

Call for Abstracts and Panels

NORA Conference 2019

22–24 May 2019, Reykjavík, University of Iceland

Border Regimes, Territorial Discourses and Feminist Politics

The 2019 NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research – conference focuses on the theme of material and symbolic borders in a period of nationalist revival. What explains the return to territoriality? What kind of political, cultural, and social boundaries are being constructed or reproduced? How are border regimes in the present and the past shaping and gendering relations? How are new or redefined boundaries affecting work for social justice and equality as well as intersectional, gender, queer and feminist research? And how can feminist resistance be organized against paternalistic modes that reinstate and reinforce relations of inequality?

We invite you to submit paper proposals, which rely on contemporary and/or historical perspectives, for this cross-disciplinary conference.

Key Concepts:

Nationalism, Populism, Borders, Boundaries, Feminist Critique, Gender Equality, Decolonialisation, Decoloniality, Humanimalism, Intersectionality, Indigenism, Exceptionalism, Adaptability, Migration, Bodies, Territoriality, Masculinities, Sexualities, Race, Racism, Resistance.

Confirmed keynote speakers:

Kim TallBear, Associate Professor, Faculty of Native Studies, University of Alberta and Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Peoples, Technoscience, and Environment

Madina Tlostanova (Lostan), Professor of postcolonial feminisms, Department of Thematic Studies/Gender Studies Unit, Linköping University

Miriam Ticktin, Associate Professor and Chair of Anthropology at The New School for Social Research

Rauna Kuokkanen, Sápmi. Professor, Arctic Indigenous Politics, University of Lapland and Associate Professor, Political Science & Indigenous Studies, University of Toronto

Streams:

1. Radical Nationalism in Present and Past

The re-establishment of border regimes in the name of national sovereignty, anti-terrorism or immigration control has become a symbol of the present political condition. Nationalist and populist politicians have already erected walls, set up detention camps, and adopted deportation policies aimed at keeping out “undesirables,” such as immigrants and asylum seekers. Even in the Nordic countries, boundaries that for a long time seemed to be invisible, at least for the majority of the population, are being recreated as a way of reaffirming territorial state policies. In an echo of the past, the normalization of the politics of exclusion is creating new divisions and struggles. The electoral successes of right-wing nationalist populist parties across Western democracies have resulted in mobilizations against “endangered” local identities of gender, religion, nationhood, ethnicity or status. Why have large segments of voters shifted their support from mainstream to Radical Right parties and how are politicians employing public policy to construct and reproduce material and symbolic borders? How does the return to nationalism affect the struggle for gender equality? What kind of feminist resistance strategies can be used against various forms of right-wing nationalism and populism?

2. Migration: Sexual and Gendered Displacements

The movement of people across geographical borders takes many forms. The increased number of people being forced to migrate because of war, persecution, and poverty, has been met with increased hostilities, racialized anxieties and securitization of both borders and bodies. At the same time, other bodies’ movement across the globe in the form of displacement of children through transnational adoption, surrogacy and reproduction, are embedded in other affective, gendered, and racialized economies. How do gendered, sexualized, and racialized economies structure, enable, and/or disable the movement of bodies across borders? How is migration framed and conceptualized within new formations of global neoliberalism and inequality? How does gender, sexuality, race, and other categories of difference, reinforce modes of inequality in relation to global and local migration?

3. Decoloniality: Revisiting the Politics of Self-determination, Indigeneity, Ethnicity, and Decolonisation

As a point of departure the concept *decoloniality* challenges settler colonial practices, structures and ideas. This include myths, violence, logics, institutions, affects, desires, categories, cartographies and politics. Decolonial work exposes how colonialization is not of the “past”. The concept promotes critical alliance and creative resistance as well as visions for alternatives, possibilities of better futures in terms of life, love and livelihood. However, while decoloniality is an important concept, *indigenizing* takes the challenge a step further, towards changing knowledge production and academia at its very core. It brings in indigenous voices and visions, not only as resistance work but as a normality for relations between humans, between humans and non-humans, with nature and territories, with life itself. Having been largely marginalized within gender studies, indigenous peoples’ perspectives and territories are more and more being brought to the forefront through activism and research. What does decolonizing and/or indigenizing agendas contribute to feminist and gender research? What does gender and feminist research, in turn, add to decolonizing and indigenizing agendas?

4. Along and across Borders: Proper Objects and Intersectionalities

Although Judith Butler argued against “proper objects” in the mid-nineties, disciplinary traditions of this phenomenon objects still haunt feminist studies. The categories or modes of

inequality that should be put to the forefront in feminist activist and/or scholarly work are being vividly discussed. How can feminist studies rethink disciplinary and categorical borders? How can feminist epistemologies more deeply incorporate more deeply intersectional modes of inquiries? Which approaches should be adopted to identify, challenge and explain dichotomies prevalent in most feminist theories, such as men/women, majority/minority, white/non-white, hetero/non-hetero, binary/non-binary understandings, ability/disability, nature/culture, human/non-human. Is such an undertaking possible without losing sight of the power inequalities these binaries represent? And how do and how should objects, theories, methodologies, and politics travel across geographical and disciplinary borders as well as between activism and academia?

5. Wars and Natural Disasters: Resilience, Response, and Mitigation

“Natural” disasters and protracted internal or external conflicts in the 21st century cause multifaceted humanitarian crises in countries and regions of the world with widespread effects across borders. What are the gendered dimensions of humanitarian emergencies and security and military operations? How can gender and feminist scholars contribute to increased understandings of the gendered dimensions of infrastructural vulnerabilities, human security, conflict, peace, post-conflict reconstruction, climate change, the destructions of ecosystems and disaster relief? What responses are available within feminist technoscience and other fields?

6. Production and Negotiation of Borders in Gender Equality Research

The Nordic countries have promoted themselves as champions of gender equality on the world stage. In the context of neo-liberalism, globalization and expanding transnational legal bodies, national equality politics and legislation are entangled in international discourses and legal acts. How have gender equality machineries – in the past and present – produced and negotiated national and transnational borders? And what impact do renewed border discourses have on gender equality studies and research.

7. Exceeding the Actual: Visions and Spaces for Change

Literature has, as Jacques Derrida pointed out, the right to say everything as well as to remain absolutely non-responsive and to keep a secret. There is no literature without democracy and vice versa. In Derrida’s view, literature has the potential to exceed the actual by including its possibilities. When democracy seems to be in danger, one has to ask if literature is also at risk. In a world preoccupied with borders and boundaries, what alternative visions for the future does literature offer? New conceptions and inscriptions of the political, ethical and epistemic subject are urgently needed in times of natural, humanitarian, and military crises. Where lies the potential for change? What can be learned from the legacies of feminist creativity and resistance? And why is feminism an important part of present-day networks of solidarity groups resisting and mobilizing against territorial and symbolic border regimes?

Papers will be selected and organized into sessions on the basis of the seven streams

For papers, submit a title page with complete author contact information, a short biography (max. 150 words), and an abstract (max. 350 words) to the conference email address: noragender@hi.is. Indicate the preferred thematic stream in the subject field.

For panels (consisting of 3–4 related papers), submit a 500-word description of the panel; type of panel (paper panel, roundtable discussion, or performance); relevance to the stream and

contact information for all panelists; and a 250 word abstract and a short biography (max. 150 words) for each presenter to the conference email address: noragender@hi.is. Please indicate the preferred thematic stream in the subject field.

Format of the presentation

Each participant will have 20 minutes for presentation and discussion.

The preliminary program will be announced on 31 January 2019.

Conference venue: The University of Iceland.

Host organizations at the University of Iceland: RIKK, Institute for Gender, Equality and Difference (**organizer**) will host the event in collaboration with UNU-GEST (United Nations University Gender Studies and Training Programme) and EDDA – Research Center.

Co-organizer: The board of NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research

Accommodation and travel costs are to be covered by participants. The host institution will arrange for reduced prices when possible.

Important dates:

Submission deadline: 30 November 2018

Acceptance notifications: 31 January 2019

Deadline for early bird registration: 18 February 2019 (students 110 EUR, regular 170 EUR)

Registration deadline: 15 April 2019 (students 135 Euros, regular 200 Euros)

Conference committee:

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