What does it mean to be a foreign worker in today’s global economy? How does being foreign intersect with assumptions about gender and sexuality? What are the ethical and political ramifications of this for individuals, organizations, labour markets and the state? These questions are borne out of a long history of the exclusion, abuse and discrimination of foreign workers, especially those who are women and sexual minorities. The conditions of the contemporary economy exacerbate this as the expansion of mass transport technology and the liberalization of global labour markets has meant a vast expansion of worker mobility.

Employment regulations, work practices and the management of organizations are all influenced by assumptions and norms about sexuality, gender, race, and nationality (Acker, 2006). This has significant ramifications for the lived experience of foreign workers (Essers, Benchop and Doorewaard 2010) and for the potential for their engagement in diverse organizing and resistance efforts (Yu, 2014). The ethical implications of this relate to differences in how people are treated, the rights they are granted, the forms of discrimination they face, and the freedoms that are open to them. That such differences are organized on both sexual and gendered grounds, risks situations where as foreign workers, women and LGBTI people can be exposed to ethical subjugation on account of their foreignness, and a dissolution of their rights on account of them being deemed secondary to their male or heterosexual counterparts.

To be a foreigner is to have crossed an ethical as well as a political border, and hence can bear social stigma and exclusion. To be a foreigner is often associated with being a stranger, an outlander and an alien, without access to the rights granted to locals. This is especially so when one’s foreignness is located in the postcolonial move from east to west, and south to north (Massey, 1998). Nowhere is this starker that in the long held conflation of control of access to work (Fang et al., 2013), control of migration, and control of women’s bodies (Van Walsum and Spijkerboer, 2007).

This phenomenon is not new. In the late 1800s, the Page Act in the United States targeted Asian women migrating for sex work. The act restricted Chinese women from entering the US by effectively conflating Chinese women’s migration with enslaved prostitution (Lubheid, 2002). Some hundred years later in the 1970s similar practices were in place in Britain. Government policy stipulated that to enter marriage a South Asian woman had to be a virgin. Enforcing this, British immigration officers subjected prospective Indian brides to virginty tests at the border (Smith and Marmo, 2011).
These examples illustrate how foreign workers are unequal as concerns employment, legal status, social standing, and labour market status. Cast as a double ‘other’, foreign workers who do not fit with white male heteronormative expectations occupy a special ethical position, one where they are, as the etymological trace back to the Latin foranus suggests, on the outside. As has long been the case, foreigners, slaves, non-heterosexuals and women are excluded from the public space of the polis, deemed not worthy of the same rights as others. This has not been without resistance and important forms of organizing and mobilization that have been motivated and carried out by foreign workers. This includes the domestic workers movement (Anderson, 2010), international framework agreements on safety in garment factories (Reinecke and Donaghey, 2015), workers’ centres (Fine, 2006), and Justice for Janitors (Erickson et al., 2002).

We are calling for papers that consider individual differences, context specific locations experiences and dynamic processes through which the sexed and gendered category of the foreign worker is constructed, enacted and resisted. These interests extend to how the category of the foreign worker varies historically both due to the changes in law, government policy, socio-cultural norms. Of central concern is how such changes influence work and employment practices, as well as how they are constitutive of workers’ subjectivities. The ethico-political implications of this are significant in terms of exclusion, discrimination, incorporation as well as resistance and mobilization. Papers might consider, but are not limited to, empirical and theoretical consideration of the following topics:

- Historical and current accounts of sexed and gendered distinctions in labour markets
- Intersections of nationality, race, and gender as related to workplace discrimination
- Changes to labour market and immigration laws and their effects on individual workers and/or organization’s work and employment relations
- Organizing and mobilization efforts by and around foreign workers
- Impact of foreign workers on host country labour and social movements and political processes
- Country specific gender and sexuality issues for foreign workers as they relate to legal, cultural, and organizational norms and practices
- Political asylum and the rights of refugees in the labour market and under labour law
- Variations in organizational and employment practices impacting foreign workers and their outcomes
- Social status, legal protection, and organizing of migrant domestic workers
- Transgender workers and their employment experiences
- Gender and the work of undocumented immigrants
- Management of identity at the workplace: foreignness, gender, and sexual identities
- Relationships among foreign workers: age, gender, and nationality
- Forced and/or unpaid labour as a mode of gendered work
- Foreignness, gender, and LGBTI experiences in the work of professionals and expatriates

Submission

Papers may be submitted electronically from July 31, 2017 until August 31, 2017 (final deadline) to SAGE Track at: http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/organization

Papers should be no more than 8000 words, excluding references, and will be blind reviewed following the journal’s standard peer-review process. Manuscripts should be prepared according to the guidelines published in Organization and on the journal’s website:

http://www.sagepub.com/journals/Journal200981/manuscriptSubmission.
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References