**The position of the Arts and Culture Studies department on content warnings**

This document has been created by the Arts and Culture Studies department in response to students’ requests to incorporate content warnings into course syllabi. The staff have decided to incorporate content warnings into course syllabi when it comes to topics that can cause a severe reaction with medical consequences for the person who is triggered. It concerns the following topics: rape, eating disorders, domestic violence, suicide and self-harm. It will also be indicated when a film or video is shown that contains flashing lights which may trigger an epileptic seizure. These topics have been determined in cooperation with students from the Arts and Culture Studies department.

The content warnings are meant to allow students to mentally prepare themselves for class, so that students who are dealing with trauma can also contribute to class. It is up to the students themselves to determine whether they will attend the class in question.

With regards to this, the department would like to stress a number of issues:

* Considering the highly individual nature of traumas, it is not possible to determine what will be triggering to individual students, nor it is possible to single out all problematic themes in a text or film in advance.
* Students coping with trauma or other problematic issues are encouraged to make use of the services the university offers in this area (including the student advisor, and student counselling).
* It is the responsibility of the student to do research before class to uncover what the contents are of the artwork or text that will be discussed, so that the student can adequately prepare for class.

**Template for general content warnings:**

**Content warning**

The subjects that are discussed in this course

and/or

The films that we will watch in this course might contain elements that could be disturbing to certain students, such as scenes of domestic violence; sexualized violence and/or rape; suicide; eating disorders; or self-harm. *(Film title) contains (a) sequence(s) of light flashes that may trigger an epileptic seizure in susceptible viewers*.

Because sensibilities and traumatic experiences are highly individual it is impossible for the tutor to identify all individual instances of possibly problematic material that may occur in lectures, film screenings, or required reading.

*Please be advised that the tutor may not (always) preface material with a content warning because revealing plot points or disturbing narrative or visual material may undermine the analytical or didactic point of showing/discussing this material. Sometimes unprepared audience response is part of the exercise of thinking through certain kinds of representations.*

Students who are susceptible to content-related triggers are urged to exercise discretion in deciding whether they will attend certain meetings and/or screenings.

*If you are likely to be triggered by certain content, or if you find certain kinds of imagery particularly disturbing, you are advised to look up film titles before the screenings to inform yourself about possible disturbing content.*

You are free to leave the room at any time if you find subjects or materials disturbing.

**Template to signpost a specific film:**

This film contains scenes of domestic violence/sexualized violence and/or rape/suicide/eating disorders/self-harm that certain viewers may find disturbing.

*(Film title) contains (a) sequence(s) of light flashes that may trigger an epileptic seizure in susceptible viewers.*

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