

16:988:530 - Gendered Borders/Changing Boundaries

W 12:35-3:35

RDJC 011 – CD

Professor Maya Mikdashi

Colonialism is usually understood as the conquest and rule of a far away territory by an imperial metropole. The “post colonial” period refers then to the era following the liberation of these territories from colonial control. Settler colonialism has a different, though related, genealogy and teleology. In a settler colony, colonial authorities (and later, nation state authorities) facilitate the settlement of non- indigenous people on indigenous land—and build structures (laws, nation states, city states) that privilege non-indigenous peoples over indigenous bodies, life worlds, ecologies political and economic structures, and moral cosmologies.

Settler societies and states are among the world's most powerful nation-states. This course explores the ways that settler colonialism operates to produce, regulate, and maintain bodies and borders. We will be exploring “bodies and borders” as nation state, reservation, Bantustan and territorial borders *and* as the production and regulation of race, indigeneity sex, and gender. We will also be studying the ways that the body itself is a border, one that separates the human from the non human—a process by which native cosmologies are altered in Australia, the United States and Canada—also known as “modernity” or “religious conversion.” The body as border/border as body also separates the native from other natives and/or from settlers through technologies of securitization, capitalization and resource control, sexual regulation, law, and cartographic/ecological intervention.

This class is a reading intensive graduate seminar. Over the semester we will critically compare cases of settler colonies, settler states, and settler societies—emphasizing their relationality but also the historical specificity of each case— the US, Canada, Australia, Israel, South Africa, the Western Sahara, New Zealand, and Algeria. How do borders and bodies operate as technologies of genocide and of control? How do they also operate as vectors of resistance and of survival? How might we think the very signification of the terms “borders and bodies” as sites where settler colonialism, and resistance to it, are being waged? These are some of the themes we will be discussing this semester.