



Gender Violence: A Cultural Perspective

By Sally Engle Merry

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Taking an anthropological perspective, this comprehensive book offers a highly readable and concise overview of what constitutes gender violence, its social context, and important directions in intervention and reform.

- Uses stories, personal accounts, case studies and a global perspective to provide a vivid and engaging portrait of forms of violence in gendered relationships
- Extensively covers many forms of gender violence including domestic violence, rape, murder, wartime sexual assault, prison and police violence, female genital cutting, dowry murders, female infanticide, “honor” killings, and sex trafficking
- Examines major approaches to diminishing gender violence such as criminalization, batterer retraining programs, and human rights interventions
- Highlights the role of social movements in defining the problem and mobilizing reforms in the US and internationally

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Editorial Review

Review

This acute analysis raises a troubling paradox: neither the growing awareness of gender violence, nor the activism directed toward it have lessened its incidence. If anything can make a difference, however, this book will.

-Jean Comaroff, University of Chicago

Gender Violence skillfully charts a tempered course through some of the most charged and globally relevant issues today. Sally Merry draws on her extensive and long-term research both to provide a primer for neophytes in how to think about gender violence and a sophisticated analysis of the structural conditions that unevenly distribute those subject to it. With critical care, she adheres to the complex and ambiguous social, personal, and political predicaments that foster its occlusion while addressing how activism has shaped the changing terms in which it is made visible, confronted, and understood.

-Ann Laura Stoler, The New School

From the Back Cover

This concise introduction defines gender violence in social and cultural terms. Through personal accounts and ethnographic case studies, Sally Engle Merry provides a vivid portrait of many forms of violence in gendered relationships. Domestic violence, rape, murder, wartime sexual assault, prison and police violence, murder, female genital cutting, female infanticide, “honor” killings, and trafficking are all analyzed extensively. Merry examines major social movements and other efforts to diminish gender violence such as criminalization, batterer retraining programs, and human rights interventions.

Gender Violence: A Cultural Perspective challenges readers to confront gender violence as a social problem deeply embedded in inequalities of class, race, and nation as well as gender. It offers a highly readable and clear overview of what constitutes gender violence, its social context, and its history as a public issue. It is invaluable as a guide to this complex and important social problem.

About the Author

Sally Engle Merry is Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Law and Society Program at New York University. Her recent books include *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice* (2006), and *The Practice of Human Rights: Tracking Law between the Local and the Global*, (co-edited with Mark Goodale; 2007). She is past president of the Law and Society Association and the Association for Political and Legal Anthropology.

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