History 300: Nationalism and Sexuality in 19th and 20th century Europe
Semester II, 2006-2007
Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9:05-9:55
Humanities Building

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Course Description:

This course explores the relationship of sexuality and nationalism in the modern era with a twofold purpose. It seeks first to conceptualize the relationship between nationalism and sexuality—recognizing connections between the two concepts and analyzing ways they have reinforced and challenged each other over the past 200 years. Second, the course strives to historicize both phenomena—to understand nationalism and sexuality not as fixed ideologies, but as products of particular historical circumstances, that is, as power structures that change over time.

We begin by examining the origins of the modern European nation during the French Revolution and considering how national politics, national economies and bourgeois morality reinforced each other at this founding moment. We also investigate alternative visions, taking into account the ways that utopian socialists and liberal feminists both criticized and re-imagined the relationship between nation and sexuality. The second section of the course focuses on what might be called "national fallout"—the constellation of sexualized "problems" created by the rapid expansion of national, imperial economies and by the impulse to regulate morality. The third part of the course looks at sexuality and nationalism in the context of the twentieth century's two world wars. We consider the threat posed by the Great War to foundational beliefs about nations and about bourgeois sexual norms and then explore ways that individuals and societies met these challenges in the realms of culture, politics and ideology. The final component of the course explores new ideas about sexuality and the nation that have emerged since 1945. We will examine, on one hand, changing notions of sexuality brought about by the sexual revolution, second wave feminism and the movement for gay rights and, on the other, the profound challenges that decolonization and European Integration posed (and continue to pose) for nation-states.

Requirements

Active participation in Lecture and Discussion (20%)
Two 5-7 page papers: Due Monday February 19th (15%) and Monday, April 16th (20%)
In-Class Midterm Exam, Friday, March 16th (20%)
Final Exam: TBA, week of May 14-19 (25%)

Required Texts: (available for purchase at the University Book Store and on reserve)

Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary
Michel Foucault, Herculine Barbin
Pat Barker, The Eye in the Door
Alexandra Kollontai, Autobiography of a Sexually Emancipated Woman
Anonymous, A Woman in Berlin
Course Reader: available at Humanities Copy Center

Required Films:

Merchant and Ivory, A Passage to India
Alain Renais, Hiroshima Mon Amour

PART ONE: Revolution and the Birth of the Modern Nation

WEEK ONE: Introduction

M 1/22: Thinking about Sexuality and Nation
W 1/24: The Science of Sexual Difference in the late 18th century
F 1/26: Discussion

Reading:
Thomas Laqueur, "Discovery of the Sexes", ch. 5 in Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud, pp. 148-192. [READER]
Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" ch. 6 Feminism and History, Scott, ed., pp. 152-180. [READER]

WEEK TWO: Birth of the Nation

M 1/29: Sexual Politics in the late Ancien Regime
W 1/31: The French Revolution
F 2/2: Discussion

Reading:
Mary Wollstonecraft: *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, "Introduction" and "The Prevailing Opinion of a Sexual Character Discussed", pp. 1-11 and 32-74. [READER]
Jean Jacques Rousseau, selection from *Emile* [READER]

WEEK THREE: The Bourgeois Family and National Identity

M 2/5: The French Revolution Abroad
W 2/7: The Bourgeois Family
F 2/9: Discussion

Reading:
Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary

WEEK FOUR: Alternative Visions of Sex and Social Order

M 2/19: Utopian Socialism, Romanticism and National Ideals; FIRST PAPER DUE
W 2/21: Middle Class Feminism: Claiming Legitimacy while Challenging the System
F 2/23 Discussion

Reading:
Charles Fourier, Design for Utopia: Selected Writings of Charles Fourier, pp. 50-96. [READER]
John Stuart Mill, On the Subjection of Women, chs. 1 and 4, pp. 1-29 and 79-101. [READER]

PART TWO: Prostitutes, Homosexuals and Racial Others

WEEK FIVE: Urban Space and Sexual Dangers

M 2/26: National Spectacle and Urban Space
W 2/28: The Problem of Working Class Profligacy
F 3/2: Discussion

Reading:

William Acton, "Prostitution considered in its social and Sanitary Aspects" (1870), in Sheila Jeffreys, ed., The Sexuality Debates pp. 42-56. [READER]

Harriet Martineau, "The contagious Diseases Acts as Applied to Garrison Towns and Naval Stations" (1863), in Jeffreys, ed., pp.77-90 [READER]

Josephine Butler, "An Appeal to the people of England on the recognition and Superintendence of prostitution by Governments" (1870), in Jeffreys, ed., pp. 111-150. [READER]

"Do women have a right to work?" (selections from the First International and Paule Mink, in Hellerstein, et. al., pp. 396-400) [READER]

WEEK SIX: Defining and Regulating Deviance

M 3/5: Controlling Prostitution: 'The French System'
W 3/7: Fin-de-Siècle: Free Love and Homosexuality
F 3/9: Discussion

Reading:

Michel Foucault, Herculine Barbin

WEEK SEVEN: Sexuality, Race and Empire

M 3/12: Sexuality and Imperial Power in British India
W 3/14: Optional In-Class Review; Evening showing of 'A Passage to India'

F 3/16: MIDTERM EXAM

PART THREE: National Ideologies and Total War

WEEK EIGHT: The First World War

M 3/19: Codes of Masculine Honor
W 3/21: The Home Front
F 3/23: Discussion

Reading:

Pat Barker, The Eye in the Door

WEEK NINE: Population Politics

M 3/26: Growing the Nation: Pro-Natalism and the Beginning of Welfare States
W 3/27: Sexuality and the Nation in Communism: Myth and Reality
F 3/30: Discussion

Readings:
Alexandra Kollontai, Autobiography of a Sexually Emancipated Woman

WEEK TEN: SPRING BREAK: March 31-April 8

WEEK ELEVEN: Decadence and the Discourse of National Decline

M 4/9: The Weimar Republic: New Women, Emasculated Men and Racial Degeneration
W 4/11: Fascism and Masculinity: Images of National Strength
F 4/13: Discussion

Readings:
Frau Willhelmine Haferkamp, in Frauen: German Women Recall the Third Reich (1995), pp. 16-31 [READER]
Dagmar Herzog, "Sex and the Third Reich" ch.1 of Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany (2005) pp. 10-63 [READER]

WEEK TWELVE: Sexuality and National Socialism

M 4/16: Women and the Third Reich; SECOND PAPER DUE
W 4/18: Liberation of Europe: The End of Hostilities?
F 4/20: Discussion

Readings:
Anonymous, A Woman in Berlin

PART FOUR: New Possibilities?

WEEK THIRTEEN: Sexuality, Liberation and Reconstruction

M 4/23: No Lecture, Scheduled viewing of "Hiroshima Mon Amour"
W 4/25: Sexuality, Economic Growth and Moral Order in the 1950s
F 4/27: Discussion

Reading:
Simone de Beauvoir: "Myth and Reality" and "Conclusion", in The Second Sex, pp. 253-263 and 716-732. [READER]
Kristin Ross, "Couples" ch. 3 in Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture, pp. 123-156. [READER]

WEEK FOURTEEN: Revolution Redux

M 4/30: The Sexual Revolution
W 5/2: Overthrowing Empire: Sexuality and National Independence in the late 20th Century
F 5/4: Discussion

Reading:

Frantz Fanon: "The Man of Color and the White Woman", ch. 3 of Black Skin, White Masks, pp. 63-82 [READER]
Selections from The Wall in My Backyard: East German Women in Transition, Dodds and Allen-Thompson, eds., Introduction, pp. 1-21, Gitta Nickel, pp. 90-96 and Eva Kunz, pp. 38-43 [READER]

WEEK FIFTEEN: Ever Closer Union?

M 5/7: Sexuality and European Union: Parité, PACS and the Veil
W 5/9: Rape, Genocide and Crimes of War in Contemporary Europe

F 5/11 In-Class Review

FINAL EXAM: TBA