

## **Splintered Boundaries: Encounters/Challenges/Disruption**

April 8, 2017

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Submission Deadline **Extended: February 10, 2017**

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**Keynote Speaker:** Jennifer Wingard (University of Houston)

Discussions about figurative and literal boundaries are ubiquitous. Transnational scholars are faced with a globalizing world, and seek to navigate the ways in which boundaries are (de)constructed in these spaces. Humanities scholars and students alike are faced with disciplinary or genre boundaries that are both maintained and simultaneously resisted. In the 21st century, new meanings, new technology, and new global crises force us to confront these boundaries that are meant to divide, classify, define. In facing them, we have the choice to maintain and uphold, or splinter, challenge, disrupt. Rupturing these boundaries doesn't make them invisible, but rather gives rise to new forms of discourse.

For our 9<sup>th</sup> annual interdisciplinary conference, the English Graduate Organization at the University of Massachusetts Amherst invites submissions that question differing notions of boundaries, and explore the ways in which boundaries can be splintered, ruptured, resisted, or maintained. We are particularly interested in the thinking of boundaries as both physical and geographical borders, as well as the abstract boundaries that envelop scholarly and creative work. How do we encounter these boundaries, and when we do, how might we challenge or disrupt the structures they seek to maintain? Further, are there boundaries that should be maintained, and how do we parse these from those we seek to splinter?

In relation to these themes, some of the questions that we are looking to explore include:

- What are boundaries and who defines them? Who can and cannot define boundaries?
- What does it mean to splinter a boundary, disrupting expectations and traditions?
- Where do boundaries exist? [i.e.: canon, genre, geography, historical, borders, intersectionality, disciplines, academy, etc.]
- How do national boundaries affect literary production?
- How do boundaries (de)construct racial, gendered, class, national and sexual identities?
- How do disciplinary boundaries impact (limit or control) the work of humanities scholars?
- How do periodization and temporal boundaries constrain literary and cultural studies?
- How have digital spaces changed the way we theorize/define boundaries?
  - How do digital spaces trouble the conception of boundaries?
  - Do boundaries exist in digital spaces?
- How are boundaries products of structures of power? How are boundaries resisted?
  - How do systems of power work for and against boundaries?

Graduate students may submit papers and/or panel presentations, performance and creative pieces, and multi-media projects. Approaches include but are not limited to:

- Affect Studies

- American Studies
- Animal Studies
- Art History
- Childhood Studies
- Communications
- Critical Race Theory
- Creative Writing
- Cultural Studies
- Digital Humanities
- Disability Studies
- Environmental Studies/Ecocriticism
- Film Studies and Film Theory
- Gender and Sexuality Studies, Queer Theory
- Genre Studies
- History/ Historiography
- Linguistics
- Literary Theory
- Media Studies
- Music Studies
- Narrative Theory
- Political Theory
- Postcolonial, Global, Transnational Studies
- Psychology and Cognition Studies
- Religious Studies
- Rhetoric and Composition
- Sociology
- Science, Technology, and Culture
- Theatre and Performance Studies

We accept three kinds of submissions:

- Individual papers/projects: please submit an abstract of no more than 300 words. Include your name, paper title, institution, and email address.
- Panels: please submit a 1000 word proposal for an entire panel of presentations (3-4 presenters). Included in this proposal should be abstracts of 200-300 words for all presentations, title of the panel, and information for each presenter (name, paper title, institution, and email address). If you are forming your own panel, you have the option of providing your own chair.
- Performances and creative presentations/panels: we welcome submissions of creative works, including creative writing, visual art, and dramatic performance. Please include a brief description of your project, as well as your name, project title, institution, and email address.