Nationalism, Gender, and Sexuality

GENS TBA
MA Level Elective Class, 2 credits
Fall 2019

Syllabus subject to change

Hadley Z. Renkin
renkinh@ceu.edu
Office: Zrinyi 512
Office Hours: TBA

Class Time: M 11am-12:40pm
Place: TBA

Course Description:
This course interrogates the complex and mutually constitutive entanglements of gender, sexuality, and nationalism, and their profound and far-reaching personal, social, and political effects, across a range of past and present sites and moments. Approaching these questions through a mix of anthropological, historical, and gender studies approaches, and both theoretical perspectives and concrete cases, we will examine the mingled conceptual and material causes and consequences of nationalism’s gendered and sexual structures and practices. Through close exploration of multiple empirical foci from the intimate practices of national bodily respectability and the reproduction of the nation to the violence of war, and from the inclusions/exclusions of heteronational homophobias to those of neo-orientalist politics of migration, homonationalism, and femonationalism, the course will strive to grasp more fully the nature and implications of these relationships.

Learning Outcomes
Through its readings, discussions, written assignments, and collaborative group project, this course will provide students with in-depth knowledge of:
- the core theoretical issues approaches to analyzing nationalisms as cultural, material phenomena
- recognize and analyze the ways in which concepts and practices of nationalism, gender, and sexuality are mutually constituted in the discourses and practices of the Nation and its Others, and consider these critically on both theoretical and methodological levels
- critically assess and compare scholarly work on nationalism’s and its theoretical arguments put forward and the methods used to construct those arguments
- identify and research a topic of theoretical relevance to the themes of the course through primary sources found on the internet or other available resources
- present critical written analyses supported by not only the insights of class readings, but by comparison to outside scholarship and primary research materials.
- demonstrate the ability to orally analyze, compare, and critique class readings through active participation in class

Student Responsibilities and Requirements
This is a discussion-based course, not a lecture course. It will, therefore, require a great deal of responsibility on the part of all of you. For each class, I will first introduce and contextualize the week’s topic. We will then, as a class, map out the central theoretical and analytical moves presented by the day’s readings, their specific arguments, and the relationships between them, and their location within broader patterns of feminists and other theorizing. The remainder of the class will be an open discussion of these arguments and connections, and their implications – in which I will occasionally mediate or intervene. Thus, all of you will be expected to analyze, express your opinions about, and debate the assigned materials in depth.

NB.: No electronic devices (laptops, tablets, cell phones) may be used in the class.

Requirements:

1) Attendance and class participation

You are required to attend classes consistently: missing class without some official documentation of a medical problem may affect your grade. You are expected to take an active and constructive part in group discussions.

2) Critical Comments.

During the course of the term, each of you will write two (2), 2-3 page Critical Comments, each for a class of your choice. The Comment may focus on a single reading, or compare more than one reading from that day’s assigned materials.

These Comments are meant to stimulate your/our thinking and questioning of specific issues, and to enable all of us to address the topic more effectively; they are therefore critical to successful discussion in the class. In this sense (as, indeed, in all others), a great deal of responsibility for the success or failure of this course lies in your hands. Assessment of these will be based on cumulative progress made throughout the term, and will be worth 40% of your final grade.

Each Critical Comment should contain (but need not be limited to) the following elements:

1. CORE QUOTATION. You should quote a sentence or short passage from the text that you think is central to the main argument of the piece. Be sure to always cite the quotation properly.
2. ARGUMENT. Briefly, summarize the author's main argument.
3. QUESTION. Raise a question about a point (not a fact!) you feel is not adequately accounted for, or supported, in the argument.
4. PERSONAL CONNECTION. Consider briefly how the argument made in the article fits or challenges your previous thinking about social movements/politics.
5. ANALYTICAL RELATION. Compare this argument with another you have come across, either in this course or in your previous study. Summarize briefly this previous argument (citing it properly), and explain how the present piece’s argument contrasts with it, or casts new light on the issues they have in common.
6. IMPLICATIONS. Discuss the potential implications that you see the current argument to have for our more general understanding of society and social change.

Critical Comments should not exceed three typed pages.

Critical Comments should be sent to the entire class via the course Moodle site by midnight the night BEFORE the relevant class.

3) Group Presentation Project

For the final two classes of the term, in order to practice “hands-on” application of the critical, analytical lessons of the course, and to broader its scope further, small groups of students will work together to prepare and then present to the class a final project involving in-depth examination of a specific, recent case of the entanglement of gender and sexuality with particular national structures, discourses, and practices. The group’s project may focus on a specific, concrete event, or a broader trend or phenomenon; the precise topic and method will be developed in consultation with the professor. Groups will be formed early in the class; a one-paragraph project abstract will be due in class at the end of October. Group presentations will be roughly 30 minutes (depending on the number of students in the class); requirements for these will be discussed in class.

Grading:
General participation in class discussions will count for 30% of your grade. Reaction papers (together) will be worth 40% of the total course grade. The group presentation will be worth the remaining 30% of the total grade.

Class Schedule:

Week 1: Thinking Nations and Nationalism


Week 2: National Bodies I: Intersectional Respectabilities


Week 3: National Bodies II: women and nation?


Week 4: National Bodies III: reproductions


Week 5: National Violence


Week 6: Nationalism and Homophobia - the postsocialist case


Week 7: The Sexual Nation and Migration: neo-orientalism

**Week 8: Sexual Terror I: Homonationalism**


**Week 9: Sexual Terror II:**


**Week 10: Sexual Terror III: Femonationalism**


**Week 11: Student Presentations**

**Week 12: Student Presentations**