



Legal Borderlands: Law and the Construction of American Borders (A Special Issue of American Quarterly)

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This collection focuses broadly on the role of law in the construction of U.S. borders and takes up an important question raised by the global turn in American studies scholarship: once territory becomes less critical to scholarship in the discipline, what constitutes the frame of American studies?

For this project, a "border" is not simply a territorial boundary. Borders are created through formal legal controls on entry and exit, through the construction of rights of citizenship and noncitizenship, and through the regulation of American power in other parts of the world. Where legal rights are at issue, borders and territory continue to play a powerful role, especially as certain spaces, such as Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, are marked by the U.S. government as outside legal restraints on government power. Yet the law also extends the United States beyond its literal borders, through, for example, efforts to export democracy to the Middle East.

This is the first collection to map the intersection of law and American studies, and it captures the excitement of interdisciplinary work at this intersection.

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