

## Introduction: bordering intimacy

This book began on an EasyJet flight. Or to be more specific, it began when my partner and I were stopped from getting on an EasyJet flight.

In the early hours of the morning we had arrived at the airport to board a flight to Sicily for fieldwork and to attend a conference. As we queued to board the plane with our young son, the airline staff made a further inspection of my partner's visa documents and her recently acquired family migration visa and marriage certificate. Unsure of the rules that applied to non-EU citizens travelling with family members to the Schengen Area, the airline staff had to contact immigration advisers for their approval for us to fly. Since 2000, as so many of us have become accustomed to, airline carriers bear the responsibility for checking the documentation of anyone boarding a plane. And in doing so they enact the (inter)national border. Whilst the plane waited on the tarmac, it became increasingly clear that the airline staff were not going to risk allowing us to board before they had received an official response from their head office. Whilst having a legal right to travel with myself as an EU citizen to an EU country, my partner needed to confirm this right with the UK Permanent Resident card, which she had yet to acquire. 'You'll probably just be deported as soon as you land in Catania,' was the response of the ground staff as they finally confirmed that the plane would leave without us.

As we watched the plane fly away, we ruminated on the inequality of border practices that made my partner constantly experience precarity, not only in terms of increasingly limited rights in the UK but also access to mobility as a non-EU national. Whilst many of our colleagues' access

to the plane was seamless, barriers were raised for her, just as they were in everyday life in Britain. Years of legislative change have rendered the family route to settlement and rights into a precarious and uncertain process, with non-EU nationals finding themselves blocked from welfare support, subject to language, intimacy tests and high salary thresholds. This was merely another reminder of such precarity, brought into stark relief.

At the same time as we sat in the dour terminal building waiting to be formally led back 'across the UK border', our minds turned to other points of transit and (im)mobility that had recently been in the news. Throughout the summer of 2015, EU states and border agencies had intensified the policing of people fleeing war in the Middle East and structural inequality throughout much of Africa who found themselves contained in camps, forced behind barbed wire, left stranded at sea, managed through infrastructural blockings such as closing down railways, road checkpoints and of course air travel. Newspapers were still full of images of the scores of refugees drowned off the Sicilian coast where we were due to travel. Our situation was an administrative nightmare, a financial and professional inconvenience, stuck in a terminal for hours, unable to attend an academic conference. But it served as a further reminder that if some borders work to violently dismantle bodies, relations, kinships, others work through more mundane means of confinement. We would walk out of the airport with each other. My partner would continue to enact her limited rights to settlement under the guise of our romantic connection to each other, and in turn the privilege of my settled citizenship and whiteness. Others would not be afforded this right.

As we were led sternly by a member of the airline staff 'back through' the UK border (a border we had perhaps never crossed because we were never allowed to leave) the border agent again demanded to see our passports and visa documentation. Grumbling at this bizarre, Kafka-like process, the border agent angrily replied to us that 'this is what it takes if you want a secure border!' To which my partner replied: 'That assumes that we want a secure border.' More than the content of

this exchange, what was significant was the intimate connections this opened up.

Walking away from the desk, the member of staff escorting us turned to my partner and began to discuss, initially in hushed tones, her own experience of 'borders'. Something, it seemed, connected her to the experience of being stopped from boarding the plane and being forced to prove formal status again and again. As a self-identified British Asian she quite candidly began describing the everyday racism she experienced as a member of the airline crew. Her experience of customer service was saturated with derogatory references to her skin colour by passengers, racist language, even incidents of spitting, claims that she was not 'properly British' and often vile forms of Islamophobia, even though she was not in fact a Muslim. She then went on to describe how, as a part of her job, she was forced to monitor and regulate who could board flights, turn people away, question people's identity documents. She was torn, she said, and it caused her great discomfort; whilst experiencing solidarity with those she was policing, the economic realities of her life made the job, and following the prescribed rules, a necessity.

The intimate policing of where my partner could move to/from – in administrative errors, barriers to flying and the threat of deportation – meets here with everyday structures of race/racism in the UK, which in turn connect with the globally orientated management of mobility. Untangling these connections, which initially were merely *felt* and *sensed*, and to document them in a more 'analytical' manner has inspired the trajectory of this book and the further research and questions it poses. On reflection, the airline staff member's orientation towards my partner's exclusion, and sense of solidarity with those she was forced to police, reveal, I propose, a series of connections that are at the heart of the way that government, and with that bordering, functions in postcolonial Britain.

We might consider in this encounter how borders worked to manage intimacy, just as dominant ideas of intimacy, linked to love and family, organised (im)mobility. Not being 'family' enough to travel was a source of exclusion and precarity. At the same time being 'family' enough to

continue to live in the UK was also a source of limited rights and temporal settlement (especially read against the violence done to those seeking to cross into Europe from the Global South). We might suggest here that (not) looking familial (or looking familial for the state and related authorities) is a source of power but also abandonment (Povinelli 2011). Abandonment here relates to both the propensity for violence, social and biological death but also more cruddy and everyday acts of forgetting and neglect (in camps, detention centres, on boats lost in the Mediterranean). We are reminded here that the history of being excluded for not looking like, being recognised as, deemed a 'proper family' has multiple histories which relate to the intersections of gender, sexuality, class, but also race. Perhaps it is the power of race that brings these different acts of bordering together.

The airline staff member's experience of structural/everyday racism is a stark reminder that colonial ideas of who belongs or who is properly human are alive and well in Britain today. However, it should also remind us that race has never solely been about biological markers or skin colour. Colonial racism was equally arranged by characterising kinships, affective relations, intimacies as improper and 'undomesticated' (McClintock 1995). So, the weight of race flows through these border encounters, just as it charges and energises the policing of borders more widely. Borders, we are reminded here, are not merely document inspections in the airport space but are instead materialised long before in bureaucratic complexity, visa regimes, barriers to citizenship and infrastructural blockages, and are performed in the everyday racism and structural violence that the airline crew member was subjected to and was forced (through economic survival and labour market pressure) to enact. Bordering can be performed and policed by legal categories of the state, by international organisations and private companies, just as it is enacted in spit from the mouth of the racist.

In revealing a series of circulations that tie together questions of intimacy, family, race, empire, borders, this event opens up a series of questions that drive this book: what ties the policing of family at the border to the structures of race? What role does family play in the

management of mobility? How might we understand the coming together of questions over family, bordering and race as part of broader patterns of government and the distribution of violence in liberal states such as Britain? The purpose of this book is to explore how intimacy, manifest in dominant and authorised forms of 'family', is inextricably bound with the racial categories and governance of empire. And in turn how empire and colonial power is continually expressed, relived and resuscitated in practices of borders/bordering in contemporary Britain.

## What this book does

This book traces the role that intimacy and 'family' plays in the contemporary government of mobility; specifically, how borders function to control certain people and populations as part of the ongoing legacies of European (and more specifically British) empire. As the title of this book suggests, it explores how intimacy and borders relate to each other as a conduit for postcolonial governance – that is, how borders make intimacy but equally how intimacy makes borders and how this remains bound up with the remaking of racialised violence. This is what is meant by 'bordering intimacy'.

It is perhaps easier to consider how intimacy and family are made and policed through borders. For example, we can think about who is allowed to move across a state border or claim rights based on 'family' or 'dependency'. This concerns who is allowed to be intimate with whom and have this intimacy sanctioned, recognised and managed by the state. But this book also explores how dominant modes of intimacy *make* borders. This views intimacy and, more specifically, family as having political power. In light of this I explore how dominant modes of socio-sexual intimacy known as 'family' have been central to the organisation of personhood and violence in modernity, including questions of who can/cannot move.

European ideas of normative sexuality and domesticity (i.e. 'family') emerged within the ideologies and practices of colonial violence,

accumulation and dispossession, of which policing mobility through bordering was a vital tool. The global management of mobility began as an imperial project, relying on racial demarcations between ‘civilised’ (European) and ‘backwards’ (colonised) peoples. Central to such racial demarcations were ideas about which populations were capable of ‘proper family life’ and which were bereft and perverse. This book examines how shifting normative claims to family continue to shape how states restrict mobility, settlement and citizenship through bordering today. Whilst postcolonial states such as Britain now pledge to be ‘postracial’, ideas of who does family properly, who is capable of ‘real love’ and ‘real family life’, arguably continue to structure racial demarcations around who can belong, who must be controlled, who can be excluded. This raises further questions as to why we view colonial rule as a thing of the past rather than a present.

Britain (and with it other European postmetropolises) is still rarely analysed as a postcolonial state. That label instead conjures up images of the Global South, as mapped out in development studies and international relations; spaces of ‘illegitimate’ and often ‘authoritarian’ violence, detached from the legitimacy, freedom and democracy which supposedly defines the Global North. Despite the healthy upsurge in postcolonial and decolonial theory in studies of international politics (Anievas *et al.* 2015; Agathangelou and Killian 2016; Sabaratnam 2017; Rutazibwa and Shilliam 2018; Howell and Richter-Montpetit 2019), there is still a hesitance in bringing these analyses to bear on questions of government in spaces like Britain (although see Virdee 2014; Kapoor 2018; Shilliam 2018; Innes 2019). Whilst there is much historical scholarship on the British Empire, far less is said about how postmetropolises were and *remain* a site for ongoing forms of colonial rule (Barder 2015; Stoler 2016; Davies and Isakjee 2018). And, most importantly, how populations, communities and subjects both within and moving to these states are subject to the workings of colonial power and racial governance today. This of course reflects the contradictory place of empire in the wider social landscape of postcolonial northern states such as Britain. Colonial amnesia is rife in public discourse. And

yet, as events such as the EU referendum in Britain show, empire both continues to be a source of nostalgia and to shape political possibilities, imaginations and institutions (El-Enany 2016, 2017; Bhambra 2017a; Andrews 2018).

Despite a huge body of evidence demonstrating how the British state functions as the racial state par excellence (see Andrews and Palmer 2016; Institute of Race Relations 2018; Kapoor 2018), studies of international politics have still rarely ventured to trace and tease out these connections and tie them to more global histories of empire. That in 2018 the UK incarcerated more black men as a percentage of the population than the United States still raises little attention among international politics scholars (Elliot-Cooper 2016; Sturge 2018). Nor how the life chances of many, in terms of education, health, labour market access or immigration status are most powerfully stratified by race (Shilliam 2018; Danewid 2019). Nor how the UK continually polices racialised groups through counter-insurgency tactics born out of colonial war (Sabir 2017; Turner 2018).

Where race is studied in Britain it often remains disconnected from questions of intimacy, love or family. Putting these terms together still occasions blank stares. Despite an extensive body of postcolonial, decolonial and black feminist scholarship on family, sexuality and race (Spillers 1987; Roberts 1997, 2015; Ferguson 2003; Povinelli 2006; Lugones 2008; Sharpe 2010; Arvin *et al.* 2013; Scott 2013), such studies have made little impact on how government, rule and power is analysed. Burgeoning feminist and queer work on intimacy and geopolitics have provided nuanced and startling insights into how issues of the intimate and domestic relate to governmental power (Mountz and Hyndman 2006; Oswin and Olund 2010; Pain and Staeheli 2014; Peterson 2014a). And yet these studies still rarely connect with the continuity of empire (for an overview see Peterson 2017; although see also Burton 2009; Lowe 2015; Mendoza 2016). Equally, scholars of family, sexuality and race still have relatively little to say about borders (although see Agathangelou 2004; Luibhéid and Cantú 2005; Lewis 2014).

Perhaps more surprisingly, given the modern function of borders, empire, race and family remain just as underanalysed in migration studies. Despite claims throughout the 1990s that we were increasingly living in a 'borderless' world, late liberal capitalism has instead produced a proliferation of borders (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013). We now have a complex understanding of how mobility is policed and governed in northern states (Walters 2006; Tazzioli 2014; Vaughan-Williams 2015; Jones 2016) but studies still struggle to draw upon postcolonial, decolonial and critical race theory to understand such trajectories (although see Bhambra 2017b; Mayblin 2017; Moffette and Walters 2018; de Noronha 2019). Despite the fact that migration patterns are almost invariably embedded within imperial histories (materialised through kinship, labour patterns, wealth inequalities and linguistic ties), it is surprising how the study of migration and the governance of mobility and borders often overlook or downplay the role of empire, either as historical or contemporary experience (although see Lake and Reynolds 2008; Saucier and Woods 2014; Walia 2014; Danewid 2017). Prem Kumar Rajaram (2018: 627) argues instead that migration studies 'tends to study refugees and migrants as groups with no relation to the racial and class structures and hierarchies of the societies in which they reside. They are strangers, governed through "integration" policy and border management.' Against this trend, recent studies have begun to push a postcolonial analysis of race onto the agenda (Grosfoguel *et al.* 2015; Danewid 2017; Mayblin 2017; De Genova 2018; El-Tudor 2018; El-Enany 2020). As yet though, this work has rarely connected up with questions of intimacy, love or family.

An emergent body of work within migration studies and international politics has begun to explore the role of 'family migration' in wider patterns of control and bordering (Kilkey and Palenga-Möllenbeck 2016). The best of this work historicises and challenges how intimacy and family are defined and managed in northern immigration regimes (Bonjour and Hart 2013; D'Aoust 2014, 2018) by tracing the particular relationship between family and exclusion. Such studies have sought to understand how 'family unification' is policed (Bonjour and Block

2016; Carver 2016; Wray 2016), the relationship between family, love, heteronormativity and citizenship (White 2014; D'Aoust 2018), and the treatment of family in detention/deportation regimes (Martin 2011, 2012; Gupta 2014; Beattie 2016). This book deepens and broadens this work, and in doing so speaks to the enduring silence regarding post-colonial rule in modern Britain. It does this in three ways:

- 1) It traces how government in Britain remains bound to empire. Here Britain is not only treated as a postcolonial state but a space for the ongoing *remaking* and *reworking* of colonial rule. This provides an opportunity to recontextualise contemporary processes such as the control of mobility, the architecture of the hostile environment or security practices of the War on Terror as part of the fabric of colonial rule and imperial formations.
- 2) It provides an alternative account of the politics of love and family. By taking seriously the work of postcolonial, decolonial and black feminists, the role that 'family' played in the making of empire is revealed – that is, in the making and unmaking of personhood through race – *and* how this is continued into the present day.
- 3) It explores how borders/bordering provide a particular transit point for reworking colonial rule and regimes of the family. Here borders/bordering are treated as more than immigration policy (as they so often are in migration studies). It examines borders/bordering functions across numerous sites of government, from policing, welfare, education and housing to counter-terrorism (to name but a few).

Whilst there is fascinating work on coloniality, race, borders and family, these are almost always dealt with as discrete categories and processes. This book brings this work together by examining the circulations between borders and family, both historically and in the contemporary political landscape in Britain. This, I argue, opens up further insights into the international/global circulations of liberal empire and its relationship to violence.

## **Bordering intimacy**

In stating that this book is about bordering intimacy and the policing of family, what I want to emphasise is the political work that intimacy and family do. What it produces and brings together and equally silences and excludes. As I have begun to tease out, I am not only interested in how family is *policed* but also how dominant claims to family and intimacy also *police*. In the example I started with, ‘family’ is shown to make rights and mobility possible; just as these possibilities are closed down through acts of bordering (i.e. not appearing familial enough to travel). This opens up vital questions about the historical contingency of *who* gets to be a family. Or, more precisely, who is accorded the social and political power that comes from being recognised as sharing ‘real love’ and being a ‘real family’ (D’Aoust 2018). Being recognised (legally and culturally) as a real family opens doors (and borders) and possibilities; just as not being a real family closes them. To add to this, ‘family’ can also work as a rationale for creating borders, that is to say in the name of protecting family and with this the familial nation and ‘civilisation’. Just as borders make and unmake families (through deportation, containment or the offer of rights), claims to protect, sustain and foster real family also make borders appear possible, necessary and naturalised.

As feminist international politics scholars have long demonstrated, the power of family is not only enacted by states but also remakes states and (inter)national order (Enloe 1990; Peterson 1992, 1999; Stevens 1999; Parashar *et al.* 2018). States, lest we forget, constantly *make* families. Whilst this takes place within a wider historical and cultural milieu, states continue to relay the power to authorise and privilege certain affective relations over others, in the codification and performance of marriage law, inheritance rights, the organisation of private property and so forth (Yuval-Davis 1997; Cott 2000; Neti 2014). Nowhere is this more starkly revealed than in immigration and citizenship law and practice (Shah 2012). We might consider, for instance, how citizenship is often inherited through legal definitions of parentage, or ‘earned’ through evidencing intimate and romantic relations as a partner or spouse.

Intimacy codified as ‘family’, regulated by the state, is bound up with more than the organisation of movement; it also structures access to resources, wealth, property and exposure to spectacular and cruddy forms of violence and abandonment.

But states, and, with this, the liberal order, also rely upon ‘family’ as a site of reproduction, bound as this often is to heteronormative futurism (Edelman 2004). The family is the site for the continuity of labour, the nation and imperial civilisation (until the mid-twentieth century this would have been explicitly referenced as ‘race’). As the unit of biopolitical intervention par excellence, the family promises continuity of capitalist heteronormative order (Foucault 1991). So, whilst appeals to ‘family values’ show that ‘family’ holds symbolic power, it is also bound into the material regeneration of biological, economic and cultural resources. States do not just intervene in family but family energises and propels a broader heteronormative order and with it practices of borders/bordering.

Investigations into the politics of family have often centred on questions of gender and sexuality, justifiably as sites of oppression and social reproduction (Federici 2004; Enloe 2018). Despite powerful interventions (McClintock 1995; Collins 1998; Feder 2007; Thomas 2007; Puar 2008; Rifkin 2015) far less is still said of how family is also deeply racialised. This is why tracing the history of family, borders *and* empire together is of such importance. Despite the privileging of European and internal national histories of domesticity and family (McKeon 2005), imperial encounters and colonial experiments in creating hierarchies of humanity were central to the history of the family. Without comprehending the formative history of where ideas about family come from, and the role they had in European empire, we are unable to grapple with the contemporary work that appeals to family organise and produce (see Scott 2013). If ‘family’ continues to wield social and political power, who is left inside/outside this story matters.

‘Family’ has a distinctly colonial/imperial history. This is relevant to whether we are examining the role of family in European society or in the (previously) colonised world. The family was viewed throughout

the nineteenth century as the site for the reproduction not only of the nation but also of the empire (Davin 1978). Whilst states are vital in relation to the power of family, love and domesticity, as I noted above, we must remember that European states emerged as colonial and imperial before becoming national states (Bhambra 2016). So, the role of the modern state in making family is always/already imperial in orientation (and only later national).

In light of this, we should consider how claims to family, and with it, heteronormativity, are always bound to the making and unmaking of people within what Roderick Ferguson (2003: 78) calls ‘taxonomies of perversion’. Taxonomies of perversion were part of the spatial and temporal markers of empire. Imperial mapping of the world into spaces of civilisation and spaces of savagery was frequently premised on accounts and imaginaries of perversions from European ideals of family and domesticity (McClintock 1995; Ghosh 2006) – that is, consumptive domesticity, Christian marriage, heterosexuality and patriarchal gendered relations. Whilst this casts perversions of sexuality as a form of arrested development (Hoad 2000; Weber 2016), these distinctions were already racialised in terms of who could be properly human/modern and with it not-quite/non-human (Spillers 1987; Weheliye 2014). This was used in colonies to justify and shore up colonial dispossession, violence and subjugation (Trexler 1995). But it was also networked into metropolises with regard to who was identified as civilised and how people were incorporated into capitalist political economy. In light of this, family must be understood to play a vital role in claims to modernity and with it the capitalist heteropatriarchy central to the spread of empire (Wynter 2003; Quijano 2007). These are not histories that are behind us; they are instead alive in the fabric of how family functions today.

### ***Family and government***

To speak of family in relation to race-making, empire and borders, as I do here, is to demonstrate that such an analysis goes beyond the production of *symbolic* hierarchies. It is about material processes and

social organisation. In saying that intimacy and family *make*, I explore how claims to family were central to the ideology of empire and *practices* of colonial rule, of which I suggest borders and bordering are one important dimension. Claims to European domesticity and the bourgeois home not only placed people in a hierarchy of cultural inferiority, but this was also central to how they were governed, for example as bereft of humanity proper, as primed for labour, or conducive to genocide or slavery, as subjects of pacification and domestication. To Rifkin (2015: 11):

Populations are racialised through their insertion into a political economy shaped around a foundational distinction between public and private sphere, with the latter defined by a naturalised, nuclear ideal against which other modes of sociality appear as lack/aberrance.

It is not just that 'difference' was constituted through measuring people's 'progress' towards European modernity/domesticity but that who was viewed as with/without family structured both the rationale and practice of dispossession and violence. 'Family' was not just an ideology of empire, it was part of the raw materials through which people were governed. And with this, how mobility was governed. It became an anthropological, sociological and governmental category for discovering, including/assimilating and expunging different forms of intimacy and sociality which were different to the emerging European family (Amadiume 1987; Thomas 2007).

The point I make in this book is that we need to situate contemporary borders/bordering with these histories. Because, despite widespread forgetting and ignorance to the contrary, the management of mobility is shaped by these colonial histories of the family and empire. Borders/bordering play an active part in the push to contain, manage, expel and include/exclude people through modern citizenship. This is not separate from but historically conditioned by empire (including categories and laws of citizenship itself). Not only do the structures of imperialism underpin how and why people move to postmetropolises like Britain, but the practices that border people and work to exclude them are directly related to the management of populations across European

empires. This is not just about keeping certain people 'out' of places like Britain but also how the wish to exclude through colonial racism is also linked to internal forms of control.

To sum this up we might say that the role that family played in making empire is retold in border practices today. This is a broader point than merely suggesting that those who move for 'family life' are discriminated against. I go further than only looking at how people categorised as 'family migrants' are racialised and treated in places like Britain. Instead I examine how the imperial control of mobility was in part reliant upon different claims to protect or harness the family and that this structured the modern regulation of mobility. Further to this, I show how family does wider work in border regimes and in ongoing forms of internal colonisation in postmetropolises like Britain. External colonialism (in colonies) was always attached to internal colonialism (within the metropole) and this relationship intensifies through the practice of borders/bordering today.

To recognise the continuity and changes in the way colonial and imperial constructions of family work in contemporary government, Povinelli (2006) argues that whilst liberal claims to humanity often rely on the idea that 'love is universal', such apparently neutral claims remain bound to claims of superior civilisation and empire. Whether propelled through Hollywood romance or the legal apparatus of the state, 'liberal adult love depends on instantiating its opposite, a particular kind of illiberal, tribal, customary and ancestral love' (Povinelli 2006: 226). Properly romantic love is bound to white hetero- (and increasingly homo)normative coupledness, against which other intimacy and relations are viewed as (relatively) perverse.

Immigration law relies on sanctioning who can move on the basis of 'family life', just as citizenship law demarcates who can inherit property and rights through kinship. This has led to detailed practices of border officials attempting to document, evidence and decipher who can claim to be properly 'in love' – just as immigration law is a site for struggle over who is deemed properly familial – for example in the writing out and exclusion of polygamy from immigration law, or the writing in of

same-sex marriage (D'Aoust 2018). We can trace the colonial orientation of questions of family in the way that ideas of 'sham' and forced marriage dominate debates surrounding family unification in the UK. Or how the Home Office's Operation Equal disrupts wedding ceremonies involving foreign nationals on the basis that the marriage may be one of 'convenience'. Appeals to the cultural neutrality of love work to constantly resurrect the unmarked colonial history of the European family and domesticity.

To consider the durability of colonial rule, it is useful to consider Stoler's (2016) approach to duress. Imperial and colonial rule does not so much continue from formal empire but is readapted and repurposed. To speak of duress then is to consider reinscriptions, modified displacements and amplified recuperations of colonial rule (Stoler 2016: 27). However, colonial duress is about more than immigration law. As this book contends, border/bordering practices and the regulation of movement around intimacy and family is found in more than just immigration law, and in the policing of people with migrant status. Immigration policy provides just one tool that connects up with a myriad of other practices which attempt to confine, contain, expel and domesticate racialised movement. This is why I distinguish between the concepts of 'bordering' and 'the border'.

Throughout the book, I trace out how 'family' works as an ideological rationale and site of intervention that circulates through numerous areas of government – social work, counter-terrorism, citizenship policy, policing – for example in the joining up of the UK counter-terrorism strategy, Prevent, with social work and the policing of 'failed' Muslim families; or in the way that criminals prosecuted for grooming have been deprived of their citizenship; or in how ideas of childhood structure who is allowed to be a 'real' refugee. It is this broader form of racialised governance that I refer to as 'bordering'. In showing how these sites are forms of bordering, I connect the treatment of people moving as migrants to that of settled black and South Asian communities within Britain who are frequently policed as 'internal colonies' (Turner 2018). The emphasis here is on the interconnection between the racialised

governance and bordering of both ‘migrants’ and ‘citizens’. But at the same time, there is a need to be sensitive to specific immigration practices that are focused on creating hierarchies of mobility and rights through sovereign power. Thus, when I speak of ‘borders’, I refer to practices which have a specific connection to immigration policy – that is, the sovereign law of a particular state with regard to migration, settlement and citizenship. When I speak of ‘bordering’, I refer to the broader process through which people are made ‘out of place’ (Ahmed 2000). This speaks to how bordering was/is constitutive of the broader push to manage populations through colonisation and the shifting dynamics of imperial/racialised capitalism, which borders play one distinct part in.

### ***Violence and normalisation***

In exploring the connection between borders/bordering and family, I am interested in how they are bound to the distribution of violence – that is, biophysical force and harm, as well more cruddy and everyday forms of structural inequality and abandonment (Povinelli 2011; Sharpe 2016). In the example I began with, my partner appeared to briefly lose her right to be counted as familial, or familial enough to travel, and this points at the wider issues of this book – how dominant notions of who is family/who is not sustains certain bodies and relationships as more or less perverse and more or less human. Whilst the dominant appeal to family is of warmth, closeness and familiarity, we also need to turn some of these affective, common-sense attachments on their head. The ongoing power of heteronormativity furnishes particular bodies and affective relations but it also excludes others who are deemed not only unfamiliar but in turn unworthy/without value. This is more than organising who can *feel at home*, or who can *belong* (although this might be important). What I am interested here is how being familial – that is, with or without value – organises violence. Or, more specifically, how it energises, targets and normalises the violence of borders.

Take, for example, the dominant construction of the ‘refugee crisis’ in Europe which reached a peak in the summers of 2015 and 2016. A

common-sense refrain to justify the exclusion of refugees has been a focus on single men on the move. These men, we are told, are not 'real refugees' and neither are they real men. During the UK's 2016 referendum on EU membership, one of the dominant images of the 'Leave' campaign was Nigel Farage (at the time leader of the far-right anti-immigration party UKIP, and subsequently leader of the Brexit Party) standing in front of a poster of predominantly male asylum seekers walking through Slovenia. The words 'breaking point', plastered over the image, further revealed the threat of race instilled in this moment. When asked in 2018 if he regretted the use of such imagery, Farage questioned where 'all the women and children' were in the picture. To Farage, these were just men: 'Where were the old people?' he remonstrated. 'Where were the disabled people? *These were not refugees in any classic sense*' (BBC 2018a, my emphasis). The unmarked appeal to family here does vital political work to dismantle and make the (inter)national rights of refuge/asylum. We learn that 'real refugees' are not single brown men. Real refugees are 'victims' and 'families' (and, we assume here, whiter, heterosexual families). Single brown men are 'migrants', calculating economic migrants. If they were real refugees and real men, as the refrain goes, why did they not stay and fight in Syria, or Eritrea, or Libya (see Elshtain 1987)? For 'stay and fight', read protect their women folk, motherland and children as a real father would. Here the 'unreal' refugee/migrant is first presented as devoid of family – as a 'failed father' – and then presented as a racialised-sexualised threat to Europe (the danger of the single, male migrant).

This only makes sense once we are able to excavate how colonised populations were already posed as being unable to do family properly, and how family was tied to claims of modernity, humanness and civilisation. Moments such as this replay key imaginaries of empire, such as the threat of the 'black peril' (McCulloch 2000), the hypersexuality of the Orient (Said 1978) and the need to protect and foster the white family at all costs from savage hordes. Such demarcations and imaginaries are of central importance because they organise not just the abandonment of bodies and people (to camps, indefinite waiting, deportation or death)

but normalise and hide the function of race through an appeal to family values.

In light of this, this book is engaged in both examining how borders and claims to family are brought together to violently exclude, but also investigating the work that family does to normalise and build the conditions of this violence – that is, to (re)produce sensibilities and orientations through which empire is both remade and hidden from view. We should remember, as I stated above, that love and family *make*. They were central to the building of empire and with it connected to acquisition of territories, dispossession, accumulation, the regulation of mobility, processes of civilisation and domestication. Equally, they continue to make today in ongoing distributions of violence and government in Britain and beyond. Here this making must be understood in terms of how borders work to delimit, refuse, expel and exclude people as unfamiliar, but also how appeals to protect ‘proper family’ (often heteronormative and white) energise and rationalise borders both within and beyond the state. As feminists have long demonstrated, appeals to family are so powerful because they are *naturalised* and deemed ‘outside of politics’, this is why it is so vital to challenge and monitor the political work that claims to family enact.

Whilst one of the central claims I make is that family makes borders (and vice versa), family can also work as a site of powerful contestation and struggle. Because it has social and political power, claims to protect family can be used to make rights claims, to contest imperial repression and dehumanising violence (for ‘home’ and resistance see hooks 1999; Beckles-Raymond 2019; and also Turner 2016). In such struggles, a claim to family may rehumanise subjects by appealing to the dominant frame that ‘family matters’. An example of this might be campaigns to stop the incarceration of irregularised migrant families and in particular children in British detention centres such as Yarl’s Wood, or the separation of families through deportation regimes in Europe and North America. Appeals that families should not suffer can often work to contest (however momentarily) the racialised practices of detention, deportation and exclusion. On the one hand, we need to stay attuned to how appeals

to family can be unruly and work to contest violence; on the other, we also need to investigate the limits of this type of contestation. At what and at whose expense does the protection and inclusion of some as ‘family’ come?

It may be the case that the ‘inclusion’ of subjects or the extension of rights through appeals to family work to ‘reify the contours of legitimacy’ (Puar 2008: 126) of existing practices of exclusion and violence, such as citizenship and the colonial-racial state. But struggles might also leave traces and possibilities of more radical alternatives and less racially charged, colonial and heteropatriarchal capitalist futures. Throughout this book I try to demonstrate what a colonial reading of ‘family’ does to reveal the limits of such contestation, whilst recognising the way in which intimacies, dependencies and kinships sustain communities and often give rise to practices of survival within colonial rule (see, for example, hooks 1999, 2008; Rifkin 2015).

## Researching bordering intimacy

In exploring both the continuity and reworking of imperial sensibilities and colonial practices of rule into contemporary Britain, this book is dedicated to a particular approach to history. This is in many ways a ‘history of the present’ (Foucault 1984). I am interested in tracing where ideas, knowledges, practices, discourses and structures that shape the present emerged from and how their orientation and function may change or stay relatively continuous. For example, how knowledge of ‘family’ was produced by elites, from anthropologists to colonial administrators in the nineteenth century and how this (dis)connects with ideas of the family today, such as in border agents’ monitoring of family visas, or the monitoring and safeguarding practices of social workers. This is broadly about how certain ways of doing, thinking and being became entrenched within modes of power and rendered *normal* (Walters 2012: 120; on colonial archives see Arondekar 2005). One way of exploring such a history is through law, and the way the law builds

and collapses subjectivities, relations and bodies across time and space (Dayan 2011). An example of this is examining how colonial ordinances and acts of parliaments circulate across imperial space and how the law today builds and resurrects this architecture. Such an approach underpins much of the archival work in this book.

This is not solely a history of knowledge but also of practice. I trace where practices (which can also be legal practice) emerged from and what this tells us. For instance, in examining the history of borders/ bordering, I look at both the historical context through which the regulation of movement emerged (as a logic of government) but also where the specific practices that are used to govern people today – such as photo IDs, deportation and port inspections – came from (Ballantyne and Burton 2009). This reveals important material histories which in turn help us understand the orientation and functions of these practices today. It matters that we can trace the history of the passport and photo surveillance to the containment and ownership of slaves or the policing of indentured labourers (Browne 2015). This connects with how the exclusion of certain bodies and not others is organised through these practices today.

Revealing both the will to govern and the practices used to govern teases out in detail the shaping of modernity through colonialism in ways that are not always adequately addressed by work that focuses solely on issues of representation. Tracing where representative practices regarding race, gender, sexuality, class came from is of vital importance. These practices include orientalist imaginaries and inferior representation of body, mind, culture and so on (such as I sketched out above with regard to male asylum seekers). But I also want to supplement these histories by showing how tools, strategies and practices of rule and law emerged under imperial and colonial governance and how they are reused and resuscitated in Britain today, for example in the deprivation of citizenship or the use of marriage law to ratify legitimacy.

The analytical approach that I take throughout this book is equally indebted to feminist historiography (Stoler 2002, 2006) and feminist and queer geopolitical approaches to intimacy (Gopinath 2005; Lowe

2015; Pain 2015; Peterson 2017). There is an obvious connection to the intimate that runs through these pages: that intimacy and with that love, family, proximities and the innermost are always sites for the (re)production of power, and for the control and management of order. This follows from the most searing challenge of feminists to acknowledge that the personal is political.

Whilst this work is inspired by key debates in feminist and queer approaches to intimacy and family (Barrett and McIntosh 1991; Bell and Binnie 2000; Peterson 2014a), I put this into conversation with postcolonial and black feminists such as Elizabeth Povinelli, Christina Sharpe and Hortense Spillers, as well as scholars working in international politics on questions of international order and violence (Kaplan 2005; Owens 2015). Bringing this work together means better understanding the role of family with regard to the reproduction of government and the liberal international order (i.e. the intimate, the biopolitical and the geopolitical), and the very colonial and imperial and racialised roots of this role.

Drawing inspiration from Lisa Lowe (2015), I treat intimacy as an approach to historical and contemporary enquiry. Intimacy can work as a method that helps to collapse commonsensical approaches to space and time. Intimacy can help us explore and think in terms of circulations, for example the circulations of ways of doing, thinking, logics and rationalities that bind seemingly disparate and distant places, bodies and practices together. Intimate connections can make the past appear into the present. Thinking through the intimate in terms of time also helps us make geographical connections, from the globally distant to the proximate (Lowe 2015: 18). This helps us to recognise how processes such as slavery in the Caribbean, or the organisation of indentured labour in Tamil Nadu or South Africa, were not somehow separate but integrally bound to social, economic and domestic life in Britain and other spaces of the Empire. Intimate markers and connections remain – they remain in relations, ruins, and in structural connections, economies and modes of thought (Stoler 2016). These remains are important because they challenge the liberal push to divide time and history into the nation

state (Lowe 2015: 19; also see Ballantyne and Burton 2009). Equally, by following the circulations of ideas, logics and practices, we are able to explore connections that work across areas of government – welfare, policing, counter-terrorism, immigration – that share familiar characteristics and would otherwise be obscured.

One element of using intimacies is connecting what are often termed ‘macro’ processes of state formation, colonialism and geopolitics with processes of the everyday and the mundane (Legg 2010; Guillaume 2011; Smith 2012). Once we start exploring the joining up of processes and exploring what is connected up in the meeting of family and borders, we can explore the different social and political sites in which power is reproduced. Here I am interested in examining how seemingly disparate processes, such as popular culture, exhibitions, images, narratives, novels and emotions, work to reform and energise dominant ideas about family, race, borders, and thus play a powerful role in mobilising and normalising forms of rule, practices of the state and legal apparatus. Thinking in this joined-up, circulatory way is useful for exploring where borders go and what they do, as well as how ‘family’ emerges to condition and propel these forms of rule. For instance, I examine how photography exhibitions connect to the global/humanitarian response to mobility, or how drone strikes in Syria connect to the criminals tried for child sexual exploitation offences in Rotherham, how popular ‘confessional’ novels are linked to white nationalist appeals to protect the ‘real’ white family, or how the policing of sham marriage connects to the UK counter-terrorism strategy Prevent. This matters, because studying law, policy and institutional arrangements only gets us so far. We miss out on the broader cultural landscape in which these processes operate and certain ways of doing and thinking become normalised and connected. Equally, only studying the everyday, representational or mundane fails to show how rule operates with regard to the apparatus of states and global/international order. We thus need both. Thinking through intimacy and circulations gives us that.

Amidst these broad methodological commitments within each chapter I also develop and draw upon different research methods. Whilst archival

research of the sort I explored above underpins this work, this is supplemented with discourse analysis, intertextual reading of documents, institutional analysis, visual analysis, ethnography and interviews. The use of a range of methods is propelled by a desire to trace the multitude of sites through which government occurs and with that the way that ongoing modes of colonial violence are accepted and distributed. Rather than spending time justifying and explaining the methods used in the main text, I have offered endnotes, where relevant, to expand in more detail on how the evidence was gathered and analysed.

## Book structure

In order to take up this task, this book is arranged into two parts. The first explores in more detail the conceptual and historical trajectories that bring family and borders together through empire. The second examines the relationship between family and borders in contemporary Britain and with this, the duress of colonial rule. I first set out the mutually entangled history of family and borders under formal empire (chapters 1 and 2) before examining how different borders/bordering operate in the UK. The second part of the book is organised around tracing three different forms of borders/bordering and their colonial orientations, what I call ‘intimate borders’ (chapter 3); ‘sticky borders’ (chapters 4 and 5); and ‘visual borders’ (chapter 6). The final chapter (chapter 7) examines strategies and forms of resistance that have worked to contest colonial bordering, in social movements but also in creative activist projects.

Chapter 1, ‘Domestication’, further asks how we can understand the relationship between family, borders and empire. I argue that turning towards an analysis of domestication helps us understand how ‘family’ is situated in relation to state formation, the organisation of violence and the control of movement. Whilst the modern state has always been orientated towards domestication (pacification and producing [dis] order), this has always been a colonial and imperial project. It has a

colonial/global rather than national history. Domestication here relates to the order of the domus – the household, home and family – just as it relates to the means of dominating the unruly and the uncivilised (McClintock 1995; Owens 2015).

To fully flesh out my approach to domestication and its colonial/imperial orientation, I turn to an analysis of the figure of Bertha Mason in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (Amadiume 1846). This nineteenth-century novel provides a rich site to both study the material traces of Victorian Empire and to theorise the role of family and borders. I do this by examining the treatment of Bertha, who is confined within the attic of Mr Rochester's English manor house. I ask how might we understand Bertha to be domesticated. Through drawing together a literature on government, domesticity and coloniality, I show how she is 'bordered' within the attic (and later abandoned to die) because she is both bereft of and a threat to 'proper family'. Here I develop a clearer connection to the work of postcolonial, decolonial and black feminists and the role that family had in empire-making (Amadiume 1987; Spillers 1987; Povinelli 2006; Lugones 2008). I propose that we should understand the role that family has in terms of organising *development*, *dispossession* and *control*.

Drawing upon the theory of domestication I outline in the first chapter, chapter 2, 'Making love, making empire', takes up a history of family and borders across the British Empire from the early nineteenth century. It traces how family was central to the development, dispossession and control of colonised populations. This chapter shows that whilst family was fostered and promoted for the coloniser, the destruction of kinships through territorial acquisition, imposition of labour markets and colonial war was constantly justified because non-European/colonised people were deemed 'undomesticated'. In contributing to a history of borders/bordering, this shows how nascent practices of borders/bordering formed around the management of undomesticated movement – that which either ran counter to the expansion of the state, emergent imperial capitalism or the racialised-sexualised order of the colonial administration. Here we can understand how family connected up with the management of mobility. Notions of family could rationalise containment and sedentarism, just

as practices of expulsion and restriction were justified on the basis of the threat of interracial intimacies and the dangers to (white) family life. In this chapter, I begin to demonstrate that what we have come to know as immigration policy/law was experimented with in the control of movement across imperial space (particularly in settler colonies), before being entrenched in the metropole from 1905. I then show how immigration law worked to arrange intimacies of those moving to Britain around different taxonomies of family/perversion throughout the mid-to-late twentieth century.

After teasing out the conceptual framework the book rests upon in chapter 1 and the more traditional historical background in chapter 2, chapter 3, titled 'Shams', evidences how colonial logics and hierarchies are adapted and resuscitated in the present. It analyses the discourse of 'sham marriage' in the UK as a site of colonial duress. Sham marriage became an increasingly prominent issue in immigration policy throughout the 2000s, with elites and immigration 'experts' attempting to limit the number of people able to claim a right to settle in the UK as a 'family member'. This chapter first traces the racialised-sexualised coordinates of debates around sham marriage, debates which I show mirror discussions about the evolutionary hierarchy of marriage and family forms under the British Empire (who could be family/who was perverse). I thus ask: what is it to be a 'sham'? And what does the sham *do*? In the UK what has driven family migration restrictions has been a dual anxiety surrounding marriages of 'convenience' (i.e. for the benefit of immigration status) with concerns about deviant kinship practices such as polygamy, forced marriage and so-called honour killings, which are predominantly tied to Muslim communities.

I show how debates around shams link up with the wider history of bordering across empire, which I call 'intimate borders'. What has propelled this 'intimate bordering' has been a particular figuration of the 'unintegrated woman'. Intimate bordering tries to capture and govern the unintegrated woman, who is both at risk and risky. The last part of the chapter investigates how concerns about shams (sham marriages, intimacies or families) have increasingly been cast as both a national

and civilisational threat by their inclusion in counter-terrorism strategies prompted by the War on Terror. Since 2010, Muslim families have been increasingly subject to intimate bordering through the UK Prevent strategy, such as in the intervention of social workers into 'radicalised homes'. What this tells us is that imperial and colonial categories of 'modern' or 'backwards' forms of family life are reinscribed into the present day through often mundane practices of government – from family migration visas and integration strategies, to safeguarding in social work.

Following on from this, chapters 4 and 5 focus on how claims to protect 'real family' can create borders and in doing so rationalise and justify certain types of violence. In chapter 4, 'Monsters', I examine the commitment made by the Home Office in 2016 to deprive of their citizenship subjects convicted of 'street grooming'. Deprivation of citizenship has increased in use since 2002 and intensified from 2010, often targeting 'suspected terrorists'. In this chapter I use the threat of deprivation to explore how borders 'stick' to certain bodies and populations (and not others). Borders appear to stick to some people even when they have settled/formal rights of citizenship. The effect of this is turning 'citizens' into 'migrants' who can be deported and killed with impunity. I explore what conditioned the move to deprive criminals of their citizenship and explore how street grooming has been made into a particular type of monstrous act. The chapter traces how the monstrousness of this crime relates to the way this violence was posed as a racialised-sexualised threat against 'white girls' by 'Asian men'. If chapter 3 examined the figure of the at risk/risky unintegrated woman, chapter 4 examines the politics of the deviant/hypersexualised black or Asian man. This familiar colonial figure animates numerous sticky bordering practices in the UK, from deprivation of citizenship, to the assassinations of 'terrorists' at the end of RAF drones, to the policing of gangs. I argue that in promising to violently deprive 'grooming' criminals of their citizenship, the British state is partaking in a white nationalist fantasy to secure and protect the 'real' (white) family against all odds. Borders do not just intervene in the intimacies of populations. Claims to protect, sustain and foster family also work to energise and animate borders.

Chapter 5, titled ‘Deprivation’, continues the discussion of sticky borders by examining what acts of deprivation tell us about postcolonial citizenship in places like Britain. The push by the British state to expand the terms of deprivation and denaturalisation has the effect of making large numbers of British citizens deportable. It makes populations who had settled rights subject to authoritarian immigration laws which target migrants. Whilst use of authoritarian security practices like deprivation of citizenship, detention and deportation has increased during the War on Terror and through anti-Muslim racism, I demonstrate in this chapter how deprivation must be understood as formative of modern citizenship crafted under empire. Deprivation of rights today is bound to the deprivation of personhood that structured imperial and colonial rule (organising people into racial categories of human/not-quite/non-human). Rather than an aberration of citizenship, sticky borders instead reveal the (im)possibility of citizenship after empire.

In chapter 6, ‘The good migrant’, I ask who can be ‘included’ in contemporary Britain. Or, more specifically, what the ‘good’ or domesticated migrant might look like. I argue that examining who can be imagined/imagined to be ‘included’ tells us about how exclusion is both organised and normalised. To do this, I first explore how visuals (looking, imaging, being seen) are central to borders/bordering. This means investigating the technical history of how visuals, and with this photography, have played a role in colonial government. It also means investigating the cultural history of who looks ‘out of place’ and who belongs – in other words, who looks like a ‘real’ refugee, a ‘real’ victim, a ‘real’ family, and so on. This history, I show, is bound up with photographic techniques such as the family portrait, something which is increasingly relied upon into border practices today (i.e. in visa regimes, cataloguing/judging settlement and right claims). So, if borders are intimate, and if they are sticky, we learn they are also visual.

In order to answer what the contemporary ‘good’ migrant looks like, I explore how humanitarian approaches to the ‘refugee crisis’ in Europe have sought to photograph migrants in order to ‘humanise’ them. I focus on an exhibition in Sheffield, England, called *Arrivals: Making Sheffield Home* as one example of such a liberal, inclusive strategy. Whilst

different from more explicitly colonial ways of seeing migrants (as swarms, hordes, dangers, perverse) there are limits to this promise to 'include'. Not only do humanitarian and progressive nationalist promises to humanise migrants forget colonial/imperial histories, they equally risk forgetting day-to-day border violence through a celebration of progressive or tolerant 'whiteness'. This equally works to eviscerate and forget those that do not fit in and who can be violently excluded. Whilst appearing to be a family (heteronormative, domesticated) ameliorates migrants' troubling differences within this politics, migrants ultimately remain compared to the 'good' white host who is praised for welcoming and 'saving' them.

Chapter 7, 'Looking back', follows on from the discussion that concludes chapter 6 by exploring other ways of looking back and contesting borders. This poses the question: if humanitarianism and 'compassionate nationalism' can be co-opted and fail to challenge colonial power, then what other orientations, imaginaries and struggles can we turn to? Whilst the previous five chapters examine the duress of colonial rule in Britain, this chapter turns to practices of contestation and resistance. It draws from bell hooks's (1992) provocation that an oppositional gaze was always a central strategy against racist subjugation historically and continues today, even in the face of insurmountable violence. Whilst focused primarily on visual practices, this offers reflections on how various struggles contest the colonial politics of mobility, family, borders more broadly and how we can think this relationship differently. I offer three different ways of looking back: resistance, escape and decolonial aesthetics. Whilst all offer powerful challenges, I argue that decolonial aesthetics, linked to a broader decolonial politics, offers lessons for how we might think family and love otherwise than with empire.

In the short conclusion I reflect on the main conclusions that I draw across these chapters and explore why such a study is important. I then offer a few provocations on the absences and silences that echo through the book.