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Catherine Whittaker (Frankfurt)

Rethinking Gang Violence: Masculine Capital, Community Defense, and Fatherly Love in the U.S.-Mexican Borderlands

Drawing on twelve months of ethnographic fieldwork in the San Diegan neighborhood of Barrio Logan, this paper challenges simplistic but politically potent and pervasive narratives about gang violence by centering Loganos' own narratives and their performative context. Recent interviews show that some Loganos consider gangs to defend the community against the threat of police violence. They are thus involved in two kinds of uphill battles, one against police violence and one against dominant narratives about gangs. In the process, they turn the dominant racialized narrative on its head that police violence is needed in order to contain criminality. On the basis of men's narration of their life stories, I argue that local notions of fatherly love and the way they can both threaten and enable individual men's masculine capital are crucial to understanding recent gang-related violence in Barrio Logan.

This work-in-progress paper is part of a larger DFG-funded research project at the Collaborative Research Center (SFB 1369) "Cultures of Vigilance", LMU Munich (PI: Eveline Dürr).

Catherine Whittaker is an Assistant Professor at the Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany, and a Visiting Scholar in Anthropology at the University of California San Diego, USA. She is currently working on two book manuscripts, one on vigilant subjectivities among Latinos in the US-Mexican borderlands (with Eveline Dürr and Jonathan Alderman) and another on the interconnectedness of love and violence in Central Mexico (based on her 2019 PhD thesis at the University of Edinburgh). Her research specializes on structures of violence, gender and racialization in Mexico and the U.S.-Mexican borderlands, and her next project is looking at transnational flows of militarized masculinity.

Institutskolloquium Sommersemester 2022 (Leitung: Markus Verne)

Wann? Dienstag, 7. Juni 2022, 18:15–19:45 Uhr

Wo? HS 13

Weitere Informationen: www.ifeas.uni-mainz.de