

The Violence of Borders

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The process of globalization includes the opening of borders for some while closing borders for others. Consumer goods, wealthy individuals, and capital move relatively easily around the world while the poor, those born in the wrong places, and those labeled as potential threats cannot. Over the past fifteen years the field of border studies analyzed these changes and contributed greatly to our understanding of their historical causes, territorial extent, and political implications with a particular emphasis on crossing points, airport security, and Europe/North America. This paper considers the violent underside of the hardening of borders by analyzing the acceptance of the militarization of borders and the invisibility of the thousands of individuals who die at borders every year. These two processes combine to render banal the violence of borders, which sustains the current system of place based inequality.