



The seminar outline will be a living document, so it might change slightly as the course proceeds.

Seminar Outline: Gender Perspectives, Feminist Theories and Nuclear Weapons

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Summer Semester 2024

Course Size: 10-30

Weekly Hours: 2

ECTS: 4 (Participation & *Studienleistung*)

Essay-ECTS: 4

Language: English

Course Description

Historically, the Global Governance of Nuclear Weapons has relied on gendered assumptions, practices and speech acts - and it does to this day. Feminist activists, since the very beginning of the so-called 'nuclear age', were among the staunchest opposition against nuclear weapons, as they would be incompatible with Feminist values, placing marginalised groups and individuals in the centre of their consideration. From this persistent activism, research on gender perspectives, feminist theories and nuclear weapons followed - focussing on language (e.g. Cohn), the legal framework (e.g. Biswas), (post-)colonial issues (e.g. Teiwa) or activism itself (e.g. Acheson). In this seminar, we want to dive into these diverse perspectives and explore why the global governance of nuclear weapons has always been a case for feminist engagement. With an intersectional aspiration, this seminar should provide both tangible examples of the application of feminist theory as well as insights into the global governance of nuclear weapons as part of the international order, or the governance international peace and security more specifically.

Aims & Learning Outcomes

With its theoretical foundation, the students will be able to understand and apply theoretical concepts of feminist international relations will be able to apply gender perspectives to a variety of policy issues. Furthermore, the students will gain an overview of the global governance of nuclear weapons through the literature of feminist research on nuclear weapons. In investigating a cross-cutting debate, students will be encouraged to apply interdisciplinary perspectives, including feminist research rooted in sociology and political science, science and technology studies (STS), peace and conflict studies, international security studies and, broader, international relations.

Through the assignments and class structure, the students will foster their skills in presentations and public speaking, academic essays and, through small- and full group discussions enhance their skill set in forming



cohesive arguments in debates. The seminar's topical orientation particularly invites and promotes critical thinking.

Teaching Methods

Each session will consist of 15-20 min. introduction to the context and the sessions literature by either the convener or the assigned group followed by 70-75 min questions and discussion on both the reading and the topic. The course starts with an introductory session where the physics, history and international legal framework of nuclear weapons will be introduced. Following, feminist theories and gender perspectives on nuclear weapons should be applied on the case of the global governance of nuclear weapons. Generally, the required material for a session will consist of one or two core readings (paper and/or book chapter), sometimes supplemented by a source of alternative format (podcast, movie, documentary, interview etc.). Further/ optional reading will be provided on a case-by-case basis. For certain topics, experts (guest speakers) may be invited to provide their perspectives and be available for Q&A.

In order to facilitate and encourage discussion, students will be required to introduce reading(s) of a session of their choice for most sessions, in the form of group presentations. Together with regular participation, the group presentation will constitute a *Studienleistung* worth 4 ECTS. At the end of term, students can submit an essay (\approx 4000 words, +/-250 words, formally: *Hausarbeit*) on a topic of their choice. Students are invited to discuss their approach (e.g. in the form of a short abstract) with the convener of the course. Essays should be uploaded to OpenOLAT.

I do not have officially set office hours. Students are, however, invited to approach me on general questions on the matter, on non-graded or graded assignments or other questions related to the course or studies. This explicitly includes questions on internships, scholarships, summer schools or similar opportunities as well. Appointments can be arranged by contacting jannis.kappelmann@uni-hamburg.de and are possible on short notice as well. In order to foster academic and practical skills and develop their career, students will be provided with an 'opportunities list' by the lecturer, consisting of internships, summer schools, scholarships and Master's Programmes (broadly) relevant to the topic of the course.

The prime platform used to facilitate interaction is OpenOLAT; STiNE serves registration purposes only:

- Course material will be uploaded to OpenOLAT;
- Registration for policy memos and pitches is possible through OpenOLAT;
- Essays should be submitted through OpenOLAT

Presentations

In marked sessions, students will hold groups presentations. The group presentations will consist of three parts: In the first part, the core reading (marked **bold** on the outline) will be introduced by the students. This includes the readings core ideas and arguments, the context and a personal reflection. Following, the students will



present a related reading or source of alternative format, either from the recommended reading's list or chosen themselves, and elaborate on the readings core ideas and arguments, the context and include a personal reflection. A source of alternative format can include a video, learning module, a website, podcast, a documentary, an interview and many more. Choosing a source of alternative format is encouraged. **Important:** Please send the supplementary reading/ source to your students one week before your session latest. Thirdly, the students develop and present 2-4 discussion questions for the class to discuss in groups. The questions should include an elaboration why they were chosen. Please register for the group presentations. Holding a group presentation is a prerequisite for passing the course.

Timetable

April 8th 2024 - July 8th 2024 (13 Sessions)

Session 1 (08.04.2024): Introduction, Expectations and Teaching Contract

Session 2 (15.04.2024): Physics and History of Nuclear Weapons; International Legal Framework & Decision Making

Required: [Bunn 2013 \(video\)](#) | [EU Non-Proliferation Consortium 2021](#) (Interactive Learning Module, Chapters I, II, III & Summary; Quizzes and Chapters IV and EU & NPT not mandatory)

Recommended: *Recommended:* [Fermi e.al. 1944](#), tbd., Futter 2021, p. 63- 84, [Bunn 2013b \(video\)](#), Xia et.al. 2022

The Session on Physics and History of Nuclear Weapons is intended to equip you with the necessary knowledge to subsequently apply a feminist lens to the issues. Please study the materials carefully, as this is a legally and technically demanding issue. The required 'literature' consists of a video of a lecture on the physics of nuclear weapons and a training course on the legal side.

Session 3 (22.04.2024): Feminism, Gender and Nuclear Weapons: An Overview (Presentation Choi/ Eschle 2022 + chosen literature)

Required: **Choi, Eschle 2022, p. 1129-1147**

Recommended: Acheson 2021, Acheson 2022, Choi, Eschle 2022 (whole), Enloe 1990, [Acheson 2018](#), Dalaqua/ Egeland/ Hugo 2019, Rosengren 2022, Tickner 2001, Tickner/ Sjoberg 2011

In the session on Feminism, Gender and Nuclear Weapons, we gain an overview on the topic of the course, and ask how studying nuclear weapons applying Feminist theory or from a gender lens has evolved and changed over time. Please read the introduction into the International Affairs Special Issue on 'Feminist interrogations of global nuclear politics' carefully.

Session 4 (29.04.2024): Nuclear Weapons Discourses and Language I (Presentation: Cohn 1987 + chosen literature)

Required: **Cohn 1987, p. 687-718**, Considine 2022, p.1-7



Recommended: Brown/ Considine 2022, Considine 2021, de Volo 2022, Hogue/ Maurer 2022, Frost 2024

In the First Session on Nuclear Weapons and Discourse, we will focus on the famous article 'Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defence Intellectuals' by Carol Cohn. We will deep dive, contextualise and also speak about further literature on the discourses and language. Circling back to IR theory, we will contextualise the importance of language, discourses or narratives when studying critical IR.

Session 5 (06.05.2024): Nuclear Weapons Discourses and Language II: Nuclear Expertise (No Presentation)

Required: **Hogue/ Maurer 2022, p. 1267-1288**, [Mangioni 2022](#), [Learning Module 1](#), [Learning Module 2](#)

Recommended: Brown/ Considine 2022, Considine 2021, de Volo 2022, Hogue/ Maurer 2022, Mangioni 2022, Frost 2024

The Second Session on Discourses and Language consists of two interactive learning modules by the 'Decolonizing Nuclear Studies' initiative. In the first learning module we employ (Activity 3: Expertise and the Nuclear Pacific), we reflect upon expertise and knowledge production in the context of nuclear testing in the pacific region. In the second learning module of the day (Activity 2: The Sound of Nuclear Expertise), we listen to nuclear experts, and reflect upon our impressions of the audio tapes.

Session 6 (13.05.2024): Nuclear Weapons Discourses and Language III: Dr. Strangelove Movie Screening (No Presentation)

Required: **Payne 2020, p. 464- 481**, [Kubrick 1964](#)

Recommended: Taha 2022, Barker 2017

During the second session on Discourse and Language, we will take a look on how culture and pop-culture is dealing with nuclear weapons. The main focus will be on the 'wargasm' fantasy and masculinity which Stanley Kubrick deals in 'Dr. Strangelove'. Watching the movie is thus also mandatory literature for the session, as is the contextualisation by Payne. Further literature will deal with popculture in Egypt and in the series 'Spongebob'.

Session 7 (27.05.2024): Nuclear Weapons Discourses and Language IIII: Dr. Strangelove Movie Discussion (Presentation: Payne 2020 + chosen literature)

Required: **Payne 2020, p. 464- 481**, [Kubrick 1964](#)

Recommended: Taha 2022, Barker 2017

During the second session on Discourse and Language, we will take a look on how culture and pop-culture is dealing with nuclear weapons. The main focus will be on the 'wargasm' fantasy and masculinity which Stanley Kubrick deals in 'Dr. Strangelove'. Watching the movie is thus also mandatory literature for the session, as is the contextualisation by Payne. Further literature will deal with popculture in Egypt and in the series 'Spongebob'.



Session 8 (03.06.2024): Digression: Science, Technology and Progress (Presentation Harding 2011 + chosen literature)

Required: **Harding 2011, p. 1-22**

Recommended: Latour 1979

In this digression, we will zoom out to the discussion on Science, Technology and Progress. Science and Technology Studies (STS) can help us to question science at large, including nuclear technology. Harding aims to decolonialise STS and aims to link gender and postcolonial ideas.

Session 9 (10.06.2024): Nuclear Colonialism 1: Testing and Mining (Presentation Teiwa 1994 + chosen literature)

Required: **Teiwa 1994 p. 87-109**, [ISYP 2023](#)

Recommended: Eschle 2022, Hecht 2012, Hogue/ Mauerer 2022, [Lin/ Jetlin-Kinjer 2019](#) , Jacobs 2022, , Jacobs 2013 p. 157-177

In the nuclear colonialism sessions, after having spoken about how colonialism and gender are linked, we will initially speak about testing and mining. Teiwa's article on testing in the Pacific will be in the centre, while the Jacobs-text provides a general overview on nuclear testing. While mining will not be in the centre of the session, recommended literature, e.g. by Hecht, will provide insight into this topic.

Session 10 (17.06.2024): Nuclear Colonialism 2: Possession, Power and Governance (Presentation Biswas 2014 + chosen literature)

Required: **Biswas 2014, p. 75-109**, [Baldus/ Fehl/ Hach 2021](#)

Recommended: Baldus/ Fehl/ Hach 2022, Das 2007

In the second session on nuclear colonialism, we will speak about how the possession of nuclear weapons, as well as their governance, might also be impacted by colonialism - Shampa Biswas fittingly asks 'whose nuclear order' we are talking about.

Session 11 (24.06.2024): Feminist Perspectives on a Nuclear South Asia (Presentation Das 2010 + chosen literature)

Required: **Das 2010**

Recommended: Sreekumar 2022

In the Session on Feminist Perspectives on a Nuclear South Asia, we are looking at Runa Das, and try to apply some of the knowledge we have gained in the prior sessions. Runa Das is often regarded as a somewhat overlooked researcher, and we will explore why some regard her work as potentially equally foundational as Carol Cohn's.



Session 12 (01.07.2024): Feminist Activism to Ban the Bomb (Presentation Acheson 2011 + chosen literature)

Required: Acheson 2021 p. 259 -296

Recommended: Arimatsu 2021, Acheson 2019

During the last thematic session, we will talk about how Feminists aimed to ban nuclear weapons historically, and how the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was subsequently achieved.

Session 13 (08.07.2024): Reflection and Questions on Assessments

Assignments

Examination performance (Studienleistungen): Group Presentation of required reading & attendance.

Please register for a session via [Link to be provided at a later stage]

Exam requirements (Prüfungsleistungen): Academic Essay (Hausarbeit, ≠ German Essay) on session of choice (≈ 4000 words, +/-400 words, formally: *Hausarbeit*)

Submission of exam (essay/ Hausarbeit): September 30, 2024, 24:00

Overview: Readings

Generally, the required material for a session will consist of a paper or book chapter, sometimes supplemented by a source of alternative format (podcast, documentary, interview etc.). Sources of alternative format can be accessed through the embedded link in this seminar outline. Further/ optional reading will be provided on a case-by-case basis.:

Arimatsu, Louise (2021) Transformative Disarmament: Crafting a Roadmap for Peace, *International Law Studies*, 97, p. 834-915

Acheson, Ray (2021) Banning the Bomb smashing the patriarchy, Roman and Littlefield, Lanham

Acheson, Ray (2022) Abolition, not arms control: against reinforcing nuclear weapons through "reform". *Zeitschrift für Friedens- und Konfliktforschung* 12:235–243

Baldus, Jana, Caroline Fehl and Sascha Hach (2021) Beyond the Ban: A Global Agenda for Nuclear Justice. *PRIF Report*. 4:2021. 1-31

Barker, Holly M. (2019) Unsettling SpongeBob and the Legacies of Violence on Bikini Bottom. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 31:2, 345-379

Biswas, Shampa (2014) *Nuclear Desire*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis

Brown, Laura Rose and Laura Considine (2022) Examining 'gender-sensitive' approaches to nuclear weapons policy: a study of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. *International Affairs*, 98:4, p.1249–1266

Choi, Shine; Eschle, Catherine (2022) Rethinking global nuclear politics, rethinking feminism, *International Affairs*, 98:4, p. 1129-1147

Cohn, Carol (1987) *Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals*, *Signs*, 12:4, 687-718



- Considine, Laura (2021) Narrative and nuclear weapons politics: the entelechial force of the nuclear origin myth. *International Theory*. 14:3 pp. 551 - 570
- Considine, Laura (2022) Rethinking the beginning of the 'nuclear age' through telling feminist nuclear stories, *Zeitschrift für Friedens- und Konfliktforschung*. 12:2. 185-193
- Das, Runa (2007) Broadening the security paradigm: Indian women, anti-nuclear activism, and visions of a sustainable future, *Women's Studies International Forum*, 30, 1-15
- Das, Runa (2010) Colonial Legacies, post-colonial (in)securities, and gender(ed) representations in South Asia's nuclear policies, *Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture*, 16:6, 717-740
- de Volo, Lorraine Bayard (2022) Masculinity and the Cuban Missile Crisis: gender as pre-emptive deterrent. *International Affairs*, 98:4, 1211–1229
- Enloe, Cynthia (1990) *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics (1.ed)*, University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Frost, Mervyn (2024): International Relations today: a long list of theories! In: Goodman, Michael S.; Kerr, Rachel; Moran, Matthew (Eds.): *An Introduction to War Studies*. Cheltenham: Edgar Elgar Publishing.
- Harding, Sandra (2011) *The Postcolonial Science and Technology Studies Reader*, Duke University Press, Durham
- Hecht, Gabrielle (2012). *Being Nuclear: Africans and the Global Uranium Trade*. The MIT Press: Cambridge.
- Hessmann Dalaqua, R., K. Egeland und T. G. Hugo (2019) Still Behind the Curve: Gender Balance in Arms Control, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Diplomacy. *UNIDIR*.
- Hogue, Rebecca and Anais Maurer (2022) Pacific women's anti-nuclear poetry: centring Indigenous knowledges, *International Affairs*, 98: 4, 1267–1288
- Latour, Bruno and Steve Woolgar (1979) *Laboratory Life - The Construction of Scientific Facts*. Princeton University Press: Princeton
- Payne, Rodger A. (2020) Grappling with Dr. Strangelove's "Wargasm" Fantasy, *International Studies Review*, 22: 3, p 464–481
- Rosengren, Emma (2022) Gendering Sweden's nuclear renunciation: a historical analysis. *International Affairs*, 98: 4, 1231–1248
- Sreekumar, Anand (2022) Feminism and Gandhi: imagining alternatives beyond Indian nuclearism. *International Affairs*, 98: 4, 1189-1209
- Taha, Hebatalla (2022) Hiroshima in Egypt: interpretations and imaginations of the atomic age, *Third World Quarterly*, 43:6, 1460-1477
- Teiawa, Teresia (1994) bikinis and other s/pacific n/oceans, *The Contemporary Pacific*, 6:1, p 87-109
- Tickner, J. Ann (2001) *Gendering World Politics*. Columbia University Press: New York.
- Tickner, J. Ann and Laura Sjoberg (2011) *Feminism and International Relations*. Routledge: London.
- Jacobs, Robert (2013) *Nuclear Conquistadors: Military Colonialism in Nuclear Test Site Selection during the Cold War*, *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 1:2, 157-177
- Jacobs, Robert A. (2022): *Nuclear Bodies: The Global Hibakusha*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Xia, Lilli et.al. (2022) Global food insecurity and famine from reduced crop, marine fishery and livestock production due to climate disruption from nuclear war soot injection, *Nature Food*, 3, 586-596