture. Key concepts of feminist scholarship-gender, patriarchy, sexual division of labour, sexism, gender socialization etc -- will be discussed in relation to the experience in Sri Lanka and South Asia.

Course Objectives

The objective of this course is to:

- i. Enable students to understand how gender relations define and shape politics and power, and
- ii. Encourage students to apply theories and concepts of gender analysis to understand political and social processes.

Expected Outcomes

At the end of this course, students are expected to:

- i. Gain a critical understanding of how gender-based power relations are present in social and political life, and
- ii. Acquire an understanding of theories, concepts and debates in feminist scholarship relating to power and politics.

Course Contents

1. Introduction to Gender Politics: Social and Cultural Construction of Gender

- i. Gender & Sex
- ii. Gender Relations
- iii. Gender Roles
- iv. Gendered Person

2. Feminist Movement

- i. First wave of Feminism
- ii. Socialist Feminism
- iii. Liberal Feminism
- iv. Radical Feminism
- v. Other Streams of Feminism
- vi. Impact of Feminist Scholarship on the Study of Society, Politics and Culture

3. Key Concepts in Feminist Understanding of Social and Political Relations

- i. Patriarchy
- ii. Sexual Division of Labour
- iii. Sexism
- iv. Gender Socialization

4. Political Power and Gender: The Feminist Critique.

- i. Equality and Rights.
- ii. Feminist Critique of Democracy.
- iii. Women and Political Participation.
- iv. Gender and Emancipation.

5. Women and Politics in South Asia/Sri Lanka

- i. Women and Nationalist Politics.
- ii. Women and Equal Rights Movements.
- iii. Women in Conditions of Armed Conflict and Peace.
- iv. Gender and Democratization.

Assessment

Classroom Test	15%
Take-home Assignment	15%
Class Attendance and Participation	10%
End of Semester Examination	60%
Total	100

Recommended Reading

Coomaraswamy, Radhika, 1996, "Women in the World Stand up against Violence," *Nivedini*, Vol.4, No.1 June.

De Mel, Neloufer, 1998, *Women in Conflict Zones: A Comparative Study of Issues Faced by Women as a Result of Armed Conflict: Sri Lanka & the Post- Yugoslav States*, Hendala (Sri Lanka).

Garrett, Stephanie. 1987, *Gender*. London: Rutledge.

Gomez, Mario and Syamala Gomez, 2001, *Gender and Politics in Sri Lanka: Preferring Women*. Colombo: Shakthi.

Jackson, Stevi and Jones, Jackie (Eds.). 1996, *Contemporary Feminist Theories*, London: Edinburgh University Press.

Jayawardane, Kumari, 1982, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, London: Zed Press.

Jayawardane, Kumari and Malathi de Alwis (Eds.), 1996, *Embodied Violence: Communalizing Women's Sexuality in South Asia*, London: Zed Press

McCann, Carole, and Seung K.K. 2002, *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives*. New York: Routledge.

Thiruchandran, Selvy, (Ed.), 1999, *Women, Narration and Nation*, New Delhi: Vikas Publications.

Thiruchandran, Selvy, (Ed.), 1998, *The Spectrum of Femininity: A process of Deconstruction*, New Delhi: Vikas Publications.

Uyangoda, Jayadeva, 1995. *Life Under the Milkwood, Women Workers in Rubber Plantations*, Colombo: Women's Education and Research Center.