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SPECIAL SECTION

INTRODUCTION: Border Studies: Past, Present, and Future

Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly and David Newman

Abstract: In anticipation of the fiftieth anniversary of the Association for Borderlands Studies (ABS), participants of the April 2025 annual conference in Seattle, Washington, agreed to collaborate on a collection of essays reflecting on the past, present, and future of border studies. BIG_Review is pleased to present this Special Section of 17 short essays by 19 scholars, along with the following introduction by the editors.

In April 2025, the Association of Borderlands Studies (ABS) celebrated its fiftieth anniversary at its legacy Conference—its annual North American meeting—held in Seattle, Washington, USA.

On this unique occasion, when a few hundred scholars were meeting to discuss borders, David Newman and I thought it would be wonderful to invite conference participants to organize two roundtables on the theme of *the border research agenda of the past, present, and future!*

Both roundtables were extremely well attended. On both occasions, the roundtables had space issues. The rooms were so full that many colleagues had to stand at the back and along the side walls to listen and engage with the speakers.

We asked colleagues to walk in with an informal paper, i.e. notes that would fit on the back of an envelope, so they would focus more on speaking and engaging with the attendees instead of reading formal papers. Following the conference, and due to the success of the roundtables, we also invited the speakers to contribute a short paper, up to 1000 words (two–three pages), on one, two, or all three themes—the border research agenda/border studies, either past, present, or future—to be published in *Borders in Globalization Review*. Indeed, we offered *BIG_Review* because it is an open-access journal that is thriving with more than 60,000 clicks and downloads in 2025.

David and I also contributed short essays, and today we are delighted to present to you the perspectives of 19 scholars **Anthony Asiwaju, Franck Billé, Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly and Jeff Corntassel, Kimberley Collins, Astrid Fellner, Jamie Ferrill, Ricardo Ferreira, Jussi Laine and Christopher Sohn, David Newman, Eva Nossem, Sergio Peña, James Scott, Laurie Trautman, Martin van der Velde, Machteld Venken, Birte Wassenberg, and Christian Wille.**

Yes, we hope you thoroughly enjoy reading these forward-looking and engaging essays on border studies in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Association of Borderlands Studies.

Because 2024 was also the year of the passing of Julian Minghi, we agreed to dedicate the special section to our colleague:

To Julian Minghi—May his memory be a blessing.

Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, University of Victoria

David Newman, Ben-Gurion University

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