Cosmopolitanism, Women, and War:  
From Virginia Woolf’s Three Guineas  
to Marjane Satrapi's Persepolis

Thursday February 11, 2010 3:30 p.m

CAS Gallery at Wesley House  
1210 Stanford Drive  
University of Miami

Susan Stanford Friedman

Virginia Woolf Professor of English and  
Women’s Studies  
Sally Mead Hands Bascom Professor of English

University of Wisconsin-Madison

What happens to the cosmopolitan dream of world citizenship during a time of war? What is women’s relationship to patriotism when the nation denies them full citizenship and uses the language of protection against violence to justify its circumscription of women’s rights? Virginia Woolf’s polemic essay on war Three Guineas (1938) and Marjane Satrapi’s bestselling memoir Persepolis (2000) explore these questions about gender, war, and world citizenship from their different standpoints in time and location. The lecture explores Three Guineas and Persepolis in the context of current debates about cosmopolitanism “from below” and argues that both women advocate a cosmo-feminism “from the side” that refuses loyalty to nation-states at war that do violence to their own citizens while claiming to protect them.


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