HIST 5190:001/791 – Studies in Near East/Africa: Gender and Postcolonialism in Middle Eastern History
Dr. Nancy L. Stockdale
Fall 2017
Time: Mondays 6:30 PM-9:20 PM
Place: Wooten Hall 262

Contact Information: Email: stockdale@unt.edu
This is a very effective way for us to communicate, so feel free to reach me online. I check my accounts once per day, so please remember that you will not necessarily receive an “instant reply” from me, but I will answer your email in a timely manner. When emailing me, please identify yourself by giving me your entire name, the class you are in, and your specific question or request.
Office: Wooten Hall #238
Office phone: (940) 565-4209
Office hours: Tuesdays 4:30-6:00 PM and by appointment.
Please come and talk to me during office hours, as it is your time set aside for us to discuss history and the course. If you cannot come during these hours, please make an appointment to see me.

Course Description: In this course, we will lay an historiographic foundation for understanding some of the most important debates and theories of postcolonialism. Moreover, we will read these through a gendered perspective. We will be reading some seminal works of postcolonial theory, as well as gendered critiques and case studies of the postcolonial experience in the Middle East. Moreover, each of you will select your own topic to explore, so that your historical and historiographic foundation will be tailored to your specific interests and needs. My primary goal for this course is that students will walk away with a clear understanding of the foundational theories of postcolonialism and specific knowledge about how gender and postcolonialism shape our understandings of Middle Eastern history.

Course Readings: There are nine required books for this course:

Lori Allen, *The Rise and Fall of Human Rights: Cynicism and Politics in Occupied Palestine*
Madeline Otis Campbell, *Interpreters of Occupation: Gender and the Politics of Belonging in an Iraqi Refugee Network*
Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*
Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, *Conceiving Citizens: Women and the Politics of Motherhood in Iran*
Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*
Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*
Edward Said, *Orientalism*
Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil*
You will also read one article, downloadable from our class Blackboard site: Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?”

I cannot stress enough how important it is for you to keep up and complete all of your assigned readings. Most of our class will involve discussing the reading, so if you don't do it, you will fail. If you have any troubles understanding any of the readings, feel free to come in to office hours to discuss them with me. Bring up your questions in class, too—if you have them, others probably do as well. PLEASE NOTE: I am going to assume that you will do the research on your own to fill in historical narratives to make sense of these books. That means that I will not be providing survey histories of events. Let me know if you need some guidance to fill in that material.

**Grading:** Your grade for the course will be weighted as follows: class participation (including your presentation)—30%, historiographic paper—40%, book reviews—15% each. If you have any questions about your grades once received, please come to see me (at least 24 hours after receiving them) during my office hours.

**Book reviews:** You will write two 5 page scholarly and critical book reviews, due September 25th and October 30th, before class starts. Directions are at the bottom of our syllabus.

**Historiographic Paper:** You will write one 15-page historiographic paper, due Dec 11th, by 9 PM. If you need help with your writing, feel free to come to me for assistance. Directions are at the bottom of our syllabus.

**Turning in things late:** This is a simple one—I do not accept late assignments. All work must be turned in to me by the due date and time! If not, your grade will suffer, because you will receive a 0% for that assignment. Of course, there are life events which pop up that make it impossible for you to turn your assignment in. Such events include death, extreme ill health, etc. If this is the case, please talk with me. Otherwise, turn in your assignments on time.

**ADA Accommodation:** The University of North Texas abides by the legal code of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and I am happy to give qualifying students accommodations. However, the only way that I can provide these accommodations is if you register with the Office of Disability Accommodation in advance of the date when you need such accommodation. Students register with this office, and the office in turn notifies professors of the types of accommodations necessary. If you don’t register with them, I cannot provide any special accommodations. If you do register with them, we can set up the accommodations you require through their office.

This is UNT's ADA statement for syllabi: “The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding
your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Plagiarism and cheating: Plagiarism and cheating take many forms, including, but not limited to: the use of another author's words without citation, cutting and pasting uncited materials from the internet, having someone else to do your work and claiming it as your own, and copying from another student’s paper or exam. All writing is the intellectual property of the person who came up with it; just think about what would happen if you suddenly starting marketing Microsoft Word as your own software, or released CDs of Chromatics songs claiming to be them--this is plagiarism. If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing, you may be expelled from UNT. Trust me, I will catch you and I will prosecute you, because plagiarism makes me very angry. If you are still unsure at any time during the semester as to what plagiarism is, please come and talk to me.

In order to protect students who do not plagiarize, I will be having everyone in the course submit their papers to me via our Blackboard Learn system. There will be no hard copies turned in – we are a paperless classroom. Your work will be added to the turnitin.com archive through this method, scanned for cheating, but it will also be preserved so that others cannot cheat off of you. Win-win!

Classroom decorum: As a courtesy to me as well as your fellow students, please do not come late to class, nor leave early. Also, please turn off all cellular phones, pagers, music players, and other disruptive devices before entering the classroom. Do not pretend to be taking notes on your laptop or mobile device, only to be surfing the net, IMing, texting, or otherwise disrupting people with your computer/phone shenanigans. Furthermore, do not photograph or record the class in any way, including audio or video tape, or digital recording devices, unless you have approved that as a necessary action with me and the Office of Disability Accommodation.

Please note: I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus.
Schedule:

WEEK ONE/August 28th
Introduction
Reading: Be sure to get all of your books!

WEEK TWO/September 4th
NO CLASS – enjoy the Labor Day weekend!

WEEK THREE/September 11th
Reading: Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

WEEK FOUR/September 18th
Reading: Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*

WEEK FIVE/September 25th
Reading: Edward Said, *Orientalism*
DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS: Book review #1

WEEK SIX/October 2nd
Reading: Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?”

WEEK SEVEN/October 9th
Reading: Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil*

WEEK EIGHT/October 16th
Reading: Catch up
In class we will watch and discuss a film: *The Beauty Academy of Kabul*

WEEK NINE/October 23rd
Reading: Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*

WEEK TEN/October 30th
DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS: Book review #2

WEEK ELEVEN/November 6th
Reading: Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, *Conceiving Citizens: Women and the Politics of Motherhood in Iran*

WEEK TWELVE/November 13th
Reading: Catch up!
We will watch and discuss a film: *Googoosh: Iran’s Daughter*
WEEK THIRTEEN/November 20th
Reading: Lori Allen, *The Rise and Fall of Human Rights: Cynicism and Politics in Occupied Palestine*

WEEK FOURTEEN/November 27th
Reading: Madeline Otis Campbell, *Interpreters of Occupation: Gender and the Politics of Belonging in an Iraqi Refugee Network*

WEEK FIFTEEN/ December 4th
Presentations + wrap up

**FINAL PAPER DUE BY 9 PM ON DECEMBER 11th @BLACKBOARD LEARN**

GOOD LUCK!
Book Review Assignment

Due: Before the start of class (6:30 PM) on the dates due (September 25th and October 30th)...No Exceptions! Late Papers Will Not Be Accepted. These papers are worth 15% each of your final grade in the course. They must be at least five (5) pages double spaced each, with appropriate margins and in 12 point font.

Your assignment: To write a critical book review. For your paper, I would like you to select one of the assigned books from our class and write a critical book review. Note that this is not a book report; your task is to evaluate the book on its historical merits, its use of sources, and its ability to successfully make its arguments.

To assist you with this assignment, I would like you to go to the library and find three scholarly book reviews of your chosen book. Read these carefully and integrate the reviewers' ideas into your own review. Do you agree or disagree with their opinions about the book? Why or why not? Please be sure to fully cite all of your sources.

In reviewing your book, point out its strengths and weaknesses in helping you understand issues of the relevant historiography. Does the author succeed or fail in putting her/his sources into historical perspective? Make sure that you use your knowledge gained from class as well as the reviews that you find.

Some good places to find book reviews include, but are not limited to:

- International Journal of Middle East Studies
- American Historical Review
- The Journal of Modern History
- Gender and History
- MIT’s E-Journal of Middle East Studies
- You can also go to the Reference section of the library and look up reviews in The Readers Guide to Periodical Literature and Book Review Index.

NOTE: It may be difficult to find reviews of the older books (Memmi, Fanon, etc.) – but you should be able to find plenty of review essays that talk about their impact and legacy. When in doubt, please reach out to me for help!

Any librarian can help you with the catalogues in the library and online as well. The internet may also help you find reviews—although make sure that any reviews you find are scholarly, that is, directed at an academic audience (reviews from popular magazines such as Time, Newsweek, etc. are not acceptable—when in doubt, ask me!) Papers should include an analysis of the main arguments of the book, an evaluation of the author's ability to use her/his sources to make those arguments, and place the book into a larger historical frame of reference. Would you use this book to teach people about the Middle East? Why or why not? Did you learn from this book? Was it well written? Be sure not to merely summarize the book—that will result in a D grade at best. Excellent papers will
analyze the book within the context of the themes of this course, integrate the outside reviews, and give the reader an idea about your subjective impressions as well.

**Remember:** I can help you throughout the writing process! Please do not hesitate to come to me for help if you need it. Come see me in office hours or email me and we'll set up an appointment to fit our mutual schedules.

**A word to the wise:** You are required to cite any quotations you take from any source, as well as any ideas that are not your original thoughts. I don't care which citation format you use--MLA, parenthetical, Turabian, Chicago, etc.--but you must use one and be consistent. Please come to me if you would like further help with this concept. Also, **PROOFREAD**! Don't just rely on the spell-checker, because it's always inadequate. Read over your paper in hard copy format, and get someone else you trust to read it over as well--a roommate, a friend, a partner--and make corrections before you print out the copy you will turn in. This is crucial because I expect these papers to be made up of excellent spelling and grammar as well as scintillating historical insight--yes, I do count grammar and composition! How can I follow your arguments if I can't understand what they are???

**Don't wait until the last minute!**
**Good luck!**
**Historiographic Essay**

Due: December 11th by 9 PM...No Exceptions! *Late Papers Will Not Be Accepted*

This paper is worth 40% of your final grade in the course. It must be at least fifteen (15) pages double spaced, with appropriate margins and in 12 point font.

**Your assignment:** To write an historiographic essay, based on some topic related to the intersections of gender and postcolonialism in Middle Eastern history.

1. Choose a topic of your choice revolving around issues that interest you.
2. Use the appropriate readings from the course, as well as five additional articles or books that you find in the library (see me if you need assistance or advice).
3. List all of the sources you will discuss in bibliography format (this is not included in your page limits).
4. Make sure to cover the appropriate questions/issues:
   --What are the major arguments/interpretations regarding your theme in the literature?
   --What kinds of sources do the authors use to make their arguments, and how effectively do they use them?
   --How do the sources influence the debates?
   --How do historians relate to the work of other scholars in their work?
5. Be sure to cite fully in endnote or footnote form as well. Papers without citations will be returned ungraded.

**The purpose of this assignment is to:**
--Evaluate interpretations of events, rather than the events themselves.
--Understand the current debates surrounding the issues at hand.
--Give you the chance to compile historiographic information for upcoming exams, theses, etc.

**Presentation**

In the last week of class, everyone will present information about her/his chosen historiographic topic to the class. You will each have 20 minutes for your presentation, with follow-up questions and comments from the class afterward. This presentation will be part of your class participation grade. The purpose of the presentation is to allow everyone to learn even more about the literature of various aspects of postcolonial and gender history in the Middle East. Please approach this presentation professionally, even if it is a work-in-progress.

**GOOD LUCK!**