

Gender and sexuality in the imagined community: Anti-LGBTQ discourses and nationalism

Anti-LGBTQ discourse has become a central resource in the construction of national identity and patriotism in right-wing populist rhetoric wherever such rhetoric has gained significant mainstream currency. It seems that in many parts of the world, from Eastern Europe to Brazil, the imagined community of the nation (Anderson 1991) is being envisioned as homogenous not just in terms of race, ethnicity, and religion, but in also terms of cis-heteronormative identities and family models. From YouTuber Wife with a Purpose's "white baby challenge" to Marion Marechal Le Pen's activism against marriage for all, anti-LGBTQ discourses are core aspects of the new populist "alt-maternalism" (Mattheis 2018), whereby conservative politics seek to regiment gender and sexuality through religious belief in gender complementarity (i.e. Klatch 1987), or mobilize gender essentialism in service of racist agendas (Minna-stern 2019) by cementing conceptions of the woman as the reproducer of the nation (Farris 2017).

Most recent literature on populist discourses and nationalist ideologies examines anti-refugee discourse, racism, and white supremacy (e.g. Wodak & Boukala 2015; Bolonyai & Campolong 2017; Wodak & Krzyżanowski 2017; Alduy 2015; Blee et al. 2017), but only a few studies focus on anti-LGBTQ discourse (e.g. Binnie 2014; Chojnicka 2015; Paternotte & Kuhar 2018; Darakchi 2019; Russell 2019). While it may seem like a predictable aspect of an ideology that glorifies homogeneity and social conservatism, the intense focus on gender identities and sexual orientations on part of right-wing populists demands rigorous scholarly scrutiny.

Consequently, this panel seeks to examine, from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives, the processes of the discursive construction of the nation, and of the patriotic subject of the nation, as inherently cisgender and heterosexual – and, conversely, the construction of any identification or empathy with the LGBTQ community as unpatriotic, and the otherization of LGBTQ-identifying citizens as "outside" the national body. One avenue of this inquiry may be a reference to George Lakoff's (2014) argument that conservative ideologies of the nation tend to envision it as modeled after the patriarchal and hierarchically governed family. Another might focus on the discursive intersections between the nation and religion, or ethnogenesis and reproductive obligations as envisioned by social conservative nationalists. This panel invites papers that will explore the ways in which people's sexual orientation and gender identities are constructed as a threat to the idea of "the nation."

Please submit 250-word abstracts to Dominika Baran (dominika.baran@duke.edu) or Cat Tebaldi (cat.tebaldi@gmail.com) by **December 10**.