

# India: Culture, Traditions, & Globalization

## India through a Gendered Lens

Fall semester

### Instructor

Dr. Anurekha Chari Wagh

### Credits

Elective course; 4 semester credits

## Course Description

This course seeks to introduce students to the diverse Indian culture and society through a gendered lens. It will explore gender relations that are rooted in tradition and culture and the intersectionality of gender with religion and caste so specific to India. Though these are rooted in tradition a slow process of change is taking place by the opening up of the Indian society. In other words, globalization has stirred up not only the Indian economy but also the cultural practices and traditions. In short, the course seeks to explore the connections between gender, changing cultural norms and globalization.

### Course Objectives

- To introduce basic concepts of gender and inequality
- To introduce intersectionality of gender, caste and culture
- To introduce the ways in which processes of globalization are culture specific

### Required Texts

These texts have been listed in each module and would be provided in the beginning of the course. Classroom sessions will be 20 in number, which will include lecture and discussion.

## Course Schedule

### *Module 1: Doing Gender and Thinking Gender (2 sessions)*

#### **Doing Gender in India**

*Reading:* Menon, N (2009): Sexuality, caste, governmentality: contests over 'gender' in India. *Feminist Review*, pp 94-112

**Men Doing Feminism**

*Reading:* Kumar, P (2015): Disrupting Coherence: Self Reflections of a Male Ethnographer, Vol L No 20, *Economic & Political Weekly*, pp 40-43

**Module 2: The Social Construction of Gender (3 sessions)****Socialization in India: Construction of Femininity and Masculinity**

*Reading:* Leela Dube, "On the Construction of Gender: Hindu Girls in Patrilineal India," *Economic & Political Weekly* (WS 11) April 30, 1988

**Gender, Caste and Patriarchy**

*Reading:* Uma Chakravarti, "Conceptualizing Brahmanical Patriarchy in Early India: Gender Caste, Class and State," *Economic & Political Weekly*, April 3, 1993

**Cultural Reproduction in India**

*Reading:* Latika Gupta, "Growing up Hindu and Muslim: How Early Does It Happen," *Economic & Political Weekly*, February 9, 2008

**Module 3: Nationalism, Gender, and Ideology (3 sessions)****The Indian Nation, Contending Voices: Women Too as Serious Contenders to the Making of Modern India**

*Reading:* Shekhar Bandopadhyaya, "Many Voices of a Nation" by Shekhar Bandopadhyaya," *From Plassey to Partition – A History of Modern India*, Orient Longman, 2004, pp. 334-404

**Woman as Subject of Social Reform and Nation Building**

*Reading:* Radha Kumar, *The History of Doing*, pp. 1-30

**Bharat Mata: India as a Mother & Being a Mother in India**

*Readings:* Charu Gupta, "The Icon of Mother in late Colonial North India," *Economic & Political Weekly*, November 10, 2001; and Radha Kumar, *The History of Doing*, Chapter 3 "Towards Becoming the Mothers of the Nation," pp 32-52

**Module 4: Gender and Violence (3 Sessions)****Violence of Normal Times: Family & Ideas of "Izzat" (honour)**

*Reading:* Shubha Sharma, "Location of Barbaric Crimes Socio-cultural Structures: Honour Killings in Haryana" in *Honor and Women's Rights South Asian Perspectives*, ed. by Manisha Gupte et.al, jointly published by Masum & IDRC, 2012

**Public Spaces and Sexual Violence**

*Reading:* Shilpa Phadke, "Dangerous Liaisons; Women and Men: Risks and Reputations in Mumbai," *Economic & Political Weekly*, April 28, 2007

**Violence at Workplace – Sexual Harassment**

*Reading:* Sheba Tejani, "Sexual Harassment at the Workplace: Emerging Problems and Debate," *Economic & Political Weekly*, October 9, 2004

**Module 5: Gender, Health, and Globalization (3 Sessions)**

**Women's Role and Reproductive Health Policies**

*Readings:* Basu, Alaka Malwade, 1993, "Women's Roles and Gender Gaps in Health and Survival," *Economic & Political Weekly*; and Datta, Bishakha and Misra, Geetanjali, 2000, "Advocacy for Sexual and Reproductive Health: The Challenge in India," *Reproductive Health Matters*, Vol. 8, No. 16, pp24-34

**Increasing Medicalization of Reproduction**

*Reading:* Marwah, V and Sarojini, N (2011), "Reinventing Reproduction, Re-Conceiving Challenges: An Examination of ART in India," *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol XLVI, No 43, pp 104-111

**Debate on Surrogacy**

*Reading:* Pande, A (2010), "Commercial Surrogacy in India: Manufacturing a Perfect Mother-Worker," *Signs*, Vol 35, No 4, pp 969-992

**Module 6: Media and Gender (2 Sessions)**

**Culture Identity and Women in Indian Cinema**

*Reading:* Vaishali Diwakar (2016): "Reimagining the Nation and Redefining Regional and Gender Identities in Cinema of the 1950s," in Uma Chakravarthi (ed) *Thinking Gender, Doing Gender: Feminist Scholarship and Practices Today*. Orient Blackswan: Hyderabad.

**Caste, Gender and Globalization – Case of Bar Dancers in Mumbai**

*Reading:* Maya Pandit, "Gendered Subaltern Sexuality and the State," *Economic & Political Weekly*, August 10, 2013, Vol. XLV, No 32

**Module 7: Gender: Emerging Concerns (4 sessions)**

**Gender, Disability and Rights**

*Reading:* Mehrotra, N (2006): "Negotiating Gender and Disability in Rural Haryana," *Sociological Bulletin*, Vol 55, No 3, pp 406-426

**Challenges to Women's Movement: Globalization and Communalism**

*Reading:* Dietrich, G (2003): "Loss of 'Socialist' Vision and Options before the Women's Movement," *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol 38, No 43, pp 4547-4554

**Queer Politics and State**

*Reading:* Srivastava, S S (2014): "Disciplining the 'Desire': 'Straight' State and LGBT Activism in India," *Sociological Bulletin*, 63 (3), pp 368-385

**Rethinking Doing Gender in India: Taking Stock of the Semester**

**Visit to:** Saheli, Sex Workers Organization, Budhwar Peth, Pune

**Guest lecture:** Bindhumadhav Khire, Queer Activist, Founder Trustee, Samapathik Trust, Pune

## Assessment

**Evaluation Structure:** Four assignments of 25 marks each spread over the semester (total of 100 marks).

***Assignment 1 - Journal: Reflections on Exploring India***

Highlight interlinkages with race, nationality, gender, religion, and class.

***Assignment 2 - Individual Presentation***

A current issue as the topic. Essay to be submitted (10 marks) plus presentation using either PPT, chart, or any other means of expression.

***Assignment 3 - Research Paper***

Topic: Gender Studies in India and United States (2500 words)

***Assignment 4 - Choose one:***

- **Photo Blog:** Create a photo blog with 5-10 photos and accompanying narrative describing why the photo is meaningful. The photos explore a theme or issue coherently and should not be a random collection of photos.
- **Documentary:** Create a short (10-15 minutes) documentary film. The film could include discussions with your family in India, staff, and experts in Pune and/or your own narration of a specific issue.

## ACM Policies on Academics

A complete listing of ACM policies can be found in your student handbook.

***Class attendance and participation***

You are expected to attend and participate fully in all classroom sessions, site visits, and field trips. All lectures will be interactive. Participation of students in every class is encouraged. Readings provided on different topics should be perused before classes so that discussions in class are more informed, critical and interesting. It is essential that students participate fully in coursework and all required academic activities. Excused absences may only be approved by the director, and students are expected to make up any missed work. Unexcused absences will adversely affect your grades.

***Expectations from the students***

The students should be motivated, and approach learning with responsibility. They should engage critically with their own self and the community (based on classroom lectures, readings, discussion, visits, interaction with people) to be done continuously through the semester. The students are expected to:

- Reflect, question and analyze their own perception of the community and examine the community's perception of them.

- Reflect on the socio-economic-political issues framing gender concerns in India and US.
- Analyze the ramifications of global gender debates on local gender issues.
- Reflect on learning gender studies in India and US.

***Academic honesty***

Actions of dishonesty are destructive to the well-being of the academic community, and ACM staff respond to them vigorously. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic theft will result in a failing grade for that assignment and may result in failure for the course.

**ACM Policy on Non-Discrimination**

The Associated Colleges of the Midwest does not discriminate in the operation of its educational programs, activities, or employment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, color, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, marital status, or disability.