



Refugee Research Network

Research Digest

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The RRN Research Digest provides a synopsis of recent research on refugee and forced migration issues from entities associated with the RRN and others.

Recent Publications and New Research

Christopher G. Anderson and Dagmar Soenneken, “Taking the Harper Government’s Refugee Policy to Court,” in *Policy Change, Courts and the Canadian Constitution*, ed. E. Macfarlane, University of Toronto Press, 2018.

In this chapter, the authors focus on changes that occurred to Canada’s inland refugee policy with two larger goals in mind. First, they de-mystify the role of the courts in shaping refugee policy in Canada. Second, they contribute to a growing body of work that reflects on the contentious relationship between the Harper government and the courts. In particular, the chapter examines the mobilization that occurred through and beyond the courts in response to the government’s 2012 cuts to the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) for refugees. The research shows that while the role of the courts in overseeing Canadian refugee policy is generally quite limited, significant mobilization on behalf of refugees inside and outside the courts occurred in response to the Harper government’s particularly rights-restrictive approach. Overall, the authors argue that in order to understand the relationship between the courts and public policy, it is necessary to appreciate the broader policy and political contours within which court rulings emerge, and the specific contexts that prompt court involvement in the first instance. More information about the chapter and the book available at: <https://utorontopress.com/ca/policy-change-courts-and-the-canadian-constitution-2>

Karimi, A. (2018). *Sexuality and integration: a case of gay Iranian refugees’ collective memories and integration practices in Canada*. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp 1-19

During the past two decades, Canada has accepted hundreds of LGBT asylum seekers, including gay Iranian men. Sociologists of sexualities and migration have yet to study this group as immigrants whose sexualities play a central role in their social interactions, immigration, and integration practices. Taking integration as a category of practice and relying on Halbwachs’s theory of collective memory, the author provides an empirical study of integration practices of gay Iranian refugees in Canada. He draws on 32 interviews with gay Iranian refugees to analyse their interactions with Canadian society at large, the Canadian gay community, and Iranian Diaspora. The findings indicate that memories play the role of proxies that inform gay Iranian refugees’ interactions in Canada at the intersection of race-ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and nationality. Available at: https://refugeereseach.net/rrn_node/sexuality-and-integration-a-case-of-gay-iranian-refugees-collective-memories-and-integration-practices-in-canada/
This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* on 28 NOV 2018, available online at:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01419870.2018.1550207>

Gordyn, C. (2018). *Pancasila and Pragmatism: Protection or Pencitraan for Refugees in Indonesia?*. *Journal of Southeast Asian Human Rights*, 2(2), 336-357.

Since the 1970s Indonesia has been a transit country for refugees searching for resettlement. While it has not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention, Indonesia does allow the UNHCR to operate within its borders. Furthermore, Indonesian President Joko Widodo recently pledged humanitarian assistance to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. This paper asks what motivates Indonesia to assist refugees, despite not being a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention? What principles underlie Indonesia's approach to refugees? Based on interviews conducted with government officials, practitioners, activists and academics in Indonesia, this paper finds that Indonesia is guided by *Pancasila* (Indonesia's state ideology) and the preamble to its constitution in playing a humanitarian role in international society. At the same time, however, this humanitarian imperative is in tension with pragmatism. This means that there are a number of problems for refugee protection in Indonesia. This paper argues that while Indonesia is driven by humanitarian ideals in assisting refugees, it must sign the 1951 Refugee Convention to endorse its commitment to *Pancasila* and the preamble to the constitution, otherwise it risks using these foundations as simply *pencitraan*, or 'window dressing'. available at:

<https://jurnal.unej.ac.id/index.php/JSEADR/article/view/8414/6042>

Sarah Khasalamwa-Mwandha (2018): Geographical versus social displacement: the politics of return and post-war recovery in Northern Uganda, Development in Practice

The civil war in Northern Uganda in the period 1986–2006 fundamentally altered former ways of life and created diverse and complex needs. Protracted conflict and displacement create, reveal, and enforce vulnerability, which can undermine resilience. Based on in-depth interviews with internally displaced persons and returnees, both before and after their return to Amuru District and Gulu District, this article argues that war and displacement constitute more than a temporary disruption. The physical and social wounds of war are engraved and embedded in people's lives. Therefore, recovery interventions must take these effects into account to forge a new post-war future. Please see the complementary

link: <https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/xucMg4IMGVKBcuS6Vzan/full>

Migration Policy Practice, Special issue on Global Compact Migration Vol. VIII, Number 4, November 2018–December 2018

This issue of Migration Policy Practice examines a specific aspect of the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration: that of migration research and analysis. While acknowledging that migration research output has significantly increased in volume and diversity globally, as outlined in the IOM World Migration Report 2018, the natural starting point for an examination of this issue in the context of the Global Compact and international migration governance more broadly is the Migration Research Leaders' Syndicate. Full issue available at: <http://gmdac.iom.int/mpp-36>

Reports, Working Papers and Briefs

M.Gkliati, H. Rosenfeldt, Accountability of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency: Recent developments, legal standards and existing mechanisms, RLI Working Paper No. 30, 2018

This working paper looks into the increased capacities, tasks and competences of Frontex (the European Border and Coast Guard Agency), brought about by the 2016 legislative reform. It examines whether this development was accompanied by an accountability regime of equal strength. The existing accountability mechanisms are measured against the standards of European Union (EU) primary and secondary law. The paper assesses the political, administrative, professional and social accountability of Frontex, including parliamentary oversight and the newly introduced individual complaints mechanism. The final part of the paper focuses on legal accountability, a strong, yet highly complex, form of accountability. There, we introduce the concept of systemic accountability and investigate possible courses of legal action against Frontex. In sum, Frontex is subject to moderately increased scrutiny under its renewed founding Regulation and to various EU accountability mechanisms of general application. But several procedural

and practical hurdles could render legal accountability difficult to achieve in practice. available at: https://sas-space.sas.ac.uk/9187/1/RLI_Working_Paper_No.30.pdf.

Focus Canada – Fall 2018: Canadian public opinion about immigration, refugees and the USA, Environics Institute for Survey research

As part of its Focus Canada public opinion research program, the Environics Institute updated its research on Canadian attitudes about immigration and about the USA. Results show that Canadians are more likely than not to be positive about immigration and its impact on making Canada a better place. However, opinions appear to have hardened a bit since February, in terms of the overall level of immigration, its contribution to the economy, and perhaps most noticeably the legitimacy of some refugees. Regarding the US, Canadians pay close attention to events in the USA, and this year they have also found their country in the crosshairs of an aggressive US administration over the renegotiation of a new continental free trade agreement. Not surprisingly, general opinion of the USA has declined sharply in 2018, with fewer than four in ten Canadians holding a favourable view; now at its lowest level since Environics began tracking this opinion in 1982. Available at: https://www.environicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/focus-canada-fall-2018---final-report.pdf?sfvrsn=fe91cb12_0

Global Migration Indicators 2018, IOM and Global migration data analysis centre

This report is a snapshot of what we know about migration today. The data is organized along 17 key migration themes and based largely on data taken from Global Migration Data Portal – IOM’s one-stop-shop for international migration data. The report aims to provide a baseline for objectives in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and migration-related targets included in the Sustainable Development Goals.” available at: <http://gmdac.iom.int/global-migration-indicators-2018-report>

News reports and Blog post

Taha, D. (2018). Ethical Reflexivity and Decolonizing Refugee Research: Reflections from the Field, CARFMS blog

The blog proposes reflexivity, or asking how the researcher’s position and positionality implicates the research process and the researcher’s interpretations, as a tool not only to sustain rigorous methodological and empirical practices but also as means to decolonizing research. it aims to extend the notion of ethical reflexivity to unravel how research can further marginalize the “Othered” stories by replicating colonial assumptions and reinforcing hegemonic discourses. In addition to reflecting on microethics or ethics in practice, ethical reflexivity thus should strive for a more egalitarian research experience which ensures that the researcher’s interpretations are not made in isolation from the research participants, their worldviews and ways of knowing. the author uses examples and interactions with her respondents during my fieldwork in 2017, where she interviewed Syrian refugee women in Egypt who married Egyptian men often as a coping strategy. available at: <http://carfms.org/methodology-reflexivity-and-decolonizing-refugee-research-reflections-from-the-field-by-dina-taha/>

The World has no protection for refugees of climate disasters, Lewis Gordon, The Outline, December 11, 2018

Legally speaking, people displaced by environmental disasters aren’t refugees, even if we recognise their temporary living conditions as reflective of such a definition. Neither are the 18.8 million people displaced by weather-related disasters in 2017, a figure that’s expected to rise sharply as the impact of climate change worsens. This article reflects on the realities of those people all over the world and points towards a platform on disaster displacement. available : <https://theoutline.com/post/6778/the-world-has-no-protections-for-refugees-of-climate-disasters?zd=2&zi=eef15o6i>

Digital and social media

The Number One Ladies' Landmine Agency, BBC sounds

After Donald Trump's recent call for Spain to build a wall across the Sahara Desert to curb African migration into Europe, this documentary follows a unique group of Sahrawi women working alongside the world's longest minefield, the 2,700km sand wall or berm built by Morocco across the region. Number One Ladies' Landmine Agency reveals a story of hope and tolerance embodied by a group of young women redefining the stereotype of the veiled, subjugated Arab woman, whose shared mission is to tear down barriers in all their forms. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3csy152>