



BORDER ABOLITION 2021

Border Abolition 2021 is a two-day online event aimed at connecting organising, campaigning, activist research and academic work around border violence, racism, incarceration and abolitionism. We hope to bring together people struggling against borders in all their forms, from immigration detention, prison and militarised border sites, to the solidarity practices that resist expanding systems of everyday bordering.

In a current moment in which borders and punitive violence seem to be growing and entrenching, it is more important than ever to formulate an abolitionism that looks at migration not as a stand-alone field but, rather, in connection with heterogeneous struggles against racializing border mechanisms. We will draw connections between different forms of containment, detention and exploitation that are often invisibilized or discussed separately.

You can find full details about the event on our website, www.borderabolition2021.com

Border Abolition 2021 is supported by the [CHASE Doctoral Training Partnership](#), [Anthro-Mob \(Anthropology and Mobility Network\)](#), [EASA \(European Association of Social Anthropologists\)](#) & [MSCA \(Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Fellowship\)](#).

CHASE



easa

European Association of Social Anthropologists
Association Européenne des Anthropologues Sociaux

**ANTHRO
MOB**



1 DAY BORDER ABOLITION 2021

**JUNE BST/
18TH GMT-1**

***TICKETS ON
EVENTBRITE***

**9:00AM -
10:00AM**

**OPENING REMARKS: LUKE DE NORONHA, GRACIE
MAE BRADLEY AND BRIDGET ANDERSON**

**10:15AM
- 11:45AM**

**AGAINST THE ACADEMIC-INDUSTRIAL-COMPLEX
WORKSHOP: UNI'S RESIST BORDER CONTROLS**

**10:15AM
- 11:45AM**

**DIRECT ACTION WORKSHOP:
ABOLISH FRONTEX**

**12:00PM
- 13:30PM**

**TECHNOLOGIES OF CONTAINMENT, DATA EXTRACTION
AND DISPLACEMENT: FORGING ABOLITIONIST TOOLS**

**14:30PM
- 16:00PM**

**SITUATING BORDER ABOLITION ACROSS
CONTEXTS AND STRUGGLES**

**16:15PM
- 17:45PM**

**FEMINIST STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES OF
BORDER ABOLITION**

**18:00PM
- 19:30PM**

**PRACTISING SOLIDARITY FOR BORDER
ABOLITION**

ONLINE EVENT

2 DAY BORDER ABOLITION 2021

**JUNE BST/
19TH GMT-1**

***TICKETS ON
EVENTBRITE***

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 9:00AM -
10:30AM | DOCUMENTING BORDER VIOLENCE |
| 11:00AM -
12:30PM | STATE RACISM, RACIAL CAPITALISM AND THE
BORDER |
| 13:30PM -
15:00PM | NO BORDERS, MANY HISTORIES |
| 15:30PM -
17:00PM | SESSION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON
THE RIGHTS OF SEX WORKERS IN EUROPE (ICRSE)
AND SWARM (SEX WORKER ADVOCACY RESISTANCE
MOVEMENT) |
| 17:30PM -
19:00PM | GLOBAL BORDERS: CLIMATE VIOLENCE, FINANCIAL
EXTORTION AND IMPERIAL EXCHANGE |
| 19:15PM -
20:15PM | CLOSING REMARKS: BRIDGET ANDERSON
AND NANDITA SHARMA |



ONLINE EVENT

**JUNE 18TH BST/
GMT-1**

DAY 1

09.00—10.00

Opening Remarks

With **Luke De Noronha**, **Gracie Mae Bradley**
and **Bridget Anderson**.

10.15—11.45

Direct Action Workshop

WORKSHOP hosted by the **Abolish Frontex Coalition**

<https://abolishfrontex.org/>

Frontex is the European Union's border agency and is a key actor in enforcing the EU's border regime and war on people who move. With a 5.6 billion euro budget it is the biggest EU agency but is little known. It will soon have an army of 10,000 border guards able to own and use firearms. It is responsible for systemic human rights violations through its operations; involvement in deportations; cooperation with third countries, and role in strengthening EU borders. Join this participatory workshop to find out how to take action against this deadly agency.

**JUNE 18TH BST/
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DAY 1

10.15—11.45

Against the Academic-Industrial-Complex

WORKSHOP hosted by **URBC**

<https://www.unisresistbordercontrols.org.uk/>

This is a workshop to get together grassroots border & prison abolition groups, to create a working document about engagement with researchers, the media and NGOs to ensure that groups can protect themselves, and to also think about what we would want in terms of having our theories and knowledge properly cited and compensated. We aim to use this session to facilitate longer term connections between groups, and create a shared resource document that we can all engage with when approached by researchers, NGOs and media.

What would an actually useful and radical set of research practices look like? How can journalists, academics and NGOs be made to divert time, resources and funds towards grassroots organisations? How does the 'hostile environment' in education structure research and put groups who take part in it at risk? More importantly, what should researchers in UK higher education along with journalists and NGOs do on the ground to support the work of border abolition?

Please come to the workshop prepared with some answers to the aforementioned questions. More broadly, please come prepared to feed into a working document about what we as grassroots activists and especially those of us who do border abolition work and are precarious migrants, need in order to protect us from exploitation, be it from NGOs, academics, and journalists.

**JUNE 18TH BST/
GMT-1**

DAY 1

12.00—13.00

**Technologies of Containment,
Data Extraction and Displacement:
Forging Abolitionist Tools**

With **Migreurop**, **David Suber**, **Lauren Cape-Davenhill**, **Ara Ortiz**, **Carolina Sanchez Boe**, and discussant **Martina Tazzioli**.
Hosted by Carolina Sanchez Boe and Martina Tazzioli.

Nowadays we witness a multiplication of modes of hybrid detention and forms of containment that sustain modes of differential exploitation. At the same time, digital technology is increasingly incorporated in migration and refugee governance to control and confine migrants as well as to extract value and data from them. This session engages with technologisation of migration confinement and interrogates how an abolitionist perspective on borders might challenge modes of containment and detention. The panel approaches technology beyond techno-optimist and techno-pessimist perspectives and looks at how digital technologies enforce modes of migration confinement and turn migrants and refugees into a source of economic profit and biopolitical value.

**JUNE 18TH BST/
GMT-1**

DAY 1

14.30—16.00

Situating Border Abolition Across Contexts and Struggles

With **Kathryn Cassidy** (Northumbria University), **Josue David Cisneros** (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), **Anna Finiguerra** (Queen Mary University of London), **Josiah Heyman** (University of Texas at El Paso), **Arianna Introna** (Independent Researcher), Brian Whitener (University of South Alabama). Hosted by Sara Riva, Stefan Millar, Ville Laakkonen and Lena Karamanidou.

Situating Border Abolition Across Contexts and Struggles explores multiple interconnected issues in different geographical regions that call for border abolition, from the (accidental) perpetuation of the European “border spectacle” through an art installation to the grassroots forms of mutual aid and solidarity in times of Covid-19. The presenters of this session engage in different ways with how border abolition would play a key role in shaping the everyday life of those most affected by borders. For instance, we’ll explore mobility as an analytic that reveals an unexplored site of solidarity-in-difference and ask what abolitionist border studies would look like. The session looks at border regions as heroic sites of solidarity and explores the need to engage with the hybrid, ambiguous reality of borderlands life and everyday bordering policies, and how the increasing internalization of bordering regimes has opened up new spaces to resist the processes and practices of state bordering.

**JUNE 18TH BST/
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DAY 1

16.15—17.45

**Feminist Strategies and
Practices of Border Abolition**

With **Ellie Shakiba** (*Searching for Aramsayesh*), **Sarah Hopwood** (*Abolish Detention Hassockfield*), **Leah Cowan**, **Myrto Tsillimpounidi & Anna Carastathis** (*Feminist Autonomous Centre for Research*), **Aminata Kalokoh & Francesca Esposito**, and **Vania Martins**. Hosted by Sarah Hopwood, Francesca Esposito and Vania Martins.

This session will look at feminist strategies and practices of border abolition from a number of interlinking perspectives, incorporating panellists with lived experience of gendered border violence and those who stand in solidarity. The panel will explore how feminism can inspire our struggles for no borders, both inside and outside the spaces of violent border control. By bringing together the themes of gendered everyday bordering, unpacking and resisting the heteropatriarchal violence of immigration detention, discussing creative, queer and feminist acts of refusing borders, this panel will inspire and enliven activities and discussions in the quest for feminist border abolition.

**JUNE 18TH BST/
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DAY 1

18.00—19.30

Practising Solidarity for Border Abolition

With **Harsha Walia**, **Philis Andrew (SYMAAG)**, **Rex Osa (Refugees 4 Refugees)**, **Lamine Sarr (Sindicato de Manteros)** and **Ettore Asoni**. Chaired by **Tom Kemp (SOAS Detainee Support/ Abolitionist Futures)**. Organised by Helen Brewer, Tom Kemp and Ana Santamarina.

It has become a truism to say that No Borders activism should involve working in solidarity with migrants who experience border violence directly. This is for good reason: the emancipatory horizons of border abolition are reflected in the bottom-up, prefigurative and anti-hierarchical concerns of solidarity work.

However, their pairing also raises tensions and contradictions. Whereas border abolition has global ambitions, the politics of solidarity prioritises the local and interpersonal. While border abolition aims to bring about a world without borders, working with those targeted by border violence often directs resources to campaigning for reforms that could legitimise and stabilise border institutions.

This round table draws from activist, migrant and academic perspectives to discuss the contemporary challenges border abolitionists face in building and practising solidarity 'across borders

**JUNE 19TH BST/
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DAY 2

09.00—10.30

Documenting Border Violence

With **Arshad Isakjee**, **Karolina Augustova**, **Sasha Hajzler** (InfoKolpa), **Emina Bužinkić** (Transbalkanska Solidarnost), **Watch the Med Alarm Phone**, **Kashef** (Abolish Frontex), **Teodora Jovanović & Bojan Mucko**, **Phevos Kororos Simeonidis** (Disinfo Collective). Hosted by **Chloe M. Powers & Simon Campbell** from the Border Violence Monitoring Network (BVMN).

This session brings together perspectives from people-on-the-move and those working in solidarity with them along the Balkan Route. Speaking about these forms of violence is part of tackling these systems. People throughout the Balkans and beyond have been documenting their individual and collective experiences, using testimony, videos, photographs, and other mediums to both process and challenge violence at borders. This session brings together discussions on the tools used by people from transit-solidarity communities to expose border regimes and project new realities

**JUNE 19TH BST/
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DAY 2

11.00—12.30

State Racism, Racial Capitalism and the Border

With **Tit Stark (Infokolpa)**, **Francesco Marchi**, **Neske Baerwaldt**, **Lauren Martin**, **Elsa Tyszler** and **Smina Akhtar**.
Hosted by Smina Akhtar, Sophia Hoffinger and Joel White.

Borders operate at different levels of the nation state, in the everyday, and beyond it, raising important questions about the role of states, capital and contemporary racism. This session seeks to explore the different forces by which human beings are divided by forms of bordering and policing, and thereby exposed to interlinked logics of exploitation, disposability and extraction.

Our panellists offer transnational perspectives on these logics and interrogate the workings of Empire in the making of race and bordering practices in Morocco (Elsa Tyszler), the carceral economies of immigration detention in the United States (Lauren Martin), and read the German-Austrian border as an archive of racialisation processes (Neske Baerwaldt). They critically examine the complicity of humanitarianism in the reproduction of racialised notions of 'the human' in Italy (Francesco Marchi) and offer insights into the work of migrant-led and solidarity activism against state racism in Slovenia (Tit Stark). We are looking forward to thinking collectively about the effects of racial capitalism and state racism on the experiences of human beings in their global contexts and local experiences.

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DAY 2

13.30—15.00

No Borders, Many Histories

With **Muhammad Idrish** (**Muhammad Idrish Must Stay/ West Midlands Anti-Deportation Group**), **Gargi Bhattacharyya** and **Radhika Mongia** (York University, Toronto). Hosted by Anish Chibber, Joel White, Kathryn Medien and Phe Amis.

What are the connections and intimacies between resistance to bordering today and older traditions of anti-colonial and anti-imperial struggle? This session explores divergent histories of border abolition (although rarely framed explicitly as such) while taking seriously the specificities of situated resistance and abolitionist projects. Radhika Mongia outlines the historical formation of borders during the 19th and early 20th centuries, providing a historical perspective and global scale in which Muhammad Idrish and Gargi Bhattacharyya discuss experiences and reflections on the West Midlands Anti-Deportation Group which ran between the 1980s and 1990s and with which both Muhammad and Gargi were involved.

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DAY 2

15.30—17.00

‘I am a woman and so the story changes’: Reciprocal solidarity between migrant’ and sex workers’ rights movement

With **SWOU (Sex Workers’ Open University)**, **Empower (Thailand)**, **Sabrina Sanchez (OTRAS Secretary, Spain)**, **Elene Lam, (Butterfly, Canada)**, **Sex Workers Advocacy Resistance Movement (UK)**, **Lilana Keith (PICUM—Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants)**, **Sarah Chander (Equinox)**. Moderated by **Luca Stevenson (ICRSE)**

The session will feature speakers from sex workers’ rights, migrants’ rights and anti-racist organisation from North America and Europe working at grassroots and European levels. In this session, advocates and activists will discuss the impact of criminalisation of sex work and migration and the use of anti-trafficking narratives, laws and practices to target, arrest and deport migrant women. The panel will also explore how they work in active and mutual solidarity to dismantle criminalisation of migrants and sex workers, border regimes and other oppressive and punitive structures.

ICRSE is the European sex worker' rights network with a membership of 111 organisations in 35 countries. ICRSE promotes the human and labour rights of sex workers at national, European and international level.

@sexworkeurope

PICUM, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants, is a network of organisations working to ensure social justice and human rights for undocumented migrants

@PICUM_post

**JUNE 19TH BST/
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DAY 2

Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice is a people of colour-led initiative working to advance rights and justice for all people in Europe. We work in solidarity with a coalition of racial and social justice leaders and organisations to influence European Union law and policy

@Equinoxrji

SWARM is a collective founded and led by sex workers who believe in self-determination, solidarity and co-operation. We campaign for the rights and safety of everyone who sells sexual services. Together we organise skill-shares and support meet-ups just for sex workers, as well as public events

@SexWorkHive

OTRAS is the Spanish sex workers union fighting for labour rights of all sex workers in Spain. (And who recently got recognition from Spain Supreme court that sex workers have right to organise after Spanish government try to shut them down!)

@OtrasSindicato

<http://www.sindicatootras.org>

Butterfly is a Canada-based Asian and Migrant Sex Workers Support Network. Butterfly was formed by sex workers, social workers, legal and health professionals. It provides support to, and advocates for, the rights of Asian and migrant sex workers. The organization is founded upon the belief that sex workers are entitled to respect and basic human rights. Butterfly asserts that, regardless of their immigration status, Asian and migrant sex workers should be treated like all other workers

@ButterflyCSW

<https://www.butterflysw.org>

**JUNE 19TH BST/
GMT-1**

DAY 2

17.30—19.00

**Global Borders: Climate Violence, Financial Ex-
tortion and Imperial Exchange**

With **Nandita Sharma, Divya Sharma, Habib Ayeb** and **Free-
dom Mazwi**. Hosted by James Trafford, Max Ajl and Out of
the Woods Collective.

What has often been called neoliberalism or globalism are post-colonial formations. Both have been directed towards the extraction and expropriation of value from people who have been figured as not the rightful inheritors of this earth. They relied on extractive modes of capital that hyper-exploit, dispossess, and make people expendable. In such a context, we urgently require connections to be made across environmental, anti-capitalist, and abolition movements in the core with agrarian struggles, movements for access to land, water, air, and the stuff of life for all. This session seeks to entangle border struggles with ongoing histories of violent dispossession, climate violence, and colonialism.

19.15—20.15

Closing Remarks

With **Nandita Sharma** and **Bridget Anderson**

Connecting academic work with anti-racist, abolitionist organising

Border Abolition 2021 begins from an understanding that there is a gap between academia and organising, and that academic conferences can be unwelcoming, materially inaccessible, re-traumatising, extractive and frankly uninteresting for communities fighting border policing in all its many forms. We also recognise that historically 'migration studies' as an academic discipline and elements of 'migrant solidarity' activism have problematically separated work around 'migration' from work around racism, racialisation and colonialism.

Nonetheless political education, activist research and theorising social change remain the lifeblood of decades of anti-racist organising towards the legislative and everyday abolition of bordering, policing and prisons. The past year has seen monumental movement-level efforts to study, educate and agitate while 'locked down' at home, with inspiring mutual aid and self-education movements. We think of Border Abolition 2021 not as a space to authenticate scholarly research but to strengthen actual relationships and conceptual connections between different struggles and their understandings of *border abolition*, to build capacity for activist research and to contribute to learning cultures for our movements.

Our committee has grown through relationships made through organising and activism, but nonetheless remains predominated with folks working within academic settings, the majority of whom do not have lived experience of detention, deportation and legislative hostility. We seek to embed anti-racist practice into how we organise Border Abolition 2021, part of that practice is learning from inevitable mistakes as we navigate the 'methodological whiteness' of conference-like events.

Each of our panels involves an initiative organising towards the abolition of borders, policing and prisons, initiatives who produce the movement's knowledge and theory about the world and how to transform it. We ask ourselves, our panellists and all our participants to share ideas and discussions in accessible, unpatronising language, in line with the 'Principles of Universal Design for Presentations' outlined below.

Safer Spaces Guidelines for Border Abolition 2021

The following guidelines are not rules but a set of suggested commitments we can all make, in order to build a positive shared space for organising the Border Abolition 2021 Conference. This set of guidelines was inspired by and modelled on [Sisters Uncut](#), [Abolitionist Futures](#) and [Imagining Abolition](#) policies, and we thank them for all their work, care and thought.

The guidelines are meant to help build our political commitments into our relationships with each other, while recognising that challenging oppression can be hard and we all make mistakes. These are guidelines through which we can develop a group culture that can foster a safer learning space for the conference in June. We acknowledge that a statement alone is not enough, and that this won't be perfect or meet all concerns - but we hope this can open dialogue and outline where we are beginning coming from.

- 1. Be aware of your privileges,** including less obvious or invisible hierarchies. Think about how your words, opinions and feelings are influenced and who they might exclude or harm.
- 2. Respect other people's emotional boundaries.** If unsure about boundaries, please ask. Listen and change your behaviour if someone tells you that you are not respecting their boundaries.
- 3. Take account of the different ways we have been socialised** (in gendered, raced and classed ways, and in relation to sexuality, immigration statuses and abilities). Be aware of how these social positions can shape our experience of the world and can manifest through inter-personal power-dynamics.

4. Please be respectful of people's preferred pronouns - i.e. she/he/they/ze (for more information see resources below). Display your own pronouns in your online name.

5. If you have acted or spoken harmfully, even if unintentionally, someone may have a conversation with you about it. If this happens, try not to be defensive. Listen and reflect on what they are saying even if you think they may be wrong. Be open to understanding the role your behaviour and plans can have in other people's experiences of oppression. For further guidance see 'Calling-In' in further resources below.*

6. Learning: If you don't understand something, please message the Host of each panel, or email the conference organisers on borderabolition@gmail.com. You may be directed to a book, website or skill-share to learn more. We are each responsible for our own learning and if we feel able, for sharing it with others.

7. Extraction: we aim to actively work against academic and NGO plagiarism of activist theories and work. We recognise that events like this can be a way that academics source and extract information for their research, often without credit and through putting pressure on people and groups experiencing border violence. We aim to combat this through the event, and have a dedicated workshop created by URBC (Unis Resist Border Controls) about resisting such forms of extraction.

9. Community Accountability: If incidents of harm occur, we will work collectively to support those who have been harmed and address the issues. If you experience or are aware of harmful incidents, we encourage you to raise it as a collective issue and not feel that it is your responsibility to deal with individually.

Further Resources

Principles of Universal Design via Imagining Abolition:

<https://sites.google.com/view/imagining-abolition/home/universaldesign?authuser=0>

Calling in: A Less Disposable Way of Holding Each Other Accountable by Ngọc Loan Trần

<http://www.bgdblog.org/2013/12/calling-less-disposable-way-holding-accountable/>

Calling In: A Quick Guide on When and How by Sian

Ferguson <https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/01/guide-to-calling-in/>

What to do if you are called out/called in: 9 Phrases

Allies Can Say When Called Out Instead of Getting Defensive by Sam Dylan Finch <https://everydayfeminism.com/2017/05/allies-say-this-instead-defensive/>

Guidance on Gender Pronouns: [https://](https://www.dropbox.com/s/ixpvasbm475wj82/Gender_pronouns.pdf?dl=0)

www.dropbox.com/s/ixpvasbm475wj82/Gender_pronouns.pdf?dl=0