

00:00 - 00:01

Okay

00:01 - 00:02

so we don't need to make a separate

00:02 - 00:04

sound file for mine versus yours. Okay good. So I

00:04 - 00:07

was taking notes because I did not prepare anything, so

00:07 - 00:11

it sort of starts the dialogue right now but I

00:11 - 00:15

will talk about what does a border mean to me, uh,

00:16 - 00:21

In English the word border does not mean limits. Yeah

00:22 - 00:28

that sense of grenzen is handled by boundary and being

00:28 - 00:35

bounded rather- or limited indeed. So that's sort of an issue

00:35 - 00:40

of translation that I really had to think about because

00:40 - 00:43

to be honest one of the papers I'm giving, I

00:43 - 00:46

did not understand the call for papers until I started

00:47 - 00:50

until I rethought I had to put it back into

00:51 - 00:55

German in order to really understand what the organizers even

00:55 - 00:58

wanted because when I just read it and thought in

00:58 - 01:01

English, it really just made no sense because they wanted

01:01 - 01:06

papers that handled both what we would say is a

01:06 - 01:11

boundary and a border. So, even within European languages let

01:11 - 01:14

alone any other languages you have these sorts of subtleties

01:15 - 01:18

of each language and what the connotations of the word

01:18 - 01:24

are that have to be considered. [DSSM1]Uh, But so that whole

01:24 - 01:29

first part of it being limited. Nope, that means nothing

01:29 - 01:34

to me not with the word border. With the word

01:35 - 01:47

Limit, sure,.. [DSSM2]some discussion with another person

01:49 - 02:05

about where to register for the conference. Okay, in terms

02:05 - 02:13

of frontiers. Uh, Two things about my own experience I grew

02:13 - 02:17

up going back and forth between England and the United

02:17 - 02:23

States. So, in that sense crossing a border is something

02:23 - 02:28

that I experienced very young but that's a sort of

02:28 - 02:31

a yes and no, because of course it was something

02:31 - 02:36

your parents dealt with, right. That your parents held your

02:36 - 02:39

passport your parents talked for you and it wasn't that

02:39 - 02:42

different from travelling within the United States because it was

02:42 - 02:46

all by plane and because my family lived a couple

02:46 - 02:50

thousand miles away and my grandparents lived in a completely

02:50 - 02:56

different part of the country, uh, crossing a national border wasn't

02:56 - 03:02

that different from crossing a border, well from state to

03:02 - 03:08

State, just going to visit grandparents, [DSSM3]where it really started

03:08 - 03:13

to sink in was after you cross after you arrived

03:13 - 03:21

and the cultural differences, the differences in use of English

03:21 - 03:25

even between within the United States because I grew up

03:25 - 03:27

on the east coast and my grandparents were in Texas

03:27 - 03:31

and Oklahoma and they have a different accent and especially

03:31 - 03:35

in Texas a very different sense of what is polite

03:35 - 03:43

and what is impolite. Uh, One of the Texas experiences that

03:43 - 03:49

I most remember was, we went when my grandmother died

03:49 - 03:55

for the funeral and my father was talking to me

03:55 - 03:57

or asking me to think about you know, how do

03:57 - 04:00

we know we're in Texas. What is different about Texas

04:01 - 04:04

versus Connecticut? So we had that conversation and later that

04:04 - 04:07

day or perhaps the same the next day, I don't

04:07 - 04:11

remember we went to view my grandmother's body at the

04:11 - 04:16

funeral home and, you know, my father prepared me for

04:16 - 04:21

This experience told me that my grandmother's body would probably

04:21 - 04:25

look like a statue in that this was a solemn

04:25 - 04:30

kind of occasion and I needed to handle it as

04:30 - 04:33

if I were going to church, this kind of thing.

04:33 - 04:36

So we got to the funeral home and we viewed

04:36 - 04:38

her body We went out and there's a young man

04:38 - 04:41

with blond hair and a ten-gallon hat the kind with

04:41 - 04:45

a huge brim and as we're leaving he says to

04:45 - 04:52

Us. Y'all come back now And this is not something

04:52 - 04:56

that would have happened in Connecticut. This would have been

04:56 - 05:01

considered extremely rude because it was like

05:01 - 05:05

saying I hope you have another relative die. So cultural

05:05 - 05:08

boundaries of that sort.[DSSM4] And of course arriving in England

05:08 - 05:12

and especially although now you can buy anything anywhere at

05:12 - 05:15

the time, as a child I certainly developed a sense

05:15 - 05:17

of there are things that I can have in the

05:18 - 05:20

United States and there are things that I can have

05:20 - 05:25

in England and I cannot have Cadbury chocolate in the

05:25 - 05:27

United States but I cannot have peanut butter in England

05:28 - 05:31

and you know all kinds of realms of life So

05:31 - 05:33

these are the kind that's the kind of boundary that's

05:34 - 05:40

essentially gone because of the world market now. [DSSM5]Uh, Okay, so

05:40 - 05:48

moving on to borders as locking out. I more or

05:48 - 05:52

less accidentally found myself as a scholar dealing with border

05:54 - 06:00

Uh issues, and you know not to spend an hour on

06:00 - 06:04

This, but I ended up working on the German-Polish borderland

06:04 - 06:10

So the experience of border for those people was really

06:10 - 06:16

an experience of craziness that is people far away and

06:16 - 06:21

high up, suddenly just changing where the borders were and

06:21 - 06:24

doing this over and over and over again in their

06:24 - 06:27

history and on the basis of that expelling half the

06:28 - 06:31

population and regulating the use of language and throwing people

06:31 - 06:36

in jail and in camps and it was an experience

06:36 - 06:42

for them of just not just severe violence, But real

06:42 - 06:46

this is nuts, This is crazy. You know what are

06:46 - 06:48

we supposed to make of the fact that yesterday we

06:48 - 06:53

were German citizens and now we are Polish citizens? So

06:54 - 07:00

and of course just as a citizen watching what's happening

07:00 - 07:03

on the southern border of the United States this is

07:03 - 07:12

very, very distressing.[DSSM6] Really I mean I think we're all

07:12 - 07:17

the people that I encounter are almost in shock about

07:17 - 07:20

what we see happening now on the southern border although

07:20 - 07:26

the situation has been terrible for a long time. [DSSM7]Uh, But

07:26 - 07:28

one thing you can say about Donald Trump: he is

07:28 - 07:32

not subtle, so things that we become used to just

07:32 - 07:35

being terrible and terrible and terrible and terrible and we

07:35 - 07:38

stop thinking about it, well here comes Donald Trump and

07:38 - 07:42

now we're going to think about it. That's for sure

07:42 - 07:46

We just take it to that huge next step of

07:46 - 07:50

inhumane behaviour and we're thinking about it. No busy ignoring

07:50 - 07:56

it now. So, in the United States we tend not

07:56 - 08:02

to have garden fences. That's not the aesthetic. Uh, so if

08:02 - 08:06

you were walking through most like suburban neighbourhoods in the

08:06 - 08:12

US, you'll see this even expansive lawn and really only

08:12 - 08:17

each householder knows exactly where the property line is, but

08:17 - 08:22

the idea is that it all looks good. You know,

08:22 - 08:24

that you know you don't want to be the house

08:24 - 08:29

on the block that has weeds in your grass. So

08:29 - 08:32

that's a little different.[DSSM8] On the other hand, we also

08:32 - 08:38

have a proverb that says strong fences make good neighbours.[DSSM9]

08:39 - 08:47

So, reconcile that. We definitely have this myth that each

08:47 - 08:51

country should take care of its own people. The problem

08:51 - 08:54

is not every country can take care of its own

08:54 - 08:57

people or does take care of its own people, so

08:57 - 09:01

then those of us in the prosperous countries are forced

09:01 - 09:09

to think about how that's exactly supposed to work. Just,

09:10 - 09:19

I mean a comment on Rousseau. Mainly I got to

09:19 - 09:22

know Rousseau as the theorist of the state of nature

09:23 - 09:29

and glorifier of this idea that before we had civil

09:29 - 09:31

society and boundary fences and this and that and everything

09:31 - 09:35

we were in a state of noble savagery, [DSSM10]And since

09:35 - 09:40

I'm an anthropologist that was critiqued as part of the

09:40 - 09:46

fact that European peoples seemed to not be able to

09:46 - 09:51

imagine the cultural other except as the noble savage or

09:51 - 09:57

the savage savage and either way it's incomplete. That was

09:57 - 10:03

sort of the introduction to anthropology that we were handed

10:03 - 10:11

as graduate students. Uh, Now subways (laughs) Subways I can talk

10:11 - 10:22

about from my Chicago experience. As you may know the

10:22 - 10:26

United States has utterly failed to overcome its history of

10:26 - 10:31

segregation and Chicago is generally known as a so-called hyper-segregated

10:32 - 10:37

city[DSSM11] and as a University of Chicago student I got

10:37 - 10:43

a job tutoring which in German is Nachhilfeunterricht geben twenty

10:43 - 10:48

blocks south. So I would take the number six bus

10:48 - 10:54

and precisely at 61st Street after 61st Street I was

10:54 - 11:01

the only white person on the bus[DSSM12]. I also in

11:01 - 11:06

the wake of Ferguson again it gets too bad people

11:06 - 11:08

start thinking about it and talking about it again but

11:08 - 11:11

I was actually teaching in Egypt at the time and

11:11 - 11:16

there was an African-American teacher from the other side of

11:16 - 11:24

that particular boundary. [DSSM13]Now before Ferguson and the other incidences

11:24 - 11:31

of young black men being shot at point-blank range for

11:32 - 11:36

essentially no reason which has convulsed our country in grief,

11:37 - 11:40

rage and shame, she and I probably would not have

11:40 - 11:47

talked about race. [DSSM14]But given the atmosphere uh, we found ourselves

11:47 - 11:51

just having this long conversation about where that boundary is

11:51 - 11:54

on the number six bus line where it is on

11:54 - 11:59

the red line of the elevated tracks where it is

11:59 - 12:02

anywhere and this is an invisible boundary. This is not

12:02 - 12:08

marked and in fact basically the population is in denial

12:08 - 12:12

that it even exists. It's obvious but it was long

12:13 - 12:15

taboo to even talk about the fact that you get

12:16 - 12:21

south of 61st Street and nobody's white. Uh, She went to

12:21 - 12:28

school in the more integrated parts of the city But

12:28 - 12:35

of course every day she would have that experience, that

12:35 - 12:39

after a certain street, everybody was black. [DSSM15]And then we

12:39 - 12:42

got together in Chicago and we literally could not find

12:42 - 12:46

each other for half an hour, We're going back and

12:46 - 12:50

forth on cell phones, The reason being that I know

12:50 - 12:54

the streets north of 61st Street very well and she

12:54 - 12:57

knows the streets south of 61st Street very well and

12:57 - 13:02

we couldn't communicate across I couldn't explain to her where

13:02 - 13:07

I was and how to find me in a way

13:07 - 13:12

that she could understand with her south of 61st Street

13:12 - 13:21

knowledge of the streets. So, it's quite interesting. Borders do

13:21 - 13:26

make it clear who is responsible, but then who is

13:26 - 13:30

responsible in a world like the one we inhabit now?

13:30 - 13:33

and if we cannot think beyond those borders, we're in

13:33 - 13:38

Trouble, because a major portion of the world is in

13:38 - 13:46

dire poverty. [DSSM16]Uh, let's see. I think that's- Actually, I must've folded this over. So that's sort of what came to my

13:47 - 13:53

mind as you were talking. Uh, I told you a little

13:53 - 13:57

bit about my experience of borders growing up. Oh! One

13:57 - 14:00

more thing that I think is a generational thing, which

14:00 - 14:04

is I was born in nineteen sixty-three, which means that my

14:04 - 14:09

entire childhood and into my adult life was Cold War.

14:10 - 14:15

So my first really smack between the eyes- experience of border

14:15 - 14:19

was actually when I was fifteen I became an exchange

14:19 - 14:22

student in Germany and they took us to the German-German

14:22 - 14:27

border And I had never seen a border like that

14:27 - 14:36

and I was very deeply impressed by just the impermeability

14:36 - 14:39

of that border and being told okay the fence is

14:39 - 14:43

there but they have made the fence inside East German

14:43 - 14:46

territory so they can legally shoot anyone who crosses. So

14:46 - 14:49

the actual border is right here and you are not

14:49 - 14:53

to go up to that fence, it's dangerous. [DSSM17]And they

14:53 - 14:56

also took us to Berlin, and again even that was

14:58 - 15:01

Nineteen eighty, and the fact that the city

15:01 - 15:05

was still demarcated into occupation zones, and of course seeing

15:05 - 15:11

the Berlin Wall. So, for me it really was like

15:11 - 15:14

the world ended at the Iron Curtain. [DSSM18]And one of

15:14 - 15:18

my colleagues wrote a book called about the German-German border

15:18 - 15:22

called ♦Where the World Ended♦ and I literally somehow in

15:22 - 15:27

my mind had the feeling that beyond the Iron Curtain

15:27 - 15:30

the world was in black and white. Now where I

15:30 - 15:34

got that I have no idea, but I remember in

15:34 - 15:37

Nineteen ninety the train crossing into Poland and just feeling like

15:38 - 15:41

♦oh, it's in colour Of course it's in colour!♦

15:41 - 15:45

you know, (laughs) You know, it was an unconscious assumption

15:46 - 15:52

about what Eastern Europe would be like and uh the fall

15:52 - 15:57

of the Berlin Wall was very, very, and personally important and

15:57 - 16:00

a day that I will never forget. [DSSM19]It's the kind

16:00 - 16:04

of thing that, you know, you always remember where were

16:04 - 16:07

you on nine eleven? For my parents, where were you

16:07 - 16:10

the day Kennedy was assassinated? Where were you the day

16:10 - 16:15

Martin Luther King was assassinated? Growing up partly in Europe

16:15 - 16:20

and having been an exchange student in Germany and speaking

16:20 - 16:22

German fluently by the time I was seventeen and so

16:22 - 16:26

on I'm sure I have a closer relationship with that

16:26 - 16:32

experience than most Americans, but I will certainly never forget

16:33 - 16:34

exactly where I was and what I was doing when

16:34 - 16:37

I heard that the Berlin Wall had fallen and even

16:37 - 16:43

Now, I'm like tearing up thinking about that. So, uh, for

16:43 - 16:46

me just a couple years ago going back to Berlin

16:46 - 16:49

it was like a pilgrimage for me to walk all

16:49 - 16:56

the way around the border, and they have- it was very moving.

16:56 - 17:00

It was a conference. It was another borderland studies conference,

17:00 - 17:03

but it was near enough to Berlin and I was

17:03 - 17:05

flying in and out of Berlin that I made sure

17:05 - 17:07

to go to Berlin and the one thing I wanted

17:07 - 17:12

to do was walk all the way around the border.

17:12 - 17:18

So that's that thirt ytwo minutes, which gives us twenty eight to

17:19 - 17:20

discuss [DSSM1]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - linguistics [DSSM2]L2 - theme - border L1 - subtheme - separation [DSSM3]L2 - theme - documents, borders L1 - subtheme - passports, crossing, [DSSM4]L2 - theme - childhood, borders L1 - subtheme - social, cultural, linguistics, separation [DSSM5]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - social, cultural, separation, events (world market) [DSSM6]L2 - theme - borders, feelings L1 - subtheme - social, cultural, separation, events (past and present). stress [DSSM7]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - events, separation [DSSM8]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - allocation, social, cultural [DSSM9]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - allocation [DSSM10]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - events (before civil society and borders) [DSSM11]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - cultural, social, allocation, separation [DSSM12]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - cultural, social, separation [DSSM13]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - separation, cultural [DSSM14]L2 - theme - feelings L1 - subtheme - anger, stress [DSSM15]L2 - theme - border L1 - subtheme - social, cultural, allocation, separation [DSSM16]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - separation, social, cultural [DSSM17]L2 - theme - border L1 - subtheme - crossing, events, separation [DSSM18]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - events, separation [DSSM19]L2 - theme - borders L1 - subtheme - events, cultural, separation, crossing