

# Globalization and Sexuality: Redrawing Racial and National Boundaries Through Discourses of Childbearing



April 10, 2003,  
6-7:30p.m.  
Student Union  
Room 316

Challenging standard accounts of globalization that ignore sexuality, race, and gender, this lecture examines how childbearing discourses and practices have provided a means to redraw destabilized racial and national boundaries. Focusing particularly on the Irish Republic, Dr. Luibhéid shows that, historically, women were annexed to postcolonial nationalism through their role as child bearers, understood in racial and national terms, and institutionalized in social policy and law. Today, in the context of accelerated globalization, the Irish government requires new strategies to construct the nation as a sovereign space. Discourses and practices targeting asylum seeker women's childbearing have provided a means to reconstitute the Republic as a sovereign space with a legitimate national government, and have also generated new modes of racialization and racial hierarchies. Situating women's sexualized bodies at the heart of racial and national boundary-marking processes in a global era, the lecture concludes by describing some ways that these developments have been contested.

Eithne Luibhéid is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Ethnic Studies. Her research focuses on the connections among immigration control, sexual regulation, and racial formation in a globalizing world. Her book, Entry Denied: Controlling Sexuality at the Border, was published by the University of Minnesota Press in 2002. She has also published in journals including positions: east asia cultures critique, Journal of the History of Sexuality, and Journal of Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies. The Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research is supporting her current research. During the Spring, 2003, semester, she is a Resident Fellow at the BGSU Institute for the Study of Culture and Society.