

The Framing of Social Justice: Law, Culture and Politics – “Here” and “There” IS 419/808

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**Monday 530-920pm
Room 2205 Harbour Centre**

Office Hours: Thursday 430-6pm

Course Description:

This course will examine how events become recognized, or fail to become recognized, as social justice/human rights issues. What is the importance of context in this understanding? Through novels, films and academic texts we will look at the role that “culture” and “politics” plays in understanding social justice and social movements – both how problems, and solutions, are framed. A particular focus will be placed on three issues that are often called “new human rights issues”: poverty, culture and gender-based issues which have a rich and tension filled, history of media and policy (mis)representation.

This class will problematize the assumption that there is an *inherent* tension between culture and human rights but also emphasize the *real* manifestations of how the rhetoric of culture is often misused to justify action, or the lack of action, in the face of abuses. By learning how and when certain issues are framed in human rights and social justice terms, and the tools and strategies that are used within the transnational social movement worlds, students will be in a better position to either utilize or counter justifications made in under the mantra of human rights and social justice.

By engaging with a variety of mediums from a variety of disciplines we will examine how concepts such as economic, social and cultural rights language have helped shift the “social issue” of poverty into a human rights and social justice issue “at home.” We will also examine how power differentiations, histories of colonialism and *real politick* can shadow even the most well-meaning “development” and “gender mainstreaming” projects abroad. In addition we will problematize how “culture” and identity” are the used to justify human rights abuses as well as engagement with war. Students will use these theoretical, experiential and creative mediums of analysis and expression to analyze a piece of journalism or fiction through a written analysis and a short radio and/or interview piece.

Grading:

- You are required to post a reflection (NOT just a summary) on one or more of the readings AND a question for your classmates to ponder by Sunday at 10am. Many of these questions may be used in the “World Café” model. **Ten reflections at 10 points each = 100 points.**
- You are also responsible for responding to five questions posted by your classmates over the course of the semester. Your responses should be your thoughts and opinions BUT it must also be integrating material we have read/watched in class. Please put the original question in the discussion post and address it below **Five responses at 5 points each – 25 points.**
- You will be required to write a reflection for each of the texts (books/articles/films) that we read during a given time period; these will be tied together into an integrated reflection. There will be **three** separated integrated reflections. The integrated reflections should be 4-5 pages long (double spaced) and should be putting the works in conversation with one another including similarities and differences between the texts. Each integrated reflection will have a specific theme to help guide the reflection but the format will be similar to a literature review. **Integrated reflection (October 19th, November 16th, November 30th) – 25 points each x 3 Total = 75 points.**
- Each student will work with 4-5 other people to lead a class discussion on one of the required texts to provide the context (historical, cultural, economic, and political) of the piece. In leading the discussion you will also need to develop 3-5 discussion questions. In addition you will need to utilize some visual/experiential strategies and/or create hand-out materials to engage us in your analysis. = **50 points**
- There will be a quiz to ensure that people are keeping current on the readings and synthesizing the information. = **25 points**
- For your final you will be required to explore one of the ten books listed below (please choose only from the list unless previously discussed with the instructor). None of these books are classically “academic” in nature and all embody innovative ways of framing and responding to issues. The focus of the final response is to show *how* an issue became framed as a human rights/social justice issue, the use of narratives/emotions/testimonial, the creation and targeting of audiences and the difficulties and consequences that arose in doing so. How do you explain the issue to an audience who may, or may not, be familiar with the issues. **By October 1st** you **MUST** meet with **individually** and choose your book and be placed in a small group of 2-3 students.

By **November 2nd** you will meet with me **as a group** to review a written 3 page pitch framing how you want to engage with your text. You will email this to me 24 hours ahead of our meeting and I will discuss this pitch with you as a group. There are a lot of issues in the book, what are **THREE** key issues do you want to highlight/explore? You will identify five sources that will help contextualize the work. You will also identify who your intended audience is for the live presentation = **25 points**

For the final you *analyze* the issues illustrated in the book *within* context; what do people need to know to understand the issue? What knowledge are you already assuming people have? This will be done in two ways:

- 1) A 12-15 page paper;
- 2) A piece discussing the book (this will be NO MORE than 12 minutes); this can be a live interview or radio/visual documentary (other creative and interactive means are possible but only with prior consultation with the instructor). Imagine that you are sitting down with an interviewer in for CBC's [The Next Chapter](#) What are the issues? You are encouraged to actually interview people involved the book – the author, some of the characters or other people engaged in the issues addressed. You are also free to be creative. Sometimes there is more truth in fiction.

Both the paper and interactive presentation should address: How do the dynamics of culture, economics, identities history (including the legacies of colonialism) and *real politick* play a role in identifying and “pitching” issues to various actors.

Note for the written component **No more than three pages can be used to summarize the book** – the rest must be walking us through the *context* of the issues at hand; how are problems understood and framed and what background information do we need to understand to recognize the dynamic nature of framing, including to different audiences? How can things be *misunderstood*? There will need to be at least ten sources.

Unless otherwise discussed: graduate students will write the paper individually and undergraduates will write the paper in pairs/groups.

Combined = 100 points

NOTE: Although Wikipedia can be used for preliminary research it will not be considered appropriate for this bibliography.

Total: 400 points

Grading:

A =	100%-93%	C+ =	79%-78%
A - =	92%-90	C =	77% - 73%
B+ =	89-88%	C- =	72%-70%
B =	87%-83%	D =	69% - 60%
B- =	82%-80%	F =	59% or lower

Up to 20 points extra credit is available up to the discretion of the instructor. All extra credit is due by November 30, 2015. No exceptions.

Attendance Policy: We have very few class meetings thus attendance at all classes, including all films and guest lectures, is *mandatory*. Students are expected to attend **all** classes and read the assignments so as to be prepared for class discussion.

Experience shows that there is a direct relation between attendance and performance in the course; I will deduct five points for every unexcused absence. **An excused absence means you contact the instructor, me, prior to your absence (barring an emergency and then you contact me as soon as possible) and I confirm your absence. You can reach me via email or phone. You are responsible for any class work or homework we go over or that is due during your absence.**

Participation:

Active involvement in this course is imperative. **You will be responsible for posting ten reflections with questions and a minimum of five (5) responses.** Your questions will often be integrated into the “World Café” model of learning. You are also encouraged to discuss things in class. That said - we will be discussing many volatile issues, and it is vital that students do the assigned readings before the class, as well as be prepared to talk intelligently about it with others.

Plagiarism: All work you submit must be your own original work. Plagiarism (submitting work that is not your own, including paraphrasing of sources that are not acknowledged or properly cited) will result in **automatic failure**, and may result in additional disciplinary action by the University.

Required Readings

- Yunus, Muhammad (2003) *Banker to the Poor: Microlending and the Battle Against World Poverty*, Public Affairs
- Maalouf, Amin (2000) *In The Name of Identity*, Penguin
- Achebe, Chinua (1958) *Things Fall Apart*, Anchor Books
- Mamdani, Mahmood (2004) *Good Muslim Bad Muslim*, Three Leaves Press
- Satrapi, Marjane (2004) *Persepolis: A Story of a Childhood*
- Keck, Margaret and Sikkink, Kathryn (1998) *Activists Beyond Borders*, Cornell University Press

The following readings will be available online

- An-na'im, Abdullah Ahmed (1990). Human rights in the Muslim world. In Henry Steiner, Philip Alston & Ryan Goodman (Eds.) *International Human Rights in Context: Law, Politics, Morals*, (pp. 531-539). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Baer and Brysk (2009) in Clifford Bob's *The International Struggle for New Human Rights*
- Carpenter, Charli (2009) in Clifford Bob's *The International Struggle for New Human Rights*
- Brysk (2013), *Speaking Rights to Power: Constructing Political Will*, New York: NY, Oxford Press. Chapter 1
- Gaber, I., & Willson, A. (2005). Dying for diamonds: The mainstream media and NGOs—A case study of Action Aid. In W. De Jong, M. Shaw, & N. Stammers (Eds.), *Global activism, global media* (pp. 95–99). London, UK: Pluto Press.
- Hall, Stuart, “Ethnicity, Identity and Difference,” in *Becoming National: A Reader* edited by Eley and Suny
- Herman, Edward & Chomsky, Noam (1998). *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Pantheon Books: New York, NY (Chapter 2, pp. 37-86)

- Joachim, Jutta (2003). Framing issues and seizing opportunities. The UN, NGOs, and Women's Rights. *International Studies Quarterly* 47, 247-74.
- Mackey, Eva *Anthropology Today* Vol 21 No 2, April 2005
- Nelson, Zed (22 March 2014) Lampedusa boat tragedy: a survivor's story *The Guardian* <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/22/lampedusa-boat-tragedy-migrants-africa>
- Plaut, Shayna (2012). Expelling the Victim by Demanding Voice *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* <http://alt.sagepub.com/content/37/1/52.short>
- Sylvester, Christine (2000). Development Poetics. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*. Vol 25, No 3, pp. 335-451. <http://jstor.org/stable/40644956>
- Wade, Lisa (2011). Journalism, advocacy and the social construction of consensus. *Media Culture Society* 33:1166 DOI: 10.1177/0163443711418273
- Zandberg, E., & Neiger, M. (2005). Between the nation and the profession: Journalists as members of contradicting communities. *Media, Culture & Society*, 27(1), 131-141. doi: 10.1177/0163443705049073
- Zograf, Aleksander (2007). *Regards from Serbia*, Atlanta: Topshelf Productions.

For your final paper you will need to choose one of the following (none are "classic" academic books) unless discussed with instructor:

- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi (2006) *Half of a Yellow Sun* New York, NY: Anchor Books,
- Amir & Khalil (2011) *Zahra's Paradise*. New York, NY: Holtzbrinck Publishers
- Armstrong, Jeanette (1990) *Slash*. Penticton, BC: Theytus Publishers
- Boo, Katherine (2012) *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*. New York, NY: Random House
- Califia, Pat (1994/2000), *Public Sex: The Nature of Radical Sex*. San Francisco, CA: Cleis Press
- Husain, Sarah (Ed.) (2006) *Voices of Resistance: Muslim: Muslim Women on War, Faith and Sexuality*, Emeryville, CA: Seal Press
- King, Thomas (2003) *The Truth About Stories* Toronto: House of Anansi Press
- Kotlowitz, Alex (1991) *There are No Children Here* New York, NY: Random House
- LeDuff, Charlie, *Detroit: An American Autopsy*, Penguin Books
- Polman, Linda (2011) *The Crisis Caravan*
- Reilly, John (2014), *Bad Judgment: The Myths of First Nations Equality and Judicial Independence in Canada*, Rocky Mountain Books

We will watch

Le Haine – Hate

Milking the Rhino

A Red Girl's Reasoning

We are the Saami

To Kill A Sparrow

1700% Mistaken for Muslim

Schooling the World

My Asian Americana

Optional readings that may be helpful in your final paper

- Jasper, James (1997) *The Art of Moral Protest*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press (especially Chapters 12 and 13)
- De Jong, Shaw and Stammers (2005) *Global Activism Global Media*, London: Pluto Press

- Behar, Ruth (1993) *Translated Women: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story*, Boston: Beacon Press.
- Gray, Lynda (2012) *First Nations 101*, Vancouver BC: Adaawx Publishing

Syllabus is subject to change on based on the needs of the class and the assessment of the instructor.

September 14th

Overview and review of the course/exploring identity as reflection

- Reviewing syllabus and class requirements/expectations
- Introductions
- Drawing identity exercise
- Essentialism/co-constructed
- (overlooking) diversity within culture

Homework: Read Stuart Hall's "Ethnicity, Identity and Difference," in Becoming National: A Reader, edited by Eley and Suny and write a reflection on how ideas of identity can frame – and challenge -- ideas of social justice.

September 21st (mis)framing truth(s)

- Review the coverage of the BC Missing women's inquiry in class – examples of coverage and framing: <http://womensenews.org/story/crime-policylegislation/120417/advocates-blast-canadian-probe-missing-women> and <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/canada-commits-grave-violation-of-rights-of-aboriginal-women-un-report-1.2989320> and http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/News_Releases/UBCICNews04101201.html#ixzz1rsZd5cxY and <http://www.macleans.ca/politics/un-committee-calls-on-canada-for-inquiry-into-missing-murdered-aboriginal-women/>
- screening of Maija Tailfeather's *A Red Girl's Reasoning*
- mini world café -- Hall's piece -- Marked and unmarked
- Introduction to boomerang pattern and framing
- Logistics: leading discussions, extra credit conversation, reading logs form

*Homework: Things fall apart (Part I); *Activists beyond Borders* Introduction (pp. 1-38 Brysk (2013), *Speaking Rights to Power: Constructing Political Will*, Chapter 1*

September 26th - The world is small

- New Planet
- Review: Information Politics/Symbolic Politics/Leverage Politics/Accountability Politics/Narrative politics
- Meeting of systems, colonialism
- New identities (i.e.: African or Black or European or White)
- How is this represented in journalism, advertising, film, "popular culture?" How is this normalized? Power?
- Hegemony

*Homework: Things Fall Apart (Part II) Keck & Sikkink (1998), Herman, Edward & Chomsky, Noam (1988), *Manufacturing consent: The political economy of the mass media*, Chapter 2*

Extra credit: http://www.loc.gov/today/cyberlc/feature_wdesc.php?rec=4502

MUST MEET WITH ME BY OCTOBER 1ST

October 5th – Worthy and unworthy victims

- **Questions**
- Student led discussion on *Things Fall Apart*
- The political economy of news – and the (assumed) importance of audiences
- Screening of Ted Talk by Alisa Miller
http://www.ted.com/talks/alisa_miller_shares_the_news_about_the_news.html
- Groupwork re: [Fruitvale Station/ Dan Archer Ferguson cartoons](#) - discussion on “worthy/unworthy” and framing

Homework: Wade, Lisa (2011). Journalism, advocacy and the social construction of consensus. *Media Culture Society* 33:1166 DOI: 10.1177/0163443711418273, Sylvester, Christine (2000). Development Poetics. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*. Vol 25, No 3, pp. 335-451. Keck & Sikkink (1998) *Activists Beyond Borders* Chapters 2 and 3 (pp. 39-120)

First Integrated reflection due next class

October 19th - The (former? Neo?) Colonized strike back

- student lead discussion on readings – with a focus on “Agency” and “Helping”
- How “history” is current
- Screening of *Schooling the World*
- Notions of global economic structures internally and externally and its effects “at home.”
- Notions of “the Other” including at home

Homework: [In the Name of Identity \(Sections 1 and 2\)](#), Zed Nelson’s *Lampedusa Boat Tragedy* and watch <https://vimeo.com/126935104>

Extra credit: Watch *Harragas* <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1420546/> and listen to <http://www.onthemedias.org/story/narratives-migration/>

October 26th The other within

- Student lead discussion on *In The Name of Identity*
- Watch Le Haine OR guest speaker (perhaps head of the Canadian Romani Alliance and/or someone from Rainbow Refugee)
- The fragility of identity, the role of fear
- economic and culture borders are policed “at home”

Homework: “*In the Name of Identity*” (Sections 3 and 4 and epilogue); Gaber & Wilson “*Blood Diamonds*”; please read <http://www.kzoo.edu/praxis/storytelling-and-resistance/>

November 2nd -- Sovereignty, Law and Power

- Sovereignty
- Group work on international human rights law
- Different methods of intervention
- Denormalizing “normal” – use culture to change culture (intro to An-naim)
- *Homework:* “[Banker to the Poor](#)” (Chapter 1-6); Read Mackey, *An-naim*

Study for Quiz

Meet with me to discuss book NO LATER THAN November 2nd

November 9th -- Institutionalizing change

- Quiz
- Risks of institutionalization
- The real fear of dependency; structure/agency debate and critiques of neocolonialism
- Watch *Milking the Rhino*

*Homework: Banker to the Poor (Chapter 7-14); go to kiva.org; Plaut 2012
Second Integrated Reflection due next week*

November 16th – Culture Talk – here and abroad

- Student lead discussion on *Banker to the Poor*
- the role of culture and the role of protest – *My Asian Americana*
- Watch *To Kill A Sparrow*
- Deconstructing cultural relativism v/human rights
- “Culture Talk” : pre-modern/modern/anti-modern

Homework: Read Baer and Brysk in Bob (Chapter 7); Zandberg, E., & Neiger, M. (2005). Intro – Chapter 1 of Mamdani; C. Carpenter in Bob (2009)

prepare questions for guest speakers Hadeel Assali (TBC)

November 23rd- The role of speaking to multiple audiences: current social movements for social justice in practice in the Middle East

- Student led discussion on Zandberg & Neiger and Baer & Brysk (framing)
- Hadeel Assali

*Homework: Read Persepolis; Conclusion of Mamdani_(pp. 229-260),_Chapter 1
“Regards from Serbia”*

Extra Credit: <http://www.theworld.org/2012/01/zahras-paradise-iran/>

Third Integrated Reading Log due next class

November 30th Reclaiming, Redefining and Resisting – new visions of culture

- Student lead discussion on Persepolis
- Confronting diversity of personal identities
- Screening of *We are the Saami* and *1700% Mistaken for Muslim*
- Pressure of unification before the international community

Final presentations and paper due next week

December 7th – Wrapping up and sharing

- Final presentation of radio/interview work