

Gender, Violence, and Empire 1800- 2020

Session 1: Introduction

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Welcome & Introductions



IMPERIAL FEDERATION - MAP OF THE WORLD SHOWING THE EXTENT OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN 1886.

Content note

- Challenging material
- Topics covered will include violence, murder, sexual assault, racism, homophobia, and transphobia.
- Please let me know if there is anything that concerns you in the course outline – you don't have to explain why if you don't wish to engage with particular topics.
- Let's treat each other carefully.
- Scheduled breaks – but please feel free to leave the room if you need.
- Local and national support resources are available – these are linked in the module handbook:
 - [Wellbeing Support | University of Wales Trinity Saint David \(uwtsd.ac.uk\)](http://uwtsd.ac.uk)
 - [Domestic abuse | GOV.WALES](http://gov.wales)
 - [New Pathways Rape crisis and sexual abuse support services.](#)

Aims

The module aims to explore the embodied histories of gender, sexualities, and the British Empire, through the lens of violence.

Upon
completion
you should be
able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of key themes in the history of gender and empire
- Reflect on the concept of 'violence', considering it in institutional, structural, epistemic, and physical forms
- Critically evaluate the concepts of 'tradition' and 'culture' as they are often applied to communities in the Global South
- Reflect upon the legacies of imperial gender policies for the world today
- Critically analyse primary and secondary sources.

Practical information

- We will meet on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays at 2pm.
- Mondays and Thursdays in T&L 13, Fridays in T&L 03.
- NB: This information is correct as of 31 October 2025 – please ensure that you check your Hwb timetable as this will always have the most up-to-date information
- If you can't attend – please advise me by email ideally well in advance. Attendance records are submitted to the Faculty Office.

Class schedule

- Session 1: Introduction
- Session 2: Gender and Empire
- Session 3: Violence and Empire
- Session 4: Liberal Humanitarianism and the Prohibition of *Sati*
- Session 5: Missionary Encounters and Domesticity
- Session 6: Imperial Feminisms

Class schedule

- Session 7: Assignment focus
- Session 8: Sexualities I – Constructing Boundaries
- Session 9: Sexualities II: Regulating ‘Deviant’ Sexualities
- Session 10: Gender and Anti-Colonial Struggles
- Session 11: STUDENT CHOICE – Gender and postcolonial conflict OR assignment workshop
- Session 12: Conclusions: “Girl power” and the limits of contemporary liberal humanitarianism

Expectations

- You are expected to engage with the key reading set for each class – there is a choice and you are asked to read at least one piece.
- Bring notes on your reading to class.
- All key reading is linked on Moodle
- The Module Handbook contains supplementary reading for each topic, which will help you to prepare for your assignments.
- You are encouraged to research further supplementary materials for your assignments.

Assessment

- Portfolio (50%) – made up of 2 parts
- Essay (50%)
- You can choose to complete your assignments on the same topic, or choose from different topics across the module.
- If you choose to complete your assignments on the same topic, please note that you cannot re-use material.

Portfolio

- 2 parts: a secondary literature review and a primary source analysis.
- Literature review – 1000 words (40% of portfolio)
- Primary source analysis – 1500 words (60% of portfolio)

Portfolio Part 1: Secondary Literature Review

- **1000 words**
- **Due Sunday 16 November 2025 at 23:59 PM**
- Choosing from the module reading list, or identifying your own item, write a review of **one** piece of scholarly literature (an academic book, journal article, or a chapter from an edited collection).

Portfolio Part 1: Secondary Literature Review

Your review should address:

- The main argument(s) of the text.
- The author: What is their area of expertise?
- Theoretical perspectives: is the author approaching the topic from a particular perspective (women's history, gender history, cultural history, Marxist perspectives, postcolonial studies, etc)?
- Methodology and sources: What evidence does the author rely on? What are the strengths and weaknesses of their source base and methodology?
- Compare the text and its arguments with other literature you have read on the topic. How does it contribute to our understanding of the topic? How does it fit in with other research on the same topic? What is missing from this work?
- Audience: Who might find this work useful?
- Your scholarly opinion: Does the author achieve their aims? Are the arguments convincing? Would you recommend the work? Why (or why not?)

Portfolio Part 2: Primary Source Analysis

- 1500 words (60% of portfolio)
- Due Sunday 23 November 2025 at 23:59 PM
- Choosing from the primary source document list provided by the module tutor, write a 1500-word analysis of a primary source document related to one of the topics covered by the module.
- You may also choose your own primary source document to analyse, but this **must be discussed and approved as suitable by the module tutor.**

Portfolio Part 2: Primary Source Analysis

A primary source is a document from the period under examination. This could be (not an exhaustive list!):

- A newspaper/magazine article
- Government sources
- Propaganda e.g. posters, radio transcripts, film sources
- Photographs
- Court transcripts
- Legal judgements
- Memoirs

Portfolio Part 2: Primary Source Analysis

Questions you will need to address in your analysis:

- Background about the document itself e.g. who was the author/photographer/artist etc? What do you know about them?
- When was it produced? What is the significance of the context?
- Where did it appear? Who were the intended audience? Who might have had access to it? What kind of response might its audience have had? Did the author intend to provoke a particular response? How successful were they in doing so?
- Analysis of the content: what are the key themes and ideas in the source? What kind of language or imagery is used? What does the source not address – what does it leave out?
- What are the strengths and potential weaknesses of this kind of source material? Are there problems with using it as an historical source?
- What does it tell us about the subject being studied? Do the insights from the source support or contradict historians' conclusions about the subject?

Essay

- 2500 words (50% of module)
- Due Sunday 30 November 2025, 23:59 PM
- Choose from one of the set essay questions
- You may, **after discussion with the module tutor**, devise your own essay topic, but this will need **explicit prior approval**.

Essay Questions

- How have historians of empire incorporated gender as a tool of analysis?
- What do colonial debates over *sati* reveal about British conceptions of their role in India?
- How did colonial powers attempt to remake gender relations?
- How far did imperial feminist campaigns challenge the basis of colonial rule?
- “‘Black peril’ scares reveal more about colonial anxieties than about the realities of sexual violence’. Discuss.
- Why did colonial authorities seek to regulate ‘deviant’ sexualities?
- Did women’s roles in anti-colonial struggles reinforce or challenge existing gender norms?
- Analyse the gendered impacts of postcolonial conflict, with reference to one case study.

Assessment Criteria

- All assignments will be assessed according to the University's published Assessment Criteria, linked in the Module Handbook
- Please consult the appropriate criteria for your level of study (i.e. Level 5 or Level 6).

Referencing

- You may use either MHRA or Harvard style.
- Proper referencing is essential and all assignments must have a properly formatted bibliography.
- Referencing handbooks can be consulted on the UWTSD Library website.

Use of AI

- General Allowable Uses of AI
- Permitted to use AI for structuring (within the bounds of the University's policy)
- You must keep all notes, drafts and other resources you have used to complete your assignment, before and after the use of any AI tool, as you may be required to produce these.
- Familiarise yourself with the allowable uses of AI.
- All assignments must include an AI declaration – whether or not you have used AI. Guidance is available in the Use of AI tile on Moodle.
- You are responsible for reviewing the University's guidelines on use of AI, and ensure that you are using AI responsibly, ethically, and with integrity.

Tomorrow's class

- Gender and Empire
- Take a look at at least 2 of the key readings – one from the 'Gender History' list and one from the 'Gender and Empire' list.