

Annotated bibliography

Compiled for the Cluster on Methodology and the Knowledge Production in Forced
Migration Contexts

By: Chizuru Nobe Ghelani

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Introduction: Context and search methodology

In April 2012, a research cluster on methodology and the production of knowledge in forced migration contexts was established by Christina Clark-Kazak (York University) and Galya Ruffer (Northwestern University), through the Refugee Research Network (RRN; <http://www.refugeereseearch.net/>). The cluster aims to address particular methodological, ethical and epistemological challenges to researchers who are engaged in research in forced migration contexts. In this way, we limited our search to literature that specifically addressed methodology **and** forced migration. In order to retain focus, we did not include related, but distinct literature on methodology in conflict or development contexts more generally.

As a starting point, we compiled the existing academic, published literature in English that addressed specific methodological, ethical and epistemological challenges that are unique to forced migration research. We began by examining the literature listed in syllabi for courses on research methodology in forced migration and related contexts and proceeded to a library search with keywords. Due to biases in the production of knowledge, this search yielded few publications by authors from the global south/majority world and those working from a postcolonial theoretical perspective. To address this issue, we asked the cluster members for assistance in identifying additional literature that might not be accessible via a conventional library search. Literature posted on the websites of RRN institutional partners in the Global South (i.e. Calcutta research centre, African Centre for Migration and Society, Javeriana University, Bogotá and The Division of Population Research in the Institute of Social Studies and Research in Tehran) was also examined as long as they were written in English. Further, we expanded our search to include grey literature in York University Library database as well as WorldCat database.

The resulting annotated bibliography below is intended to provide a guide to existing, recent social science, English-language publications. This annotated bibliography is not meant to provide in-depth analysis of each article but to act as an introduction to existing literature, thus it is mostly taken from the abstracts when they are available. When the authors did not include the abstracts, a brief summary of the publication is provided.

Key themes, gaps and questions

The existing literature on methodology and the knowledge production in forced migration contexts can broadly be categorized into two types. The first type addresses the methodological and ethical challenges that are associated with the politics of knowledge production in forced migration contexts. These challenges include but are not limited to: power relationships between researcher and researched; ethical issues within specific methods (e.g. survey research, narrative research, life history research and participatory research), and the issue of North-South relations in research partnerships. The second type of literature is concerned with particular methods, techniques and strategies of research methodology in forced migration contexts. They address issues such as accessing forced migrants, sampling difficulties in highly mobile forced migration population and accuracy of data. In particular, the research community of human trafficking has been active in producing literature that identifies

specific methods and techniques in order to capture the complex migration flows related to human trafficking.

The following points highlight some considerations and questions identified through the exercise:

- Lack of discussion around North-South relations in knowledge production

With a few exceptions such as the work by Bradley (2007) and Landau (2011), little attention has been paid to the politics of knowledge production arising from North-South relations in forced migration research. Given that most forced migration research takes place within the contexts of North-South global politics, more attention should be paid to the power dynamics resulting from North-South relations.

- Lack of discussion in regards to different methodological approaches arising from disciplinary differences

While it is acknowledged that there is a variety of methodological approaches arising from disciplinary differences in forced migration research, few have engaged in discussion as to how such differences affect the methodological approaches. Given the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature of forced migration research, more attention should be paid to methodological opportunities and challenges arising from interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary differences.

- Lack of discussion in regards to different epistemological approaches arising from local differences

The discussion of methodology and knowledge production in forced migration research is dominated by Euro-American or Western frame of epistemology. While a growing literature emphasizes the importance of understanding forced migration experiences and phenomena through the eyes of forced migrants themselves, few address how local cultural, historical, political and economic differences influence what counts as knowledge and how that knowledge is valued.

- Methodology specific to forced migration contexts

While acknowledging the relative lack of methodological discussion in forced migration research, Black (2007) asks whether there are and should be distinctive methodological approaches appropriate for researching refugees and forced migrants, as opposed to other 'hard to reach' or marginalized groups (p. 13). In reviewing the existing literature, we have similarly faced questions such as: what are the specific methodological issues associated with research in forced migration contexts? How are they different from the methodological issues in similar research contexts such as conflict and development?

- Attention to local specificities

Several studies, particularly those produced by scholars based in the global south/majority world, emphasize the needs to pay attention to local specificities in approaching the data empirically. For example, the methods to examine mixed migration flows in Africa (Berriane & de Haas, 2012; Macchiavello, 2003; Singh & Clark, 2013; Vearey, 2013) and the history of partition refugees in West Bengal (Bose, 2010; Dasgupta, 2003) were discussed.

- Un/commonness of methodological and ethical discussion in various forced migration contexts

While attending to local specificities is indeed crucial, it is equally important to ask: what are the overarching methodological and ethical issues that are common to forced migration research? How do methodological and ethical issues differ across the historical and geographical contexts? Is it possible to talk about common methodological and ethical issues as a field?

- Lack of south-produced literature and postcolonial analysis

While we explicitly made efforts to include literature produced by scholars and institutions in global south/majority world, there is still lack of representation of southern based literature as well as postcolonial analysis. As pointed out by some, this is a structural deficiency that reflects the production of knowledge in forced migration studies, which requires larger discussion in the field of refugee/ forced migration studies.

This document remains a work in progress. We welcome further contributions and recommendations of publications relating to methodology and the knowledge production in the forced migration contexts. If you would like to add any literature to the list, please contact Christina Clark-Kazak at CClark-Kazak@glendon.yorku.ca.

Annotated bibliography

Ahearn, F. L., Ed. (2000). Psychosocial wellness of refugees: Issues in qualitative and quantitative research. New York & Oxford, Berghahn Books.

In recent years, scholars in the fields of refugee studies and forced migration have extended their areas of interest and research into the phenomenon of displacement, human response to it, and ways to intervene to assist those affected, increasingly focusing on the emotional and social impact of displacement on refugees and their adjustment to the traumatic experiences. In the process, the positive concept of "psychosocial wellness" was developed as discussed in this volume. Noted scholars address the strengths and limitations of their investigations, citing examples from their work with refugees from Afghanistan, Cambodia, Vietnam, Palestine, Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, Eastern Europe, Bosnia, and Chile. The authors discuss how they define "psychosocial wellness," as well as the issues of sample selection, measurement, reliability and validity, refugee narratives and "voices," and the ability to generalize findings and apply these to other populations. The key question that has guided many of these investigations and underlies the premise of this book is "what happens to an ordinary person who has experienced an extraordinary event?" This volume also highlights the fact that those involved in such research must also deal with their own emotional responses as they hear victims tell of killing, torture, humiliation, and dispossession. The volume will therefore appeal to practitioners of psychology, psychiatry, social work, nursing, and anthropology. However, its breadth and the evaluation of the strengths and disadvantages of both qualitative and quantitative methods also make it an excellent text for students. Taken from publisher:

<http://www.berghahnbooks.com/title.php?rowtag=AhearnPsychosocial>

Tag: Multidisciplinary

Andrees, B. and M. N. J. van der Linden (2005). "Designing trafficking research from a labour market perspective: The ILO experience." International Migration 43(1-2): 55-73.

The ILO is particularly well placed to develop a better understanding of the labour dimensions of human trafficking. The bulk of the existing literature focuses on trafficking for sexual exploitation of women and children. While this has helped develop clearer definitions and uncover the mechanisms of trafficking, it only presents a partial picture. The starting point of ILO/SAP-FL was that trafficking for labour exploitation is significant and under-researched. The following article aims to critically discuss methodologies used for the purpose of this research as well as "lessons learned" and preliminary results. Our main argument is that the trafficking paradigm presents a useful entry point to better understand some of the worst forms of exploitation existing in the world today. If too narrowly defined, however, it limits rather than enlarges our knowledge base on exploitation linked to the movement of people. This also has consequences for taking action to eliminate human trafficking.

Tag: Mixed-methods

Bakewell, O. (2007). "Editorial introduction. Researching refugees: Lessons from the past, current challenges and future directions " Refugee Survey Quarterly 26(3): 6-14.

This special edition of *Refugees Survey Quarterly* reflects on some of challenges of researching refugees that arise from the problematic policy roots of the field and the practical dilemmas of conducting research among refugees. It draws together the views and experience of a range of researchers from different disciplines, backgrounds and levels of experience to reflect on the process of research among refugees. It is broadly structured in three sections on the following themes: i) the origins of Refugee Studies; ii) methodological and ethical challenges of researching refugees; and iii) sets out some new directions for future research.

Tag: Multidisciplinary

Bertrand, D. (2000). The autobiographical method of investigating the psychosocial wellness of refugees. *Psychosocial wellness of refugees: Issues in qualitative and quantitative research*. F. L. Ahearn. New York & Oxford, Berghahn Books 88-104.

This chapter is the result of my research carried out with refugees who were awaiting transit and resettlement from a camp in Thailand. The purpose of the research was to understand the dynamics of social and identity restructuring in the camps as the roles that refugees played were changed and altered. I will examine in this chapter the methodological and ethical issues in controlling and analyzing the interactions that take place during biographical interviews between a researcher and an informant. These interactive elements are an integral part of the research process, which need to be taken into account in order to: 1) express and construct the real setting of the information collected, and 2) analyze how subjectivity may interfere in the research process. This chapter includes 1) Exploration in which the main issues and the dilemma of the refugees are drawn out; 2) Analysis of content, context, and interactions; and 3) An expressive overview of what the refugee and researcher are doing in search of meaning.

Tag: Narratives, ethics

Berriane, M. and de Haas, H. (Eds.) (2012). *African migration research: Innovative methods and methodologies*. Trenton, NJ, Africa World Press.

While migration out of Africa has become the subject of growing interest and concern, there has been much less research into patterns of international migration within the continent, only a small fraction of which may result in journeys to Europe, North America and beyond. *African Migrations Research* addresses this gap by showcasing the sheer diversity of African migration patterns and the various ways they can be approached empirically. It explores a variety of less conventional research methodologies and addresses different methods of data collection.

Tag: Multidisciplinary; Mixed methods

Bloch, A. (1999). "Carrying out a survey of refugees: Some methodological considerations and guidelines." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 12(4): 367-383.

This paper explores the methodological issues that arise when carrying out survey research with refugee people. The paper examines the identification of the study population, the use of gatekeepers, translating questionnaires, sampling and the issues that arise when designing and carrying out cross-cultural research

within one country. Although the work reported on was carried out in Britain, the wider methodological concerns are applicable more generally to researchers in Europe and North America.

Tag: Survey research, research design

Bloch, A. (2007). "Methodological challenges for national and multi-sited comparative survey research." Journal of Refugee Studies 20(2): 230-247.

This paper will examine the ways in which 'textbook' survey research methods need to be adapted and refined for research with forced migrants, and the ways in which cross-national contexts, as well as research within one national context with forced migrants from different communities, affect the utilization of survey methods. Linked to this, the ways in which survey design issues need to be sensitive to the diversity between and within countries and communities will be explored. The paper will draw on two surveys, one a UK national survey and the other a multi-sited comparative survey in the UK and South Africa, to explore access to forced migrants in different contexts and the appropriateness of different modes of data collection between and within countries and communities (e.g. paper self-completion, face-to-face interviews and web-based surveys). The impact of politics, language and literacy, gender, and immigration status, especially irregular and insecure statuses, will be examined.

Tag: Survey research, politics of knowledge production

Block, K., D. Warr, et al. (2012). "Addressing Ethical and Methodological Challenges in Research with Refugee-background Young People: Reflections from the Field." Journal of Refugee Studies.

Ethical complexities associated with research involving vulnerable and marginalized population groups are well recognized, while practical solutions to these challenges are somewhat less well described. In this article we focus on strategies for addressing interrelated practical, methodological and ethical issues which may arise during research with refugee-background participants considered vulnerable. The article draws on a study exploring the impact of social networks and support on the resettlement experiences of newly-arrived migrant youth of refugee background in Australia. Three key sets of issues are discussed: developing research processes that maximize the benefits of involvement for participants while reducing potential harms; enhancing capacities for participants to give informed consent; and adapting research methods to heighten their relevance to the circumstances of participants' lives and enhance their engagement in the research. We argue that promoting ethical practice and methodological validity are mutually reinforcing objectives and illustrate how processes of ethical reflexivity were applied to resolve methodological challenges, promote autonomy and capacity of research participants and enhance the potential for outcomes to be rigorous and useful.

Tag: Ethics

Bose, P. K. (2010). "Refugee, memory and the state: A review of research in refugee studies." Refugee Watch 36(1-30).

In India refugee problem has been revisited in recent times through reviewing partition from various perspectives and vantage points. The partition constitutes a field of transformation and a discourse that shaped the postcolonial citizenship and politics. It is in this context that the figure of partition refugee became a site through which a range of question about nationality, security, right, and citizenship were negotiated in India. The discourse of partition reveals the official rhetoric as well as what Foucault has called 'subjugated knowledges' about identity, minor citizenship, gender and relationship in postcolonial India. This article provides a review of research that looked at partition refugees from 2001 to 2010.

Tag: Politics of knowledge production

Bradley, M. (2007). "Refugee research agendas: The influence of donors and North-South partnerships." Refugee Survey Quarterly 26(3): 119-135.

This paper examines how refugee studies and forced migration research agendas have been shaped by donor policies, and in particular by donors' support for North-South research partnerships. The first part of this paper considers the nature of donors' influence on forced migration research agendas, and contextualises donor support for forced migration research within broader trends in the financing of development-related research, including increased assistance for multidisciplinary, multi-stakeholder research, and the primacy of 'policy-relevant' research. The second section focuses on the implications of donors' tendency to support forced migration research through North-South partnerships. In this section, I explore researchers' motivations for entering into such partnerships, and discuss the obstacles they may entail for Southern researchers trying to articulate and advance their own agendas. At their best, North-South research partnerships are a source of mutual learning and capacity building that stimulate academic debates while successfully contributing to efforts to protect and assist the displaced. However, I contend that donors and researchers alike are well-advised to be frank about the limitations of this approach and use it only judiciously, as North-South partnerships are not necessarily the most productive way to advance research agendas grounded in the concerns and perspectives of Southern actor.

Tag: North-south, politics of knowledge production

Brenann, D. (2005). "Methodological challenges in research with trafficked persons: Tales from the field." International Migration 43(1-2): 35-54.

This article is intended to discuss methodological challenges to conducting research with trafficked persons in the United States. It draws from my experiences as an anthropologist involved in an ongoing book project on life after trafficking. By exploring the methodological difficulties and ethical concerns that I have faced as an anthropologist, I hope to lay bare some of the methodological challenges that researchers across disciplines, particularly social scientists who rely on ethnographic research, are likely to confront when examining this issue. The central focus of this article is on the possibilities of collaboration between

academic researchers, trafficked persons, and social service providers on advocacy, research and writing projects, as well as on the possibilities of trafficked persons speaking and writing for themselves. It also considers the role trafficked persons can play in building what the media and activists loosely term the “anti-trafficking movement” and asks what would have to happen for them to move beyond their “victim” status where they are called upon to provide “testimony” about trafficking, to participating in the decision making of the direction of the movement. Since it identifies obstacles to trafficked persons (to whom I refer to in this article as ex-captives) taking the podium and picking up a pen, it explores ways to mitigate potential problems when researchers “speak for” ex-captives.

Tag: Ethnography, ethics

Chatty, D. (2007). "Researching Refugee Youth in the Middle East: Reflections on the Importance of Comparative Research." Journal of Refugee Studies 20(2): 265-280.

This paper reflects on the value of comparative anthropological research with refugee youth. It examines a participatory research programme in eight field sites in the Middle East and North Africa. While recognizing the importance of the specific socio-political and cultural context of the different field sites, it has been possible to uncover similarities among refugee youth that would have been missed were it not for the exercise in comparison. What emerges from these findings, within research contexts which were viewed, by some, as unique and thus not comparable, are thematic similarities. Characteristic of many young people living in situations of prolonged forced migration are issues of multiple and conflicting identities and ambivalence to transgressed places; activism; and engagement in activities independent of existing humanitarian aid structures. Thus it can be seen that comparative studies can draw out the features and qualities which transcend borders, local cultures and the humanitarian aid regime to display the traits in common among refugee youth.

Tag: Participatory research

Chatty, D., G. Crivello, et al. (2005). "Theoretical and methodological challenges of studying refugee children in the Middle East and North Africa: Young Palestinian, Afghan and Sahrawi refugees." Journal of Refugee Studies 18(4): 387-409.

This article aims to address a number of conceptual and methodological challenges facing the study of young refugees. Much of the research on refugees has, until recently, been focused on adults, and to a lesser degree, on young children. Those studies that do include children are largely carried out in the domain of psychology and psychiatry and tend to pathologize and individualize. This article is based on observations derived from a six-year, multi-disciplinary anthropological and participatory research programme that examined the impact of forced migration on young people in the Middle East and North Africa: Palestinian refugee youth in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza, Sahrawi youth in Algeria, and Afghan youth in Iran. It argues that despite the challenges, an anthropological and participatory approach contributes to a greater, more holistic understanding of refugee youth.

Tag: Participatory research

Clark-Kazak, C. 2013. Research as 'social work'? Managing expectations, compensation and relationships in research with unassisted, urban refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Field research in the Great Lakes region: The story behind the findings. A. Ansom, S. Thomson and J. Murison. Kitchener-Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University Press

This chapter explores the ethical and methodological challenges of undertaking long-term qualitative research with urban refugees in Kampala who have no access to formal social services. Drawing on six months' fieldwork with Congolese young people in Kampala, it uses two case studies – the stories of Rose and Bondeko and my personal and research relationships with them – to highlight the ways in which a researcher may become aware of, and involved in, the difficult circumstances of refugees who live informally or illegally in urban areas.

Tag: Ethics, qualitative research

Clawson, H. J., M. Layne, et al. (2006). Estimating human trafficking into the United States: Development of a methodology. Washington, DC, Caliber, an ICF International Company.

The purpose of this study was to develop and fully document methods to estimate the number of females and males trafficked for the purposes of sexual and labor exploitation from eight countries (Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, and Venezuela) into the United States at the southwest border. This research represents the first phase of a two-phase project and; 1) Provides a conceptual framework for identifying potential data sources to estimate the number of victims at different stages in trafficking; 2) Develops statistical models to estimate the number of males and females at risk of being trafficked for sexual and labor exploitation from the eight countries, and the number of males and females actually trafficked for sex and labor; 3) Incorporates into the estimation models the transit journey of trafficking victims from the eight countries to the southwest border of the United States; 4) Designs the estimation models such that they are highly flexible and modular so that they can evolve as the body of data expands; 5) Utilizes open source data as inputs to the statistical model, making the model accessible to anyone interested in using it; 6) Presents preliminary estimates that illustrate the use of the statistical methods; and 7) Illuminates gaps in data sources.

Tag: Sampling, Statistical methods, epistemology

Colson, E. (2007). "Linkages methodology: No man is an island." Journal of Refugee Studies 20(2): 320-333.

The paper argues that given the diversity of the field of forced migration, research requires a multi-disciplinary approach and an awareness of the multiplicity of interacting factors which come into play. It examines two key texts published 20 years apart which exemplify the linkages approach. *Imposing Aid* (1986) studied the developing situation in Sudan as refugees arrived from Uganda in the early 1980s, and showed the unproductive nature of interactions between officials and refugees. *Landscape of Hope and Despair* (2005) examined the situation of Palestinians in refugee camps, where the refugees' own agency comes up against

the structural constraints of camp administration and the political actions of local and international power holders.

Tag: Multidisciplinary, politics of knowledge production

Cooper, E. (2005). "What do we know about out-of-school youths? How participatory action research can work for young refugees in camps " Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education 35(4): 463-477.

This paper reports on an initiative that took the strategy of youth consultation in programme planning one step further by putting a research project's design, data collection, analysis and presentation of findings in the hands of young women and men who have experienced education and discontinuity of education in a long-term refugee camp. The participatory action research (PAR) process is described and assessed with attention to how PAR may serve as a practical, credible and ethical methodology for research with refugee youths about refugee youths. This case study reflects that PAR can yield new insights for developing youth-focused initiatives and positive personal experiences for youth participants, including limited forms of empowerment. Ultimately, however, the structural inequalities imposed by refugee status require redress if the goal is the long-term empowerment of youths in camps.

Tag: Participatory research

Dasgupta, S. (2003). "Questioning a questionnaire." Refugee Watch 18(24-26).

The Population Studies Unit of the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata has framed a questionnaire to get qualitative information on undocumented migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal. This article examines the questionnaire and interrogates its motive. Why are all the questions, framed in the questionnaire, raised now? The author argues that the questionnaire regarding the migration of people from Bangladesh to West Bengal has been framed with some specific objectives in view. It contributes to the stereotype that migration from the east is unwanted and its effect on the society is negative. The qualitative information helps the power to "determine the forms of laws about society" and it functions as a "part of the technology of power in a modern state" (Hacking, 1991, p. 181).

Tag: Politics of knowledge production

de Haene, L., H. Grietens, et al. (2010). "Holding harm: Narrative methods in mental health research on refugee trauma." Qualitative health research 20(12): 1664-1676.

In this article, we question narrative inquiry's predominant ethics of benefit when engaging in narrative research on trauma and social suffering. Through a particular focus on the use of a narrative methodology in a refugee health study, we explore the potential risk and protective function of narrative trauma research with vulnerable respondents. A review of ethical questions emerging during the course of a multiple-case study with refugee families documents how narrative methods' characteristics clearly revisit the impact of traumatization on autonomy, narrativity, and relationship building in participants and, thus, evoke the replay of traumatic experience within the research relationship itself. Blurring a straightforward ethics of benefit, this reactivation of trauma accounts

for the research relationship's balancing movement between reiterating and transforming traumatic distress, and urges for the need to contain coexisting aspects of both harm and benefit in developing narrative research with traumatized participants.

Tag: Ethics, politics of knowledge production

Doná, G. (2006). "Children as research advisors: Contributions to a 'methodology of participation' in researching children in difficult circumstances." International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care 2(2): 22-34.

This article contributes to emerging discussions of child participation in general, and in research with migrant and displaced children specifically, by examining the involvement of children as research advisors in two projects: a study of foster care for separated children in Rwanda, and an analysis of the conditions of children outside parental care living in institutions and communities in Bangladesh. The comparison highlights the importance of conceiving participation as a research strategy, and advocates a 'methodology of participation' that considers varieties of participation and varieties of social change. Teaching research methods to children acting as advisors enabled them to understand what research is and to learn about the lives of other children, while contributing to decision-making processes in selecting questions, participants, interpreting findings and making recommendations. Children's input into research contributes to overcoming essentialist conceptualisations of children in difficult circumstances, and moving to viewing these children as social actors embedded in complex relational processes. At the same time, involving children in an advisory capacity considers them as active participants in the research process, as they are in social life.

Tag: Participatory research, politics of knowledge production

Doná, G. (2007). "The Microphysics of Participation in Refugee Research." Journal of Refugee Studies 20(2): 210-229.

This paper examines the involvement of refugees in the production and reproduction of knowledge of which they are ultimately meant to be beneficiaries. By using examples from research with Central American refugees and Rwandan displaced children, it considers forced migrants' roles as participants in research, their position in 'participatory' research, and the representation of refugees' voices in refugee-centred research. Power is intimately connected to the diverse ways in which participation unfolds, and the last part of the paper examines refugees' participation in research in terms of 'power that circulates' (Foucault) to show that they are not more or less powerful but vehicles for the circulation of power, simultaneously undergoing and exercising it.

Tag: Ethics, participatory research, politics of knowledge production

Dyregrov, K., D. A., et al. (2000). "Refugee families: Experience of research participation." Journal of Traumatic Stress 13(3): 413-426.

Because refugees can experience crisis, bereavement, and traumatization, there has been a rapid increase of research carried out with refugees. This study investigated how refugee families respond to participation in research. A previous

study explored how adults and children had communicated about the difficult question of repatriation after arriving in a new country. Did the in-depth interviews harm or benefit them? Are there any ethical risks in research on traumatized refugees? From an original sample of 74 Bosnian refugees (5–73 years), 30 family members from 9 families including 14 children aged 6 to 19, were re-interviewed. The refugees rated participation as positive. A few parents lacked information that could have enabled them to inform the children better before the interviews. The study shows that studies on traumatized/bereaved populations can have beneficial effects.

Tag: Ethics

Eastmond, M. (2007). "Stories as Lived Experience: Narratives in Forced Migration Research." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20(2): 248-264.

Stories are part of everyday life and constitute means for actors to express and negotiate experience. For researchers, they provide a site to examine the meanings people, individually or collectively, ascribe to lived experience. Narratives are not transparent renditions of 'truth' but reflect a dynamic interplay between life, experience and story. Placed in their wider socio-political and cultural contexts, stories can provide insights into how forced migrants seek to make sense of displacement and violence, re-establish identity in ruptured life courses and communities, or bear witness to violence and repression. The researcher must pay particular attention to his/her own role in the production of narrative data and the representation of lived experience as text.

Tag: Narratives

Ellis, B. H., M. Kia-Keating, et al. (2007). "Ethical research in refugee communities and the use of community participatory methods." *Transcultural Psychiatry* 44(3): 459-481.

This article describes the distinct challenges associated with conducting ethical research with refugees. A case example of an ongoing study of stigma and access to mental health treatment among Somali refugee adolescents resettled in the USA is presented. In developing the study, standard research paradigms were critically examined in order to take account of the unique aspects of Somali culture and experience. Community participatory methods were adopted to uphold both ethical and methodological rigor in the research. A participatory approach for developing ethical protocols within different refugee communities is recommended.

Tag: Ethics, participatory research

Gemignani, M. (2011). "Between research and researched: An introduction to countertransference in qualitative inquiry." *Qualitative Inquiry* 17(8): 701-708.

When doing research on topics that are sensitive and involve core dimensions of the researcher's identities and subjectivities, the process of inquiry is likely to generate significant emotions, attachments, and reactions that transgress traditional forms of data and research positions. If embraced and addressed, the researcher's emotional reactions can be an important source of reflexivity and data as well as creativity, motivation, and engagement. This relational aspect of the research parallels psychotherapists' experience of reacting to their clients'

concerns and narrations. This process—called countertransference (CT)—may leave the researcher open to vulnerability and the need to account for the necessary presence of personal biographies and identities in qualitative inquiry. From my research with refugees, I provide examples of my CT reactions and interpretations and the ways in which they became crucial assets to the study.

Tag: Ethics

Ghorashi, H. (2008). "Giving silence a chance: The importance of life stories for research on refugees." Journal of Refugee Studies 21(1): 118-131.

In order to capture refugees' experiences and narratives it is necessary to create space within research to be able to notice the untold within the interviews. This article focuses on the ways that Iranian women refugees (in the Netherlands and the United States) narrate their experiences of the past and the present or stay silent when the experiences are too difficult to talk about. Including the moments of silence within the process of analysing the stories has helped the researcher to discover different layers within the interviews. The main argument of this article is that the combination of the life stories method and the comparative nature of the research have especially helped to find out about the different ways in which the past is positioned within the present narratives. The life stories in particular have created the necessary space to listen to the often untold stories of refugees. This has enabled the researcher to go beyond the expressed words in order to understand different layers of expression within the narratives.

Tag: Narratives

Guerin, P. and B. Guerin (2007). "Research with refugee communities: Going around in circles with methodology." The Australian Community Psychologist 19(1): 150-162.

Doing long-term participatory research with refugee communities has changed our views on methodology for community research. For this paper, we draw on our experiences, rather than the community psychology literature, to show ways in which community researchers could productively change or supplement their typical methods and gain flexibility. In particular, we have learned to expect new "stories" to appear at regular intervals and to not place any final value on early understandings. We have found that intensive, participatory methodologies should be used wherever and whenever possible. Finally, we have learned to not expect research 'topics' to divide neatly into compartments when in the field even if those categories are used for funding purposes. After discussing a few more specific methodological issues and problems, we discuss two examples of our research to illustrate how these issues and problems arose and were handled.

Tag: Participatory research

Harris, J. and K. Roberts (2011). Challenging barriers to participation in qualitative research: involving disabled refugees. Doing research with refugees: Issues and guidelines. B. Temple and R. Moran. Bristol, The Policy Press: 155-166.

This chapter is concerned with the practicalities of involving disabled refugees and asylum seekers in qualitative research. While methodological literature in the minority ethnic field addresses issues related to overcoming linguistic

barriers in research contexts, literature in the disability studies field tends to focus on overcoming barriers associated with impairments and developing research practices based on social and political perspectives of disability. The strength of this chapter is that by focusing on experiences of engaging disabled refugees and asylum seekers in qualitative research, it transcends the traditional disciplinary boundaries of disability or minority ethnic studies. Specifically, the authors address the need for clarity about how qualitative research is carried out in the field, the barriers and challenges that researchers face, and the measures required to overcome them.

Tag: Qualitative research

Hugman, R., L. Bartolomei, et al. (2011). "Human Agency and the Meaning of Informed Consent: Reflections on Research with Refugees." Journal of Refugee Studies 24(4): 655-671.

Recent analysis of the ethics of research with refugees suggests that there are practical and theoretical issues to be addressed in achieving informed consent from participants who are in vulnerable situations. This article reviews the questions that are central to this concern, focusing in particular on the challenge of ensuring that the human agency of refugees is sustained and promoted. A model for research work with refugees is described and discussed, drawn from a participatory action research project, which demonstrates a way in which these core ethical principles can be achieved.

Tag: Ethics, participatory research

Hugman, R., E. Pittaway, et al. (2011). "When 'do no harm' is not enough: The ethics of research with refugees and other vulnerable groups." British Journal of Social Work 41(7): 1271-1287.

Ethics in social work research increasingly recognises that the rights and interests of subjects must be primary. The principal aim is to ensure that the subjects of research are protected from harm that might result from their participation in the research. In this article, research ethics are examined in the context of refugees and other vulnerable groups. It is argued that the ancient idea of seeking to 'do no harm' that continues to be a key principle in the refugee field, while necessary, is insufficient to ensure ethically sound research practice. A more sophisticated approach is required in research with such groups in order to ensure that social work's ethical responsibilities are realised. This article discusses a model of participatory research as a vehicle for developing research ethics in social work.

Tag: Ethics, participatory research

Hyndman, J. and M. Walton-Roberts (2000). "Interrogating borders: A transnational approach to refugee research in Vancouver." The Canadian Geographer 44(3): 244-258. Immigration is predicated on the centrality of the nation-state. The authors argue that analyzing settlement patterns and successful integration within a strictly national context is insufficient to understand the political, social, and economic relations which shape the lives of refugee immigrants in Canada. To support this claim, a less state-centric theoretical framework of transnational migration is outlined. The paper examines methods emerging from transnational migration,

focussing in particular on research with Burmese refugees who have settled in the Greater Vancouver Area. Based on 50 personal interviews conducted with refugee newcomers from Burma who are now settled in the Lower Mainland, the authors use the case study as a basis to raise methodological and theoretical questions about immigration research. We argue that the very politics of doing research with this group of refugees and other immigrant groups are shaped by the relations of power experienced before arriving in Canada.

Hynes, T. (2003). "The issue of 'trust' or 'mistrust' in research with refugees: choices, caveats and considerations for researchers." New Issue in Refugee Research 98.

This paper is based on issues raised in a research project investigating the experience of asylum seekers in the UK dispersal process. This study examines the refugee experience in its entirety, focussing on pre and post arrival in the UK. It investigates the history of mistrust and relationships of mistrust prior to arriving in the UK by examining the experiences of refugees from Myanmar in refugee camps and urban centres in Southeast Asia. It investigates mistrust within the UK by examining the context, experiences and perceptions of various nationalities of refugees dispersed throughout the UK. The research is built on the premise that refugees are the experts of their own experience and is therefore based on qualitative methods. Crucial to the success of these methods is the establishment of trust between the researcher and the researched. The refugee experience however, creates mistrust at a number of levels. Considerations of why refugees themselves mistrust; why refugees are mistrusted; who is trusted to provide information about refugees and how, as a researcher, the issue of mistrust can be handled are explored. These issues are examined in relation to their theoretical as well as practical dimensions.

Tag: Qualitative research

Jacobsen, K. and L. B. Landau (2003). "The dual imperative in refugee research: some methodological and ethical considerations in social science research on forced migration." Disasters 27(3): 185-206.

Social scientists doing fieldwork in humanitarian situations often face a dual imperative: research should be both academically sound and policy relevant. We argue that much of the current research on forced migration is based on unsound methodology, and that the data and subsequent policy conclusions are often flawed or ethically suspect. This paper identifies some key methodological and ethical problems confronting social scientists studying forced migrants or their hosts. These problems include non-representativeness and bias, issues arising from working in unfamiliar contexts including translation and the use of local researchers, and ethical dilemmas including security and confidentiality issues and whether researchers are doing enough to 'do no harm'. The second part of the paper reviews the authors' own efforts to conduct research on urban refugees in Johannesburg. It concludes that while there is no single 'best practice' for refugee research, refugee studies would advance its academic and policy relevance by more seriously considering methodological and ethical concerns.

Tag: Ethics, politics of knowledge production

Jacobsen, K. and L. B. Landau (2003). "Researching refugees: some methodological and ethical considerations in social science and forced migration." Forced Migration Working Paper Series 2 (Forced Migration Studies Programme, University of the Witwatersrand).

Social scientists doing fieldwork in humanitarian situations face a dual imperative: research should be both academically sound and policy relevant. We argue that much of the current research on forced migration is based on unsound methodology, and that the data and subsequent policy conclusions are often flawed and/or ethically suspect. The paper identifies some key methodological and ethical problems confronting social scientists studying forced migrants or their hosts. These problems include: non-representativeness and bias; issues arising from working in unfamiliar contexts including translation and the use of local researchers; and ethical dilemmas including security and confidentiality issues and researchers are doing enough to 'do no harm'. The second part of the paper reviews the authors' own efforts to conduct research on urban refugees in Johannesburg. It concludes that while there is no single 'best practice' for refugee research, Refugee Studies would advance its academic and policy relevance by more seriously considering methodological and ethical concerns.

Tag: Ethics

Lammers, E. (2007). "Researching refugees: preoccupations with power and questions of giving." Refugee Survey Quarterly 26(3): 72-81.

The phenomenon of forced migration challenges its researchers to tackle complex questions about the ethics of conducting research in the face of human suffering. The issue of giving assistance to the people included in one's research is an inescapable dilemma for anthropologists working in a world of inequality and injustice. This article argues in favour of opening up honest and self-critical reflection on this dilemma and on the presupposed power relations between 'researcher' and 'researched'.

Tag: Ethics

Landau, L. B. (2012). "Communities of knowledge or tyrannies of partnership: Reflections on north-south research networks and the dual imperative." Journal of Refugee Studies.

Networks and north-south partnerships have become prerequisites for much forced migration research funding. The objectives vary but usually include leveling the scholarly playing field, improving research quality, building southern capacity and relaying southern perspectives to northern policymakers. Reflecting on a decade's work in Southern Africa, this article suggests such initiatives often fall short of their objectives due to both mundane reasons and fundamentally unequal resource endowments and incentive structures. Moreover, by pushing southern researchers towards policy-oriented research, filtering the voices heard on the global stage, and retaining ultimate authority over funding and research priorities, these networks risk entrenching the north-south dichotomies and imbalances they purport to address. While inequalities are rooted in an intransigent global political economy of knowledge production, the article

nonetheless concludes with a series of practical steps for improving southern-generated research and future collaborations.

Tag: North-South, politics of knowledge production

Leaning, J. (2001). "Ethics of research in refugee populations." *The Lancet* 357: 1432-1433.

In the context of research with refugee and internally displaced populations, the author proposes the following guidelines:

- Undertake only those studies that are urgent and vital to the health and welfare of the study population
- Restrict studies to those questions that cannot be addressed in any other context
- Restrict studies to those that would provide important direct benefit to the individuals recruited to the study or to the population from which the individuals come
- Ensure the study design imposes the absolute minimum of additional risk
- Select study participants on the basis of scientific principles without bias introduced by issues of accessibility, cost, or malleability
- Establish highest standards for obtaining informed consent from all individual study participants and where necessary and culturally appropriate from heads of household and community leaders (but this consent cannot substitute for individual consent)
- Institute procedures to assess for, minimise, and monitor the risks to safety and confidentiality for individual subjects, their community, and for their future security
- Promote the well-being, dignity, and autonomy of all study participants in all phases of the research study

Tag: Ethics

Macchiavello, M. (2003). *Urban forced migrants in Kampala: Methodologies and ethical and psychological issues*. Johannesburg, Forced Migration Studies Programme, University of the Witwatersrand.

This paper tries to outline some of the most common and relevant issues that researchers might run into when undertaking fieldwork in the area of forced migration, specifically in urban settings. In particular, this article focuses on preliminary issues, such as decisions on how to collect samples and how to gain entry to the sample group. It also concentrates on ethical issues concerning forced migrants in general as well as situations in which forced migrants are mixed with the local population, which need to be carefully addressed by researchers during fieldwork in order not to endanger the often precarious safety of their sample members. Finally, it provides specific information about the psychological stress that researchers can experience after prolonged contact with forced migrants.

Tag: Ethics

Mackenzie, C., C. McDowell, et al. (2007). "Beyond 'Do No Harm': The Challenge of Constructing Ethical Relationships in Refugee Research." Journal of Refugee Studies 20(2): 299-319.

This paper highlights some of the central ethical challenges involved in undertaking social science research with refugees in conflict and crisis situations. It focuses on two main sets of challenges: first, the difficulties of constructing an ethical consent process and obtaining genuinely informed consent; and second, taking fully into account and responding to refugee participants' capacities for autonomy. The authors also discuss the challenges involved in applying the central normative principles governing ethics review processes—the principles of beneficence, integrity, respect for persons, autonomy and justice—to the context of refugee research. It is argued that researchers should seek ways to move beyond harm minimization as a standard for ethical research and recognize an obligation to design and conduct research projects that aim to bring about reciprocal benefits for refugee participants and/or communities. Some of the methodological issues raised by this analysis are discussed in the conclusion.

Tag: Ethics

Manawar, J. (2011). The community leader, the politician and the policeman: a personal perspective. Doing research with refugees: Issues and guidelines B. Temple and R. Moran. Bristol, The Policy Press 97-109.

Drawing on the personal experiences of the author, this chapter considers some of the issues that arise in service development and research that limits itself exclusively to community representatives, often self-appointed but sometimes elected, as sources of information. It explores the dynamics between community representatives, and the potential for interdependence with other key actors within the community setting in representing race-related issues, from specific and, arguably exclusive, perspectives that preclude the opportunities for other members of communities to articulate their views about what is happening in the development of social policy concerned with minority ethnic populations. The author argues that service development and research projects must counterbalance the dominance of these influences. In this way they might ensure that the range of views and ideas about how to tackle the issue of racism, including asylum and immigration concerns, on the ground becomes much more inclusive.

Tag: Politics of knowledge production

Mestheneos, E. (2006). Refugees as researchers: Experiences from the project "Bridges and fences: Paths to refugee integration in the EU" Doing research with refugees: Issues and guidelines B. Temple and R. Moran. Bristol, The Policy Press: 21-36.

This chapter describes a large-scale study on refugee integration across different languages and countries in European Union that employed refugees to carry out interviews. It discusses the challenges and advantages of using refugee interviewers in research projects and potential contributions to policy making.

Tag: Interviews

McDonald-Wilmsen, B. (2009). "Development-induced displacement and resettlement: Negotiating fieldwork complexities at the three Gorges dam, China." The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology 10(4): 283-300.

The present paper explores the process of an applied anthropology research project at one of the most controversial and politically sensitive recent development project, The Three Gorges Project in the People's Republic of China. The size and complexity of the project, as well as political sensitivities, impacted on the choice of research strategies and methodologies. Ultimately, it is the relationship between the researcher and the collaborative partner that is the most valuable resource for negotiating complex political landscapes.

Tag: Politics of knowledge production, qualitative research

Misago, J.-P. and L. B. Landau (2013). "Gutters, Gates, and Gangs: Collaborative Sampling in 'Post-Violence' Johannesburg." Journal of Refugee Studies 26(1): 116-125.

This account reflects on potential challenges and benefits of designing and conducting a research project with 'local' practitioners. The collaboration with local practitioners provided a surprising mix of challenges and opportunities. It reveals that operational agencies often collaborate or conduct research or assessments for their own purposes and are often biased due to limited research capacity, untested presuppositions, or a strong (and understandable) desire to ensure that their results affirm a need which the relevant agency can help to address. That said, operational agencies often bring with them extensive knowledge about the geographical and human environments that can assist in designing a survey and negotiating access to difficult and potentially hostile communities. While somewhat compromised, the data produced by this sampling strategy and collaboration is powerful and useful in revealing—and challenging widely-held assumptions about—differences in socio-economic and safety vulnerabilities among groups and sub-places sampled.

Tag: Politics of knowledge production, participatory research

Moran, R., Z. Mohamed, et al. (2011). Breaking the silence: Participatory research processes about health with Somali refugee people seeking asylum Doing research with refugees: Issues and guidelines B. Temple and R. Moran. Bristol The Policy Press: 55-74.

This chapter draws on the authors' experiences during the period 1998-2001 when they developed a participatory research project in Manchester, England with people from Somalia recently arrived as refugees fleeing war. It presents and discusses an early empirical example from the study that demonstrates how women from Somalia who are living in Britain are experiencing - and overcoming- barriers to their health needs within the primary care system, through creative interactions with healthcare practitioners. The authors analyse how their research approach has created a qualitative and quantitative dataset that is being incorporated into contemporary participatory action research protocol. It concludes by discussing the potential within this research approach for experiencing equality between academic and community-based researchers and community members.

Tag: Participatory research

Mulumba, D. (2007). "The challenges of conducting research among rural-based refugees in Uganda." Refugee Survey Quarterly 26(3): 61-71.

The article seeks to describe some of the critical methodological and ethical dilemmas that challenge the conventional social research. The paper is a reflection of the research experience in two rural refugee settlements by a scholar who completed her doctoral studies on refugee issues in northern Uganda not so long ago. While the study population comprised the Sudanese refugees in northern Uganda, the article in passing also alludes to the other aspects of research with other refugee nationalities in Uganda including the Banyarwanda, Congolese and Somalis (although no specific study of them is mentioned in this paper). The article focuses on the following issues: problems associated with protocol to conduct research amongst refugees in refugee settlements; accessing refugees in the rural settlements; methodological problems and ethical challenges; sampling difficulties in a highly mobile refugee population; accuracy of data, taboos and maximization of resources; obtaining informed consent; in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. For illustration purposes, a case study is included in the text. Lastly, the paper ends with concluding remarks.

Tag: Ethics

Omidian, P. A. (2000). Qualitative measures and refugee research: The case of Afghan refugees. Psychosocial wellness of refugees: Issues in qualitative and quantitative research F. L. Ahearn. New York Oxford, Berghahn Books: 41-66.

There has been much debate, both in the literature and in the classroom, about the merits of quantitative versus qualitative research. Qualitative research methods are usually seen in opposition to or even as less rigorous than quantitative research, but the best research includes both. The hallmark of qualitative research is not the use of a single method for data collection and analysis, but the researcher's use of multiple methods of gathering data and on-going analysis. This process uncovers a different type of data from that of strictly statistical methodologies, which focus on broader, less contextual issues. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the range of qualitative methodological approaches in assessing refugee wellness with consideration of sample size, reliability, and validity in the process of data collection, and then to discuss methods of data analysis.

Tag: Qualitative research

Penz, G. P. (2002). Ethics and social science in the analysis of development-induced displacement: Issues of theory and methodology. Ethics and social science in the analysis of development-induced displacement: Issues of theory and methodology. Toronto, Centre for Refugee Studies.

This paper is about two current team research projects on the ethics of development-induced displacement (EDID). The first is an Indo-Canadian project entitled "Economic policy, population displacement, and development ethics". The second is a Canadian project entitled "International development

ethics and population displacement: the nature and extent of Canada's obligations in developing countries". (The author is principal investigator for both.) Both projects are in the process of being carried out. This paper is therefore not about project findings, but about theoretical and methodological issues in the design of these projects.

Tag: Ethics

Pernice, R. (1994). "Methodological issues in research with refugees and immigrants." Professional Psychology: Research and Practice 25(3): 207-213.

A growing number of psychologists are becoming involved in research with migrants, particularly those from developing countries. This article highlights the unique methodological difficulties in research with refugees and immigrants. The main examples given are from Indochinese refugees and Pacific Island immigrants to New Zealand. Six areas of difficulty are identified: (a) contextual differences between migrants and the receiving society, (b) conceptual problems with translation of instruments, (c) sampling difficulties, (d) linguistic problems, (e) observation of etiquette, and (f) personality characteristics of researchers. Recommendations are made to resolve some of the difficulties encountered in each area.

Tag: Politics of knowledge production

Polzer, N., Tara (2013). "Collecting Data on Migrants Through Service Provider NGOs: Towards Data Use and Advocacy." Journal of Refugee Studies 26(1): 144-154.

Conducting methodologically defensible, logistically feasible and affordable large-scale national surveys of migrants is a serious challenge. This paper outlines the pros and cons of working with and through NGOs which provide services to migrants, in order to conduct a national longitudinal survey on migrant access to basic public services. This access method clearly does not result in a sample which is representative of a total national population of migrants, but the paper argues that there are also benefits of such a methodology. Apart from making larger and more longitudinal surveys logistically and financially possible in the first place, such benefits include the formation of active and collaborative networks among organizations in the migrant rights sector; capacity building within this sector around research and the use and meaning of empirical data; and the direct integration of empirical data into local and national advocacy work.

Tag: Politics of knowledge production, ethics

Powles, J. (2004). "Life history and personal narrative: theoretical and methodological issues relevant to research and evaluation in refugee contexts ." New Issue in Refugee Research 106.

Research and evaluation in refugee contexts requires a broad tool kit of methods that can be drawn on as appropriate, and what I am arguing for is the insertion of life history and personal narrative into this tool kit. There are, however, theoretical and methodological issues around life history and personal narrative that need careful and critical consideration before using these approaches. This paper aims to set out some of these issues, primarily from an anthropological

perspective. Questions that will be raised are for example: to what extent is a life history the subjective interpretation of someone's life or an accurate account of the past? How much does the presence of the interviewer affect what is said? Is genre important for shaping the way people speak about their lives? Are these approaches going to be suitable for use in all refugee contexts?

Tag: Narratives

Refugee Studies Centre (2007). "Ethical guidelines for good research practice." Refugee Survey Quarterly 26(3): 162-172.

The Refugee Studies Centre's Research Committee has decided that the Ethical Guidelines for Good Research Practice (reproduced below), adopted with permission of the Association of Social Anthropologists of the Commonwealth, should govern all research conducted under the approval of the Refugee Studies Centre. These guidelines contain general provisions on good practice, which are applicable to the conduct of research on forced migration. In addition to these guidelines, researchers may also be bound by more specific obligations under the regulations of their professional associations. This would be the case, for instance, for qualified psychologists or medical doctors, and other regulated professions. These guidelines shall be complied with by anyone who is conducting research under the sponsorship of the Refugee Studies Centre, regardless of her or his formal affiliation with the Centre. All researchers are required to complete the research ethics form indicating their compliance with these guidelines having been interpreted in light of the conditions and particular circumstances of each individual research project. The Sub-Committee on Ethical Guidelines shall be immediately notified of any serious ethical issue arising in the course of the research. Any serious concern regarding compliance with ethical standards will be forwarded to the Research Committee for further examination.

Tag: Ethics

Rodgers, G. (2005). "'Hanging out' with forced migrants: Methodological and ethical challenges." Forced Migration Review 21: 48-49.

Recent reflections on the study of forced migration urge researchers to take a step back from the forced migrants whose plight we seek to describe and analyse. This article re-asserts the continued relevance and importance of modest and small-scale qualitative approaches, generated largely through intensive informal and interpersonal interactions between researchers and the forced migrants. I refer to this approach as "hanging out", as a kind of shorthand for participatory approaches but also as a reminder of the informal and everyday nature of the interactions and processes that allow us to generate information. Such research can be conducted in ways that are methodologically sound.

Tag: Ethics

Samaddar, R. (2001). "Power, fear, ethics." Refugee Watch 14: 12-20.

The new mix of forced and illegal population flows and the inadequate appreciation of the new phenomenon in refugee studies raises the problem of method from several angles. First, studies of forced migration have been so far

pursued from economic and demographic angles and failed to connect the link between state-formation and population flow. Second, the notion of forced is so narrowly defined that the structural violence permeating these societies escapes our attention. Third, there is lack of historical analysis in the study of forced migration. Fourth, the politics of humanitarian regime subsumes the ethic and sentiment of care, protection and hospitality that are supposed to be the core of humanitarianism guiding international work on refugees. Fifth, there is a neglect of the subject in forced migration studies, the subject who moves, who makes the movement. The article elaborates these inadequacies of refugee studies by addressing three issues in the connections - power, fear, and ethics, to show why there is a need for refugee studies to become sensitive to the realities of power, fear, and ethics, and in order to be so, needs to reinstate itself in history.

Tag: Politics of knowledge production

Schmidt, A. (2007). "'I know what you're doing', reflexivity and methods in Refugee Studies " Refugee Survey Quarterly 26(3): 82-99.

What considerations should inform the choice of methods in Refugee Studies? In a widely shared dictum of social science, the primary research question largely conditions the methods chosen to answer it. More problematic is whether the meta-purpose – the ultimate purpose and target audience of our research – conditions methodology. This paper analyses the methodological implications of different primary and meta purposes of research in Refugee Studies and shows how and where the two are linked. One prominent feature of forced migration is that it frequently takes place in a highly political environment. This has direct methodological consequences. For a number of reasons discussed here, forced migration research can be described as taking place in what sociologists would call situations of 'heightened reflexivity' where both findings and terrain are strongly influenced by the presence of the researcher. Drawing on Weber's 'science as a vocation' and Barbara Harrell-Bond's defence of 'advocacy research', the final section of the paper suggests some of the methodological and ethical consequences of this fact.

Tag: Ethics, politics of knowledge production

Schweitzer, R. and Z. Steel (2008). Researching refugees: Methodological and ethical considerations. Doing cross-cultural research: Ethical and methodological perspectives P. Liamputtong, Springer: 87-102.

This chapter concerns with the methodological and ethical considerations in researching refugees. The authors suggest that research with refugees involves particular conceptual, ethical and methodological issues. They outline a number of approaches to refugee research including the dominant trauma approach, noting the particular tendency of this approach to exclude indigenous forms of knowledge and understanding. They review the emergence of alternative or complementary approaches which strive to integrate qualitative and quantitative methodologies and emphasise a return to human experience and a deeper eco-social and cultural understanding of the refugee experience. One such methodology, interpretative phenomenological analysis, is described in greater detail.

Tag: Qualitative methodology

Singh, G. and Clark, B.D. (2013). "Creating a Frame: A Spatial Approach to Random Sampling of Immigrant Households in Inner City Johannesburg." Journal of Refugee Studies 26(1): 126-144.

Adequate knowledge about the spatial distribution of immigrants, particularly those undocumented, can be a significant challenge while designing social science surveys that are aimed at generating statistically valid results using probability samples. Often the underlying expectation of documented information on a population's physical distribution and orderly surveillance units needed for random sampling is frustrated by the lack of knowledge about immigrants' settlement patterns. Addressing these challenges, this paper summarizes a strategy employed for surveying difficult-to-reach immigrant populations in the absence of a reliable sampling frame in inner-city Johannesburg. The survey applied a nationality stratified, three-stage cluster random sampling strategy involving an innovative use of spatial information from a geo-database of buildings within inner-city Johannesburg. An enumeration of the method and challenges faced in the data collection are discussed here to demonstrate the feasibility of probability sampling within non-homogeneously distributed population groups in the absence of pre-existing sampling frames.

Tag: Quantitative research, sampling

Smith, V. J. (2009). "Ethical and effective ethnographic research methods: A case study with Afghan refugees in California." Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics 4(3): 59-72.

Scholarly studies of refugees and other vulnerable populations carry special ethical concerns. In this invited case study of Afghan refugees in Fremont, California, I provide illustrations and recommendations of ethical research methods with refugees. I also compare and contrast some ethical issues in the U.S. with issues in Thailand. The qualitative, ethnographic methods I report here demonstrate how to conduct culturally sensitive investigations by ethically approaching gatekeepers and other community members to preserve autonomy, ensure confidentiality, build trust, and improve the accuracy of interpretations and results. Six groups at risk for being marginalized in multiple ways within refugee populations are described. Ten best practices are recommended for ethically acquiring an in-depth understanding of the refugees, their community, and appropriate research methods.

Tag: Politics of knowledge production

Stark, L., L. Roberts, et al. (2010). "Measuring violence against women amidst war and displacement in northern Uganda using the "neighbourhood method"." Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health 64(12): 1056-1061.

Background: Gender-based violence is viewed as a significant problem in conflict-affected regions throughout the world. However, humanitarian organizations typically have been unable to reliably estimate the incidence of rape, intimate partner violence and other forms of sexual abuse in such settings.

Such estimates are required to inform programming in contexts such as northern Uganda.

Methods: We sought to establish incidence rates for gender-based violence in internally-displaced-persons camps in northern Uganda. The assessments involved a “neighbourhood methodology,” in which adult female heads of household reported about their own, their sisters' and their neighbours' experiences. 299 households were selected for interview across four camps by using systematic random sampling.

Findings: Interviews were completed by 204 respondents (5 women having declined interview and 90 not having been successfully contacted). These respondents reported on themselves, a total of 268 sisters and 1206 neighbours. Reports with respect to these alternative populations produced estimates of overall incidence of intimate partner violence in the past year of 51.7% (95% CI 44.8 to 58.7; respondents), 44.0% (95% CI 41.2 to 46.9; respondents' sisters) and 36.5% (95% CI 30.7 to 42.3; respondents' neighbours). In the same period, estimates of incidence of forced sex by husbands were 41.0% (95% CI 34.2% to 47.8%), 22.1% (95% CI 17.0 to 27.2) and 25.1% (95% CI 22.5 to 27.6), respectively, with incidence of rape by a perpetrator other than an intimate partner estimated at 5.0% (95% CI 2.0% to 8.0%), 4.2% (95% CI 1.8 to 6.6) and 4.3% (95% CI 3.1 to 5.5), respectively.

Interpretation: Gender-based violence—particularly intimate partner violence—is commonplace in postconflict Uganda. The neighbourhood method provides a promising approach to estimating human right violations in humanitarian settings.

Tag: Sampling, qualitative method

Tang, S. S.-l. (2008). Community-centred research as knowledge/ capacity building in immigrant and refugee communities Engaging contradictions: Theory, politics and methods of activist scholarship. C. R. Hale. Berkeley, University of California Press: 237-264.

In this chapter, I discuss why practitioner knowledge matters and how a community-centered research process can draw out hidden and overlooked sources of knowledge that, in turn, enhance capacity and knowledge building in immigrant/refugee communities. First, I will discuss my role and responsibilities at the University of Massachusetts at Boston (UMass Boston) and a personal experience to demonstrate how my community and teaching commitments have influenced my research priorities and directions. I will then discuss a research methodology that I developed and employed in my research with two Khmer (Cambodian) American communities in Massachusetts. The research process will be described in detail, not as a “how-to” guide for readers, but as a way to trace how bilingual and bicultural community practitioners have become knowledge producers. Finally, I will reflect on my academic journey and explain why I consider nepantla, the space-in-between, to be a habitat for my research, political activism, and intellectual positioning.

Tag: Politics of knowledge production

Temple, B. and R. Edwards (2011). Limited exchanges: approaches to involving people who do not speak English in research and service development. Doing research with refugees: Issues and guidelines B. Temple and R. Moran. Bristol, The Policy Press: 37-54.

This chapter is concerned with how to involve people who do not speak English in such a way that acknowledges that there are baseline language issues whatever level and method of involvement is chosen. The authors examine the literature on issues in translation and their own research projects in order to demonstrate that applying some of the concepts developed in translation studies to research and service development with interpreters have many advantages. They conclude that to meaningfully engage with people who speak little or no English, English-speaking researchers need to talk to the interpreters and translators they are working with about their perspectives on the issues being discussed.

Tag: Use of interpreters/ translators

Temple, B. and R. Moran, Eds. (2011). Doing research with refugees: Issues and guidelines. Bristol, The Policy Press.

This book is the first specifically to explore methodological issues relating to the involvement of refugees in both service evaluation and development and research more generally. It builds on a two-year seminar series funded by the ESRC and attended by members of a range of statutory and voluntary organisations, as well as academics and refugees themselves. The participants jointly drew up a set of good practice guidelines that are re-produced in the book for the first time. Key features include a focus on the methodology for active involvement of refugees; a discussion of barriers to involvement; suggestions for overcoming barriers; analysis of existing practices and ideas for change and a discussion of the implications for policy, research and practice. Doing research with refugees is essential reading for anyone working with in the field. This includes academics, researchers, health and social care providers and voluntary organisations. Refugees themselves who are interested in their role in service evaluation, development and research will also find the book of interest. Taken from publisher: <http://www.policypress.co.uk/display.asp?K=9781847429056>

Tag: Multidisciplinary

Trait, K. (2011). Refugee voices as evidence in policy and practice. Doing research with refugees: Issues and guidelines. B. Temple and R. Moran. Bristol, The Policy Press: 133-153.

In the absence of a long-standing rich evidence base of refugee voices and experiences, this chapter argues that the existing government evidence base needs to be complemented and supplemented by other sources. It shows how the work of the Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees (ICAR) at Kings College London, in identifying and recording sources of refugee experiences and voices, could be used to contribute evidence to influence policy making. The sources include: independently funded exploratory university research; research and studies by local authorities; research by the voluntary sector in the form of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and refugee organisations; and research commissioned by refugee community organisations (RCOs) using asylum seeker

and refugee experiences. The author demonstrates how a broader evidence base of refugee experiences and voices might be built up using these sources.

Tag: Narratives

Tyldum, G. and A. Brunovskis (2005). "Describing the unobserved: Methodological challenges in empirical studies on human trafficking." *International Migration* 43(1/2): 17-34.

In this paper we will discuss the production of various types of data on human trafficking, analyse existing data and research, and suggest methods for improving enhanced data collection techniques and developing new methodologies. We will focus both on the development of estimates of victims of trafficking, as well as the production of data that describes the characteristics of this group. The discussion will be based on a review of publications on trafficking for sexual exploitation in Europe (Tyldum et al., forthcoming), as well as our own experiences from the study "Crossing Borders", on transnational prostitution and trafficking in Oslo (Brunovskis and Tyldum, 2004). During our research we found some answers, but also met with several questions and challenges relating to obtaining the best possible quality of data. We hope that our experience in this field may be of use to others working on the same topic, a research field that indeed holds great challenges, but through its urgency and importance also great rewards.

Tag: Sampling, statistical methods

Vearey, J. (2013). "Sampling in an Urban Environment: Overcoming Complexities and Capturing Differences." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 26(1): 155-162.

Through the discussion of the methodological and ethical challenges experienced when designing and implementing a cross-sectional household survey exploring linkages between migration, HIV and urban livelihoods in Johannesburg, this paper argues that it is possible to generate data sufficiently representative of the complexities and differences present in an African urban environment. This is achieved through employing purposive and random sampling techniques across both urban formal (three suburbs in the inner city) and urban informal (an informal settlement on the edge of the city) areas. Urban informal settlements present particular challenges requiring extensive community engagement and mapping to develop a sufficiently representative sampling frame.

Tag: Sampling, statistical methods

Voutira, E. D., Giorgia (2007). "Refugee research methodologies: Consolidation and transformation of a field." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20(2): 163-171.

Editorial introduction: In this special issue on refugee research methodologies, the concept 'refugee' was chosen as the key term to synthesize the varieties of issues relevant to forced migration research. In spite of the political and administrative devalorization of the term, in our view 'refugees' continue to challenge our imagination and represent a 'categorical anomaly' (Malkki 1990) that remains irreducible to legal or administrative labels. It is these labels that have declined in currency, while an appreciation of the philosophical, historical, social and cultural connotations of the meaning of the term 'refugee' reveals that

it continues to have a great deal of currency. 'Refugee' is a complex category (albeit with a dwindling constituency), which denotes those who undergo forcible uprooting, who lack protection, are stateless, and it is in this broader social-historical meaning that we have chosen to retain 'refugee' as a central concept in this Issue.

Tag: Sampling, category

Vigneswaran, D. (2009). "Residential sampling and Johannesburg's forced migrants." Journal of Refugee Studies 22(4): 439-459.

This study examines a residential sampling technique that was used to survey refugees in inner-city Johannesburg. The survey's sampling framework assumed that, once displaced populations had settled, they could be a) adequately categorized according to residential sampling 'frames'; and b) readily accessed in their homes. The paper explores the theoretical and practical limits of these assumptions. It shows how the particularly volatile relationship between respondents and the urban landscape made it difficult to generate a representative sample. The paper uses these findings to call for sampling procedures that are better suited to forced migrants' experiences of urban space.

Tag: Sampling

Warner, K. (2011). "Environmental changes and migration: Methodological considerations from ground-breaking global survey." Population and Environment 33(1): 3-27.

Recently, scoping activities have emerged to produce empirical observations about the role of environmental change in decisions about human mobility, including a range of movements from voluntary to forced migration and displacement. One notable recent attempt to contribute to the base of knowledge about the links between environmental change and migration has been the European Commission co-sponsored the Environmental Change and Forced Scenarios (EACH-FOR) project. The EACH-FOR project was created to assess the impact of environmental change on migration at the local, national, regional and international level. This paper shares the methods and fieldwork experiences of a first-time, multi-continent survey of environmental change and migration from the research project supported by the European Commission: Environmental Change and Forced Migration Scenarios (EACH-FOR, Contract Number 044468, <http://www.each-for.eu>). This paper has three purposes. First, the authors explore issues related to how EACH-FOR designed its methodological approach for the first global survey of environmental change and migration. The paper then describes how the project attempted to create a method that would produce comparable results in a challenging context of multiple scientific challenges and trade-offs for research design. The second purpose of this paper is to examine how field researchers implemented and used this methodology in the EACH-FOR project. This paper takes a closer look at the fieldwork approach applied in investigating the 23 EACH-FOR project case studies. These case studies presented diverse local conditions and social contexts and different types of environmental changes. The paper discusses some of the practical considerations and shortcomings of the method in practice and illustrates how local researchers

from selected case studies managed the challenges of their complex assignment. The third purpose of this paper is to explore lessons learned from the initial fieldwork experience and fruitful directions for future research.

Tag: Epistemology

Yu, E. S. H. and W. T. Liu (1986). "Methodological problems and policy implications in Vietnamese refugees research." International Migration Review 20(2): 483-501.

This article is written with two objectives: First, to describe some of the critical methodological problems encountered in our research with Vietnamese refugees in San Diego, California, about which few studies have been conducted previous to their arrival in 1975. Second, to discuss the policy implications of research beset with these difficulties, some of which are unique to studies of refugee populations per se, while others are common to research on small ethnic minorities in general. This article focuses on four major issues: the quality of refugee studies; the purpose and functions of such research; the ethical dilemmas of studying refugees; and public policy implications of refugee research. Recommendations are offered to resolve some of these issues which would call for policy changes both in the ways refugee research are conducted, and in the training of researchers themselves.

Tag: Ethics, politics of production of knowledge

Zimmerman, C. (2003). WHO ethical and safety recommendation for interviewing trafficked women, Health Policy Unit, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine Daphne Programme of the European Commission World Health Organization.

The trafficking of women and girls into forced prostitution and other slavery-like or exploitative conditions is increasingly recognized as one of the world's fastest growing crimes and most significant human rights violations. In response to the rapid global rise in trafficking and growing demand for information on trafficking by policy-makers, donors, service providers, and the media, women who have been trafficked are increasingly being interviewed to discuss their experiences. Women are being interviewed both while they are in trafficking situations under the control of traffickers, employers, or pimps, and after they have left the trafficking setting, such as while in shelters, under the care of service agencies, or once they have returned home or re-established their lives elsewhere. In any of these situations, interviewing a woman who has been trafficked raises a number of ethical questions and safety concerns for the woman, others close to her, and for the interviewer. Having a sound understanding of the risks, ethical considerations, and the practical realities related to trafficking can help minimize the dangers and increase the likelihood that a woman will disclose relevant and accurate information. These recommendations are intended primarily for use by researchers, members of the media, and service providers unfamiliar with the situation of trafficked women. They do not explicitly discuss the different risks and obligations of interviewing females who are minors, although many of the same principles will apply.

Tag: Interviews, ethics

Zion, D., L. Briskman, et al. (2010). "Returning to History: The Ethics of Researching Asylum Seeker Health in Australia." The American Journal of Bioethics 10(2): 48-56.

Australia's policy of mandatory indefinite detention of those seeking asylum and arriving without valid documents has led to terrible human rights abuses and cumulative deterioration in health for those incarcerated. We argue that there is an imperative to research and document the plight of those who have suffered at the hands of the Australian government and its agents. However, the normal tools available to those engaged in health research may further erode the rights and well being of this population, requiring a rethink of existing research ethics paradigms to approaches that foster advocacy research and drawing on the voices of those directly affected, including those bestowed with duty of care for this population.

Tag: Ethics

Zureik, E. (2003). "Theoretical and methodological considerations for the study of Palestinian society." Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East 23(1-2): 152-162.

To study the Palestinians is basically to study a society in conflict and transition. The majority of the society's members live in dispersion as refugees and members of exiled communities, whether in the Arab countries or the West. Some continue to live in their homeland, such as in Israel where they live as a minority, or as a majority in highly contested political environments such as the West Bank and Gaza. Thus, it is not surprising that issues of identity, control, and resistance, among others, comprise key concerns of any intellectual enterprise purporting to render intelligent the fragmented experience of the Palestinian people. While maintaining a particular emphasis on refugees, this paper situates recent studies of Palestinians in the context of (1) social science debates surrounding qualitative and quantitative methodologies with special reference to Palestinian society; (2) theoretical discussions of power, resistance, and subjectivity; and (3) ethnographic studies of refugee identities.

Tag: Mixed methods, politics of production of knowledge