

GLOBAL IDENTITIES

Theorizing Transnational Studies of Sexuality

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*I*n modernity, identities inevitably become global. Indeed, few things remain local in the aftermath of the rise of capitalism. Just as goods and people come to circulate in new ways, so too identities emerge and come into specific relations of circulation and expansion. In this globalized framework of encounter and exchange, sexual identities are similar to other kinds of identities in that they are imbued with power relations. These power relations are connected to inequalities that result from earlier forms of globalization, but they have also generated new asymmetries. Our task is to examine both the specificities and the continuities within the globalization of sexual identities at the present juncture.

For the most part, throughout the twentieth century, what we might call politically “progressive” studies of sexuality emerged as a result of identity politics and social movements. Increasingly, with the rise of ethnic and postcolonial studies and the growing emphasis on diaspora in American studies, the scholarship on sexuality is globalized.¹ Yet thinking simply about global identities does not begin to get at the complex terrain of sexual politics that is at once national, regional, local, even “cross-cultural” and hybrid. In many works on globalization, the “global” is seen either as a homogenizing influence or as a neocolonial movement of ideas and capital from West to non-West.² Debates on the nature of global identities have suggested the inadequacy of understanding globalization simply through political economy or through theories of “Western” cultural imperialism and have pushed us to probe further the relationship between globalization and culture.³ Yet how do we understand these emerging identities, given the divergent theories regarding the relationship between globalization and cultural forma-

tions? Can these identities be called “global identities,” or is some other term more useful?

In light of the problems that some scholars have pointed out with the rhetoric of diversity and globality with respect to sexual identity, such that these discourses produce a “monumentalist gay identity” and elide “radical sexual difference,” the term *transnational* seems to us more helpful in getting to the specifics of sexualities in postmodernity.⁴ As we have argued elsewhere, the term *transnational* can address the asymmetries of the globalization process.⁵ Yet it has become so ubiquitous in cultural, literary, and critical studies that much of its political valence seems to have become evacuated. Is this a function of globalization in its cultural aspects, of the ways in which it has become a truism that everyone and everything are always already displaced and hence “transnational”? Or is it a function of the modernist search for novelty and innovation leading to the adoption of a seemingly new term for a global world? Perhaps these two tendencies are intertwined, and this term works at this point because it has become “real” or “appropriate” in some way that it would do us good to examine. By thinking about the many ways in which the term is being rearticulated, we can understand the rhetorical imperative that underlies such uses. Since terms and critical practices are neither authentic nor pure, we do not wish to argue that one use is more correct than another. Rather, we need to examine the circulation of this term and its regulation through institutional sites, such as academic publishing, conference panels and papers, and academic personnel matters. By doing so, we can begin to understand how the study of sexuality remains bound by disciplinary constraints. A more interdisciplinary and transnational approach that addresses inequalities as well as new formations can begin more adequately to explore the nature of sexual identities in the current phase of globalization.

We can identify several primary ways in which the term *transnational* does a particular kind of work in the U.S. academy in general. First, it circulates widely as a more useful term to describe migration at the present time. This is the application that we find most often at work in anthropology, for example, in the work that theorizes migration as a transnational process.⁶ In emphasizing labor migration, this approach leaves out other factors in the globalization of labor. We can also identify an application in the notion of “transnational flows,” a concept that sometimes ignores inequities as well as those aspects of modernity that seem fixed or immobile.⁷ Some Marxist commentators prefer the term *flexible* over the term *flow*, since it ties globalization to flexible accumulation in current capitalism.⁸

A second use of *transnational* is to signal the demise or irrelevance of the nation-state in the current phase of globalization.⁹ A related “borderless world”

argument suggests that cultures are more and more important or relevant than nations and that identities are linked to cultures more than to nations or to the institutions of the nation-state.¹⁰ In this approach, the concept of transnational does not have to concern itself with the postcolonial state; that is, it erases political economy as well as new forms of governmentality. As Victoria Bernal has put it so powerfully, “Embracing globalization and transnationalism as forces that render the nation inconsequential may appeal to anthropologists and humanities scholars in part because it allows them to conveniently ignore the ambivalent and troubling postcolonial state in favor of more sympathetic social forms.”¹¹ Thus, by eliminating the postcolonial nation-state, flows of people and shifts in culture appear to be almost inevitable and strangely ahistorical.

A third use of *transnational* that has become visible recently is as a synonym for *diasporic*. In this increasingly common usage, which follows on the current use of *transnational* as a term that describes cross-border migration, any reference to materials or evidence or texts from a region outside the United States is coded as “diasporic.”¹² And everyone in the United States is believed to be diasporic in some way. Often diasporics come to be figured as always in resistance to the nation-state in which they are located.¹³ In this formulation, diasporic groups can be best understood through the politics of cultural identity or cultural citizenship. Thus subcultures of immigration and migration are always already diasporas. Here we are not arguing that people are better understood simply through the politics of the local. Rather, we are pointing to the mystification and romanticization of displacement that often accompany this formulation.¹⁴

A fourth use of *transnational* is to designate a form of neocolonialism. In this approach, *transnational* is a deeply problematic term, because it appears to be completely imbricated in the movements of transnational capital.¹⁵ That is, the argument goes, globalization involves rapid movements of finance capital and thus facilitates a global economy in which transnational corporations have trampled on and destroyed local formations. In our view, this approach may inadvertently mystify what existed before the advent of late capitalism, whereas we would argue that earlier phases of globalization produced their own inequalities. Certainly, transnational capital is creating new forms of inequality and continuing older asymmetries. Consequently, a long historical viewpoint, indeed multiple views for many sites, is necessary.

A fifth use of *transnational* signals what has been called the NGOization of social movements.¹⁶ In the wake of several decades of U.N. conferences on women, the emergence of global feminism as a policy and an activist arena, and the rise of human rights initiatives that enact new forms of governmentality, the term *transna-*

tional has been adopted to stand for all of the above. Thus we find more and more references to “transnationalism from below” or to transnational women’s movements (with *transnational* supplanting *global*).¹⁷ Such a shift in usage is interesting and significant, since it signals an alternative to the problematic of the “global” and the “international” as it was articulated primarily by Western or Euro-American second-wave feminists as well as by multinational corporations, for which “becoming global” marks an expansion into new markets. Our response to this specific development is that we need to trace the histories of such movements through the modern period to understand how they have been tied to colonial processes and to imperialism. Thus such usage relied on a universal subject of feminism, while *transnational* could signal cultural and national difference. However, it is important to remain alert to these national and international histories, which are embedded in every so-called transnational social movement, regardless of the intention of committed individuals and organizations.

If we have pointed out some of the ways in which *transnational* is used so ubiquitously at the present moment, it is not to suggest that we should abandon the term on the grounds that it has been overused to the point of meaning nothing in particular. Since ignoring transnational formations has left studies of sexualities without the tools to address questions of globalization, race, political economy, immigration, migration, and geopolitics, it is important to bring questions of transnationalism into conversation with the feminist study of sexuality. The history of the way in which sexuality has been studied and described needs to be better understood. Many scholars working on sexuality have begun to identify how separate spheres of study have arisen as a result of the disciplinary divides in the U.S. academy. In this context, critical practices are at a bit of an impasse, relying heavily on conventional disciplinary approaches that are unable to address some key issues and problems.

What are these separate spheres? The first divide is the separation of sexuality from the study of race, class, nation, religion, and so on. If Western, Judeo-Christian culture has viewed sexuality as the other within each individual, the study of sexuality in the U.S. academy has been limited by the inability of the human sciences to address this feared aspect of human life. In general, in the social sciences sexuality has been discussed at length only as an attribute of “primitive” cultures—exerting a strong fascination and producing an enormous literature that continues to this day. As anthropologists begin to study their “own” cultures, we have begun to see some shifts in this dynamic. But the legacies of the rise of the human sciences remain. And the Western body stands as the normative body in scholarly discourse and in public policy.

We have to turn to the rise of biomedicine and the emergence of eugenics, gynecology, endocrinology, genetics, and psychology to understand fully the social and political stakes in viewing sexuality as distinct from race, class, nation, and other factors in modernity. Gender and sexual difference have become understood as attributes of bodies unmarked in any other way, despite copious evidence that all of these modern identities are interconnected. The binary gender model is so pervasive and universalized that it has become naturalized. In most queer studies in the United States, destabilization of gender binarism seems to remain in the zone of gender permutation or diversity rather than including considerations of histories of political economies and forms of governmentality.¹⁸ For instance, if we can argue that historical analysis shows us that concepts of gender difference in medieval China were quite different from those in medieval Islamic cultures, we will begin to understand that the legacies of these traditions with attendant identities and practices produce new kinds of subjects in the present moment. Here we have to pause to note that we are not arguing that cultural specificity leads to complete difference. Rather, we want to add to this model of cultural difference a consideration of power, history, and analyses of contact and change.

In the study of sexuality in a transnational frame, we need a mapping of different medical traditions, conceptions of the body, scientific discourses, and, last but not least, political economies of the family. Such a mapping requires us to rethink the reliance on the family as a primary locus of difference and inequality. The family has been primarily treated as an entity that emerges in the context of a public-private split and as a result of divisions of labor. Internationalizing the public-private split and patriarchal divisions of labor has not changed the content of the scholarship much. Many of these approaches to the family produce representations of a heteronormative unit, a universal patriarchy, and, very often, a victimized and unified subject of feminism. If class comes to the fore in these analyses, sexuality remains in the realm of the exploitation and control of women via reproduction or trafficking. This emphasis on the family as a universal category of analysis also enables an allied mode of universalizing, that is, psychoanalytic criticism.

Psychoanalysis is a powerful mode of interpretation that has struggled with its universalizing tendencies.¹⁹ That is, many psychoanalytic critiques admit to cultural limitations in the model but find it impossible to depart from it. If sexual desire is always already understood as produced in and through the family, then it would be difficult to detach it from a psychoanalytic approach. The family is an important figure in modernity, but it is not the only site of subject production. We want to argue that the study of sexuality in a transnational frame must be detached

from psychoanalysis as a primary method in order to resist the universalization of the Western body as sexual difference. Psychoanalysis is a powerful interpretive tool, but it has become a form of biomedicine and cannot be utilized in ignorance of its own power structures.

Recently, new versions of psychoanalysis have sought to lift the cultural blinders from earlier work. These new works focus on the nation or the community as the family to provide new examples from diverse places. Although in recent years there has emerged an interest in expanding and rearticulating the notion of family and kinship, for the most part psychoanalytic cultural criticism may be of limited usefulness. Its Eurocentric biases can often be marshaled to reproduce nationalist formations.²⁰ Even Lacanian psychoanalysis cannot shake off its reliance on the modern European family as a central structuring metaphor. As we have said, this type of family may not make sense to people in other cultures and nation-states, nor can desire be understood solely in Western psychoanalytic terms. At the very least, the psychoanalytic framework may have to be different where relations between family and state are not the same as in the wealthier welfare states or where psychoanalysis is not medicalized or professionalized, as it is in Europe and North America.

The second instance of separated spheres that we wish to examine concerns the demarcation in the United States of international area studies from American studies. As Tani E. Barlow has argued, international area studies was implicated in the production of Cold War cultural and political knowledges about other cultures and nations.²¹ American studies comes from a 1930s Marxist, popular-front effort to critique and oppose capitalism. During the conservative backlash of the Cold War, it was co-opted and became articulated as American exceptionalism. At that point, the whiteness of "American" studies became distinguishable from what was later called "ethnic studies." The emergence of ethnic studies has to be understood as a response to this conservative retrenching of an otherwise limited but more radical initial vision. So both international area studies and American studies as we know them today are Cold War productions generated to manage and negotiate the tensions that arose after the Second World War and during decolonization worldwide, that is, in distinction to the emergence of other nationalisms.

One consequence of these divisions has been that comparative work in international area studies and American studies remains bound by the nation-state. Although an analytic position of the comparison studies mode has given us some useful insights, it naturalizes and reproduces the nationalist basis of modern scholarship.²² By questioning the distinctness of areas presupposed by the comparative framework and by respecting the specificities of historical and cultural

conjectures, we might enable new insights into the workings of gender and patriarchy across various borders rather than simply within the parameters of the state or the nation. The changing nature of migrations, global flows of media, and capital demands a different notion of transdisciplinary scholarship.

How does the institutional divide between international area studies and American studies affect contemporary studies of sexuality? The academic study of sexuality that can be linked to the emergence of gay and lesbian politics of identity and new queer formations has focused on U.S. and European examples, with the primary emphasis on white, middle-class life.²³ Thus the disciplinary divides that emerge out of other political arenas are played out on campus and off, that is, in academic as well as in “community-based” or activist locations. As a result, much of the experience-based literature rearticulates the divide between a sexuality-based lesbian or gay or queer culture or identity and one that is based on race or class or ethnicity.²⁴ In recent years, both “articulation” theory and “intersectionality” approaches have attempted to resolve this problem by arguing for complex or hybrid subjects.²⁵ That is, the nationalist basis of these academic disciplinary formations has participated in producing sexual subjects as nationalist subjects or as cultural-nationalist subjects. A related issue that we are not going to dwell on here but that we have discussed elsewhere is the nature of the cosmopolitan subject as a mystified national subject in the guise of a “world” or global citizen.²⁶

A third divide that we would like to bring up can be characterized as the tradition-modernity split. Following postcolonial studies, much has been said about this primary binary of Western culture. What is noteworthy, however, is the reemergence of this split in the international study of sexuality. As we noted above, nationalist biases and geopolitics contribute to this binary formulation, in which the United States and Europe are figured as modern and thus as the sites of progressive social movements, while other parts of the world are presumed to be traditional, especially in regard to sexuality. If any countries or nations depart from this model, it is because they are interpellated by “primitivism.” In general, the United States and Europe come to be seen as unified sites of “freedom” and “democratic choice” over and against locations characterized by oppression.

In our work on female sexual surgeries and the global and cultural feminist discourse of “female genital mutilation” (FGM), we have argued that the tradition-modernity binary is foundational and even modern in that sexual subjects are produced as traditional in order to create feminist modern subjects.²⁷ Thus the global feminist is one who has free choice over her body and a complete and intact rather than a fragmented or surgically altered body, while the traditional female

subject of patriarchy is forcibly altered, fragmented, alienated from her innate sexuality, and deprived of choices or agency. As we have discussed in relation to the film text by Alice Walker and Pratibha Parmar, *Warrior Marks*, freedom of choice in this nexus of modernity is marked by “coming out” as a lesbian. This is a complicated example, but suffice it to say at this juncture that a feminist and lesbian cosmopolitanism emerges over and against rural, African and Islamic “barbarism” in the name of saving “traditional women” from their own families. Although we see plenty of events and instances in the United States, for example, in which violence is enacted against gays and lesbians, against transgendered people, and against women, the displacement of the victims of sexualized violence to the Third World needs more discussion.

Another example of the tradition-modernity divide at work in the study of sexuality can be found in the literature on migration and refugee asylum. In such work, the process of migration to the United States, Europe, and other metropolitan locations is figured as the movement from repression to freedom.²⁸ That is, “backward,” often rural subjects flee their homes and/or patriarchal families or violent, abusive situations to come to the modern metropolis, where they can express their true nature as sexual identity in a state of freedom. This narrative is a hallowed one in domestic “coming-out” discourses as well as in a burgeoning international human rights arena. Refugee asylum in the United States, for instance, produces gay and lesbian subjects through a political and legal articulation of such narratives. Some recent research suggests that it is virtually impossible to stay in the country without deploying such a narrative, thereby questioning its “natural” origins.²⁹ Further inquiry into this international context of immigration and asylum would need to focus on the ways in which the state becomes involved in producing sexual identities in an era of globalization. This is why we are arguing that a cultural or psychoanalytic understanding of so-called global lesbian and gay movements is inadequate. Nation-states, economic formations, consumer cultures, and forms of governmentality all work together to produce and uphold subjectivities and communities.

It is these kinds of examples and considerations that lead us to believe that we cannot think of sexual subjects as purely oppositional or resistant to dominant institutions that produce heteronormativity. In other words, as many have pointed out, queer subjects are not always already avant-garde for all time and in all places. For example, lesbian sexuality and practices in many sites have to struggle against patriarchal formations, while gay male sexualities may not. Our point is that, again, universalized models of resistance with idealized tropes or politics of identity obscure rather than elucidate the terrain of subjectivity in postmodernity.

A fourth link in this chain of examples of separate spheres is the global-local divide. In the context of globalization and some kinds of transnational studies, the local is seen as working against or in resistance to the global. That is, local and global constitute two separate spheres that never contaminate each other. The global-local divide is a tempting device for many cultural critics, but, like all the other binaries we are discussing, this one obscures important aspects of postmodernity, not the least of which is that the local is often constituted through the global, and vice versa.³⁰ It is also a model that hails critics because of its liberatory and resistance qualities. In this formulation, the local serves as the space of oppositional consciousness and generates practices of resistance, and the global serves as an oppressive network of dominant power structures. In various critical engagements with this global-local binary, lesbian, gay, and queer theorists have argued that the site of the local destabilizes the homogenizing tendencies of global gay formations.³¹ There is another formulation that advocates the globalizing of Euro-American identity politics of sexuality along the lines that we have discussed above, that is, to advance human rights and freedom of choice.

We think that there is another way to look at the tension between these heavily mediated practices that appear to signal “local” or “global.” We would advocate a mode of study that adopts a more complicated model of transnational relations in which power structures, asymmetries, and inequalities become the conditions of possibility of new subjects. For example, we could look at the way social and political movements are cosmopolitan and class-based, generating new sites of power rather than simply forms of resistance.³² We could also investigate the empowering practices of consumption and engagements with media and new technologies that create new subjects that trouble the model of rights and citizenship. Above all, there should be much more attention to the power relations of travel—contacts and transactions of all kinds—that are part of the knowledge production through which subjects are constituted. The social aspects of sexuality are always embedded in the material histories of these encounters and must be addressed in nuanced ways.

In many ways we are addressing the problem of writing history, a problem foregrounded by many theorists and critics working in gay and lesbian and queer studies.³³ That is, subjects are produced by the writing of history itself and thus may always be marked by a belated recognition or identification that is always already in the terms of the present. While we can see this problem at work in the representation of the past, we are not always as aware of the limits of representation in the present. This problem of the present is especially egregious when we look at other cultures near or far. That is, identity politics have structured our view

so profoundly that we literally cannot see the link between representation and subject formation in the ways that we are calling for vis-à-vis a transnational framework. Actually, what we are really grappling with here is not just representation; it is also the emergence of new forms of governmentality with an entire repertoire of strategies, regulatory practices, and instrumentalities linking the state to bodies. Thus representation is always linked to production, consumption, and regulation.³⁴

Most of the identities we can recognize have emerged during the era of modernity encompassing the rise of capitalism and the nation-state in the context of imperialism. Our point is that sexual subjects are produced not just by the politics of identity or social movements but by the links between various institutions that accompany these social movements. Furthermore, we need to probe these connections and circuits to see how identities are upheld or made possible by institutions linked to the state. We find it problematic that in much work on sexual identities the state seldom has a hand in enabling these identities.³⁵ Most discussions of the state focus on queer or gay resistance to state-sanctioned heterosexism. While most states seem to oppose all forms of sexuality that are not related to reproduction or marriage, there have been cases where states (or institutions within states) have not been so uniformly in opposition. Although there is increasing discussion of the ways in which communities might be affected by institutions such as schools or the military, other state-linked or related institutions, such as universities and census boards, or institutions of the market, such as advertising, financial flows, and banks, are not often discussed in work on sexualities or sexual identities. Instead, communities seem to be simply produced by culture or by a culturalist notion of history, and by *culture* we mean in both the Arnoldian and the anthropological sense. This idea of culture signals a means of distinguishing between and ranking groups or seeing cultural formations as aesthetic categories.

What, then, is a transnational practice of the study of sexuality? There is a great deal of very exciting and useful work coming out of both interdisciplinary and disciplinary sites. Journals such as *GLQ* and *positions* have taken the lead in publishing new approaches, and there have been a plethora of conferences, workshops, and panels where these intersections have been increasingly evident.³⁶ Other institutional sites—such as centers for the study of sexuality or for gay, lesbian, and transgender studies; women's studies; gender studies; ethnic studies; and other interdisciplinary initiatives—are encouraging new scholarship and fostering various dialogues. Sexuality studies, like feminist and gender studies, is an increasingly important area of work in all kinds of disciplinary formations as well.

In our work on the film text of *Warrior Marks*, we began the project of creating a transnational framework for the study of sexual surgeries. We started by

examining the ways in which colonial and postcolonial discourses of modernity and tradition have structured feminist and lesbian-feminist cultural production and identity politics as well as policy and activism in the Clinton era. Other parts of this long-term project include examinations of refugee asylum and other human rights practices and legal-judicial discourses that produce sexed subjects and identities. Another valence concerns the deployment of FGM discourse in social activism around infant sex assignment practices. Here the complicated issues involve the emergence of an intersex movement in the United States and the complexities of resisting recent biomedical practices by relying on notions of a natural body, conventions of sexual and gender difference, and colonial notions of tradition, barbarism, and mutilation. There is more that we can say about this project, but for now we would argue that the study of biomedicine must incorporate the kind of transnational frame that we are calling for in this essay.

Another area that engages not only our work but the work of many other scholars is travel and tourism.³⁷ As feminists in colonial and postcolonial discourse studies have argued, the emergence of travel in the modern period has been constitutive of many forms of orientalism and other ethnocentrism.³⁸ Power differentials are always implicated in the activity of travel. Imperialism enabled forms of travel and exploration that produced circuits and flows of power and desire through which new forms of otherness and exoticism arose. From the “sotadic” zone in Richard Burton’s travel narratives to Roland Barthes’s “empire of signs” (not to forget Isabelle Eberhardt’s peregrinations in male attire in North Africa), sexuality has been a primary subject of travel writing.³⁹ While over the last fifteen years both feminist and postcolonial critics have written extensively about travel in the era of imperialism, the field has been plagued by many of the critical limits that we have delineated here. In gay and lesbian and queer studies, the discussion of travel follows the parameters that we have critiqued thus far, for instance, the positioning of gay and lesbian travelers as transcending colonial power relations or functioning as agents of resistance.

Tourism is linked both to the colonial history of travel and to new forms of globalization in late capitalism. From global trafficking of women to sex tourism, the topic of tourism provides a window onto specific connections among nationalism, political economy, and cultural formations. The debate about global trafficking and sex tourism in certain locales, such as Thailand, Sri Lanka, and the Caribbean, for example, tends to portray sex workers as downtrodden victims of their patriarchies and “underdeveloped” economies. The figure of the “Third World prostitute,” male or female, adult or child, is structured by the fantasy of rescue.⁴⁰ As Spivak’s formulation argues, it is the old colonial project of saving the

brown woman from her own kind—in these instances, we can expand this formulation to various subjects of capitalism and patriarchy, although there are important differences among these linked subjects.⁴¹ There has been a lot of new work on these circuits of labor and desire, but much more needs to be done, especially in terms of media and visual culture.

We are also interested in new kinds of studies of migration and immigration that trouble the narratives of movement from oppression to freedom that we have already mentioned. Migration within nations as well as across different kinds of national boundaries has been studied in different disciplines; however, we need to pay attention to the different kinds of boundaries that are crossed or that cannot be crossed, and by whom. For instance, the family-based categories for immigration into the United States are profoundly antigay and -lesbian, but they also assume models of the family based on a hierarchy of nations and cultures. Other nation-states have enacted laws requiring HIV testing for entry as well as other invasive and homophobic practices. Here nationalism, gender, sexuality, and geopolitics must be considered, along with the political economy that underlies the regulation of immigration at the current moment.

One of the best examples of the issues we are raising here is the production of HIV/AIDS discourses over the last two decades. In this field we can discern a massive shift from the separate spheres to which we have been referring to the new forms of global and transnational policy discussions that have been created in response to this emergency. We see also the interconnections among state policies, nationalist agendas, pharmaceutical corporate practices, biomedical institutions, and the varied sexual subjects, cultures, and practices that become visible and targeted in new ways. The discourse of the modern nation-state's heteronormative family and of sexuality as the purview of males has been disrupted by the circulation of discourses of viruses, consumer actions, treatment strategies, theories of origins, and new sexual subjects. This example enables us to see the limits of the separate spheres approach as well as the interconnections that transnational subjects engender.

In conclusion, we would like to return to the five points with which we began our discussion of the circulation of the term *transnational*. We pointed out the limits of current uses of the term and linked these uses to articulations of knowledge formations. These limits include the production of various kinds of separate spheres or binaries, which prevent an approach to the study of sexuality that would usefully enable us to examine some of the areas of study that we have mentioned. Although other such topics can be considered, we have raised a few here as a contribution to a discussion that can build a bridge between the fields of global

and transnational studies and those of sexuality, gender, women's, ethnic, and cultural studies in the U.S. academy. Such interdisciplinary work will enable us to understand global identities at the present time and to examine complicities as well as resistances in order to create the possibility of critique and change.

Notes

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1. See Jasbir Kaur Puar, "Global Circuits: Transnational Sexualities and Trinidad," *Signs* 26 (2001): 1039–65; Martin F. Manalansan IV, "Diasporic Deviants/Divas: How Filipino Gay Transmigrants 'Play with the World,'" in *Queer Diasporas*, ed. Cindy Patton and Benigno Sánchez-Eppler (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 183–203; Yukiko Hanawa, ed., "Circuits of Desire," special issue of *positions* 2, no. 1 (1994); Elizabeth A. Povinelli and George Chauncey, eds., "Thinking Sexuality Transnationally," special issue of *GLQ* 5, no. 4 (1999); Phillip Brian Harper et al., eds., "Queer Transexions of Race, Nation, and Gender," special issue of *Social Text*, nos. 52–53 (1997); and Engin F. Isin and Patricia K. Wood, *Citizenship and Identity* (London: Sage, 1999).
2. For an influential account of this approach to globalization see Richard J. Barnet and John Cavanagh, *Global Dreams: Imperial Corporations and the New World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1994); see also George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Pine Forge, 1993).
3. See Mike Featherstone, ed., *Global Culture* (London: Sage, 1990); Stuart Hall, "The Question of Cultural Identity," in *Modernity and Its Futures*, ed. Stuart Hall, David Held, and Tony McGrew (Cambridge: Polity, 1992), 274–316; Anthony D. King, ed., *Culture, Globalization, and the World System* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); and Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi, eds., *The Cultures of Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).
4. See Lisa Rofel, "Qualities of Desire: Imagining Gay Identities in China," *GLQ* 5 (1999): 451–74.
5. See Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, "Introduction: Transnational Feminist Practices and Questions of Postmodernity," in *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*, ed. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 1–33.

6. See Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, eds., *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States* (Langhorne, Pa.: Gordon and Breach, 1994).
7. See Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational Connections* (London: Routledge, 1996); and Scott Lash and John Urry, *Economies of Signs and Space* (London: Sage, 1994).
8. See David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989).
9. See Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*.
10. See Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*.
11. Victoria Bernal, "The Nation and the World: Reflections on Nationalism in a Transnational Era," unpublished manuscript, 2001.
12. This usage is evident at conferences such as the American Studies Association meetings, as well as other meetings of humanities or social science academic organizations such as the American Anthropological Association. See also David L. Eng, *Racial Castigation: Managing Masculinity in Asian America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).
13. See Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993).
14. See Caren Kaplan, *Questions of Travel: Postmodern Discourses of Displacement* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).
15. See Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, eds., *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).
16. We take this phrase from Sabine Lang, "The NGOization of Feminism," in *Transitions, Translations, Environments: Feminisms in International Politics*, ed. Joan W. Scott, Cora Kaplan, and Debra Keates (New York: Routledge, 1997), 101–20.
17. See Teresa Carillo, "Cross-Border Talk: Transnational Perspectives on Labor, Race, and Sexuality," in *Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age*, ed. Ella Shohat (New York: New Museum for Modern Art; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998), 391–412.
18. Although *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, ed. Henry Abelove, Michèle Aina Barale, and David M. Halperin (New York: Routledge, 1993), broke new ground in important ways, many of the essays in it focus on this approach to gender diversity. Since then, other publications have attempted to address this problem. See Gerald Hunt, ed., *Laboring for Rights: Unions and Sexual Diversity across Nations* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999); Amy Gluckman and Betsy Reed, eds., *Homo Economics: Capitalism, Community, and Lesbian and Gay Life* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Erica Rand, *Barbie's Queer Accessories* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); Donald Morton, ed., *The Material Queer: A LesBiGay Cultural Studies Reader* (Boulder,

- Colo.: Westview, 1996); and Roger N. Lancaster and Micaela di Leonardo, eds., *The Gender/Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy* (New York: Routledge, 1997).
19. For a trenchant critique of such work see Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "French Feminism in an International Frame," in *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 134–53.
 20. For instance, in the context of South Asian studies see the work of Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983).
 21. Tani E. Barlow, "Colonialism's Career in Postwar China Studies," *positions* 1, no. 1 (1993): 224–67.
 22. See Inderpal Grewal, *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire, and the Cultures of Travel* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996); and Inderpal Grewal, Akhil Gupta, and Aihwa Ong, eds., introduction to "Asian Transnationalities," special issue of *positions* 7 (1999): 653–66.
 23. Many writers have pointed out that analyses of race are often absent from works by gay and lesbian scholars. See Audre Lorde, *Sister/Outsider* (Trumansburg, N.Y.: Crossing, 1984); bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (Boston: South End, 1990); and Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (Watertown, Mass.: Persephone, 1981). An example of work that does not address the relation between sexuality and race or ethnicity is Corey K. Creekmur and Alexander Doty, eds., *Out in Culture: Gay, Lesbian, and Queer Essays on Popular Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995). In the very influential *Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, most of the essays focus on Europe and North America, although some address the relationship among sexuality, sexual identities, and race. Lancaster and di Leonardo's anthology *The Gender/Sexuality Reader* provides a more cross-cultural perspective.
 24. See Patton and Sánchez-Eppler, *Queer Diasporas*; Emilie L. Bergmann and Paul Julian Smith, eds., *¿Entiendes? Queer Readings, Hispanic Writings* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); Russell Leong, ed., *Asian American Sexualities: Dimensions of the Gay and Lesbian Experience* (New York: Routledge, 1996); and David Eng and Alice Hom, eds., *Q & A: Queer in Asian America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).
 25. For articulation theory see Lawrence Grossberg, ed., "On Postmodernism and Articulation: An Interview with Stuart Hall," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 10, no. 2 (1986): 45–60. For intersectional theory see Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color," in *After Identity: A Reader in Law and Culture*, ed. Dan Danielson and Karen Engle (New York: Routledge, 1995), 332–54.
 26. See Kaplan, *Questions of Travel*; and Caren Kaplan, "Hillary Clinton's Orient: Cosmopolitan Travel and Global Feminist Subjects," *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 2 (2001): 219–40.

27. See Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, "Warrior Marks: Global Womanism's Neo-Colonial Discourse in a Multicultural Context," *Camera Obscura* 39 (1996): 5–33.
28. See Olivia Espin, *Women Crossing Boundaries: A Psychology of Immigration and Transformations of Sexuality* (New York: Routledge, 1999).
29. See Inderpal Grewal, *Transnational America: Gender, Nation, and Diaspora* (Durham: Duke University Press, forthcoming).
30. See Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake, eds., *Global/Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).
31. Katie King, "Local and Global: AIDS Activism and Feminist Theory," *Camera Obscura* 28 (1992): 79–100.
32. Lash and Urry, *Economies of Signs and Space*; Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996).
33. See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Pantheon, 1978); David M. Halperin, "Is There a History of Sexuality?" *History and Theory* 28 (1989): 257–74; Halperin, "How to Do the History of Male Homosexuality," *GLQ* 6 (2000): 87–124; John D'Emilio, "Capitalism and Gay Identity," in *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, ed. Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, and Sharon Thompson (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983), 100–113; Carolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); and Donna Penn, "Queer: Theorizing Politics and History," *Radical History Review*, no. 62 (1995): 28–30.
34. See Stuart Hall, introduction to *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London: Sage, 1997), 1–11.
35. For work that does address the state in the context of transnationality see M. Jacqui Alexander, "Erotic Autonomy as a Politics of Decolonization: An Anatomy of Feminist and State Practice in the Bahamas Tourist Economy," in *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*, ed. M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (New York: Routledge, 1997), 63–100.
36. See Hanawa, "Circuits of Desire," in which some essays utilize approaches that engage with circulations of identity and sexuality. See also Povinelli and Chauncey, "Thinking Sexuality Transnationally"; and Harper et al., "Queer Transexions of Race, Nation, and Gender."
37. See Puar, "Global Circuits"; and Alexander, "Erotic Autonomy as a Politics of Decolonization."
38. See Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992); Ella Shohat, "Gender and the Culture of Empire: Toward a Feminist Ethnography of the Cinema," *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, no. 131 (1991): 45–84; Lisa Lowe, *Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity, and Representation* (London: Routledge, 1996); Grewal, *Home and Harem*; Anne McClintock,

- tock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (New York: Routledge, 1995); and Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Travel Writing and Colonialism* (New York: Routledge, 1991).
39. See Richard Phillips, "Travelling Sexualities: Richard Burton's Sotadic Zone," in *Writes of Passage: Reading Travel Writing*, ed. James Duncan and Derek Gregory (London: Routledge, 1999), 70–91; and Phillips, "Imaginative Geographies and Sexuality Politics: The City, the Country, and the Age of Consent," in *De-centring Sexualities: Politics and Representations beyond the Metropolis*, ed. Richard Phillips, Diane Watt, and David Shuttleton (London: Routledge, 2000). Primary works include Richard F. Burton, *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, 6 vols. (New York: Limited Editions Club, 1934); Roland Barthes, *The Empire of Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1982); and Isabelle Eberhardt, *The Passionate Nomad: The Diary of Isabelle Eberhardt* (Boston: Beacon, 1988).
40. See Kamala Kempadoo and Jo Doezema, eds., *Global Sex Workers: Rights, Resistance, and Redefinition* (New York: Routledge, 1998).
41. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–313.