

## Call for Papers



# Association for **BorderlandsStudies**

**2020 Annual Conference**

**April 1-4, 2020**

**Portland, Oregon, USA**

Marriott Downtown Waterfront

1401 SW Naito Pkwy

In contrast to the complexity and differentiation suggested by much recent academic literature, borders continue to be conceived of and represented by mainstream politics and the media in an overly simplistic way. Much recent political and public debate has regressed into nationalistic, state-centric thinking and populist rhetoric, reducing the idea of borders to be mere protective frontlines. We seek to promote a more comprehensive understanding of b/ordering processes and the major challenges affecting changing scenarios of globalised contemporaneity. This implies that more attention should be given to how theoretical innovations can be connected to empirical findings and can be of relevance to policy communities. Border research should transcend boundaries between scholarly, applied, public, and activist categories, creating something that redefines practice.

The territorialisation of populist discourses and the resurgence of spatial and nationalist identities are creating new kinds of cleavages, while borders have become symbolic and concrete resources for populist political agendas. Spatially exclusionary policies are redefining relations between democracy and space, while narratives about place and the exclusion of others accentuate anxieties and ontological insecurities. With this call, we draw attention to the rise of populist politics; populism and neo-nationalism as (re)bordering; and the role of populism in activating tensions surrounding borders and the meaning of sovereignty, contested historical memory, and migration. With an increasing securitisation of mobility and bodies, the study of borders has become inseparable from questions of xenophobia, fear, exclusion and inequality – a somewhat radical shift from the idea that national borders express alternatives, multiple sovereignties, political recognition and freedom from externally imposed constraints.

Today, an increasingly tense geopolitical climate has overshadowed much of the innovative conceptual (re-)framing of borders as social, political, economic and cultural spaces. Neo-nationalism, populism, xenophobia, as well as border violence, appear to refute the potential of borders to connect but they can also draw attention to the fact that many crucial questions about borders and border-making remain unanswered. A more nuanced and critical understanding of borders as both challenge and resource is urgently needed in order to better understand and interpret the broad socio-political transformations taking place in the world. We believe that border scholarship can provide tools to analyse and understand xenophobia, exclusion, and inequality by fragmenting territorial aspects of political radicalization across the world and by exposing the political use of borders for promoting and advancing exclusionary and defensive policies.

The Association for Borderlands Studies invites proposals for complete panels, roundtables and individual papers that address these and other cross-cutting perspectives on issues related to borders and borderlands. Contributions on all topics and areas concerned with border studies are invited, with the following issues particularly welcome:

- populism as an international phenomenon
- resonance of / resistance to populism
- borderlands as laboratories of tolerance
- borders and inequality
- conceptualizing migrant agency
- ethical, moral and humanitarian issues associated with borders
- conceptual change in the treatment of borders and their ethical consequences
- borders and bordering as reflections of power relations
- borders as resources
- border pedagogy: the role of borders in learning and education.
- The role of institutions, policies, or governance structures in exacerbating the exclusionary nature of borders, or counteracting them
- methodological and theoretical advancements in border studies
- moving towards applied, committed, and engaged research agendas
- bridging scientific, aesthetic, and political approaches to borders

We encourage participants to consider cohesive panel and roundtable submissions, while individual submissions are warmly welcomed. All proposals must be submitted through the website, at the links below, by **December 1, 2019**.

- [Click here to propose a PANEL](#)
- [Click here to propose a ROUNDTABLE](#)
- [Click here to submit a single PAPER](#)

A "**PANEL**" is a group of papers with a similar theme that have been organized, by the person submitting, to make a unified session. All of the papers and authors intended for this panel must be included in the submission at the same time. You may deviate from the traditional presentation format.

A "**ROUNDTABLE**" is an open session on a topic with **NO PAPERS**. A description of the topic and the members participating are required.

A "**PAPER**" is a single paper submitted to the Section Coordinator of the applicant's choice. This can have multiple authors, but is only a single paper.

For more information, please go to: <http://www.WSSAweb.com/sections> and select Association for Borderlands Studies

Also note that WSSA is pleased to offer a number of competitive awards and grants. For a full list and descriptions, please go to: <http://www.wssaweb.com/competitions-and-awards.html>

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