

## **A note about the book extract**

This is an extract of the book "*Hook, Line and Sinker: Encountering Violence of Culture*". The book has articles by students of the course "**WS8 - Culture: Gender Perspectives**" (2013 batch).

The articles are around a theme that was conceptualized by Prof. Sharmila Rege, who wrote the introduction and edited the volume along with team. The extract includes the cover pages, content pages and introduction written by Prof. Sharmila Rege. The book is published by **Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule Women's Studies Centre**, University of Pune.

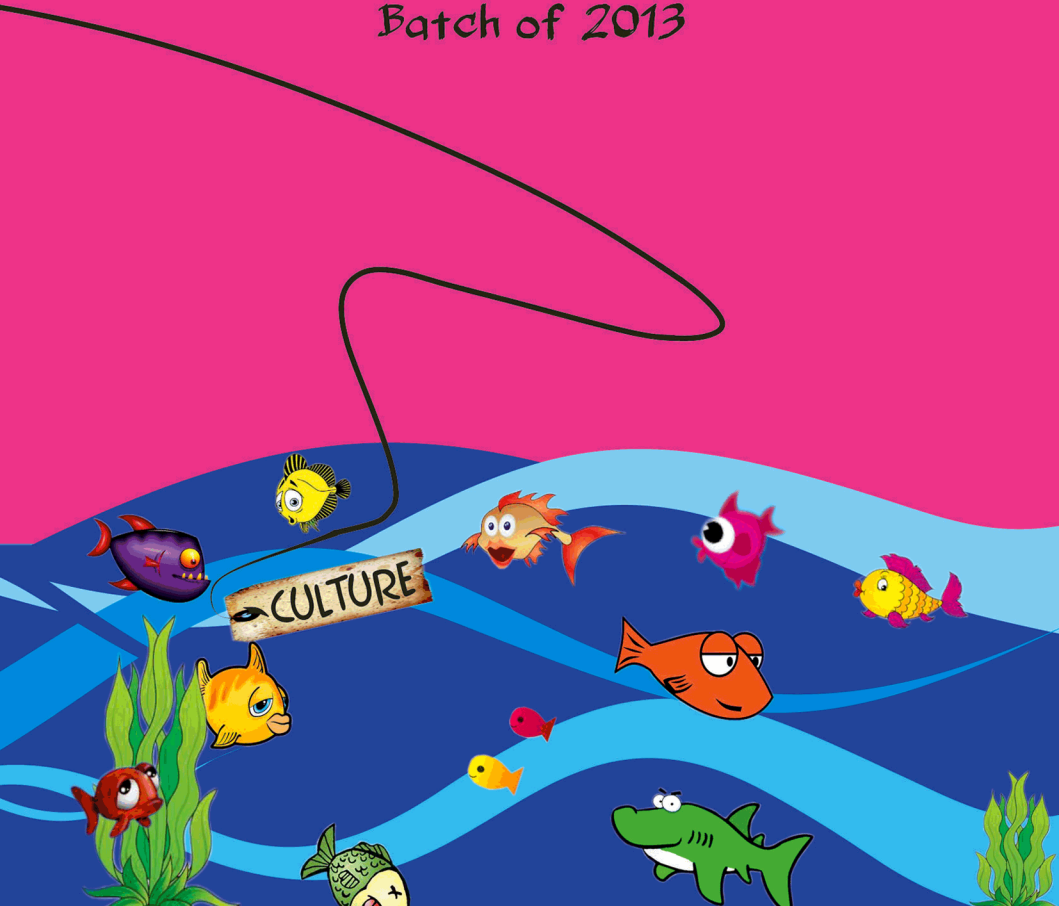
Details about Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule Women's Studies Centre at:

[http://www.unipune.ac.in/snc/womens\\_studies\\_centre/](http://www.unipune.ac.in/snc/womens_studies_centre/)

# HOOK, LINE AND SINKER

ENCOUNTERING VIOLENCE OF CULTURES

WS 8 Class  
Batch of 2013



**Hook, Line and Sinker:  
Encountering  
Violence of Cultures**

**WS-8: Gender, Popular Culture and  
Modernity in India  
Batch of 2013**

**Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule Women's Studies Centre,**  
Dr. Ambedkar Bhavan,  
University of Pune,  
Pune 411 007

*Gender Studies: Student Project Series - 6*

**Hook, Line and Sinker:  
Encountering Violence of Cultures**

**Authors** : WS -8 Gender, Popular Culture  
and Modernity in India  
Batch of 2013

**Editorial Team** : Mayuri Samant  
Sneha Gole  
Sharmila Rege

**Editorial Assistance** : Swapnali Korhale  
Pritam Kokate  
Debasmita Deb

**Cover Design by** : Roshan Rathod  
Gayatri Sashidharan  
Anupama Rathod

© : Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule  
Women's Studies Centre,  
University of Pune, Pune 7.

**Published On** : 10<sup>th</sup> March 2013

**Pages** : 372 + 16

**CONTENTS**

**Introduction:**

**In the WS – 8 Classroom: Encountering Violence of Cultures: Hook, Line and Sinker**

*Sharmila Rege* ..... ix

**Section One**

**Encounters with the State Policies and Practices**

**The Every day in prison and the Prison of the Every day in Contemporary Iran**

*Raha Sabet* ..... 1

**Who Cooks? Who Eats? : Caste in State Sponsored Mid Day Meals**

*Abhilasha Srivastava* ..... 30

**The ghost of the city and some reflections about Pune roads from a Colombian mind**

*Vivianna Jaramillo* ..... 35

**In the name of Religious Culture: Reviewing ‘Stoning’ in Contemporary Iran**

*Hamideh* ..... 51

**Section Two**

**Encounters With Contemporary Sexual Economies**

**A Foreigner’s Fantasies of Fear: (Re-) evaluating Bias through Analysis of the Politics of Gaze on a Walk Down Bhandarkar Road**

*Pavlina Crowley* ..... 64

**Condom's Travelogue in India: From a Birth Control Measure to a Kama Sutra Ambassador**

*Rupali Gupta* ..... 90

**Encountering Sexual Harassment at the Work Place: Making Sense of My own Experience and Resistance**

*Smita Dixit* ..... 109

**The Term *Slut*: Violence in our Everyday Language**

*Reid Williamson* ..... 121

**An Ideal Man: Men in American Television Commercials**

*Ashley Miglin* ..... 130

**Fifty Shades of Violence**

*Srushti Mahamuni* ..... 136

**Section Three**

**Encounters with Moral Economy of the Family**

**Will the 'Real' Mother Please 'Step' Out: Reflections on the Dichotomous Model of Motherhood in India**

*Mayuri Samant* ..... 150

**'Bullshitting' Mothers**

*Rohini Shukla* ..... 160

**Cultures of the Extra-Curricular: Thinking through Caste and Beyond Class Mobility**

*Amrapali Waghmare* ..... 177

**भाऊसत्ता : इज्जत व आंबट गोड नातेसंबंधांची**

*निशा सुरेश पोळ* ..... 184

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| विवाहाचे अर्थकारण : हुंडा व्यतिरिक्त खर्च मांडताना         |     |
| मंदार लष्कर .....  | 193 |
| <b>“Aaj Ki Housewife Hai ...Sab Janati Hai” Why is it?</b> |     |
| <i>Manisha Kumari</i> .....                                | 198 |
| संपत्तीमधील मुलीचा वाटा: भावनांचे अर्थकारण बघताना          |     |
| अश्विनी डोके .....   | 211 |
| कौटुंबिक हिंसाचाराकडे मागे वळून पाहताना                    |     |
| नामदेव कारखिले .....                                       | 221 |

#### **Section Four**

#### **Encounters with Compulsions of Fertility and Son-Preference**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| लिंगगुणोत्तराचे प्रमाण : कुटूंबातच उलगडताना                                  |     |
| स्वाती पन्हाळे .....   | 225 |
| <b>‘Son Preference’ and My<br/>‘Becoming a Mother of Two Daughters’</b>      |     |
| <i>Vandana Kamthe</i> .....  | 228 |
| <b>Cultural Violence of Fertility: A Gaze from<br/>an Infertility Clinic</b> |     |
| <i>Rupali Pethkar-Joshi</i> .....  | 238 |
| मासिक पाळी : निषिद्धतेची संस्कृती  |     |
| स्वप्नाली कोन्हाळे .....   | 246 |

**Section V**

**Encounters with Caste and Community Identities and Practices**

**The Not so Holy Matrimony**

*Roshan Rathod* ..... 256

**The Violence of everyday 'LIES'**

*Maithili Rao* ..... 267

**Ghosts of Dharmashastras**

*Gayatri Sashidharan* ..... 273

**Locating Caste in Bengal**

*Debasmita Deb* ..... 281

**State Sponsored Training for 'Hawaai Sundaris':  
Tracing Gender and caste violence**

*Pritam Kokate* ..... 292

**Section VI**

**Encounters with Toys, Technology and Campus Life**

**Violence of Gendered Toys**

*Anvita Upponi* ..... 297

**VIDEOGAMES: Unravelling the  
Many Layers in Structure and Practice**

*Larrissa Andrade* ..... 304

**प्रेमाची चौकट : जात वर्गाच्या सीमारेषा**

*शंकर गवळी* ..... 324



|  |     |
|--|-----|
| पॅरासाईट संस्कृती : स्वप्न, संघर्ष, तडजोड शिक्षणासाठी<br>रविंद्र बेलोटे .....  | 335 |
| <b>Mobile Phone Cultures: Exploring the<br/>Violence in Everyday Lives</b>   |     |
| <i>Nemboi Sitlhou</i> .....  | 341 |
| <b>Reciprocal Violence: Reflections from<br/>a Student of Philosophy</b>   |     |
| <i>Yusuf Indorewala</i> .....  | 352 |
| <b>College Students Map of Gender, Culture and Violence:<br/>Outlining Yeola Taluka Stree Visheshanka<br/>(Special Issue on Women of Yeola Taluka)</b> |     |
| <i>Enayat Pardeshi</i> .....   | 359 |
| <b>About the Contributors</b> .....  | 364 |

**In the WS-8 Classroom:  
Encountering Violence of Cultures:  
Hook, Line and Sinker**

This year Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule Women's Studies Centre is commemorating 25 years of learning of women's studies on the University of Pune campus. The faculty, staff and students of the Centre decided to mark 25 years of its existence, struggles and achievements with Mukta Salve Special Lecture Series on 'Pursuit of Justice: Understanding Gendered Histories of Intolerance and Violence'. The twelve lectures in the series were planned in November 2011, to map a continuum of violence- from the agricultural fields to borders and boundaries, work to family, gendered bodies to body politic, neo urban spaces to states of exception, caste and gender violence across regions to epistemic violence as it frames the everyday of our research and teaching. The idea was to collectively 'see' and debate the complex relations between the different sites of violence and intolerance.

The focus on violence and intolerance in this semester (Jan-April 2013) was not limited to the special lecture series but ran through optional courses and the assignments across all the courses. Over the last five years, it has become customary for participants in WS-8 Course on 'Gender, Popular Culture and Modernity in India' at the Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule Women's Studies Centre to conceive of and work on a collection of student essays. The focus on 'Violence and Intolerance' also flowed in

as a theme for student essays. It was decided that while the lecture series opened up the ‘big picture’ of violence, the essays would draw upon own experiences of encountering violence in cultural practices. The essays would labour to map journeys of ‘discovering’ the violence in lived practices or /and seek to ‘make sense’ of the experience through unravelling the workings of power on and across different sites.

### **Outlining the Process: Hook, Line and Sinker**

The usual blocks associated with thinking through and writing papers seem to disappear when the exercise calls for engaging with themes that participants are convinced need exploration. The very idea of engaging with own encounters with cultural practices as if makes permeable the otherwise watertight boundaries between personal reflections and academic styles of writing. The initial discussions instantiated passionate, ambitious and courageous lists of possible sub-themes for student essays; calling for focus on structuring of essay even as discussions energised the classroom. A discussion on developing a structure for the proposed essay was initiated by a presentation by Mayuri Samant, faculty undergraduate programme and presently working with students of the WS-8 course to develop bilingual reading capacities.

The themes and structures of essays submitted by the course participants were very diverse and engagements uneven. We sought to address some of the blocks in thinking and writing by inviting Dr Bindu KC, faculty at Women’s Studies Centre at TISS, Mumbai to do writing workshops with us. The two sessions with a gap of a week; each of four hours of interactive sessions were immensely fruitful in thinking through themes collectively, structuring of the essays without mechanical

standardisation of formats and in unhealing fears that run loose in the process of writing.

The WS-8 class would like to place on record deep appreciation for Dr Bindu's innovative efforts and patience that gave many the courage to delineate their position and arguments for the essay. The WS-8 class is also thankful to Sneha Gole, Mayuri Samant for making the production of the book possible and course assistants Swapnali, Pritam and Debasmita for their efforts and assistance.

### **Diverse and Uneven Engagement with Violence of Cultures**

The diverse and uneven engagements with violence of cultures unfold through the essays as descriptions, interrogations, explorations and conceptual reflections on encounters with a varied range of cultural practices. The diverse and uneven engagements have produced multiple genres of essays and pushed us to ask - How do we 'make sense' of the diversity and uneven character of these essays?

To begin with, all of us - the participants in the WS-8 Course on 'Gender, Popular Culture and Modernity in India', come with our 'burdens' and 'lessons' from diverse disciplinary and social locations to straddle between three interdisciplinary spaces of gender, culture and development studies. Located in a Masters programme in Gender, Culture and Development Studies in a State university in a multilingual classroom, our effort in this course is to understand the ways in which gender studies in India has opened up diverse ways of 'doing culture' as also to draw upon the theoretical and methodological gains of the practices of culture studies in India for 'doing gender'. The WS-8 course which seeks to make sense of modernities in India

works with the category of popular culture as one that has persisted from one period to another, seeking to draw out the different ways in which it relates to the changing everyday lives, labour and struggles of different groups of people. More importantly, it seeks to analyze the constitution of popular culture in relation to gender and other political and social categories such that it gives us insights into the historical constitution of the cultural and also its changing relationship with the social - and with categories such as women, caste and class. However, diverse disciplinary baggage and undergraduate training bring with them different assumptions and common sense about culture that is not easily interrogated or fractured through readings and discussions in one course. It is also not easy to fracture the received common-sense of women's studies with learning that comes from 'disciplined' interventions from students.

Some of the 'problems' therefore lie in the formation of the field of women's studies and its newly launched full-time teaching programmes as also in 'our present'. Women's studies was conceived primarily as research, and different disciplines in the humanities and social sciences responded differently and at different levels to the challenges posed by women's studies. Different disciplines have been impacted by women's studies, and women's studies on its part has received from these disciplines to a greater or lesser extent. This has happened in ways that do not always make obvious the development of an interdisciplinary field of women's studies and gender as a specialization area within disciplines. In practice, therefore women's studies is an interdisciplinary field as also a field anchored in existing disciplines and this poses complex questions at the level of pedagogical practice.

The ‘present of teaching programmes in women’s studies’ reveals how activism of the women’s movement; visibility of women’s studies in the university system, hyper visibility of gender issues in the media and the expansion of the Rights discourse propelled both by national and international agencies have led to paradoxical developments. There is, on the one hand, a lot of information now on gender issues, making the issues sometimes seem self-evident and commonsensical to some students and ‘discoveries’ to others. Often anxieties of making courses engaging for a generation that is disconnected from the history upon which women’s studies curricula build, have resulted in preoccupation with quantifying the ‘victimhood’ of women (often reiterating all the binaries of East/West, Rural/Urban that the feminist intellectual political project has long critiqued) or presenting an uncomplicated narrative of ‘women’s resistance’.

Publishing **‘Hook, Line and Sinker : Encountering Violence of Cultures’** a collection of essays by students is a part of the larger collaborative efforts at the Centre to deal with the above mentioned issues and develop critical pedagogies through different tools, methods, strategies that combine social critique with skills of doing critical work.

### **Why Hook, Line and Sinker?**

The idiom – hook, line and sinker, etymologically draws upon the idea of a fish so hungry that it swallows the hook, the line and the sinker. In usage however the idiom suggests the state of being tricked into believing something without any doubts. The WS-8 Class of 2013, after much discussion on possible titles came up with ‘hook, line and sinker’ as they saw it as best describing the processes involved in our collective and individual efforts to think through violence of cultures. Cultural practices it

was argued, are like bait – some of us fall hook, line and sinker only to realise in retrospect the web of cultural lies, myths and mythologies that normalise the violence of lived cultures. Some in the classroom were keen to underline that many ‘fish’ who unlike the idiomatic hungry fish, never completely swallow the hook, line and the sinker and resist the bait. As a class that gives much thought to diversity and difference there was a debate on why the cover of the book would have to represent all kinds of fish in the deep sea of culture- those who fall hook, line and sinker, those that ignore the bait, resist the bait or subvert the hook, line and sinker!!

The essays are organised into sections- traversing different sites and locations of encounters with violence of cultures. The first section is organised around encounters with violence embedded in state policies and practices. More specifically, essays in this section move from the everyday in prisons and prisons of the everyday (Raha), violence of caste exclusions in Mid-day Meal Scheme (Abhilasha), the invisibility of cyclists in Pune City (Vivianna) to the practice of stoning in contemporary Iran (Hamideh).

The second section brings together five contributors who have a keen interest in mapping the violence embedded in practices of sexual economies. Essays in this section explore the maze of the gaze on ‘foreign streets’ (Pavlina), the shifting imaginations of condom advertisements (Rupali Gupta), sexual harassment in new work spaces (Smita), violence in everyday language (Reid), hegemonic masculinities (Ashley) and in texts like ‘Fifty shades of Grey’ (Srushti).

Eight contributors in the third section bring focus on varied encounters with the moral economy of the family. More specifically they interrogate the discourse and practices of

biological motherhood (Mayuri), extra-curricular classes for children (Amrapali), ideologies and practices of ‘bullshitting mothers’ (Rohini), ‘Fratriarchy’ or power of brothers in the family (Nisha), economies of marriage (Mandar), ‘the all-knowing housewife’ in teleserials (Manisha), anxieties of daughters seeking inheritance rights (Ashwini) and normalisation of abuse against women in the family (Namdeo).

The fourth section brings together seven contributors all of whom are interested in exploring compulsions of fertility and son-preference. Through foregrounding own experience, essays in this section focus on cultural practices that normalise son-preference (Swati, Vandana), fertility treatments for women (Rupali Pethkar-Joshi) and taboos and pollution related to menstruation (Swapnali).

The fifth section traces encounters with caste and community identities and practices across sites as varied as arranged marriages in Marwari community (Roshan), inter caste marriage (Maithili), judicial discourse (Gayatri), dalit literature in Bengal (Debasmita) and state sponsored training programs for SC/ST women (Pritam).

The last section moves to more ‘youthful’ sites to encounter violence in toy cultures (Anvita), videogames (Larissa), love interests (Shankar), cell phones (Nemboi) and college magazines (Enayat). Two essays in this section map formal disciplinary and informal spaces on campus as they interrogate parasite cultures in hostels (Ravindra) and reciprocal violence from disciplinary perspectives (Yusuf).

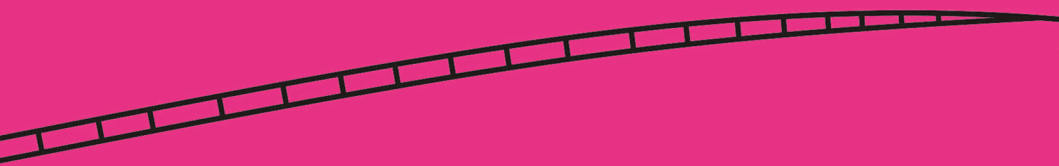
Together these papers unfold the diverse expectations that students bring to the women’s studies classroom. This classroom is textured through diversities and inequalities of caste, age,



access, unequal cultural capital, uneven undergraduate training and multiple and diverse aspirations attached to the degree. The co-learners in the WS-8 courses share very little in common by way of nationality, caste, region, language and also in terms of their investment in and what they see as constituting structural and cultural violence of our times. Working together on the book project, in creating space for integrating dialogue, participation, and experience has been mutually enriching - hook, line and sinker!

**Sharmila Rege**

**10 March 2013**



Centre- Student Partnership Project Series - 6

Published by

KrantiJyoti Savitribai Phule

Women's Studies Centre

University of Pune, Pune

