

# Crossing borders in transnational gender history\*

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## Abstract

*Transnational history and the history of gender and sexuality have both been concerned with the issue of borders and their crossing, but the two fields themselves have not intersected much in the past. This is beginning to change, and this article surveys recent scholarship that draws on both fields, highlighting work in six areas: movements for women's and gay rights; diverse understandings of sexuality and gender; colonialism and imperialism; intermarriage; national identity and citizenship; and migration. This new research suggests ways in which the subject matter, theory, and methodology in transnational history and the history of gender and sexuality can interconnect: in the two fields' mutual emphasis on intertwinings, relationships, movement, and hybridity; their interdisciplinarity and stress on multiple perspectives; and their calls for destabilization of binaries.*

**Keywords** colonialism, gender, intermarriage, sexuality, transnational

## Introduction

Geographic borders and their crossing have been central to scholarship that defines itself as 'transnational'. In their dictionary of transnational history, Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier define their topic as 'what moves between and across different polities and societies'.<sup>1</sup> Steven Vertovec's *Transnationalism*, an introduction to the field designed for students, describes the book's subject as 'sustained cross-border relationships, patterns of exchange, affiliations, and social formations'.<sup>2</sup> In an article discussing the transnational turn in US history in the pages of this journal, Ian Tyrrell notes 'transnational history refers to a broad

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1 Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, eds., *The Palgrave dictionary of transnational history: from the mid-19th century to the present day*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, jacket.

2 Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, London: Routledge, 2009, p. 2.

range of phenomena cutting across national boundaries'.<sup>3</sup> A widely read discussion of transnational history published in the *American Historical Review* emphasizes the centrality of the study of 'movements, flows, and circulations' across borders.<sup>4</sup>

Other scholars seek to combine this analysis of exchange and movement with comparison, which has long been a key methodology in global and world history. Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann have described their concept of *histoire croisée*, for example, as the history of 'empirical intercrossings' and 'intersection', in which 'objects of research are not merely considered in relation to one another but also *through* one another'.<sup>5</sup> Others use slightly different terms: Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Victor Lieberman speak of 'connected histories', Frederic Cooper of 'shared histories', Ann Stoler of 'comparative connections', and Shalini Randeria of 'entangled histories'.<sup>6</sup> In all of these, theorists and practitioners have used (and problematized) the double meaning of 'trans': across or between borders, and above or beyond them.<sup>7</sup>

Histories that are crossed, connected, shared, and entangled still imply borders, however, even if these are blurred, transcended, or ignored. Thus a further step in this transnational movement has been history that emphasizes mixture and hybridity, though in this there has also been debate about terminology, methodology, and focus. Various words to describe the process or condition of mixture have gone in and out of fashion: imitation, borrowing, appropriation, re-appropriation, acculturation, transculturation, amalgamation, accommodation, negotiation, mixing (especially in its Spanish form: *mestizaje*), syncretism, hybridity, fusion, cultural translation, creolization. As Peter Burke has recently pointed out in his excellent small book *Cultural hybridity*, historians have borrowed these words from botany, physics, and metallurgy, as well as the more expected borrowings from anthropology and linguistics.<sup>8</sup> Thus in *thinking* about borrowing, hybridity, or whatever one chooses to call this process, historians have *engaged* in it as well, crossing disciplinary borders.

3 'Reflections on the transnational turn in United States history: theory and practice', Ian Tyrrell, *Journal of Global History*, 4, 3, 2009, p. 454.

4 'American Historical Review conversation: on transnational history', with Chris Bayly, Sven Beckert, Matthew Connelly, Isabel Hofmeyr, Wendy Kozol, and Patricia Seed, *American Historical Review*, 111, 5, 2006, pp. 1441–64.

5 Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, 'Beyond comparison: *histoire croisée* and the challenge of reflexivity', *History and Theory*, 45, 2006, p. 30.

6 See the essays in Victor Lieberman, ed., *Beyond binary histories: re-imagining Eurasia to c. 1830*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997, especially that by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Connected histories: notes towards a reconfiguration of early modern Eurasia', pp. 289–315; Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria, *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus: postkoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften*, Frankfurt-am-Main: Campus, 2002; Ann Stoler and Frederic Cooper, *Tensions of empire: colonial cultures in a bourgeois world*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997; Ann L. Stoler, 'Tense and tender ties: the politics of comparison in North American history and (post) colonial studies', *Journal of American History*, 88, 3, 2001, pp. 829–65.

7 For other recent work that considers theoretical issues involved in comparison, see Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor, eds., *Comparison and history: Europe in cross-national perspective*, New York: Routledge, 2004; Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad, and Oliver Janz, eds., *Transnational Geschichte: Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006; Micol Seigel, 'Beyond compare: comparative method after the transnational turn', *Radical History Review*, 91, 2009, pp. 62–90; Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Explorations in comparative history*, Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnus Press, 2009.

8 Peter Burke, *Cultural hybridity*, London: Polity, 2009.

Werner and Zimmermann have also noted this, asserting that a central feature of *histoire croisée* is a ‘multiplicity of possible viewpoints and the divergences resulting from languages, terminologies, categorizations and conceptualizations, traditions, and disciplinary usages’.<sup>9</sup>

Another body of historical scholarship is also wrestling with issues surrounding the crossing, blurring, and transcendence of borders: that on gender and sexuality. Geographic borders certainly figure in this scholarship, but so do other types of borders, beginning with the border between ‘gender’ and ‘sex’. In the 1980s, as gender history was emerging as a field, historians generally used ‘sex’ to mean physical, morphological, and anatomical differences (what are often called ‘biological differences’) and ‘gender’ to mean a culturally constructed, historically changing, and often unstable system of differences, built to some degree on ‘sex’ but also on other factors. In the decades since, that distinction has become increasingly contested, challenged by studies of historical people who were categorized as intersexed, gender-dysphoric, transsexual, third gender, or transgender, and by the personal experiences of contemporary people who identify as such.<sup>10</sup> Dichotomous cultural norms about gender (that everyone *should* be a man or a woman) often determined (and continue to determine) ‘biological’ sex, rather than the other way around, as Anne Fausto-Sterling and Judith Butler have demonstrated.<sup>11</sup> The border between sex and gender that women’s and gender history (and gender studies in other fields) had carefully created thus seems increasingly permeable, unstable, murky, or perhaps even illusory.

At the same time that the biological basis of gender was problematized, historians of women – and historians of men who recognized that their subjects were such – were putting increasing emphasis on other sorts of differences: class, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, and so on. They wondered whether ‘woman’ (or ‘man’) was a valid category whose meaning is self-evident and unchanging over time, or whether assuming so was simply naive ‘essentialism’.<sup>12</sup> These historians noted that not only in the present is gender ‘performative’ – that is, a role that can be taken on or changed at will – but it was so at many points in the past, as individuals ‘did gender’ and conformed to or challenged gender roles. Thus they argued that it is misguided to think that we are studying women (or men, for that matter) as a

9 Werner and Zimmermann, ‘Beyond comparison’, p. 32.

10 Gilbert Herdt, ed., *Third sex, third gender: beyond sexual dimorphism in culture and history*, New York: Zone Books, 1994; Sabrina Petra Ramet, ed., *Gender reversals and gender cultures: anthropological and historical perspectives*, London: Routledge, 1996; Joanne Meyerowitz, *How sex changed: a history of transsexuality in the United States*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004; Susan Stryker, *Transgender history*, Berkeley, CA: Sea Press, 2008.

11 Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the body: gender politics and the construction of sexuality*, New York: Basic Books, 2000; Judith Butler, *Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity*, 2nd edition, New York: Routledge, 2000; eadem, *Undoing gender*, London: Routledge, 2004. These issues have been highlighted recently in the ongoing controversy about the South African middle-distance runner Caster Semenya: see Ariel Levy, ‘Either/or: sports, sex, and the case of Caster Semenya’, *New Yorker*, 30 November 2009.

12 Doubts about the value of ‘women’ as an analytical category were conveyed most forcefully in Denise Riley, ‘Am I that name?’ *Feminism and the category of ‘women’ in history*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1988, though they have primarily been associated with the work of Joan Scott, such as *Gender and the politics of history*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. For a recent discussion of the impact of Scott’s work, see ‘*American Historical Review* forum: revisiting “Gender: a useful category of historical analysis”’, with articles by Joanne Meyerowitz, Heidi Tinsman, Maria Bucur, Dyan Elliott, Gail Hershatter, and Wang Zheng, and a response by Joan Scott, *American Historical Review*, 113, 5, 2008, pp. 1344–1430.

sex, for the only thing that is in the historical record is gender; ‘women’ and ‘men’ are thus conceptual categories, not enduring objects.

Historians of sexuality have contended with their own borders. One of these is chronological: the border between ‘modern’ sexuality and what came before, what is sometimes described as the point at which sexuality itself was born, created, or discursively constructed (the operative verb varies). As with so much else in the history of sexuality, this issue comes from Michel Foucault. As the argument is usually framed, at some point between the seventeenth century and the nineteenth, people discovered that they had a ‘sexuality’, a quality defined by sexual object choice. Those who desired those of the same sex were ‘homosexuals’ – a word devised in 1869 by the Hungarian jurist K. M. Benkert – and those who desired those of the opposite sex were ‘heterosexuals’, a word originally used to describe individuals of different sexes who regularly engaged in non-procreative sex simply for fun, but increasingly used for all those who were sexually attracted to the ‘opposite’ sex.<sup>13</sup> Before this point there were sexual acts, but after this point people came to understand that they had a sexual identity or sexual orientation. This ‘acts versus identities’, ‘modern versus premodern’ binary has been widely challenged as overly dichotomizing and ahistorical – even Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, a key theorist, has satirically termed it ‘the great paradigm shift’ – but it has been extremely powerful.<sup>14</sup> Foucault’s ideas and the notion of sexual ‘modernity’ have been used by some scholars who focus on areas outside the West, although others note that this creates problems, especially because it tends to make the United States and Europe appear ‘modern’ and ‘progressive’, while ‘other parts of the world are presumed to be traditional’ and ‘characterized by oppression’.<sup>15</sup>

The notion of sexual orientation initially created a dichotomized sexual schema, but then other categories were added, sometimes mixed together with gender categories into an ever-lengthening acronym of categories: the longest version I have seen of this in the United States is LGBTTTQQI2S – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersexed, two-spirit. Both activists and theorists wondered whether this did not reify boundaries, rather than removing or even blurring them much. Beginning in the 1990s queer theorists asserted that these categories were (and are) constructed, artificial, and changing. Some celebrated all efforts at blurring or bending categories, viewing any sort of identity as both false and oppressive and celebrating hybridity and performance. In

13 Robert Nye, ed., *Sexuality*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

14 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the closet*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993, p. 44. Recent works on European sexuality that affirm the idea of a major shift include Randolph Trumbach, *Sex and the gender revolution, volume I: heterosexuality and the third gender in Enlightenment London*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999; Robert Tobin, *Warm brothers: queer theory and the age of Goethe*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001. Those that critique it include Valerie Traub, *The renaissance of lesbianism in early modern England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

15 Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, ‘Global identities: theorizing transnational studies of sexuality’, *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*, 7, 4, 2001, p. 669. Several of the authors in the ‘*American Historical Review* forum: transnational sexualities’, *American Historical Review*, 114, 5, 2009, pp. 1250–1353 (which includes articles by Margot Canaday, Marc Epprecht, Joanne Meyerowitz, Dagmar Herzog, Tamara Loos, Leslie Peirce, and Pete Sigal), also highlight the use of a Foucaultian paradigm of modernity and the problems that this has created, as does Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with mustaches and men without beards: gender and sexual anxieties of Iranian modernity*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005.

the last decade, queer theory has been widely applied, as scholars have ‘queered’ – that is, called into question the categories used to describe and analyse – race, religion, and other topics alongside sexuality. This broadening has led some, including a few of the founders of the field, to wonder whether queer theory loses its punch when everything is queer, but there is no sign that its applications are diminishing.<sup>16</sup>

As in transnational history, these debates in the history of gender and sexuality have to some degree centred on the double meaning of the perplexing prefix ‘trans’, particularly as increasing numbers of individuals describe themselves, and sometimes the people they study in the past, not as ‘transsexuals’ but as ‘transgender’: that is, not moving across a border from one sex to the other but moving beyond such borders to become neither male nor female, or both male and female.<sup>17</sup> Susan Stryker, one of transgender history’s most influential theorists, has noted ways in which debates about gender and sexual borders have led to consideration of other types of spatial, disciplinary, and temporal borders. In her words, transgender history is history in which ‘questions of space and movement’ are linked ‘to other critical crossings of categorical territories’, and which ‘articulates new generational and analytical perspectives’.<sup>18</sup>

Stryker’s description of transgender history and Werner and Zimmermann’s of *histoire croisée* are so similar that they could be reversed: both focus on movements and interconnections across borders of various types, both emphasize multiple perspectives, both discuss socially constructed and historically changing ‘imagined communities’, and both draw on the theory and methodology of various disciplines. Despite these parallels, however, until now there has been relatively little intersection between transnational history – and global history more broadly – and the history of gender and sexuality, a situation on which a number of scholars have commented.<sup>19</sup> In this article, I will first examine this situation in greater detail and suggest some reasons why it developed, but then focus primarily on scholarship that is beginning to bring these fields together. In doing so, I will include some works that

16 Jonathan Goldberg and Madhavi Menon, ‘Queering history’, *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, 120, 5, 2005, pp. 1608–17; Thomas Piontek, *Queering gay and lesbian studies*, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006; special issue of *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*, ‘Thinking sex/thinking gender’, 10, 2, 2004, pp. 211–313; David L. Eng, Judith Halberstam, and Jose Esteban Munoz, eds., ‘What’s queer about queer studies now?’, special issue, *Social Text*, 84–5, 2005.

17 For a history of the way in which this understanding emerged, see David Valentine, *Imagining transgender: an ethnography of a category*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007. For key texts and debates, see Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, eds., *The transgender studies reader*, London: Routledge, 2006.

18 Susan Stryker, ‘Transgender studies: queer theory’s evil twin’, *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*, 10, 2, 2004, pp. 212, 214.

19 For gender historians who have commented on this, see Judith P. Zinsser, ‘Women’s history, world history, and the construction of new narratives’, *Journal of Women’s History*, 12, 3, 2000, pp. 196–206; Bonnie Smith, ‘Introduction’, and Margaret Strobel and Marjorie Bingham, ‘The theory and practice of women’s history and gender history in global perspective’, in Bonnie Smith, ed., *Women’s history in global perspective*, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004, vol. 1, pp. 1–8, 9–47; Merry Wiesner-Hanks, ‘World history and the history of women, gender, and sexuality’, *Journal of World History*, 18, 2007, pp. 53–68. For comments by historians of sexuality, see Grewal and Kaplan, ‘Global identities’, pp. 663–79, and Elizabeth A Povinelli and George Chauncey, eds., ‘Thinking sexuality transnationally’, special issue, *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*, 5, 4, 1999; Leila J. Rupp, ‘Toward a global history of same-sex sexuality’, *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 10, 2, 2001, pp. 287–302. For remarks on this from a world historian, see Patrick Manning, *Navigating world history: historians create a global past*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, pp. 208, 210.

their authors and editors frame as comparative, international, or global as well as explicitly transnational, as the borders between all of these terms are just as contested and entangled as are any other borders.

## The lack of intersection

Statistics about books, journal articles, and conference papers bear out more impressionistic observations about a lack of intersection. To use book prize competitions as a measure: of the books submitted to the American Historical Association by publishers for consideration for the Joan Kelly Prize in women's history during the period 2004–06 and 2010–11 (ninety to one hundred books a year), roughly 45 per cent were in US history, another 35 per cent in European, and about 20 per cent for the rest of the world.<sup>20</sup> Only a handful took on topics that have been at the centre of transnational or global history, such as trade or political economy, and only one or two per year were transnational or global in geographic scope. On the other hand, of the books submitted to the World History Association for its book prize in the years 2005–11, one or two of roughly thirty submitted each year have been on women or gender, and none on sexuality.

To use journal articles, of the roughly 150 articles published in the *Journal of Women's History* during the period 2000–10, fifteen address what I would term 'global history' topics. However, two-thirds of them do deal with topics outside the United States, and there have been several special issues or article clusters that focus on transnational or global issues.<sup>21</sup> Of the 160 articles in the *Journal of World History* for the period 2000–10, eight specifically examine women or gender. In the first six years of its publication, no article in the *Journal of Global History* has focused explicitly on women, gender, or sexuality.<sup>22</sup>

To use conference papers as a measure, well over half of the paper proposals to the Berkshire Women's History Conference, the largest women's history conference in the world, in the years 1996–2008 (the conference is held every three years) were in US history. The 'globalization' of US history has affected women's history, and many of the papers that focused on US topics considered transnational issues such as migration, American neo-imperialism, diasporas, and borderlands. They were still about the United States, however. At the conference itself (as opposed to proposals), sessions focusing on US history occupied about one-third of the programme, which represented a conscious choice on the part of the organizing committee to achieve a better geographic balance than that being produced by the field itself. On the other side, until 2009 there were generally only a handful of papers or sessions at the World History Association conference on women or gender, and none on sexuality. At the European Congress of World and Global History, held in Leipzig in 2005, there was one panel on gender, but at the subsequent Congress in Dresden in 2008 there were none.

20 In 2004–2006, I was on the Kelly prize committee; my thanks to Katherine French for providing me with the statistics for 2010 and 2011.

21 This includes a forum, edited by Karen Hagemann and María Teresa Fernández-Aceves, 'Gendering trans/national historiographies: similarities and differences in comparison', *Journal of Women's History*, 19, 1, 2007, pp. 151–213.

22 Ulrike Strasser's 'A case of empire envy? German Jesuits meet an Asian mystic in Spanish America', *Journal of Global History*, 2, 1, 2007, pp. 23–40, does use gender as a category of analysis.

By any measure, then, there has not been much connection between these two fields, for which I see three primary reasons. First, transnational history and the history of gender and sexuality have developed simultaneously as, in part, revisionist interpretations, arguing that the standard story needs to be made broader and much more complex. Each has denaturalized and deconstructed a topic that was a given in historical scholarship: the nation on the one hand, and heterosexual man on the other.<sup>23</sup> Thus both have been viewed by those hostile or uninterested as ‘having an agenda’. Both have concentrated on their own lines of revision, so have not paid much attention to what is going on in the other. In this assessment I differ from Margot Canaday, who commented in a recent forum on transnational sexualities in the *American Historical Review* that historians of sexuality have ‘less of an establishment to shake off’ and so ‘have more reason to challenge existing categories of analysis’.<sup>24</sup> That may be so, but most of the hundreds of studies referenced in the footnotes of the six essays that follow Canaday’s introduction stay within one nation, and many within one city. Here, too, as in women’s and gender history, US history predominates. Joanne Meyerowitz, whose article discusses the US, is the only author to note that the literature is so extensive that her footnotes can include only books (that is, not articles), and even then only some of these.

From the other side, in that same *American Historical Review* forum, Dagmar Herzog, discussing European sexual cultures, comments that the publication in the mid 1990s of several major books on sexuality and imperialism ‘made it impossible to tell the stories of colonial projects of Britain, the Netherlands, or France without recognizing not only the sexualization of colonial encounters in the European imaginary and the intricate imbrication of local sexual and economic arrangements, but also the literal pervasiveness of “cross-racial” sexual and familial intimacies of all kinds’.<sup>25</sup> Judging by recent general studies of British imperialism, however, fifteen years after the mid 1990s it is still quite possible to do so.<sup>26</sup>

A second reason for the lack of intersection is that the primary revisionary paths in transnational history and the history of gender and sexuality have been in opposite directions. Transnational history in all its variants – comparative history, *Transferschichte*, *histoire croisée*, entangled history, shared history – has emphasized connections, links, and the crossing of boundaries: what David Northrup has called the story of the ‘great convergence’.<sup>27</sup> In contrast, after an initial flurry of ‘sisterhood is global’, gender history over

23 Mary Louise Roberts also notes this parallel in ‘The transnationalization of gender history’, *History and Theory*, 44, 3, 2005, p. 462.

24 Margot Canaday, ‘Thinking sex in the transnational turn: an introduction’, *American Historical Review*, 114, 5, 2009, p. 1251.

25 Dagmar Herzog, ‘Syncopated sex: transforming European sexual cultures’, *American Historical Review*, 114, 5, 2009, p. 1291. Ida Blom agrees with this assessment, in ‘Gender as an analytical tool in global history’, in Sølvi Sogner, ed., *Making sense of global history: the 19th International Congress of the Historical Sciences*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2001, pp. 71–86.

26 One example is John Darwin, *The empire project: the rise and fall of the British world-system, 1830–1970*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

27 David Northrup, ‘Globalization and the great convergence: rethinking world history in the long term’, *Journal of World History*, 16, 3, 2005, pp. 249–68.

the last decades has spent much more time on *divergence*, making categories of difference ever more complex. Gender historians have emphasized that every key aspect of gender relations – the relationship between the family and the state, the relationship between gender and sexuality, and so on – is historically, culturally, and class specific. Today historians of masculinity speak of their subject only in plurals, as ‘multiple masculinities’ appear to have emerged everywhere, just as have multiple sexualities in the works by historians of sexuality.<sup>28</sup>

A third reason is the powerful materialist tradition in transnational history, inherited from world and global history, which stands in sharp contrast to the largely cultural focus of the history of gender and sexuality as these have developed over the last few decades. Although Ian Tyrrell notes that transnational history ‘refers to a broad range of phenomena’, most of it has focused on political and economic processes carried out by governments and commercial elites. Women’s history also initially had a strong materialist wing, with many studies of labour systems and political movements, but since the linguistic/cultural turn of the 1980s more attention has been paid to representation, meaning, and discourse, which has also characterized the history of sexuality.

Despite this lack of intersection in the past, however, this border is beginning to be crossed; here I fully agree with Canaday. The organizers of the 2010 World History Association annual conference chose ‘gender’ as one of their two themes; 18 of the 67 sessions at the conference had at least one paper that focused on gender, although only one paper explicitly examined sexuality. The organizers of the 2011 Berkshire Women’s History conference, in their words, ‘restructured the conference to take advantage of new upsurges of intellectual energy in global history, transnational and transregional history’ and 28 of the conference’s 190 sessions included the word ‘transnational’ in their title.<sup>29</sup> These promising trends should not be overemphasized, as the 2011 WHA had only 7 sessions out of 125 with at least one paper on women or gender, and many of the Berkshire Conference ‘transnational’ sessions were simply papers on several different countries stuck together. However, exciting scholarship that draws on *both* transnational history and the history of gender and sexuality is beginning to appear, which points toward a future of increased border crossing. I see such work emerging especially in six areas: movements for women’s and gay rights; diverse understandings of sexuality and gender; colonialism and imperialism; intermarriage; national identity and citizenship; and migration.

28 On multiple masculinities, see (among many) Stefan Dudnik, Karen Hagemann, and Josh Tosh, eds., *Masculinities in politics and war: gendering modern history*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004; Lahoucine Ouzgane and Robert Morell, eds., *African masculinities: men in Africa from the late nineteenth century to the present*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005; John Tosh, *Manliness and masculinities in nineteenth-century Britain: essays on gender, family, and empire*, Harlow, Essex: Pearson Longman, 2005; Ulrike Strasser and Heidi Tinsman, ‘It’s a man’s world? World history meets the history of masculinity, in Latin American studies, for instance’, *Journal of World History*, 21, 2010, pp. 75–96. On sexualities, see Jarrod Hayes, *Queer nations: marginal sexualities in the Maghreb*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000; Mark McLelland and Romit Dasgupta, *Genders, transgenders and sexualities in Japan*, Malden, MA: Routledge, 2005; ‘Sexualities in southern Africa’, special issue, *Sexualities*, 10, 2, 2007; Saskia Wieringa, Evelyn Blackwood, and Abha Bhaiya, *Women’s sexualities and masculinities in a globalizing Asia*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

29 Conference program for the 15th Annual Berkshire Women’s History Conference, p. 3.



## Movements for women's and gay rights

A first group of border-crossing studies are those that focus on movements for women's rights and, more recently, for gay, lesbian, and transgender rights. The history of the movement for women's rights that began in the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth, the 'first wave' of the feminist movement, initially focused on the United States and Great Britain, but more recent scholarship has made clear that this movement was transnational, not simply something emanating from the Anglo-American world.<sup>30</sup> The 'woman question', which, along with suffrage, debated the merits of women's greater access to education, property rights, more equitable marriage and divorce laws, temperance, and protection for women workers, was an international issue, though with different emphases in different parts of the world. Women's rights were linked to other social and political issues in both colonies and metropolises, and to calls to broader democratic representation for all, not simply for women. However, efforts to achieve women's rights and the actions of actual women have often been forgotten, or intentionally effaced, in the nationalist historiographies of anti-colonial struggles, as Louise Edwards and others have shown.<sup>31</sup> Carmen Pereira, an independence leader who fought the Portuguese in Guinea-Bissau in the 1970s, recognized this tendency and noted that women were 'fighting two colonialisms' – one of gender discrimination and one of nationalist struggle.<sup>32</sup> Studies are beginning to revise this picture and examine the interplay between women's rights movements and state-building, sometimes setting this in a comparative or global context.<sup>33</sup>

Women's suffrage was not always a force for more general notions of rights, however, but was also linked to racialized constructions of nation and empire. In many places, advocates of women's rights used ideas about racial and class superiority to bolster their arguments, noting how much more worthy and responsible honourable white middle-class

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- 30 Caroline Daly and Melanie Nolan, eds., *Suffrage and beyond: international feminist perspectives*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1994; Leila Rupp, *Worlds of women: the making of an international women's movement*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- 31 Louise Edwards and Mina Rocas, eds., *Women's suffrage in Asia: gender, nationalism and democracy*, New York: Routledge, 2004; Louise P. Edwards, *Gender, politics, and democracy: women's suffrage in China*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008.
- 32 Stephanie Urdang, *Fighting two colonialisms: women in Guinea-Bissau*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979. See also Elizabeth Schmidt, *Mobilizing the masses: gender, ethnicity, and class in the nationalist movement in Guinea, 1939–1958*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2005.
- 33 For books that set developments in particular regions or countries in a global context, see Maroula Joannou and June Purvis, eds., *The women's suffrage movement: new feminist perspectives*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998; Raka Ray, *Fields of protest: women's movements in India*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999; Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux, eds., *Hidden histories of gender and the state in Latin America*, Durham, NC: Duke University, 2000; Nadje Al-Ali, *Secularism, gender and the state in the Middle East: the Egyptian women's movement*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; Dorothy L. Hodgson and Sheryl McCurdy, eds., *'Wicked' women and the reconfiguration of gender in Africa*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2001; Sharon R. Wesoky, *Chinese feminism faces globalization*, New York: Routledge, 2002; Ellen L. Fleischmann, *The nation and its 'new' women: the Palestinian women's movement, 1920–1948*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003; Ibtisam Al-Atiyat, *The women's movement in Jordan: activism, discourses and strategies*, Berlin: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2003; Yoshie Kobayashi, *A path toward gender equality: state feminism in Japan*, New York: Routledge, 2004; Sylvia Paletschek and Bianka Pietrow-Ennker, eds., *Women's emancipation movements in the nineteenth century: a European perspective*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004; Christine Ehrick, *The shield of the weak: feminism and the state in Uruguay, 1903–1933*, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2005.

women were than working-class, immigrant, or non-white men.<sup>34</sup> Women understood to be 'honourable' were married and generally mothers, of course, so such lines of reasoning were also heterosexist, although sexuality was never mentioned openly, in contrast to blatant and hostile race and class comparisons. Such arguments form one of the reasons why white women were granted the vote relatively early in Australia and New Zealand, and why one of the first states in the US to allow women's suffrage was conservative Utah, where Mormon women argued that their votes would outnumber those of non-Mormon men.<sup>35</sup> Whiteness also became part of notions of who was truly a man; as Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds have recently commented, 'White men monopolized the status of manhood itself.'<sup>36</sup>

The second-wave feminist movement that began in the 1960s and 1970s was similarly international, and comparative studies are evaluating similarities and differences between feminisms in West and East, North and South. Some of these works are global, while others are regional but still examine what happens when ideas, institutions, and individuals cross borders. Maxine Molyneux, for example, compares women's movements across Latin America within liberal, authoritarian, and revolutionary states, and discusses the ways in which these broadened the meaning of rights in different domains of social and political life.<sup>37</sup> Studies of transnational feminist networks of activists and organizations note class, racial, ethnic and imperial tensions, but also their common agendas and similar programmes.<sup>38</sup> Wendy Kozol emphasizes the ways in which studies of such groups

have compelled reconsiderations of how historians understand migrations, state formations, globalization, etc . . . Transnational feminist activists, for instance . . . articulate social justice claims through their understanding of the inequalities between First

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- 34 Louise Michele Newman, *White women's rights: the racial origins of feminism in the United States*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1999; Ian Christopher Fletcher and Laura E. Nym Mayhall and Philippa Levine, eds., *Women's suffrage in the British Empire: citizenship, nation, and race*, New York: Routledge, 2000; Fiona Paisley, *Loving protection? Australian feminism and aboriginal women's rights 1919–1939*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2000. Racist voting restrictions often lasted long after women's rights groups and others argued for their removal. Native Americans, female and male, were granted voting rights in Canada only in 1960, and Aboriginal peoples in Australia only in 1962.
- 35 Miriam Dixon, *The real Matilda: women and identity in Australia*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 1999; Marilyn Lake, *Getting equal: the history of Australian feminism*, St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1999.
- 36 Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the global colour line: white men's countries and the international challenge of racial equality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 7.
- 37 Maxine Molyneux, *Women's movements in international perspective: Latin America and beyond*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001; Nikki Craske and Maxine Molyneux, eds., *Gender and the politics of rights and democracy in Latin America*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. For a comparative study that looks at women in revolutionary movements in Latin America, see Julie D. Shayne, *The revolution question: feminisms in El Salvador, Chile, and Cuba*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, 2004.
- 38 Amrita Basu, ed., *The challenge of local feminisms: women's movements in global perspective*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995; Joan W. Scott, Cora Kaplan, and Debra Keates, eds., *Transitions, environments, translations: feminisms in international politics*, London: Routledge, 1997; Bonnie G., Smith, ed., *Global feminisms since 1945: a survey of issues and controversies*, New York: Routledge, 2000; Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism without borders: decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2003; Valentine M. Moghadam, *Globalizing women: transnational feminist networks*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 2005; Stephanie A. Limoncelli, *The politics of trafficking: the first international movement to combat the sexual exploitation of women*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2010; Amanda Lock Swarr and Riacha Nagar, eds., *Critical transnational feminist praxis*, New York: State University of New York Press, 2010.

and Third World women's experiences and resources. In dialogue with this critique, transnational feminist historians have begun to reexamine how processes and institutions such as colonialism, modernization, and feminist movements have sustained critical divisions that have differentially privileged or harmed groups through gender, racial, and/or sexual frameworks.<sup>39</sup>

## Diverse understandings of sexuality and gender

Kozol links activists and historians in her comments, and this link can also be seen in a second area of border-crossing scholarship: that which examines diverse understandings of sexual relations and gender identities. Here scholarship has particularly focused on individuals now generally described as 'third genders'. Some of these individuals are intersexed, and occasionally they are eunuchs, but more commonly they are morphologically male or female but understood to be something else. The best known of these are found among several Native American peoples, and the Europeans who first encountered them regarded them as homosexuals and called them 'berdaches', from an Arabic word for male prostitute. Now most scholars choose to use the term 'two-spirit people', and note that, though Europeans focused on their sexuality, they are often distinguished from others by their work or religious roles, as well as their sexual activities. Two-spirit people often had special religious and ceremonial roles because they were regarded as having both a male and female spirit rather than the one spirit that most people had; they could thus mediate between the male and female world and the divine and human world. The difference was thus one of gender rather than sexuality.<sup>40</sup> Most scholarship on two-spirit people has examined their roles within Native American cultures, but Mark Rifkin considers them within the framework of state-building and the cultural interaction that is central to transnational history. He examines the ways in which European Americans sought to 'insert American Indians into the ideological system of heterosexuality' (especially in an emphasis on the monogamous conjugal couple), which denied 'the possibility of interpreting countervailing cultural patterns' (including polygamous households, same-sex attachments, two-spirit people, and kin groups) 'as principles of geopolitical organization'.<sup>41</sup> Principles of geopolitical organization have been central to every analysis of the state since those of Herodotus

39 Kozol, in 'American Historical Review conversation', p. 1445. Kozol's own work does just what she calls for: Wendy Hesford and Wendy Kozol, eds., *Just advocacy? Women's human rights, transnational feminisms, and the politics of representation*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005.

40 Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang, eds., *Two-spirit people: Native American gender identity, sexuality, and spirituality*, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997; Will Roscoe, *Changing ones: third and fourth genders in Native North America*, London: Macmillan Press, 1998; Sabina Lang, *Men as women, women as men: changing gender in Native American cultures*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998; Michael J. Horswell, *Decolonizing the sodomite: queer tropes of sexuality in colonial Andean culture*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2005.

41 Mark Rifkin, *When did Indians become straight? Kinship, the history of sexuality, and Native sovereignty*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 7.

and Sima Qian, of course, but Rifkin's emphasis on how these principles relate to sexuality is new.<sup>42</sup>

Studies of two-spirit people in the Americas have been accompanied by investigations of third genders in other areas of the world: the *bissu* of South Sulawesi, who carried out rituals thought to enhance and preserve the power and fertility of the rulers; the *hijra* of northern India who perform blessings at marriages and the births of male children; the *khanith* in Oman and the *mahus* in Polynesia, who were morphologically male but performed women's work.<sup>43</sup> These studies of third genders are not simply broadening historical scholarship but are also proving politically useful, as people within the gay rights and transgender movements today use them to demonstrate the variety in indigenous understandings of gender and sexuality and to stress that demands for rights for homosexuals are not simply a Western import.<sup>44</sup>

This use of historical scholarship to support desires for the present and future has been sharply critiqued by some scholars as misrepresenting the past, however. While Walter Williams and Will Roscoe have asserted that most Native American groups valued femininity, so did not disparage men or boys who dressed as women or took the female role (i.e. passive and penetrated) in actual or ritualized same-sex relations, Richard Trexler and Ramón Gutiérrez stress that transvestism and sex were linked to conquest, and the passive partner was mocked and vilified.<sup>45</sup> One's position in this debate shapes how one views the impact of European conquest – that is, whether the Spanish and Portuguese, and later other European powers, introduced new attitudes and punishments, or whether they reinforced existing ones.<sup>46</sup>

42 Sima Qian included more about sexuality than have most political historians since; after becoming involved in a succession dispute, he chose castration over death, and commented on his degraded position as a eunuch in his history.

43 Serena Nanda, *Neither man nor woman: the hijras of India*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1990; Stephen O. Murray, ed., *Oceanic homosexualities*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1992; Gilbert Herdt, ed., *Third sex, third gender: beyond sexual dimorphism in culture and history*, New York: Zone Books, 1994; Gayatri Reddy, *With respect to sex: negotiating hijra identity in South India*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005; Sharyn Graham Davies, *Challenging gender norms: five genders among the Bugis in Indonesia*, London: Wadsworth, 2006; Michael Peletz, *Gender pluralism: Southeast Asia since early modern times*, London: Routledge, 2009; William G. Clarence-Smith and Raquel Reyes, eds., *Sexual diversity in Asia, c. 600–1950*, London: Routledge, forthcoming.

44 Qwo-Li Driskill, et al., eds., *Queer indigenous studies: critical interventions in theory, politics, and literature*, Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2011.

45 Roscoe, *Changing ones*; Walter L. Williams, *The spirit and the flesh: sexual diversity in American Indian culture*, Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1986; Richard C. Trexler, 'Making the American berdache: choice or constraint?', *Journal of Social History*, 35, 3, 2002, pp. 613–36; Ramón Gutiérrez, 'Warfare, homosexuality, and gender status among American Indian men in the southwest', in Thomas A. Foster, ed., *Long before Stonewall: histories of same-sex sexuality in early America*, New York: New York University Press, 2007, pp. 19–31.

46 Martin Nesvig, 'The complicated terrain of Latin American homosexuality', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 81, 3–4, 2001, pp. 689–729, presents a good overview of this debate, as well as other issues. For other studies of sexuality and colonization in Latin America, see Federico Garza Carvajal, *Butterflies will burn: prosecuting sodomites in early modern Spain and Mexico*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003; 'Sexual encounters/sexual collisions: alternative sexualities in colonial Mesoamerica', special issue, *Ethnohistory*, 54, 1, 2007, pp. 3–194; and the many works of Pete Sigal, including *From moon goddesses to virgins: the colonization of Yucatecan Maya sexual desire*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2000; idem, *Infamous desire: male homosexuality in colonial Latin America*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003; idem, 'Latin America and the challenge of globalizing the history of sexuality', *American Historical Review*, 114, 5, 2009, pp. 1340–53.

## Colonialism and imperialism

The impact of colonization on same-sex relations is only one of the many threads in the broad array of recent studies of gender and sexuality in colonialism and imperialism, a third area of fruitful intersection. Both men and women were agents in imperial projects, and colonial powers shaped cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity. Many recent works demonstrate that imperial power is explicitly and implicitly linked with sexuality, and that images of colonial peoples were gendered and sexualized.<sup>47</sup> As Giulia Calvi summarizes in her recent comparison of global gender history in Europe and the US, ‘the gendered bodies of colonizers and colonized formed a contact zone where racialized notions of gender relations and difference were constructed through the exercise and representation of colonial power’.<sup>48</sup> In fact, gendered studies of colonialism and imperialism have been undertaken for long enough that they are now generating revision and self-criticism. The Winter 2003 issue of the *Journal of Women’s History*, for example, was a special issue: ‘Revising the experiences of colonized women: beyond binaries’, with articles on Australia, Indonesia, India, Igboland (Nigeria), Mozambique, and the US Midwest.<sup>49</sup>

One of the binaries that this special issue seeks to move beyond is that between colonizer and colonized. Research on gender and sexuality in the context of imperialism has

47 General studies include Lenore Masterson and Margaret Jolly, eds., *Sites of desire, economies of pleasure: sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997; Nancy Rose Hunt, Tessie P. Liu, and Jean Quataert, eds., *Gendered colonialisms in African history*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1997; Ruth Roach Pierson and Nupur Chaudhuri, eds., *Nation, empire, colony: historicizing gender and race*, Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998; Robert Aldrich, *Colonialism and homosexuality*, London: Routledge, 2002; Tamara L. Hunt and Micheline R. Lessard, eds., *Women and the colonial gaze*, New York: Palgrave, 2002; Jean Allman, Susan Geiger, and Nakanyike Musisi, eds., *Women in African colonial histories*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002; Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal knowledge and imperial power: race and the intimate in colonial rule*, 2nd edition, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011; eadem, *Haunted by empire: geographies of intimacy in North American history*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006; Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, eds., *Bodies in contact: rethinking colonial encounters in world history*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005; Patty O’Brien, *The Pacific muse: exotic femininity and the colonial Pacific*, Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2006; Philippa Levine, ed., *Gender and empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

On Spanish colonialism, see Martha Few, *Women who live evil lives: gender, religion, and the politics of power in colonial Guatemala*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002; Miroslava Chávez-García, *Negotiating conquest: gender and power in California, 1770s to 1880s*, Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2004; Karen Vieira Powers, *Women in the crucible of conquest: the gendered genesis of Spanish American society, 1500–1600*, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2005.

On French imperialism, see Julia Clancy-Smith and Frances Gouda, eds., *Domesticating the empire: race, gender and family life in French and Dutch colonialism*, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1997; Alice Conklin, *A mission to civilize: the republican idea of empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997; Alice Bullard, *Exile to paradise: savagery and civilization in Paris and the South Pacific, 1790–1900*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000; ‘Intersections of race and gender in French history’, special issue, *French Historical Studies*, 33, 3, 2010.

On British imperialism, see (among many) Anne McClintock, *Imperial leather: race, gender and sexuality in the colonial contest*, London: Routledge, 1995; Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid zones: maternity, sexuality, and empire in eighteenth-century English narratives*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995; Richard Phillips, *Sex, politics, and empire: a postcolonial geography*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006; Angela Woollacott, *Gender and empire*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

48 Giulia Calvi, ‘Global trends: gender studies in Europe and the US’, *European History Quarterly*, 40, 4, 2010, p. 645.

49 Claire C. Robertson and Nupur Chaudhuri, eds., ‘Revising the experiences of colonized women: beyond binaries’, special issue, *Journal of Women’s History*, 14, 4, 2003.

emphasized links between colonized areas and the metropole, arguing that the process of colonization shaped gender ideologies and practices everywhere. Kathleen Wilson, for example, examines the ways in which English men's and women's perceptions of their English identity were shaped by colonial expansion.<sup>50</sup> Zine Magubane traces colonial images of blackness from South Africa to England and back again, noting the ways in which these influenced representations of marginalized groups such as women, the poor, and the Irish.<sup>51</sup> Clare Midgely and Carolyn Eichner document ways in which European women's political ideas were transformed by colonial experiences.<sup>52</sup>

That special issue also had a separate section on historians, sources, and historiography of women and gender in modern India that emphasized 'dissolving' and 'rethinking' various boundaries. It is not surprising that this section focused particularly on India for, among colonized areas, South Asia has seen the most research. Feminist historians of India, including Tanika Sarkar, Manu Goswami, Mrinalini Sinha, and Durba Ghosh, have developed insightful analyses of the construction of gender and national identity in India during the colonial era, and the continued, often horrific and violent, repercussions of these constructions today.<sup>53</sup> They highlight the role of female figures – the expected devoted mother, sometimes conceptualized as Mother India, but also the loving and sacrificing wife – in nationalist iconography. Though the theoretical framework in this scholarship is postcolonial, these scholars also take much of postcolonial scholarship to task for largely viewing actual women as a type of 'eternal feminine', victimized and abject, an essentialism that denies women agency and turns gender into a historical constant, not a dynamic category. The large number of works on India has led some scholars of colonialism to argue that Indian history has become the master subaltern narrative, and that Indian women have somehow become iconic of 'gendered postcolonialism'. Clearly a sub-field that has developed an iconic representation to be contested is healthy and growing.

## Intermarriage

A fourth area of intersection, and one that has been central to theorizing hybridity, is research on intermarriage and other types of sexual relationships among individuals from different groups. These especially occurred in colonies or border regions, increasingly known as 'gender frontiers', and were interwoven with developing notions of racial

50 Kathleen Wilson, *The island race: Englishness, empire and gender in the eighteenth century*, New York: Routledge, 2003.

51 Zine Magubane, *Bringing the empire home: race, class, and gender in Britain and colonial South Africa*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

52 Clare Midgely, *Feminism and empire: women activists in imperial Britain, 1790–1865*, New York: Routledge, 2007; Carolyn Eichner, 'La Citoyenne in the world', *French Historical Studies*, 32, 1, 2009, pp. 63–84. For other studies that link metropole and colony, see Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose, eds., *At home with the empire: metropolitan culture and the imperial world*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

53 Tanika Sarkar, *Hindu wife, Hindu nation: community, religion and cultural nationalism*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002; Manu Goswami, *Producing India: from colonial economy to national space*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004; Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India: the global restructuring of an empire*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006; Durba Ghosh, *Sex and the family in colonial India: the making of empire*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

difference and national identity.<sup>54</sup> For example, Saliha Belmessous, Jennifer Spear, and Guillame Aubert have analysed the way in which French policy in colonial North America changed depending on changing ideas about how best to increase both the colonies' and France's strength. Most immigrants in the seventeenth century were unemployed young men from urban environments, who stayed briefly and then either died or went back to France. For a brief period in the 1660s the French crown directly recruited young women to go to New France, mostly poor women from charity hospitals, and paid for their passage. About eight hundred of these *filles du roi* (daughters of the king) did immigrate, more than doubling the number of European women who were not nuns, but their numbers were never great enough to have a significant effect on the population. The French finance minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert decided not to expand the programme, however, stating explicitly in 1667 that 'it would not be wise to depopulate the kingdom in order to populate Canada'. Instead he recommended that

the most useful way to achieve it would be to try to civilize the Algonquins, the Hurons, and the other Savages who have embraced Christianity; and to persuade them to come to settle in a commune with the French, to live with them, and educate their children in our mores and our customs . . . after some time, having one law and one master, they may form one people and one blood.<sup>55</sup>

Thus official policy in New France in the seventeenth century was one of the assimilation of Native Americans through *Fransication*, by which they would be 'made French'. The policy of *Fransication* included intermarriage between French men and indigenous women, for the French hoped that such marriages would help the fur trade and strengthen ties between French and Native American communities and families.

In a few cases, this policy had exactly the effect that the government hoped it would: couples married in Christian ceremonies and Indian women adopted the clothing, work patterns, and language of French women; they crossed the border from native to French. In

54 The concept of 'gender frontiers' was first proposed by Kathleen Brown in *Good wives, nasty wenches and anxious patriarchs: gender, race, and power in colonial Virginia*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. Like so much else in gender history, the role of intermarriage in the creation of racial categories has been particularly well studied for North America: Kirsten Fischer, *Suspect relations: sex, race, and resistance in colonial North Carolina*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001; Adele Perry, *On the edge of empire: gender, race, and the making of British Columbia, 1849–1871*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001; Elise Lemire, *'Miscegenation': making race in America*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002; Nancy Shoemaker, *A strange likeness: becoming red and white in eighteenth-century North America*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; Thomas N. Ingersoll, *To intermix with our white brothers: Indian mixed bloods in the United States from earliest times to the Indian removal*, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2005; Peggy Pascoe, *What comes naturally: miscegenation law and the making of race in America*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

On gender, racial mixing, and national identity in Latin America, see Maria Elena Martinez, 'The black blood of New Spain: *limpieza de sangre*, racial violence, and gendered power in early colonial Mexico', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 61, 3, 2004, pp. 479–520; Susan Kellogg, 'Depicting *mestizaje*: gendered images of ethnorace in colonial Mexican texts', *Journal of Women's History*, 12, 3, 2000, pp. 69–92; Magal M. Carrera, *Imagining identity in New Spain: race, lineage, and the colonial body in portraiture and casta paintings*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003.

55 Letter from Colbert to Intendant Jean Talon, 5 January 1666, quoted and translated in Saliha Belmessous, 'Assimilation and racialism in seventeenth and eighteenth-century French colonial policy', *American Historical Review*, 110, 2, April 2005, pp. 325, 326..

many more cases, however, the opposite happened. Marriages, if they occurred at all, were 'in the custom of the land', and French men adopted 'savage' customs. Official opinion changed. 'One should never mix a bad blood with a good one', wrote the governor of New France in 1709, continuing: 'Our experience of [intermarriage] in this country ought to prevent us from permitting marriages of this kind, for all the French men who have married savage women have been licentious, lazy and have become intolerably independent; and the children they have had are even lazier than the savages themselves. Such marriages should thus be prohibited'.<sup>56</sup> Prohibition of intermarriage became official policy in New France in 1716, and Indian/French marriages were discouraged by secular officials elsewhere in French North America. Despite the fulminations of authorities about mixing blood, however, European men and Indian women continued to engage in sexual relations in western French North America, and, in areas where intermarriage worked to the benefit of the local people, to marry. These marriages were often formalized by Native American rituals rather than Christian ones; only 65 church marriages between French men and Indian women are listed in the records for all of New France during the whole period 1608 to 1765, out of a total of more than 27,000 marriages.

In 1724, French colonial Louisiana (which included a large part of the Mississippi Valley) also forbade the 'King's white subjects' to 'contract a marriage or live in concubinage with Blacks'.<sup>57</sup> Officials in Louisiana tried positive measures as well as prohibitions. They succeeded in convincing the king to pay once again for the transport of women from France, and from 1704 to 1728 several hundred French women came to Louisiana. The administrators wanted 'hard-working girls . . . daughters of farmers and the like', but the young women were often recruited from houses of detention in France, so instead turned out to be 'women and girls of bad life' who were also 'extremely ugly'. Male settlers refused to marry the new arrivals, and in 1727 the governor of Louisiana recommended building a 'house of correction here in order to put in the women and girls of bad lives who cause a public scandal'.<sup>58</sup> The programme was stopped in the following year. French Louisiana became an area of great cultural and racial mixing, a situation that continues today. Similar examples of shifting policy toward intermarriage and great variation in levels of enforcement can be found throughout the colonial world.<sup>59</sup>

Marriage created an economic unit as well as a sexual relationship, and historians have begun to examine the economic consequences of intermarriage and other encounters involving men and women from different groups in frontier and border areas.<sup>60</sup> George Brooks,

56 Quoted in Guillaume Aubert, "'The blood of New France": race and purity of the blood in the French Atlantic world', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 61, 3, 2004, p. 449.

57 *Ibid.*, p. 459.

58 Quoted in Jennifer M. Spear, "'They need wives": *métissage* and the regulation of sexuality in French Louisiana, 1699–1730', in Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, love, race: crossing boundaries in North American history*, New York: New York University Press, 1999, pp. 47, 48, 50. See also Spear's book, *Race, sex, and social order in early New Orleans*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009.

59 See my *Christianity and sexuality in the early modern world: regulating desire, reforming practice*, 2nd edition, London: Routledge, 2010.

60 See Leonard Blussé, *Bitter bonds: a colonial divorce drama of the seventeenth century*, trans. Diane Webb, Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 2002; Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale, eds., *Contact zones: aboriginal and settler women in Canada's colonial past*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005; Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian women and French men: rethinking cultural encounter in the western*



for example, traces the ways in which European and local notions about acceptable marriage partners combined in the colonies of West Africa to create distinctive economic and social patterns. In the patrilineal societies of West Africa, such as the Mandinka and Wolof, Portuguese men and their mixed-race children were not allowed to marry local people of free standing, as this could give them claims to land use; their children could not inherit or join the kin and age-grade associations that shaped political power structures. Brooks has found that this meant that mixed-race children generally went into trade, and in some places women became the major traders, with large households, extensive networks of trade, and many servants and slaves. Because these wealthy female traders (*nharas* in Crioulo; *signares* in French) had connections with both the African and European worlds, they were valued as both trade and marriage partners by the French and English traders who moved into this area in the eighteenth century. ‘Some of these women were married in church’, reported one French commentator, ‘others in the style of the land, which in general consists of the consent of both parties and the relatives’.<sup>61</sup> In the latter form of marriage, the women’s European husbands would have paid bridewealth to their new in-laws (instead of receiving a dowry as was the custom in Europe), provided a large feast, and been expected to be sexually faithful. If the husband returned to Europe, the *signare* was free to marry again. Thus intermarriage facilitated and was a key part of a pattern of cultural exchange in which European men adopted local customs far more than their indigenous wives adopted European, just as did French men in western North America.

‘Gender frontiers’ were not only found in the colonies, however. In Strasbourg, the Lutheran city council debated in 1631 whether citizens should lose their citizenship if they married Calvinists. Such debates were common in many territories of the Holy Roman Empire after the middle of the sixteenth century. Earlier, most reformers had decided that religious conversion did not give one the right to leave one’s spouse. One could pray that he or she would see the light, but not leave. The later debates were about marriage *formation*, however, not about changes in marriages that already existed. Should people be allowed to marry across religious lines? In general, the answer was no. Spouses were to be (quoting city councils here) ‘one in body and spirit’ and a mixed marriage would create ‘one body and two minds’ and ‘cause arguments, quarrels, blasphemous wild conduct, and often half-hearted belief’. Authorities ordered sermons to be preached against mixed marriage, warning of the dangers to the soul ‘seduced by the infamous sweet poison of heretical

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*Great Lakes*, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001; Juliana Barr, *Peace came in the form of a woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas borderlands*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007; Gunlög Fur, *A nation of women: gender and colonial encounters among the Delaware Indians*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009; Jean Gelman Taylor, *The social world of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia*, 2nd edition, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009.

61 Quoted in George E. Brooks, *Eurafricans in western Africa: commerce, social status, gender, and religious observance from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century*, Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2003, p. 214. Two other studies that examine gender in the Afro-Portuguese Atlantic are James Sweet, *Recreating Africa: culture, kinship and religion in the African–Portuguese world, 1441–1770*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003, and J. Lorand Matory, *Black Atlantic religion: tradition, transnationalism, and matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian candomblé*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.

teaching'.<sup>62</sup> Even the body might be endangered, as Lutheran blood mixed with Calvinist blood, or, even worse, Catholic blood mixed with Protestant blood. The Strasbourg city council largely agreed with this, but, like all early modern authorities, they also worried about unmarried women, those 'masterless' women free to saunter about the city and spend their wages on frivolous things. So they decided that a Lutheran man who married a Calvinist woman would not lose his citizenship because (in the words of the council) 'he can probably draw his spouse away from her false religion and bring her on the correct path', though he would have to pay a fine for 'bringing an unacceptable person into the city'. A woman who married a Calvinist would lose her citizenship, however, 'because she would let herself easily be led into error in religion by her husband and be led astray'.<sup>63</sup> Thus the gender frontier of Strasbourg also became a gendered frontier, in which notions of male and female honour and sexuality shaped state policies about difference and intermarriage, just as they did in French Canada and French Louisiana.

This did not end with the seventeenth century, of course. In *Drawing the global colour line*, Lake and Reynolds trace restrictions on immigration and intermarriage in the transnational community of 'white men's countries' in the early twentieth century. Similarly, Dagmar Herzog comments about contemporary Europe: 'The entire complex of issues surrounding European identities and citizenships, with all the accompanying assumptions about appropriate inclusions and exclusions, now rests with remarkable frequency on sex-related concerns'.<sup>64</sup>

## National identity and citizenship

Lake and Reynolds' book and Herzog's comment point to a fifth area where there has been a significant amount of scholarship – studies of national identity and citizenship. Although a key aim of transnational history has been to get away from a focus on nations, one of its ironic conclusions is just how transnational nationalism has been (and continues to be). There are articles on gender in many of the new collections on nationalism, and a special issue in 2000 of the new journal *Nations and Nationalism* was titled 'The awkward relationship: gender and nationalism'. *Feminist Review*, *Gender and History*, and *Women's Studies International Forum* have all had special issues on nationalism. An edited collection, *Gendered nations: nationalisms and gender order in the long nineteenth century*, has been particularly influential in setting out key themes, with essays noting the ways in which national symbols, rituals, and myths are gendered, and tracing both women's contribution to nation-building and their exclusion from it by the state and its institutions.<sup>65</sup> Other

62 German church ordinances, quoted in Dagmar Freist, 'One body, two confessions: mixed marriages in Germany', in Ulinka Rublack, ed., *Gender in early modern German history*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 282, 287. See also David Warren Sabean, Simon Teuscher, and Jon Mathieu, eds., *Kinship in Europe: approaches to long-term development (1300–1900)*, New York: Berghahn, 2007.

63 Records of the Strasbourg XXI, translated and quoted in Merry E. Wiesner, *Working women in Renaissance Germany*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986, p. 20.

64 Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the global colour line*; Herzog, 'Syncopated sex', p. 1305.

65 Ida Blom, Karen Hagemann, and Catherine Hall, eds., *Gendered nations: nationalisms and gender order in the long nineteenth century*, Oxford: Oxford International Publishers Ltd., 2000.

volumes of case studies have followed, exploring the ways in which gender shaped citizenship as a claims-making activity, and stressing the role of war in defining citizenship for women and men.<sup>66</sup> As would be expected, most monographs on gender and nationalism focus on one country, but those that examine former colonial areas tend, to some degree, to put their subjects in a global perspective.<sup>67</sup>

Several recent studies of Mediterranean areas have adopted the comparative methodology that has been central to transnational history. Mary Layoun examines ways in which gendered understandings of home and nation figure in Greek refugees' displacement from Asia Minor into Greece in 1922, the 1974 Cypriot coup, and the Palestinian expulsion from Beirut following the Israeli invasion in 1982.<sup>68</sup> Elizabeth Thompson looks at how French rulers and elite nationalists in Syria and Lebanon tacitly agreed to marginalize women in public life, despite – or perhaps because of – their participation in mass anti-colonial movements.<sup>69</sup> Mounira Charrad highlights differences rather than similarities, concluding that the varying political power of kin structures can explain why women in post-independence Tunisia gained legal rights that they did not in Morocco and Algeria.<sup>70</sup>

Sexuality, as well as gender, has shaped the making of nations, especially in the twentieth century. Margot Canaday has examined ways in which the United States excluded homosexuals from full citizenship through restrictions on immigration, military service, and access to public welfare, and Carolyn Lewis how physicians in the Cold War era viewed heterosexuality as essential to a secure nation.<sup>71</sup> Jasbir Puar looks at ways in which race and religion have inflected the relationship between homosexuality and nationalism in the post-9/11 United States, noting that, increasingly, certain homosexuals – those who are

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- 66 Social Text Collective (Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti, Ella Shohat), eds., *Dangerous liaisons: gender, nation, and postcolonial perspectives*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997; Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and nation*, London: Sage Publications, 1997; Caren Kaplan, Norma Alarcon, and Minoo Moallem, eds., *Between woman and nation: nationalisms, transnational feminisms, and the state*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999; Sita Ranchod-Nilsson and Mary Ann Tétreault, eds., *Women, states, and nationalism: at home in the nation?*, New York: Routledge, 2000; Suad Joseph, ed., *Gender and citizenship in the Middle East*, Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University, 2000; Kathleen Canning and Sonya O. Rose, eds., *Gender, citizenships and subjectivities*, Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002; Joyce P. Kaufman and Kristen P. Williams, *Women, the state, and war: a comparative perspective on citizenship and nationalism*, Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2007; Natividad Gutiérrez Chong, ed., *Women, ethnicity, and nationalisms in Latin America*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.
- 67 Sangeeta Ray, *En-gendering India: woman and nation in colonial and postcolonial narratives*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000; Elizabeth Martyn, *The women's movement in post-colonial Indonesia: gender and nation in a new democracy*, New York: Routledge, 2005; Lisa Pollard, *Nurturing the nation: the family politics of modernizing, colonizing, and liberating Egypt, 1805–1923*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005; Rupal Oza, *The making of neoliberal India: nationalism, gender, and the paradoxes of globalization*, New York: Routledge, 2006; Beth Baron, *Egypt as a woman: nationalism, gender, and politics*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007.
- 68 Mary N. Layoun, *Wedded to the land? Gender, boundaries, and nationalism in crisis*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001.
- 69 Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial citizens: republican rights, paternal privilege, and gender in French Syria and Lebanon*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.
- 70 Mounira Charrad, *States and women's rights: the making of postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001.
- 71 Margot Canaday, *The straight state: sexuality and citizenship in twentieth-century America*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009; Carolyn Herbst Lewis, *Prescription for heterosexuality: sexual citizenship in the Cold War era*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.

white and middle-class – are incorporated into understandings of who is an ‘American’, while those who appear as if they are or could be Muslim are not.<sup>72</sup> In Europe, debates about the immigration and citizenship of Muslims often revolve around gendered practices such as the veil, and include discussion of Muslim attitudes toward homosexuality.<sup>73</sup>

## Migration

Nations are built through policies of inclusion and exclusion, and entered and exited through migration, a topic that has been a central theme in world history and a sixth area in which there are growing numbers of studies that integrate gender or sexuality. Approximately half of all long-distance migrants today are female, with women’s migration patterns sometimes similar to those of men but sometimes quite different. Recent studies examine the ‘transnational’ character of migrants’ lives, in which women and men physically move back and forth and culturally and socially create and maintain links across borders.<sup>74</sup> They also discuss ways in which gendered and sexualized migration shaped (and continues to shape) the economies, societies, and politics through and across which people moved. The essays in *Moving subjects*, for example, assess ways in which distance and movement shaped intimacy, and in which intimacy, or the prospect of intimacy, or the desire for intimacy, influenced the formation of imperial power. The intimate served ‘not merely as a domain of power but as one of the technologies available to colonizer and colonized alike in the struggle over colonial territory, imperial goods, and the meanings of global aspirations’.<sup>75</sup>

Much of the work on gender and sexuality in migration, like much of the more general study of migration, focuses on the ‘globalization’ of the very recent past and the present. Some of this work is not very historical, but some is. In their analyses of contemporary South and Southeast Asians, for example, Sonita Sarker and Esha Niyogi De examine the ways in which ideologies of gender and sexuality within the dominant colonial

72 Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist assemblages: homonationalism in queer times*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007.

73 See Gert Hekma, ‘Imams and homosexuality: a post-gay debate in the Netherlands’, *Sexualities*, 5, 2, 2002, pp. 269–80; Joan Scott, *The politics of the veil*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007; Eric Fassin, ‘A double-edged sword: sexual democracy, gender norms, and racialized rhetoric’, in Judith Butler and Elizabeth Weed, eds., *The question of gender: Joan W. Scott’s critical feminism*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, forthcoming.

74 Pamela Sharpe, ed., *Women, gender, and labour migrations: historical and global perspectives*, New York: Routledge, 2001; Daiva K. Stasiulis and Abigail B. Bakan, *Negotiating citizenship: migrant women in Canada and the global system*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005; Inderpal Grewal, *Transnational America: feminisms, diasporas, neoliberalisms*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005; Ingrid Palmay, et al., eds., *Gender and migration: feminist interventions*, London: Zed Books, 2010; Elisabetta Zontini, *Transnational families, migration and gender: Moroccan and Filipino women in Bologna and Barcelona*, New York: Berghahn, 2011; Sandra McGee Beutsch, *Crossing borders, claiming a nation: a history of Argentine Jewish women, 1880–1955*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011; Kathleen M. Coll, *Remaking citizenship: Latina immigrants and the new American politics*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011.

75 Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, eds., *Moving subjects: gender, mobility, and intimacy in an age of global empire*, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009, p. 12. See also Jiemin Bao, *Marital acts: gender, sexuality, and identity among the Chinese Thai diaspora*, Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005; Elisa Camiscioli, *Reproducing the French race: immigration, intimacy, and embodiment in the early twentieth century*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.

powers refigured those of the contemporary postcolonial states. They define both migrants and individuals affected by globalization who do not themselves move as 'trans-status subjects', explicitly choosing that prefix for its double meaning of 'across' and 'beyond'.<sup>76</sup>

Research on sexuality and migration has emphasized that, just as the state produced national identities, so it also produced (and continues to produce) sexual and gender identities, often at its borders when it lets in, or does not let in, individuals whom it identifies as a certain type. To those policing geographic borders, 'homosexual' was not simply a discursive category but an actual, and threatening, type of person. Many countries refuse to allow in those judged to be homosexual, to say nothing of those who challenge the 'natural' gender order of male and female to present themselves as transsexual.<sup>77</sup> Despite such restrictions, however, those whose sexual and/or gender identity and presentation were in some way 'queer' have migrated extensively, so much so that scholars have been able to trace 'queer diasporas' in many parts of the world.<sup>78</sup> They examine ways in which people in different places challenged, adapted, appropriated, and reworked the conceptualization of sexual acts or identities: what is often termed 'localization'. Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes, for example, looks at Puerto Ricans who came to the United States in the period from the 1960s to the 1990s, noting the ways in which the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities that they created were shaped by the era in which they migrated and by the city to which they came.<sup>79</sup>

## Conclusions

Taken together, all of this research suggests ways in which the subject matter, theory, and methodology within transnational history and the history of gender and sexuality can intersect, and indeed are intersecting. First there is the emphasis on movement, interconnection, and interaction. Transnational history in all its forms is a study of relationships, interactions, and intertwinings. These interconnections also shaped the experiences of people who did not move a metre, for any fixed location can also be saturated with transnational relationships. Sexual behaviour, in its most common forms, is, of course, a combination of

76 Sonita Sarker and Esha Niyogi De, eds., *Trans-status subjects: gender in the globalization of South and Southeast Asia*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002.

77 Eithne Luibhéid, *Entry denied: controlling sexuality at the border*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005; Eithne Luibhéid and Lionel Cantu Jr, eds., *Queer migrations: sexuality, U.S. citizenship, and border crossings*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005.

78 Cindy Patton and Benigno Sánchez-Eppler, eds., *Queer diasporas*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000; Martin Manalansan and Arnaldo Cruz-Malave, eds., *Queer globalizations: citizenship and the afterlife of colonialism*, New York: New York University Press, 2002; Martin F. Manalansan IV, *Global divas: Filipino gay men in the diaspora*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003; Gayatri Gopinath, *Impossible desires: queer diasporas and South Asian public cultures*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005; Suparna Bhaskaran, *Made in India: decolonizations, queer sexualities, trans/national projects*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

79 Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes, *Queer Ricans: cultures and sexualities in the diaspora*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

just these things: physical, emotional, mental, and other interactions and intertwinings.<sup>80</sup> Thus the two reinforce one another. The editors of the new journal *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* explicitly note that they seek to cross many kinds of borders – political, cultural, sexual, disciplinary – and take their theory from both transnational and gender scholarship. The journal’s 2000 mission statement reads: ‘Recognizing that feminism, race, transnationalism and women of color are contested terms, *Meridians* engages the complexity of these debates in a dialogue across ethnic and national boundaries, as well as across traditional disciplinary boundaries in the academy.’ Many of the studies reviewed in this article do just what the editors of *Meridians* call for.

*Meridians*’ mission statement points to a second common quality, an emphasis on multiple perspectives and crossing disciplinary boundaries. As I noted at the beginning, both Stryker and Werner and Zimmermann highlight the interdisciplinarity and multivocality of their different trans enterprises. Almost every collection of essays in the footnotes of this article similarly points with pride at the disciplinary diversity of the authors, as well as their diversity along other lines of difference.

Third, though both transnational history and the history of gender and sexuality have created binaries – elite/subaltern, colony/metropole, homosexual/heterosexual, masculine/feminine – they have also called for their destabilization. Both early transnational studies and early women’s and gay and lesbian history often involved a grand narrative of domination and resistance, in which the subordinate subject was either a victim or resistor (or both). This dichotomous grand narrative has now been thoroughly critiqued, as the studies reviewed here demonstrate. Increasingly, all categories are complicated, and the emphasis instead is on what in gender scholarship is usually termed ‘intersectionality’, in queer and trans history ‘post-identitarian subjectivity’ and in transnational scholarship in phrases such as ‘active and dynamic principle of intersection’. According to this line of thought, all dichotomies are too limiting, particularly in a globalized world in which individuals can blend and build on elements from many cultures to create hybridized or fluid sexual and national identities, or no identity at all.

There is thus much to look forward to as future scholarship draws on the theoretical richness of both these areas of study, but I also want to add a final, more cautionary note. Individuals might very well understand themselves to be beyond a national identity, or beyond a binarized notion of sexual identity, or even beyond gender. It is important to recognize, however, that national identities are not simply discursive categories but very real, as are gender and sexual identities also. Just as it produces national identities, the state continues to produce sexual and gender identities, often at its borders when it lets in or does not let in individuals whom it identifies as a certain type, thus barring them from full participation in a new globalized world. To use Gayatri Spivak’s phrase, states engage in ‘a strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest’.<sup>81</sup> Thus as

80 Both Margot Canaday and Joanne Meyerowitz make this same point in the *American Historical Review* forum on transnational sexualities.

81 Gayatri Spivak, ‘Subaltern studies: deconstructing historiography’, in Donna Landry and Gerald MacLean, eds., *The Spivak reader: selected works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, London: Routledge, 1995, p. 214.

we examine historical examples of border-crossers and border-transcenders, and often find in them much to celebrate, or as we cross disciplinary, theoretical, or physical borders ourselves, it is equally important to remind ourselves of the continued power of those borders.

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