

Department of International History

Gender, Sexuality, and Decolonization in the Global South

Course Description

This course will examine the intersections of gender, sexuality and nationalism within the context of decolonization movements in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean from the late 19th century to the postcolonial period, with a particular focus on the 1920s to 1970s. Case studies will range from analysis of Gandhi's approach to women's mobilization in India to the involvement of women in armed rebellions in Africa to reproductive politics in the Caribbean. Students will consider how nationalist movements worked to either include or exclude certain genders and sexualities from their discourses and projects, how a variety of actors resisted these prescriptions and tried to pursue different agendas, and how these struggles shaped society, politics, and state-building in postcolonial societies.

> PROFESSOR

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Syllabus

This course is organized thematically, with case studies for each week drawn from across a variety of decolonizing societies in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. After addressing some of the main theoretical perspectives on nationalism, gender, and sexuality, we will focus in on the following themes: the construction of "femininity," "masculinity" and "tradition" in colonial and anti-colonial discourses; male nationalist leaders, women's emancipation and gender discourses; women's political activism and thought; feminism, nationalism, and internationalism; the gendered dynamics of armed liberation movements; gender, violence and dislocation; body politics; reproduction; disruptive sexualities; and the regulation of sex work by the state. Students are expected to come to each class ready to discuss the arguments and methodology of required readings. Each week (starting in Week 3), 1-2 students will also write a short paper examining in more detail the authors' approach, which they will briefly present in the second half of class discussion. Finally, students will prepare a longer paper examining a primary source of their choosing relevant to the course's themes.

A course schedule with a weekly reading list is provided below, along with more details on course requirements and course policies. All readings will be made available on hold at the library and/or through the course Moodle page. Movies are also available through the course Vimeo account, password HI079. <https://vimeopro.com/graduateinstitutelibrary/gender-sexuality-and-decolonisation>

COURSE SCHEDULE

I. Introduction

Week 1, February 22: Introduction

Optional Background Readings:

- Bradley, Mark Philip. "Decolonization, the Global South, and the Cold War, 1919-1962." In *The Cambridge History of the Cold War Volume 1, Origins, 1945-1962*, edited by Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge University Press, 2012): pp. 464-85. (Accessible online at: http://phobos.ramapo.edu/~theed/Cold_War/y%20Cambridge%20CW%20vol%201/Ch%202%20Decolonization,%20the%20global%20South,%20and%20the%20Cold%20War,%201919-1962.pdf).
- Kathleen Canning, "Gender History: Meanings, Methods, & Metanarratives," in *Gender History in Practice: Historical Perspectives on Bodies, Class & Citizenship*, (Cornell University Press, 2006): 3-62. (Online at: <https://wislicz.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/canning-gender-history.pdf>)
- Students are also encouraged to listen to or download the transcript of Kwame Anthony Appiah's recent Reith Lecture on the history of nationalism, entitled "Country" <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07zz5mf> (This is part of a four part lecture series on "Mistaken Identities" which also covers religion, race, and culture)

II. Women and Gender in Nationalist Struggles

Week 2, March 1: Theories of Gender and Nation

Required Readings:

- Mrinalini Sinha, "Gender and Nation," in Bonnie G. Smith, ed. *Women's History in Global Perspective*, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 229-274.
- Kumari Jayawardena, "Introduction" to *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, (Zed Books, 1986), 1-24.
- Amina Mama. "Sheroes and villains: Conceptualizing colonial and contemporary violence against women in Africa." In *Feminist genealogies, colonial violences, democratic futures*, ed. M.J. Alexander and C.T. Mohanty (1997), 46-62.

Week 3, March 8: Gender and Tradition in Colonial and Nationalist Discourses

Required Readings:

- Uma Chakravarti, "Whatever happened to the Vedic Dasi? Orientalism, nationalism and a script for the past," in Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid (eds), *Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History* (Rutgers University Press, 1990), pp. 27-87.
- Ann McClintock. "'No Longer in a Future Heaven': Women and Nationalism in South Africa." *Transition* 51 (1991): 104-123.
- Honor Ford-Smith, "Unruly virtues of the spectacular: Performing Engendered Nationalisms in the UNIA in Jamaica," *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 6.1 (2004): 18-44.

Week 4, March 15: Nationalist Leaders and Women's Emancipation

Required Readings :

- Madhu Kishwar, "Gandhi on Women," *Race & Class* XXVIII, 1 (1986): 43-61.
- Karen Bouwer, "Introduction: the Gender of Decolonization," and "Chapter 2: Lumumba on Women: From Domesticity to Political Mobilization," in *Gender and Decolonization in the Congo: The Legacy of Patrice Lumumba* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2010): 1-39.

Optional: Watch the movie *Gandhi* (Colombia Pictures, 1982) and/or *Lumumba* (Zeitgeist Films, 2000).

Week 5, March 22: Women's Political Activism

Required Readings:

- Henrice Altink, "We are equal to men in ability to do anything!": African Jamaican women and citizenship in the interwar years', in Francisca de Haan, Margaret Allen, June Purvis, Krassimira Daskalova, eds., *Women's Activism: Global Perspectives from the 1890s to the Present*. (Routledge, 2012): pgs 77-89.

- Susan Geiger, "Tanganyikan Nationalism as 'Women's Work': Life Histories, Collective Biography and Changing Historiography," *The Journal of African History* Vol. 37, No. 3 (1996), pp. 465-478
- Judith A. Byfield, "From Ladies to Women: Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti and Women's Political Activism in post-WW II Nigeria" in Mia Bay, Farah Griffin, Martha Jones, Barbara Savage (eds.) *Toward an Intellectual History of Black Women* (University of North Carolina Press, 2015): 197-213.

Week 6, March 29: Feminism, Nationalism and Internationalism

Required Readings:

- Mrinalini Sinha, "Suffragism and internationalism: The enfranchisement of British and Indian women under an imperial state," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 36.4 (1999): 461-484.
- Imaobong D Umoren, "Anti-fascism and the Development of Global Race Women, 1928-1945," *Callaloo*, 39.1 (2016): 151-165.
- Katharine McGregor, "Opposing Colonialism: the Women's International Democratic Federation and Decolonisation struggles in Vietnam and Algeria 1945-1965," *Women's History Review*, 25:6 (2016): 925-944.

Week 7, April 5: Gender and Armed Struggle

Required Readings:

- Luise White, "Separating the Men from the Boys: Constructions of Gender, Sexuality, and Terrorism in Central Kenya, 1939-1959." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (1990), pp. 1-25
- Sita Ranchod-Nilsson, "(Gender) Struggles for the Nation: Power, Agency and Representation in Zimbabwe," in Sita Ranchod-Nilsson and Mary Ann Tetreault, Eds., *Women, states and nationalism* (New York, New York: Routledge, 2000): pp. 1-17.
- Aaronette M. White, "All the Men are Fighting for Freedom, All the Women are Mourning their Men, but Some of us Carried Guns: A Raced-Gendered Analysis of Fanon's Psychological Perspectives on War," *Signs*, Vol. 32, No. 4, (2007): 857-884.

Optional: Watch the films *The Battle of Algiers* (Rialto Productions, 1966) and *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* (Roco Films International, 2008).

Week 8, April 12: Gender, Violence and Dislocation

Required Readings:

- Urvashi Butalia, "Community, State and Gender: On Women's Agency during Partition," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 17 (Apr. 24, 1993): 12-24.
- Pippa Virdee, "Remembering partition: women, oral histories and the Partition of 1947," *Oral History* Vol. 41 No. 2 (2013): 49-62.
- Tanya Lyons, "Chapter Ten: The Telling of History in Zimbabwe," in *Guns and Guerilla Girls: Women in the Zimbabwean Liberation Struggle* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2004): 251-279.

Optional: Watch the films *Flame* (California Newsreel, 1996) (discussed in Lyons' chapter) and *Earth* (Eros Entertainment, 1998) (on partition in India).

April 17-21: Spring Break

III. Sex and Sexuality

Week 9, April 26: Body Politics

Required Readings:

- Thomas, Lynn M. *Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya* (University of California Press, 2003), especially "Introduction," and "Chapter 3: Mau Mau and the Girls Who 'Circumcised Themselves': The Gender and Generational Politics of the 1956 Ban on Clitoridectomy in Meru, Kenya," (pp. 1-20 and 79-102).

- Final Paper Proposal Due

Week 10, May 3: Reproductive Control

Required Readings:

- Laura Briggs, "Chapter Three: Debating Reproduction: Birth Control, Eugenics, and Overpopulation in Puerto Rico, 1920–1940," in *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (University of California Press, 2002): 74-108.
- Amy Kaler, "A Threat to the Nation and a Threat to the Men: The Banning of Depo-Provera in Zimbabwe, 1981," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Jun., 1998), pp. 347-376

Week 11, May 10: Sexualities

Required Readings:

- M. Jacqui Alexander, "Not Just (Any) Body Can Be A Citizen: The Politics of Law, Sexuality and Postcoloniality in Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas." *Feminist Review* No. 48 (August 1994): pp. 5-23
- Marc Epprecht, "The 'Unsayings' of Indigenous Homosexualities in Zimbabwe: Mapping a Blindspot in African Masculinity," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Dec., 1998), pp. 631-651
- Andil Gosine, "CAISO, CAISO: Negotiating sex rights and nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago," *Sexualities* 18.7 (2015): 859-884.

Week 12, May 17: Sex and the State

Required Readings:

- Rachel Hynson, "'Count, Capture, and Reeducate': The Campaign to Rehabilitate Cuba's Female Sex Workers, 1959-1966," *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 24.1 (January 2015): 125-153.
- Film: *Virgin Margarida* (Marfilmes 2012) and background materials:
 - Mozambique History Net – Reeducation centers: <http://www.mozambiquehistory.net/reeducation.php>
 - Interview with the filmmaker: <http://africasacountry.com/2013/04/a-critical-look-into-mozambiques-past-licinio-azevedos-virgin-margarida/>

Week 13, May 24: Conclusions

- No readings: we will reflect on the course as a whole and students will have the opportunity to discuss their final papers.

Week 14, May 31: No class, final papers due.

REQUIREMENTS

Participation: 30%

Students are expected to complete the required readings listed for each week and to participate actively in weekly discussions. While reading, students should pay attention to the content of the reading as well as the sources, methodologies, and rhetorical strategies employed by the author. Some questions to consider while reading include: What question(s) is the author trying to answer? What are the authors' main points? What approaches have they adopted and what sources have they used to tell their story? What does the text tell us about the interactions between gender, sexuality, and nationalism (ie. How was this nationalist movement shaped by categories/hierarchies of gender and sexuality, and how did it in turn attempt to shape these categories/hierarchies?) How does the author's arguments, conclusions, and approaches compare/contrast to other readings assigned for that week and/or previous weeks? What is new/useful/unique? What is left unanswered, and how might this affect the story they have told?

Participating actively will require regular attendance in class; students should email the TA when unable to attend for a legitimate reason. Participation also includes not only talking but also listening to and engaging with one's colleagues respectfully and fully. This means that phones must be off and put away at all times, and laptops used for taking notes only.

Reading Commentary: 25%

Students will sign up for **one week** from Weeks 3-12 in which they will provide a more detailed commentary on the course readings. This assignment consists of two parts:

(1) Short Paper: 1200-1500 words (excluding bibliography, 12 pt Times New Roman font, double-spaced, Word document),

due the Tuesday before class at 14:15, submitted online through Moodle

For the paper, students will write a detailed, comparative analysis of the required readings for the week, with a focus on dissecting the author's methodology rather than on restating their arguments. What aspects of gender/sexuality/nationalism and other "big questions" are the authors interested in? How do they narrow down their focus/scope of analysis? What sources do they use to answer these questions? As far as you can tell, who produced these sources, in what context, for what audience, and with what intention? (While some authors make discussion of their sources explicit, in other cases you may need to dig through the footnotes to find this information). What strengths and limitations of these sources do the authors identify? In other words, what do the sources allow us to see/not see? (Dominant narratives or alternative/marginalized perspectives? Key moments or daily life? Views of elites or those of the "subaltern"? Public projections or private thoughts?) What additional strengths, limitations, opportunities and gaps can you see in the use of these types of sources? How does this affect the authors' arguments and how might their work be built on by future research?

(2) Presentation (maximum 10 minutes)

In the second half of class, students will briefly present their paper, highlighting a few key points and posing questions for discussion. (If two students are presenting during the same week, they will have to decide how they want to divide up the time/readings for the purposes of the presentation, but each must cover all readings when writing the paper).

Final Paper: 45%

Students will submit a final paper of 3500-4000 words providing a critical analysis of a primary source of their choosing. This could include, for example, the speeches of a nationalist leader, a memoir of a guerrilla fighter, transcripts from a UN debate or conference, a series of newspapers articles, a film, or some other source that is relevant in some way to the theme of gender, sexuality, and nationalism. Your paper should begin by reviewing the relevant literature on the topic, and then explore how the themes and arguments play out in terms of your primary source(s). Do you find evidence to support the claims scholars have made regarding the gender/sexual politics of nationalism, or does your analysis challenge some of their core assumptions? In what ways? What are the implications and limits of your analysis? What new questions might it raise?

The assignment includes:

(1) Proposal – due April 26 – The proposal should provide a 1-page introduction to the primary source (or sources) you are going to analyze and a 1-2 page bibliography of secondary sources (including both any relevant assigned readings and additional sources you have identified).

(2) Final Paper – due May 31 - 3500-4000 words excluding bibliography (12 pt Times New Roman font, double-spaced, Word document), due May 31 at 23:59 (ie. before midnight), submitted online through Moodle

Resources for final paper: In addition to resources that might be available online or in print, students are encouraged to consult the **database "Women and Social Movements, International."** The collection includes over 4000 historical documents from across the globe, and can be searched in multiple ways (source type, country, theme...etc). The database is fully accessible when connected to the Graduate Institute Intranet: <http://wasi.alexanderstreet.com/>.

Policies

All written work must be submitted to the course Moodle page as a **Word document, double-spaced, 12 pt Times New Roman font, with standard 2.5cm (1") margins**. Students may choose to submit their work in either English or French. Late submissions of assignments will be penalized at a rate of -0.25 per day. Students seeking an extension due to illness, family emergency, or other unforeseen circumstances must contact the professor as soon as possible and will be asked to provide documentation.

Papers should use **footnotes in the Chicago citation style**. Please see Purdue OWL's [Chicago Manual of Style](#) and the sample paper provided on Moodle for guidelines on how to use this format and sample citations.

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Cheating includes any action in disregard of the rules and standards governing evaluation or re-using, all or part, of coursework for which credits or a degree have already been obtained and presenting it as an original piece of work. Plagiarism includes appropriating the work of a third party and presenting it as one's own work, copying text, data, figures, images, etc. from external sources without citing the source or presenting ideas of other authors as original work. In the event that cheating or plagiarism are found to have occurred, a "0" grade will be attributed. Depending on the severity of the offence, the student may be excluded from the Institute. Please see the Institute's ["Internal Guidelines"](#) for further information.