

Borders and Walls
2nd Global Inclusive Interdisciplinary Conference

Sunday 10th July 2022 to Monday 11th July 2022
Athens, Greece

In a contemporary moment where human mobility is shaped by a global pandemic, the ongoing effects of climate change, and growing economic instability, the role and utility of borders are in need of renewed exploration. The spread of the novel coronavirus has made the ways in which borders structure and constrain our lives apparent to more people than ever. Due to the pandemic, billions of people around the world have faced the realities of confinement to home countries as traversal across international lines has been limited only to those with sufficient claims to citizenship, residence, and now, proof of vaccination. Some argue that in times like these, borders provide security, the preconditions for effective governance, and the distribution of goods and services within a given population. Yet, others might ask to what extent they simultaneously reinforce hegemony and bar access to necessities – such as life saving COVID vaccines and other medical infrastructure – for those who, by mere lottery of birth, happened to be born on the 'wrong' side.

In reality, people across the globe have been grappling with the asymmetries bound up in borders ever since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia and the emergence of modern nation-state, a geopolitical concept that has hitherto fundamentally relied on the existence of borders – both in their physical manifestations as well as in the political imagination and in terms self-determination. On one hand, in consolidated economic spheres such as the European Union, citizens have enjoyed decades of free and uninhibited movement across the continent. Yet, it's undeniable that certain member states have fared far better than others in this arrangement, and each national project within the Schengen Zone has struggled with questions of pluralism and exclusion. Meanwhile, the US-Mexican border of the post-9/11 world is increasingly militarized via structures and technologies, and those same structures have disseminated to other borderlands such as that of Israel-Palestine, whose tensions have only risen in recent months. Thus, borders and their meanings exist within complex social, political, and economic networks where movement is codified by factors such as ethnicity, social class, and cultural narrative.

Moving beyond conventional notions of borders as static lines separating "us" from "them" and "inside" from "outside," this conference aims to open a non-essentialist conversation about borders and walls. As inclusive and multidisciplinary, we seek submissions on the varying significance of borders and borderlands across a wide array of contexts and fields including but not limited to architecture, sociology, urban planning, history, anthropology, linguistics, literature, art, poetry, performance, journalism, and cartography. We welcome both traditional and nontraditional formats ranging from empirical research and analysis, ethnography, and journalism to poetry, performance, film, and fictocriticism. Drawing upon this multiplicity of perspectives from people directly affected by borders, our objective is to invite critical reflection with respect to the presence of borders as constructs in contemporary society, their transnational histories, and multidimensional significance. We seek to imagine border alternatives, and to open up space for new approaches and understandings via interdisciplinary exchanges.

Key Topics

Key topics, themes and issues for discussion may include, but are definitely not limited to:

- ~ Border as metaphor
- ~ Critical implications of border technology and security
- ~ Local voices in border literature, poetry, art, performance
- ~ Borders and architecture
- ~ Borders and the nation-state
- ~ Borders within nations (states, lands reserved for Indigenous peoples, territories)
 - ~ The neoliberal border
 - ~ Globalization's impacts
- ~ Trade (including trade agreements; clandestine/smuggling/informal economies; remittances)
 - ~ Necroviolence and necropolitics
 - ~ Identity construction
 - ~ International development
- ~ Transnational histories or case studies about border wall projects (Berlin, Israel, US-Mexican)
- ~ Key border regions: EU, US-Mexican (maquiladoras, border towns), Israel (Gaza); post-9/11; Russia-Osetian (Georgia); India-Pakistan
 - ~ Borders and walls in fiction and literature
 - ~ "Frontiers," nation expansion, imperialism
- ~ Border as industry (analysis financial investments/corporate stakeholders that maintain and expand these projects)
 - ~ Border violence
 - ~ Bifurcation and creation of borderlands
 - ~ Borders over time; i.e. modern/post-Westphalian border
 - ~ Borders as theorized vs. borders as lived; borders as real and imagined
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 - ~ Poetics of space, spatiality and the border
 - ~ (Mis)representations of borders
 - ~ Mapping, archiving, and cartography
 - ~ Border ethnographies
 - ~ Critiques of border essentialism
 - ~ Resisting borders and (anti)border movements
 - ~ "Natural" borders vs. constructed borders
 - ~ Border ontologies and linguistic constructions of borders
 - ~ Open borders and debordering
 - ~ Borders and migration (clandestine vs. legitimized)
 - ~ Borders and citizenship, identity, belonging
- ~ Beyond the wall; borders as institutions/institutional maintenance (consulates/embassy, specialized border police forces, bureaucracy/documentation)
- ~ Transnational relationships between borders (e.g. Israel/US-Mexican); comparative analyses
 - ~ Traversing and transportation with respect to borders
 - ~ Border disputes and contestations
- ~ Borders and legality/law and immigration law; borders and "criminality"
 - ~ Borders and human rights
 - ~ Race, class, sexuality; sociology of border

- ~ Critical analysis of terms such as immigrant, expat, migrant, refugee
- ~ Borders and Indigenous sovereignty
- ~ Emancipatory visions with respect to a world without borders
- ~ Borders and ecology/biodiversity; environmental impacts of border walls

What To Send

This interdisciplinary conference and collaborative networking event aim to bring together academics, professionals, practitioners, NGOs, voluntary sector workers, etc., in the context of a variety of formats: presentations, seminars, workshops, panels, performances, etc.

300-word reviews of your proposed contribution (paper abstracts, proposals for workshops, collaborative works or round tables, overviews of artistic projects, or any other relevant forms of participation you are interested in) should be submitted by Friday 11th February 2022

All submissions will be minimally double reviewed, under anonymous (blind) conditions, by an international panel drawn from the Project Advisory Team and the Advisory Board. In practice, our procedures usually entail that by the time a proposal is accepted, it will have been triple and quadruple reviewed.

You will be notified of the panel's decision by Friday 25th February 2022

If your submission is accepted for the conference, a complete draft of your contribution should be submitted by Friday, 20th May 2022

Proposals may be in Word, PDF, RTF, or Notepad formats with the following information and in this order:

- a) author(s), b) affiliation as you would like it to appear in the programme, c) email address, d) title of proposal, e) body of the proposal, f) up to 10 keywords.

Emails should be entitled: Borders Submission

Where To Send

Abstracts should be submitted simultaneously to the Organising Chair and the Project Administrator:

lac295@cornell.edu Lily Cichanowicz (Organising Chair):
athensborders@progressiveconnexions.net Len Capuli: (Project Administrator):

What's so Special About a Progressive Connexions Event?

A fresh, friendly, dynamic format – at Progressive Connexions we are dedicated to breaking away from the stuffy, old-fashion conference formats, where endless presentations are read aloud off PowerPoints.

We work to bring you an interactive format, where exchange of experience and information is alternated with captivating workshops, engaging debates and round tables, time set aside for getting to know each other and for discussing common future projects and initiatives, all in a warm, relaxed, egalitarian atmosphere.

A chance to network with international professionals – the beauty of our interdisciplinary events is that

they bring together professionals from all over the world and from various fields of activity, all joined together by a shared passion. Not only will the exchange of experience, knowledge and stories be extremely valuable in itself, but we seek to create lasting, ever-growing communities around our projects, which will become a valuable resource for those belonging to them.

A chance to be part of constructing change – There is only one thing we love as much as promoting knowledge: promoting real, lasting social change by encouraging our participants to take collective action, under whichever form is most suited to their needs and expertise (policy proposals, measuring instruments, research projects, educational materials, etc.) We will support all such actions in the aftermath of the event as well, providing a platform for further discussions, advice from the experts on our Project Advisory Team and various other tools and intellectual resources, as needed.

An opportunity to discuss things that matter to you – Our events are not only about discussing how things work in the respective field, but also about how people work in that field – what are the struggles, problems and solutions professionals have found in their line of work, what are the areas where better communication among specialists is needed and how the interdisciplinary approach can help bridge those gaps and help provide answers to questions from specific areas of activity.

An unforgettable experience – When participating in a Progressive Connexions event, there is a good chance you will make some long-time friends. Our group sizes are intimate, our venues are comfortable and relaxing and our event locations are suited to the history and culture of the event.

Ethos

Progressive Connexions believes it is a mark of personal courtesy and professional respect to your colleagues that all delegates should attend for the full duration of the meeting. If you are unable to make this commitment, please do not submit an abstract or proposal for presentation.

Please note: Progressive Connexions is a not-for-profit network and we are not in a position to be able to assist with conference travel or subsistence, nor can we offer discounts off published rates and fees.

athensborders@progressiveconnexions.net Please direct all enquiries to the project email:

For further details and information please visit the project web page:
<https://www.progressiveconnexions.net/interdisciplinary-projects/cultures-and-societies/borders-and-walls/conferences/>

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