COURSE SYLLABUS

Borders and Bordering Practices in World Politics

Instructor:
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Fall 2018
MA 4 Credits (8 ECTS Credits), 2018-19

Course description:

This course engages with borders and bordering practices in world politics – that is, ways in which lines, boundaries, caesuras are drawn between geographical entities, populations, groups, identities and ultimately, people – demarcating self and other, establishing hierarchical relationships and moral categories, authorizing particular modes of action and violence between them. Drawing on insights from critical international relations theory, critical border studies, critical security studies, political geography and biopolitics, as well as reviewing a range of contemporary issues – such as migration, counter-terrorism, surveillance and everyday experiences of (in)security – it engages with how contemporary security practices and assemblages operate with modes of separation and classification ranging from physical walls to instruments of social sorting in the digital age. Ultimately, the course maps out vistas of engagement and everyday practices of resistance that seek to challenge, subvert or collapse such distinctions.

Aims

The main objectives of the course are:

- To develop a theoretically and critically informed understanding of contemporary security practices
- To assess and analyse contemporary debates around ‘borders’ on the basis of critical theory, case studies and lived experience
- To facilitate nuanced and holistic engagement with everyday experiences of (in)security by looking at a range of sites, actors, narrations and practices globally and in the European context

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module students will:

- Be able to navigate and critically assess various strands of theorizing regarding contemporary security issues and practices and understand their main stakes
- Be able to confidently work with interdisciplinary approaches in studying contemporary phenomena
Understand some of the most important ways in which different modalities of power and resistance operate through the lens of ‘bordering practices’ broadly conceived

Have engaged with and analysed a range of empirical cases, practical examples and cultural artefacts in developing an in-depth understanding of the complexities of meaning making and interpretation at various sites and registers of politics and society

**Course Requirements**

Active participation in seminars: **10%**
Mid-term exam in Week 9: **25%**
Two short position papers for Week 10 and 11: **20%** (10% each - details to be discussed in the first seminar)
Term paper: **45%**

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**PART I: LINES OF (IN)SECURITY**

**Week 1. Borders within and without**

**Seminar 1. Inhabiting the line**


**Seminar 2. Borders and bordering practices**


Week 2. Sovereign Lines and Imagined Communities

Seminar 3. Defining Self and Other


Seminar 4. ‘Community’ in the making


Shindo, Reiko (2012) ‘Rethinking Community: Translation Space as a Departure from Political Community’ International Political Sociology, 6, 149–164


Recommended reading:


PART II: BODY-POLITICS

Week 3. Biopolitics via Foucault

Seminar 5. Life-politics

Commentary:

Seminar 6. Population-politics

Selmeczy, Anna (2009) “… we are being left to burn because we do not count”: Biopolitics, Abandonment, and Resistance’, Global Society, Volume 23 Issue 4: Michel Foucault: New Directions in Theorising World Politics, pp. 519 –38.


Week 4. Biopolitics via Agamben

Seminar 7. States of exception


Commentary:

Seminar 8. Life on the threshold


Week 5. Enactments of Sovereignty
Seminar 9. Bureaucrats


Seminar 10. Experts and citizens


Week 6. Security Governance

Seminar 11. Governing mobility


Seminar 12. Governing bodies

Vaughan-Williams, Nick (2015) ”‘We are not animals!” Humanitarian Border Security and Zoopolitical Spaces in EUrope’, Political Geography, 45 (March), pp. 1-10.


**Week 7. Borders and bordering practices in Europe**

*Seminar 13 Europe’s border crisis*


*Seminar 14. Cases and experiences*


**Recommended reading:**


**Week 8. Lines of Knowledge**

*Seminar 15. Screening asylum*


*Seminar 16. Spotting signs of radicalisation*

Week 9. Mid-term exam

Seminar 17. No class

Seminar 18. Mid-term exam

PART III: PRACTICE

Week 10. Dissent

Seminar 19. NGO Activism
Invited speaker: Andras Lederer, Hungarian Helsinki Committee (TBC)

Seminar 20. Citizen Activism
Invited speaker: TBC

Background reading:


Week 11. Border Art

Seminars 21 & 22:

Film to be screened:


Heath Bunting (2002-2003) borderxing

Background reading:


PART IV: EMBRACING THE LINES

Week 12. Reimagining the border

Seminar 23: Another (bio)politics


Seminar 24: Writing between the lines
