IAS Gender and Feminism Network Conference and Seminar Series

Term 1 2016 Schedule

The IAS Gender and Feminism Network is a new initiative designed to provide a focal point for UCL (as well as other London-based and international) scholars conducting research in and teaching about gender and feminism from across the humanities and social sciences. We aim to bring a wide range of expertise and knowledge from across faculties, schools and institutes into productive interdisciplinary dialogue. In doing so, we seek to enhance the core mission of the IAS to sponsor critical thinking and engaged enquiry within and across conventional institutional boundaries. Follow us on Twitter at @UCL_IAS for more information on forthcoming events. The series is coordinated by Dr. Philippa Hetherington (UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies) who can be contacted at p.hetherington@ucl.ac.uk.

1. 7-8 October 2016

Conference
IAS Common Ground (Friday) and Room 433, SSEES, 16 Taviton St (Saturday)
Borders of Biopolitics: Gender, Population and Power in Modern Russia and Eastern Europe

A conference organised by the SSEES Fringe Center, in collaboration with the UCL IAS Gender and Feminism Network and the Jordan Center for the Advanced Study of Russia at New York University. With generous support from the Fringe Center and the UCL Global Engagement Office.
This interdisciplinary conference aims to explore the possibilities (and limits) of biopolitics as a heuristic device for analysing the gendered history of Russia. The term 'biopolitics' (which refers to the production of state legitimacy through the use of the human body, and not just territory, as a critical site of control) has long inflected the scholarship on western Europe. However, scholars working on eastern Europe have been slower to draw on the ‘biopolitical’ as a conceptual language. Nonetheless, recent work in Russian history abounds with apparent examples of the exercise of biopolitics. We can see this, for example, in the creation of ‘population’ as a site of intervention in nineteenth century Russia, and in attempts to remake the ‘socialist person’ though new ways of tying individuals to the state in the post-war Eastern bloc. Similarly, theories of biopolitics are potentially useful tools to mobilize in order to analyze the relationship between gender, sexuality, race, nation and geopolitics in the contemporary context. This conference will explore the biopolitics of modern Russia with papers on (among other themes): gender and migration; the regulation of sexuality; the subjectivization of the population through reform of family, property and tax law; religion and biopolitics; gender, violence and the ‘carceral archipelago’; and the intersections of political economy and law in the production of gendered subjects.

For the complete programme, and to register, please see:

2. 12 October 2016. 4:30-6:00pm.

Seminar. Rachele de Felice (UCL English).
Seminar Room 20, Institute for Advanced Studies, South Wing, Wilkins Building, UCL

Language at work: Hillary Clinton's emails
The U.S. State Department has released all emails sent and received by Hillary Clinton while she was Secretary of State. In this talk, Rachele de Felice will take a socio-linguistic approach to these emails, discussing this unique opportunity to explore Clinton’s language as a powerful (female) politician. How does she ask for things? How does she build camaraderie among her team? Does she ever say please?

Dr. Rachele de Felice is Teaching Fellow in the Department of English Language and Literature at UCL. She received her DPhil in Computations Linguistics from Oxford University, and was previously Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellow at Centre for Research in Applied Linguistics at the University of Nottingham. Her research focuses on speech act annotation and the creation of pragmatic profiles of Business English.

3. 2 November 2016. 4:00-6:00pm.

*Seminar.* Juliet Mitchell (UCL).
IAS Common Ground, South Wing, Wilkins Building, UCL

**Fifty Years After "Women: The Longest Revolution"**

Respondents: Nina Power (Roehampton) and Catherine Grant (Goldsmiths).

Fifty years ago, in 1966, Juliet Mitchell published ‘Women: the Longest Revolution’ in the *New Left Review*. Ranging from Marx and Bebel to de Beauvoir and Millet, and critiquing both radical
feminism and ‘abstract’ socialism for misunderstanding the causes of women’s oppression, the text became one of the key works of socialist feminism of the 60s. Weaving together analysis of women’s roles in production, reproduction, sexuality and the socialization of children, the text was highly influential in both activist and scholarly arenas.

At this commemorative forum, Juliet Mitchell will speak on both the text and the context in which she wrote it, reflecting on fifty years of reception and (re)interpretation. This will be followed by the reflections of a number of fellow feminist scholars who will reflect on what the work means to them today.

Professor Juliet Mitchell is a Professorial Research Associate and Founder Director of the MPhil/PhD Programme in Psychoanalytic Studies at UCL Psychoanalysis Unit. She is also the Founder Director of the Centre for Gender Studies at the University of Cambridge, a Research Fellow at the Department of Human Geography, University of Cambridge and Fellow Emeritus of Jesus College, University of Cambridge. She is a Fellow of the British and International Psychoanalytical Societies and a Fellow of the British Academy.

4. 23 November 2016. 4:30pm-6:00pm.

Seminar. Rebecca Steinfeld (Goldsmiths)
Seminar Room 20, Institute for Advanced Studies, South Wing, Wilkins Building, UCL

Genital Alteration and Gender Equality: The Future of Policy
Global and Western states’ policies toward genital alteration tend to focus on eliminating female genital mutilation, or FGM, while tolerating or even encouraging male circumcision. On the surface, this seems unproblematic: Within global health and human rights circles, FGM is almost universally regarded as bad and barbaric – as a savage and severely harmful manifestation of the patriarchal drive to control female sexuality – whereas male circumcision is seen as benign or even beneficial. Yet mounting empirical evidence and ethical critique calls into question these contrasting perceptions, and in turn the divergent policies they underpin. In this paper, I argue that maintaining policies premised on sex-based distinctions seems unsustainable, as well as incompatible with gender equality. Instead, I suggest that meaningful age-based distinctions between those unable (children) and able (adults) to give informed consent could constitute more ethical and effective policies. I evaluate the merits and demerits of both permissive and restrictive approaches to female and male genital alteration, and assess the advantages and disadvantages of some specific alternative policies. In so doing, I point towards a gender equal future for genital alteration policies.
Dr. Rebecca Steinfeld is a political scientist researching the politics of reproduction and of genital alteration. A Visiting Research Fellow at the Centre of the Body at Goldsmiths, University of London, she is writing her first book, entitled Wars of the Wombs: Struggles over Reproduction in Israel, for publication with Stanford University Press. Rebecca is a co-founder, together with her partner, Charles Keidan, of the Campaign for Equal Civil Partnerships in the UK, and the pair are also co-litigants in a Judicial Review challenge to the Government’s ban on different-sex couples’ access to civil partnerships. She received her DPhil in Politics from the University of Oxford in 2012.

5. 30 November 2016. 4:30pm-6:00pm.

Seminar. Glenda Sluga (University of Sydney, Australia).
In collaboration with the IHR Re-thinking Modern Europe seminar.
Seminar Room 20, Institute for Advanced Studies, South Wing, Wilkins Building, UCL
Gender, Sex and International Society at the Congress of Vienna, 1815
The Congress of Vienna, which ran from September 1814 to June 1815 and was to settle the terms of a post-Napoleonic world order, lies at the heart of an historical narrative of the modern transformation of European politics, setting new thresholds of international political cooperation and coordination in the interests of peace. Yet, while there is a long tradition of Congress historiography, historians are only now beginning to investigate the implications of the Austrian historian Hilde Spiel's (mid-20th century) description of a setting in which the ‘statesmen and politicians, assembled solely and exclusively to deal with matters of commonweal interest’, laboring ‘extensively and decisively under the influence of women’. In this paper, I argue that by reconnecting two intrinsically gendered versions of Congress history—the masculine political narrative, and the feminine 'dancing congress’—we can recover the international dimensions of the radical structural shifts in modern European history at that time, including the alignment of new political values with cultural (and class) hierarchies of difference within Europe, and the gendered separation of spheres.

Professor Glenda Sluga is Professor of International History, and Australian Research Council Kathleen Fitzpatrick Laureate Fellow at the University of Sydney. She has published widely on the cultural history of international relations, internationalism, the history of European nationalisms, sovereignty, identity, immigration and gender history. In 2013, she was awarded a five-year Australian Research Council Laureate Fellowship for the project ‘Inventing the International - the origins of globalisation.’ Her most recent book is Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013) and with Carolyn James, Women, Diplomacy, and International Politics (Routledge, 2015).