



Love and Empire: Cybermarriage and Citizenship across the Americas (Nation of Nations)

Felicity Amaya Schaeffer

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The spread of the Internet is remaking marriage markets, altering the process of courtship and the geographic trajectory of intimacy in the 21st century. For some Latin American women and U.S. men, the advent of the cybermarriage industry offers new opportunities for re-making themselves and their futures, overthrowing the common narrative of trafficking and exploitation.

In this engaging, stimulating virtual ethnography, Felicity Amaya Schaeffer follows couples' romantic interludes at "Vacation Romance Tours," in chat rooms, and interviews married couples in the United States in order to understand the commercialization of intimacy. While attending to the interplay between the everyday and the virtual, *Love and Empire* contextualizes personal desires within the changing global economic and political shifts across the Americas. By examining current immigration policies and the use of Mexican and Colombian women as erotic icons of the nation in the global marketplace, she forges new relations between intimate imaginaries and state policy in the making of new markets, finding that women's erotic self-fashioning is the form through which women become ideal citizens, of both their home countries and in the United States. Through these little-explored, highly mediated romantic exchanges, *Love and Empire* unveils a fresh perspective on the continually evolving relationship between the U.S. and Latin America.

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