

SEMINAIRE IDEX HOMES
(HOSts Migrations Exchanging Stories)

“EXPLORING LINKS BETWEEN BORDERS AND ETHICS”

4 mars 2020, 13h30

Salle Jacques Cartier, Maison des Langues

Jussi Laine

Assistant professor of multidisciplinary border studies
Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland

Ce projet HOMES a bénéficié d'une aide de l'État gérée par
l'Agence Nationale de la Recherche au titre du programme «
Investissements d'avenir » portant la référence
ANR-15-IDEX-02.

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BIO:

Dr Jussi P. Laine is an assistant professor of multidisciplinary border studies at the Karelian Institute of the University of Eastern Finland, holding the title of Docent of Human Geography at the University of Oulu, Finland. He is also the President-Elect of the Association for Borderlands Studies and currently serves on the Steering Committee of the International Geographical Union's Commission on Political Geography. By background Dr Laine is a human

geographer, yet in his approach to borders he combines influences from international relations and geopolitics, political sociology, history, anthropology, and psychology. Within border studies he seeks to explore the multiscalar production of borders and bring a critical perspective to bear on the relationship between state, territory, citizenship, and identity construction. Most recently, Dr Laine has published works on border mobility, migration, the ethics of borders and ontological (in)security.

ABSTRACT:

Borders remain vitally important features of our political world. They continue to make divide the surface of the earth into blocks that are easier to manage and mark areas of governance and sovereignty. They amplify the innate human desire to demarcate physical space and protect not just one's property, but also the sense of freedom. Indeed, most people do not question that countries should have clear borders and the right to control them. In this sense, national borders have been assigned with a high moral value. However, they undeniably carry considerable moral weight also in determining ethical responsibilities toward migrants, particularly displaced persons. Borders do not only divide physical space, but they used increasingly to

sort people according to the degree of their belonging to certain ethnic, cultural, political, and social groups. Who gets to decide the criteria based on which such sorting is made, is the question we need to address, as it is here where the ethical question become the most blatant. An important characteristic of contemporary border studies is its increasingly prevalent ethical nature. While the field has been engaged with questions of justifiable state borders and the ethical concerns related to their mere existence already for long, the aim here is broaden the discussion by bringing in a more holistic, and hopefully more balanced, perspective on the various, often competing, viewpoints. Paying attention to ethics is of importance not only for the sake of borders per se, but also because it is central to the evaluation of major changes to the global social, political, and economic order.