

Crossing Sexual Borders. Gender & Sexuality in Migration

**Traverser les frontières sexuelles.
Genre & sexualité en migration**

An international conference (in English) at MSH Paris Nord

June 13-14, 2019

Research Center: Laboratoire d'études de genre et de sexualité (LEGS)

Research project: Genre & sexualité en migration (LEGS / UPL)

Université Paris 8 Vincennes – Saint-Denis

Sex has to do with borders. This can involve very different logics. Migration may be the result of intimate relationships, for example through family reunification. Sex can also make migration possible – in particular in the case of sex work. However, these two logics are not always so easy to distinguish. For example, binational marriages are alternately considered as the cause or as the instrument of migration.

This is due to the fact that, conversely, borders have to do with sex. Migration is sometimes a way to flee from persecution based on sexual or gender identity. Indeed, States often use sex to define borders, and accordingly decide whether to let people in, or keep them out. Forced marriage, polygamy, and genital mutilations are used as arguments to open borders to the persons who are recognized as victims, and close them for those that are held responsible for their plight.

Sex without borders and the borders of sex are thus the two sides of the same coin. This process involves a multiplicity of agents – not only migrants, but also the various intermediaries, from judges to activists, including interpreters. It has consequences on individuals who migrate, as sexual identity does not exist independent of these power relations: the subjectivation of migrants is thus inseparable from State policies.

Finally, the sexualization of migration is both an empirical reality and a symbolic one: sex is also a discourse that produces borders as it draws a line between “us” and “them.” For example, on the one hand, “brown women” deserve “our” protection; on the other, “brown men” can threaten “our” women, and thus justify closing borders, as was the case after the Cologne attacks.

This conference will not isolate one aspect or another among these diverse issues; on the contrary, it is intended to make them resonate together. This conference is part of the project on “Gender and Sexuality in Migration,” and it is supported by the CNRS research center LEGS, along with the MSH Paris-Nord and the Université Paris 8.

This international conference will take place at the Amphithéâtre of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme (MSH) Paris Nord, 20 Avenue George Sand, 93210 Saint-Denis (Métro: ligne 12, Front Populaire station).

Organizers:

Éric Fassin (Paris 8 University, LEGS-

Manuela Salcedo (Défenseur des droits-CNRS, LEGS)

Organizing Committee:

Anne-Cécile Caseau (Paris 8 University, LEGS)

Seba Cesaro (Paris 8 University, LEGS)

Caroline Ibos (Rennes 2 University, LEGS)

Lucas Monteil (Paris 8 University, LEGS)



Program

Day 1

Amphithéâtre, MSH Paris Nord

9:30 – 10:00 Arrival of participants. Welcome Coffee & Tea

10:00 – 10:30 Introduction

Éric Fassin (Paris 8 University, LEGS): “Sex with (and without) borders”.

10:30 – 11:45 Panel 1: Sexualizing Migration

Moderator: **Manuela Salcedo** (Défenseur des droits-CNRS, LEGS)

Kira Kosnick (Goethe University, Frankfurt)

“After Cologne: Sexualities as discursive minefields and zones of contestation in Germany”

Anne-Cécile Caseau (Paris 8 University, LEGS)

“(En)gendering analysis on precarious migrant lives in French *bidonvilles*”

11:45 – 13:00 Panel 2: Subjectivation through migration

Moderator: **Seba Cesaro** (Paris 8 University, LEGS)

Eithne Luibheid (University of Arizona):

“Intimacies, Sex, and U.S. Deportation: Queer Struggles and Connections”

Lucas Monteil (Paris 8 University, LEGS):

“Migrant desires: the (homo)sexual trajectories of migrant workers in China.”

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch Break

14:30 – 15:45 Panel 3: Sex in translation

Moderator: **Shira Havkin** (Sciences Po, CERI-ICMigrations)

Manuela Salcedo (Défenseur des droits-CNRS, LEGS):

“Translating sex in court: the difficulties of neutrality”

Jennifer Cole (University of Chicago):

“The use and abuse of French gender norms among Malagasy marriage”

15:45 – 17:00 Panel 4: Letting in and keeping out (1)

Moderator: **Lucas Monteil** (Paris 8 University, LEGS)

Calogero Giammetta (Aix-Marseille University, LAMES):

“Migration governance and racialization in anti-trafficking interventions targeting migrant sex workers in France”

Hélène Mastowski (Ardhis)

17:00 – 17:15 Coffee Break

17:15 – 18:30 Film session

Moderator: **Caroline Ibos** (Rennes 2 University, LEGS)

“Selling sex on the other side.

The story of Becky and Nigerian women across the Mediterranean”

Presentation by and discussion with director **Sine Plambech** (Danish Institute for International Studies)

Day 2

Amphithéâtre, MSH Paris Nord

9:30 – 10:00 Arrival of participants. Welcome Coffee & Tea

10:00 – 11:15 Panel 5: The Racialization of Sex and the Sexualization of Race

Moderator: **Daniel Borrillo** (Nanterre University, LEGS-CERSA)

Sabreen Al'Rassace (Association Lesbians of Color, LOC's):

“The French state vs. refugees’ sex, sexuality, and identity”.

Seba Cesaro (Paris 8 University, LEGS);

“Discussing sexual violence towards LGBT migrants: between sexual and racial boundaries”

11:15 – 12:30 Panel 6: Letting In and Keeping Out (2)

Moderator: **Anne-Cécile Caseau** (Paris 8 University, LEGS)

David Murray (York University, Canada):

“Liberation nation? Queer refugees, homonationalism and the necropolitical state”

Mimi Aum Neko (Acceptess)

12:30 – 13:00 Conclusion: Manuela Salcedo & Éric Fassin