COURSE SYLLABUS

Borders and Bordering Practices in World Politics

Instructor:

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Winter 2019-20
MA 4 Credits (8 ECTS Credits), 2019-20

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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%

Two position papers: 40% (20% each - to be discussed in first seminar)

Term paper: 50%

**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**


**Recommended reading:**


**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

Please choose one article from the list below:

Selmeczi, 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*

Please choose one article from the list below:


**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:**


A collection of papers in Antipode ‘Migration and the Refugee Crisis’ [https://antipodefoundation.org/2015/10/13/migration-and-the-refugee-crisis/]

**Week 8. Lines of Knowledge**

**Seminar 15. Screening asylum**


**Recommended reading:**


**Seminar 16. Post-colonial feminism & migration**


**PART III: PRACTICE**

**Week 9. Subverting Borders**

**Seminar 17. Border Art**

Choose one reading from each track:

1. Amoore & Hall

   *Amoore, Louise and Alexandra Hall (2013) 'The clown at the gates of the camp: Sovereignty, resistance and the figure of the fool,' Security Dialogue, 44(2) 93–110*

2. Selected chapters from the collection below - see folder:

Films to be screened:

Heath Bunting (2002-2003) borderxing

Seminar 18: Potential futures


Week 10. Borders, reimagined

Seminar 19 no class [free slot for Sub/Dom Performance]

Seminar 20 Film screening TBC

Week 11. Dissent

Seminar 21.
Invited speaker: TBC

Seminar 22.
Invited speaker: TBC

Background reading:


**Week 12. Field trip (TBC – this can take place in any week, to be discussed in first seminar)**

*Seminar 23. No class*

*Seminar 24. No class*