Criminology, Sociology, Politics and International Relations
RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES 2024-25

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AUTUMN SEMESTER

Thu Sep 26th – Mariela Alvarez Martinez
Seminar title: *From Warfare to Welfare: Lighting up the Cannabis policy debate*
Location: TM3-02 yellow zone Roding
Time: 4:00-5:30pm

Abstract:
A wealth of negative evidence built over decades of prohibitionist policies has led several jurisdictions to de facto and de jure innovate their drugs' policy. In December 2013, Uruguay was the first country to regulate cannabis at national level, 'from seed to smoke' (Hoffman 2016). This study sought to explore the passing of Law 19.172 and initial stages of the regulation. 12 qualitative semi-structured interviews were carried out via Sype videocall. The sample were 11 policy makers and 1 Uruguayan drug's expert scholar. The analysis interprets and reconstructs stakeholders reported interactions and interpretations of evidence, as well as locating it in its national and international socioeconomic context. The analysis uses a post-Marxist theoretical frame to understand discursive formations within the socioeconomic, political context of drugs and organised crime (OC) where meanings emerged. Key findings suggest that *first*: the government dealt dynamically with health, security and human rights concerns; and those concepts not narrated as necessarily restrictive of each other. *Second*: the catalyst for the parliamentary discussion was multifaceted but it was mainly a moral panic against OC that triggered discussion. *Third*: findings suggest that the main implication both national and international is the posturing of a change of political discourse from Uruguay's national government, with cross party consensus departing from neoliberal solutions to drug use. The effect seems to be the de-construction of the cannabis user imagery of a problematic user to a more frequently found social reality of functional cannabis use.

Mon Oct 14th – Michał P. Garapich, Anna Jochymek and Rafał Soborski
Seminar title: *Transnationalizing the Far Right: negotiating white supremacy in migratory context*
Location: BEL1-02 Green Zone
Time: 4:00-5:30pm

Abstract:
The historical, social and conceptual relationship between migration processes and the far right is not as clear-cut as is sometimes assumed. As an ideological framework revolving around nativism (Mudde 2019), xenophobia (Guia 2016) and racism (Newth 2024), the far right has constructed migration as both a symptom and a cause of social and political decay and a threat that must be resisted. Consequently, migration scholarship has tended to view the far right as a relatively undifferentiated political phenomenon representing a section of generic "natives" who mobilize against immigrants, or as politicians who seek to gain support through inflaming anti-immigrant

sentiments. But how should we theorize ethnic diversification within the far right, where immigrants and minorities become hostile to other immigrants or minorities and organize themselves politically, either in groups they themselves create or within established far-right organizations in the countries of residence – organizations that sometimes actively reach out to recruit them? What is the relationship between migration-driven diversity and shifting structures and modes of operation of far-right politics in the US, Europe and elsewhere? We engage with these questions by exploring a case study of Polish migrants' involvement in far-right politics in the British context. Based on multi-sited ethnography, in-depth interviews with far-right activists and participant observation in various milieus, in this presentation we will focus on the supply side – namely, Polish far-right organizations operating in Britain as well as British groups recruiting Polish migrants – and the demand side, that is to say, Polish migrants who engage with far-right politics in Britain. Our case study is broadly indicative of a wider range of realignments on the far right where selected minorities have increasingly been recruited as potential allies (Leidig 2019; Mulinari and Neergaard 2018; Svraka 2023), but also particularly evocative of the mechanisms accompanying such processes due to ideological and strategic synergies between British and Polish far right actors in transnational political spaces. Most importantly, these spaces need to be seen also through the prism of constructions of white supremacy, which generates the key and frequently asked question whether the European far right is able to create a uniform, pan-European movement threatening the democratic order, or the European far right due to its nationalistic idiosyncrasies is unable to create a uniform front.

Tue Nov 12th – Gordana Uzelac
Seminar title: *National Traitresses: When Nationalism meets Misogyny*
Location: TM1-03 Yellow Zone Roding
Time: 4:00-5:30pm

Abstract:
Betrayal of the nation is often seen as the most threatening form of betrayal. While literature frequently portrays personal betrayals as evoking strong emotional responses, breaches of collective trust and loyalty – such as those towards a nation – tend to elicit more severe repercussions. Through an examination of the case of the so-called "Witches of Croatia", this paper will investigate how and why nationalism reacts to perceived national treachery by prominent women with both severe punishment and emotional fervour, almost as if the betrayal were personal and intimate. An analysis of mainstream media coverage during the War in Croatia (1991-1995) will indicate a potential trend of gender-biased responses to perceived treason where "traitors of the nation" are more likely to be scrutinised for their mental state, while "traitresses of the nation" are more likely to face misogynistic attacks.

Thu Nov 28th – Mark Wheeler
Seminar title: *The Californian Ideology*
Location: TM1-01 Yellow Zone Roding
Time: 4:00-5:30pm

Abstract:
This chapter considers the democratic implications for social media with reference to Richard Barbrook and Andy Camerons' 'Californian Ideology' (1995). This definitive essay provided a corrective to the utopian abstract of the Net Citizen (or 'Netizen') which had been conceived by

advocates of new Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) like Wired Magazine. Most especially, it acted as a critique of Silicon Valley's conflation of the 'heroic' individualism apparent in Ayn Rand's Objectivism with its technocratic embracement of corporate power. Invariably, this fusion existed via an ostensible counter-cultural spirit as exemplified by Steve Jobs who constructed Apple as a vehicle for utopian libertarianism. Simultaneously, Jobs monopolised the digital marketplace with non-compatable technology. He had gone on the Hippy Trail wherein he embraced Eastern mysticism in his 'living on thin air' ideology while engaging in anti-competitive practices to become a 'guru.' of the information revolution. In tandem Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos, Peter Thiel, Elon Musk and Mark Zuckerberg have presented their behemoths of Microsoft, Amazon, PayPal and Meta as representations of individual creativity, social libertarianism and political liberation. This is in spite of their corporate worth and trust-style cormering of information environments.