

SO261-15 Gender and Violence

26/27

Department

Sociology

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Ravi Thiara

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module explores the different forms taken by gendered violence, how it can be understood and explained and the political and policy responses to it. We investigate how its occurrence varies over time and in different societies, its manifestation on a societal scale and in the most intimate and private of relationships, and the effects it has on women and girls. We also explore how it relates to masculinities, its strategic use in military conflicts and women's resistance to it. Throughout we are concerned to highlight the power relations which underpin gendered violence and the abuse of power associated with it. We also interrogate the high profile given to sexual violence and abuse in public discourses and explore how gendered sexual violence has become an issue which attracts a high level of public attention. We shall ask whether and how this level of publicity affects the prevalence of gender-based violence and what effect it has on its cultural acceptance, particularly in circumstances where abuse of women and children is tolerated and, in some cases, seen as a reasonable response to transgressions of cultural norms.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This module aims to examine the complex, multifaceted and global phenomenon of gendered violence. It draws on the expertise of a number of scholars from the Sociology Department and will

appeal to Sociology students as well as other FSS students who wish to include a gender studies focus in their academic programme. The module will: - Explore the phenomenon of gendered violence, the different forms it takes, and how it can be explained; - Look at how different cultures understand gendered violence and how this has changed historically; - Consider the 'costs' and consequences of gendered violence to the individual, the community and to society; - Investigate the circumstances which lead to gendered violence becoming a political issue; - Study the political and policy responses to gendered violence. - Provide theoretical understandings of violence and its gendered nature. Gendered violence has a long history. Philosophical and practical justifications for it have been challenged in many cultures while in others they retain legitimacy. Historically gendered violence is evident in practices such as burning witches in the early middle ages, and ideas that it is acceptable for a man to beat his wife as long as the stick is no thicker than his thumb. Its cultural acceptance and women's resistance to it has changed historically and, in Western Europe and North America, it was put on the political agenda in the 1970s by second wave feminism. Since then, awareness of its prevalence and the many forms it takes has increased around the world. Women's and human rights NGOs and governments have developed policies and programmes to combat gender-based violence and women have organised both to help survivors and to bring about cultural, legal and political change.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. Introduction to the module – why look at gender and violence? This session will provide an introduction to the module and examine some key ideas on gender and violence. A key question posed will be why gender is important for the study of violence and why gender violence matters.
2. Theorising gender and violence - This lecture explores different understandings of gender and violence ranging from individually-based theories which regard those who commit violence as pathological to feminist and other theories which conceptualise violence as fundamentally gendered and related to how societies are structured. Feminist theorisations of gender and violence developed crucial understandings of power and control and argued that violence is overwhelmingly associated with men and masculinities. We will explore these different theoretical approaches through a critical lens.
3. How gendered violence became a political issue - In this lecture will look at processes by which gendered violence has become the subject of open and public discussion, how it came to be incorporated into the agenda of governments, legislatures and international organisations and how its emergence as a public issue has led to the adoption of preventive policies, laws and programmes against gendered violence.
4. Sexual violence and sexual harassment - This lecture discusses questions of power circulating within notions of sexual misconduct. In utilising current research on staff sexual misconduct in higher education this lecture will more broadly consider two areas: the link vulnerability has with endurance as a requirement of living with sexual violence; the visibility of violence inflicted by institutions as perpetrators of harm within forms of sexual and gender based violence. It will do so by examining different temporalities in which sexual violence

and harassment might occur and how this engages different embodied forms of vulnerability and endurance and what can be required of particular bodies within this process.

5. Domestic violence - This lecture will focus on intimate partner violence, exploring the different forms taken by domestic violence and expanding students' understanding of what counts as violence. It will address domestic violence as a problem which occurs across cultures and social groups and examine the effects that domestic violence has particularly on women but also on families and communities. We will also explore the gender symmetry argument and the economic costs of domestic violence to society.
6. Please note this is reading week.
7. 'Culture', 'honour' and gender - This lecture examines debates on harmful practices such as forced marriage, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation. It considers how these phenomena have been explained within political discourse, policy and practice as well as feminist challenges to explanations that view them as cultural practices inherent within particular communities.
8. Political conflict and gendered violence - This lecture provides an overview of feminist approaches to war and violence and how these differ from gender-blind approaches. In addition, it introduces some contemporary cases of war and conflict in the Middle East, highlighting how gender intersects with other axes of social relations.
9. This lecture will discuss the ways in which gender intersects with political extremism and terrorism, focusing on the way in which states in Europe have responded to violence carried out in the name of Islam. It will examine the impact of state responses on women from Muslim communities in the UK and elsewhere, in the context of the War on Terror and the securitising measures which have emanated from it in the 2000s It will also consider the way in which women from Muslim communities have resisted being labelled "suspect" and the securitisation of their communities.
10. In-class assessment: group presentations

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Recognise the complex nature of gendered violence and how it varies over time and across cultures
- Assess the societal impact of cultural representations of gendered violence
- Evaluate the different ways of explaining gendered violence
- Critically assess the 'costs' of gender violence both to the individual and to society
- Explain policy and practice responses to gendered violence

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

Subject specific skills

By the end of the module the students should be able to :

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis;
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations.

Transferable skills

By the end of the module the students will have acquired the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Reading for seminars.
Preparation for seminars
Preparation of presentations
Preparation and writing of summative work

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Group Presentation	25%		Yes (extension)
Students will be required to work in groups, constituted in class by the end of week 4. They will work collectively on a topic deriving from the module content, chosen by the group. This will culminate in an in-class group presentation which will last 15 minutes per group. The presentation will be encapsulated in a set of PPT slides which will be submitted via Tabula for assessment.			
Reassessment component			
Review of two key works			Yes (extension)
This is a critical review of 2 key works treating the themes that were explored in the failed group presentation.			
Assessment component			
2500 word essay	75%		Yes (extension)
Students are required to submit a 2500 word essay responding to a list of essay titles which they will receive at the start of the module.			
Reassessment component is the same			

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback will be provided on the essay and group presentation. Verbal feedback on the essay and presentation may be sought by students, either via appointment or during normal staff office hours.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 3 of ULAA-ML33 Undergraduate Law and Sociology

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of USOA-L301 BA in Sociology
- Year 2 of USOA-L314 Undergraduate Sociology and Criminology

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 5 of ULAA-ML35 BA in Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree) (with Intercalated year)
- ULAA-ML33 Undergraduate Law and Sociology
 - Year 2 of ML33 Law and Sociology
 - Year 4 of ML33 Law and Sociology

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)

This module is Option list G for:

- Year 2 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics