

Call for Papers

# Sexuality and Borders

Symposium, 4-5 April 2019

Department of Media, Culture, and Communication, New York University, NYC

In her path-breaking work *Borderlands/La Frontera* (1987), Gloria E. Anzaldúa parsed out the relationship between heteronormativity and the stretching of the border into various borderlands, subjectivities, and temporalities. In the context of ongoing migration and the intensification of border regimes, this formative thesis on the relationship between borders and sexuality needs renewed attention and consideration. How do sexuality and borders intersect? What role does sexuality play in the production, maintenance, and disruption of contemporary border regimes? How do borders as features of racial capitalism multiply inequalities via sexuality and, conversely, how is sexuality mediated through racialized border regimes? While people continue to move across borders, sexuality becomes a dominant frame through which such movement is attempted to be captured, framed, and contained. At the same time, the border becomes understood, organized, and contested through sexuality and sexual discourse.

In response to these phenomena, this symposium conceptualizes sexuality as a method of bordering and thinks sexuality beyond identity towards its multifarious entanglements with contemporary border regimes. From moral panics about migrant sexuality, the pornotropic gaze of surveillance technologies, to media discourses about reproduction and contagion, sexuality can be said to play a key role in how borders are policed and managed. At the same time, intimacy, desire, and sexuality have become rallying points in challenging borders as seen in queer activism against deportations, critiques of homonationalism and imaginations of different sexual futures and political horizons. Bringing together scholars from a variety of disciplinary and regional contexts, this symposium aims to show how sexuality matters for the study of and struggles around borders.

## **Topics include but are not limited to:**

- Intimacy of border control, touch, and the haptic
- Sexual transmission, deviancy, and national health
- Family, state and, national reproduction
- Sexual panics and the intensification of border regimes
- Trans perspectives on gendered and sexualised border regimes
- Sexual violence, detention, and state violence
- Sex work, discourses of trafficking, and migrant sex work activism

- Digital borders, pornography, mediation
- Homonationalism(s)
- Technologies of border control and sexuality
- Surveillance, voyeurism, pornotropics
- Entanglement of anti-migrant and anti-queer/feminist politics
- Virality, sexuality, and contagion across borders
- Queer of colour critique and critical migration studies
- Affect, desire, and queer/no border futurities
- Biopolitical borders, demography, and population
- Queer temporalities, archives, and histories of migration
- LGBTQ refugees and migrants
- Queer and feminist activism around/against borders

Sexuality and Borders is a two day symposium hosted and funded by New York University's Department of Media, Culture, and Communication. It is co-sponsored by NYU's Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, the DFG-funded research training group "Minor Cosmopolitanisms" (University of Potsdam, Germany) and is supported by LSE's Department of Gender Studies.

### Keynotes

- Radha Hegde (Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication, NYU)
- Miriam Ticktin (Associate Professor of Anthropology, New School for Social Research)
- Alyosxa Tudor (Lecturer in Gender Studies, SOAS University of London)

### Applications

Please send proposals for papers (no longer than 350 words) and a short bio (150 words) by **November 1st, 2018** to [sexualityandborders@tutanota.com](mailto:sexualityandborders@tutanota.com). As an interdisciplinary symposium, we encourage applications that engage a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches and focus on different geopolitical contexts. We aim to enable discussions across academic, artistic and activist debates and also welcome applications from participants outside the academy.

### Organizing team

- Michelle Pfeifer (NYU, Department of Media, Culture, and Communication)
- Billy Holzberg (London School of Economics, Department of Gender Studies)
- Anouk Madörin (University of Potsdam, RTG Minor Cosmopolitanisms)

For updates and more information see <https://sexualityandborders.wordpress.com/>  
For questions please contact [sexualityandborders@tutanota.com](mailto:sexualityandborders@tutanota.com)

