

Radical Nationalist Movements

Honors 131.004 (ver. 1.3)

Professor Mills Kelly
tkelly7@gmu.edu
<http://edwired.org>
@EdwiredMills

Office Hours
<http://millskelly.youcanbook.me>
Robinson B373b
Slack Channel: honors131.slack.com

Introduction

When I proposed this course back in February, I could not have known that just before the semester was to start we'd see mayhem and murder at a nationalist demonstration in Charlottesville. I'm glad we'll have a chance to engage in careful exploration of the topic of radical nationalism in other countries and in the United States. Because the events in the U.S. are still unfolding as I write these words, we're going to retain some flexibility in what we read and discuss this semester. The work requirements won't change, but the sources and how we approach them might.

In this course we will be exploring the rise of radical nationalist movements in the 19th, 20th, and now 21st centuries from a variety of perspectives in the social sciences and humanities. Radical nationalism has caused no end of trouble since its appearance in Europe in the late 19th century and has been a contributing factor in causing and sustaining more wars than we can easily count. At the more mundane level, radical nationalism is responsible for the marginalization, persecution, and forced migration of tens of millions of people around the world over the past 150 years or so.

How did we as humans decide that nations existed, that they mattered, and were/are worth killing and dying for? How are the ideas of nation and nationalism understood differently in different parts of the world? How do we make sense of these phenomena using the epistemologies of different academic disciplines? These are just some of the questions we'll be trying to answer this semester.

Learning Goals

On the surface, this may seem like a course about radical nationalism, but really it is a course about *thinking* and *understanding*. I've spent a good part of my life as a historian trying to make sense of radical nationalism and despite having written a dissertation, a book, and half a dozen refereed articles on the topic, not to mention countless hours in archives in Washington, D.C., Prague, Brno, Bratislava, and Vienna, I can say that I've still only scratched the surface of this complex topic.

For this reason, my learning goals for you this semester are that you will achieve a mature understanding of the parameters of our topic, that you'll understand, at least a little, how scholars in a variety of disciplines have tried to make sense of radical nationalism, and that you will have found for yourself some new ways to think about

and to begin to make sense of a difficult, complex, provocative, and sometimes disturbing topic.

To put it another way, come to class prepared to think.

Course Requirements

Participation: In addition to keeping up with the readings, I expect you to be an active participant in class discussions in person and online. Failure to participate in our discussions will not only have a negative impact on your final grade, but will also make the class less enjoyable for you and for everyone else. Class participation means talking, not just showing up for class. And, you should have something to say when you speak, which requires you to keep up with the assigned readings. Grades for class participation will be based both on the regularity of your participation and the quality of comments you offer.

You may also contribute to the class discussion through our Slack channel (honors131.slack.com). I have to invite you to the channel, so don't worry that you haven't been invited yet. I will invite everyone the week before classes begin. [Slack](#) is a communication platform that allows a wide variety of conversations to happen simultaneously, and is the kind of project/team communication platform that you might actually encounter in the work world, unlike BlackBoard, which you'll never touch again once you graduate from college.

Essays: There will be three assigned essays this semester, each worth one-fifth of your final grade. As you will see, I have a particular writing process that I expect you to follow for the first essay. You will have the opportunity to re-write the first two essays if you wish, but not the third. After the semester gets under way, I'll have a hand out for you on the essays. All footnotes and bibliography should be in [Chicago style](#). No MLA.

Grading

Your grade for the semester will be based upon the following criteria:

- First essay part one – 5%
- First essay part two – 5%
- Completed first essay – 10%
- Second essay – 20%
- Third essay – 20%
- Class participation — 20%
- Final exam — 20%

Course Policies

Attendance: Because this class is an evolving conversation about a complex topic, it is imperative that you come to class, keep up with your assignments, and stay engaged with the rest of the group. Otherwise, you won't know what's going on and will struggle to catch up.

ADA: Any student who requires special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact me to make necessary accommodations (before September 6, please). Students should present appropriate verification from the [Office of Disability Services](#) (703-993-2474). All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. **Please note**: There are often ODS forms that must be filled out and signed by me. It is your responsibility to get those forms to me for signing.

Medical and Other Excuses: Every semester someone is forced to miss either an examination or the due date for an assignment as the result of an illness or due to a personal or family emergency. If you find yourself in this situation, fairness to all students in the class requires the proper documentation, without which your excuses will not be accepted. If you need to know more about this process consult me as soon as the emergency is taken care of.

Plagiarism and Cheating: In a word, don't. Plagiarism and cheating are much easier in the digital age, but finding cheaters is even easier, especially when you know computers and the Internet as well as I do. Besides, the university expects students to demonstrate a high code of personal honor when it comes to academic work. Please read the [George Mason University Honor Code](#) if you have any questions about what is expected of you in this regard. Penalties for academic dishonesty are severe. In short, you are at extreme risk for failing the course from just a single act of plagiarism or cheating, and your academic career will be put in jeopardy. Also, future employers will ask you about that course you failed for plagiarism or cheating.

How Not to Plagiarize: If you are copying and pasting text that someone else wrote, you might be plagiarizing. Pasted or manually retyped text is not plagiarized only when all of the following three conditions are true: 1) the pasted text is surrounded by quotation marks or set off as a block quote, and 2) the pasted text is attributed in your text to its author and its source (e.g., "According to Clifford Geertz, . . ."), and 3) the pasted text is cited in a footnote, e.g., "Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight", in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 2000): 412. If this is new or confusing to you, that's why I'm so easy to meet with. Use [my booking app](#) to set up a time and we'll go over it until you are clear on what to do.

Communication: In general, the best way to get hold of me is via our Slack channel or by email; I will usually respond within one business day, but probably less. Please be aware that I spend a lot of time off the grid (in places with no connectivity), so if I don't respond the same day, don't worry. I will get back to you as soon as I reconnect. I'll give you my cell number in class just in case nothing else works. If you text me, which is fine, be sure to identify yourself, because you won't be in my contact directory and I might wonder just who you are. Also, state privacy rules and various laws dictate that I cannot send you any grade related information over text.

Enrollment Status: You are responsible for verifying your enrollment status in this (and every) course. Any change in that status is your responsibility and must be made by the dates listed in the *Schedule of Classes*. After the last day to drop a course, withdrawal from the course must be approved by the Dean and will be approved only for nonacademic reasons. Attempting to add a class after the last day to add is all but impossible. Undergraduate students wishing to drop a class after the drop date may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the *Schedule of Classes* for [selective withdrawal procedures](#).

Cell phone ringers: Why do I even have to say this? Please turn off your phone or set it to vibrate before you come to class. And if you take a call in class (it's happened), I will penalize you severely in that all important class participation grade. However if your phone is your primary access point to the Internet, then by all means use it. But tell me first and just be sure you are using it for class purposes. Really.

Laptops/Tablets: I am not one of that growing legion of professors who ban laptops or tablets from class ([see my blog post on this](#)). In fact, I encourage you to bring your laptop or tablet to class. But if you are clearly checked out ([Anyone? Anyone? Bueller?](#)) to SnapChat, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitch, League of Legends, or wherever, expect me to call on you.

Food, Drink, Tobacco: No eating in class. It's disruptive and results in ants, roaches, and other beasties infesting the classrooms. Drinks are fine, so long as you don't slurp or burp loudly. No tobacco products of any kind.

Important dates

September 4 – Labor Day – No class

Last day to add or drop classes without penalty: September 5

September 27 – No face to face class. I'm in Berlin.

Final drop deadline: September 29

October 10-11 – No face to face class. I'm in Calgary.

October 23 – No face to face class. I'm in Bucharest.

Last day of class – December 6

Course Outline

August 28-30 – What is a Nation?

For Wednesday, read Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, through page 9; the [Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen](#) (1789).

September 6 – What is Nationalism?

Read: Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pages 1-22 (provided); Leah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, pages 1-26 (provided).

September 11-13 — How/why do national movements become radicalized?

Read: "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight," Clifford Geertz, from *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 1973 (provided); Lorenz Khazaleh, "[The rise of radical nationalism: 'The solution is to try to understand these people'](#)"; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pages 69-158.

-- **Argument due on Wednesday** --

September 18-20 – The Rise of the Radical Right in Germany

Read: William Sheridan Allen, *The Nazi Seizure of Power*, pages 1-150.

-- **First page due on Wednesday** --

September 25 — The Success of the Nazi Party

Read: Allen, pages 151-232

First paper: Due via email, September 27. No face to face class that day.

October 2-4 — Life Under the Nazi Regime

Read: Allen, pages 232-306

Explore: [Voyant Tools](#). We'll discuss this in class in more detail, so for now, just play around with the text analysis tool.

October 10-11 – Analyzing Nationalist Rhetoric

Read: Dan Cohen, "[It's About Russia](#)"; Maarten van den Bos and Hermione Giffard, "[Mining Public Discourse for Emerging Dutch Nationalism](#)," *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, v. 10/3 (2016). Don't get caught up in the technical details. Focus on the method and the results.

Respond: Write something in the Slack thread on analyzing nationalist rhetoric using new digital tools.

Create: Find a speech or other text by someone you believe to be a radical nationalist (politician, writer, religious or cultural figure, etc.). Take that text into Voyant and using the techniques we discussed last week, create a visualization of that text. What did you learn from looking at the text in this way? Post your results to the Slack thread.

Remember – I won't be in town this week, so this week is a series of online activities.

October 16-18 — Yugoslavia in the 1990s

Monday – We'll spend time discussing your text analyses. Print out your visual and bring it to class.

For Wednesday...

Read: Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia*, pages 1-137

October 25 – Yugoslavia in the 1990s

Read: Glenny, pages 138-180; Slobodan Milošević's speech at Gazimestan, June 28, 1989 (provided).

October 30/November 1 – Yugoslavia in the 1990s

Read: Glenny, pages 181-294

Second paper: Due, via email, November 3

November 6-8 — The End of History?

Read: Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History," *The National Interest*, Summer 1989 (provided); Azar Gat, "The Return of Authoritarian Great Powers," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2007.

Write: Sample final exam essay (question handed out in class)

November 13-15 — A Radical Right in America?

Read: Jane Meyer, *Dark Money*, pages 1-194

November 20-22 — A Radical Right in America?

Read: Meyer, pages 195-332.

Find: An article, book, or extended blog post that refutes Meyer's argument.

Summarize what you found and come to class prepared to discuss. After class, post your citation in the Slack thread.

November 27-29 — A Radical Right in America?

Read: Meyer, pages 333-466; Sam Tanenhaus, "The Architect of the Radical Right How the Nobel Prize-winning economist James M. Buchanan shaped today's antigovernment politics," *The Atlantic*, July/August 2017.

Find: An article, book, or extended blog post that refutes Nancy MacLean's argument (reviewed in Tanenhaus' essay). Summarize what you found and come to class prepared to discuss. After class, post your citation in the Slack thread.

December 4-6 — A New Radical Right in Europe

Research one radical right movement in Europe, focusing on the period since 2001. Come to class on Monday prepared to give a two-minute summary of "your" movement.

Third paper: Due via email, December 7 by noon. No exceptions!

Final exam: December 13, 10:30-1:15 in our regular room. Bring a blue book.