



SEEKING ASYLUM IS A HUMAN RIGHT
CHILD REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS
ATTITUDES OF HOST NATIONS TO ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

**Researchers for Asylum Seekers (RAS) Interdisciplinary
Postgraduate Conference**

Monday 16th November 2015, 9am – 5 pm

**Gryphon Gallery
1888 Building, University of Melbourne**



**For more information about Researchers for Asylum Seekers (RAS),
or to become a RAS member, please visit our website:**

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RAS Conference Committee

Karen Block

Elin Nicholson

Carly Copolov

Lunch will be provided, comprising vegetarian and vegan 'finger foods' from Asylum Seeker Resource Centre Catering, as well as light refreshments for morning and afternoon tea.

PROGRAM

9.00 – 10.30	<p>Welcome – Nick Haslam</p> <p>Session 1 – Attitudes and Representations – Chair: Karen Block</p> <p>9.15 Susan Kennedy – ‘Delete the term “ethnic”’- The narrative of a disappearing asylum group of ‘stateless Arabs’</p> <p>9.30 Lizzil Gay – Displaced: Art and the politics of exclusion</p> <p>9.45 Maddy Macfarlane – Collaborative radio storytelling: Using community radio and ethnomusicology towards safe self-representation</p> <p>10.00 Tania Cañas – Practice-as-research and refugee communities</p> <p>10.15 Max Walden – <i>Murderous seas, ocker nationalism and willing Asian workers: The Australian news media's depiction of Vietnamese refugees in the late 1970s</i></p>
10:30 – 11.00	Morning Tea
11.00 - 12:30	<p>Session 2 – Children; and Seeking Asylum is a Human Right – Chair: Elisha Riggs</p> <p>11.00 Sarah Green – Children as the faces of war: Reflections on Bosnia</p> <p>11.15 Elin Nicholson – The politics of performing cultural resistance: Palestinian refugee children on the theatrical/political stage</p> <p>11.30 Renuka T. Balasubramaniam – Exposing the abuse of power: An emerging role for refugee rights advocates in Malaysia</p> <p>11.45 Bernice Carrick – The humanitarian destruction of refugee rights: Australian and Canadian comparisons</p> <p>12.00 Asher Hirsch – The extra-territorialisation of migrant control and the right to seek asylum: The legality of Australia’s disruption and deterrence activities beyond its borders</p> <p>12.15 Amanda Johson – Lentara Uniting Care: Asylum Seeker Project</p>
12:30 - 1:15	Lunch

<p>1:15 – 2:15</p>	<p>Keynote address – Attitudes of host communities to asylum seekers - <i>Nyadol Nyuon</i></p> <p>Refugee Research Blog launch – <i>Rhys Stephens</i></p> <p>Report – Understanding asylum seeker policy facts and myths: A University of Melbourne knowledge exchange project – <i>Karen Block</i></p>
<p>2:15 – 3:00</p>	<p>Session 3 – Host Nation Attitudes Chair: Elin Nicholson</p> <p>2.15 Tess Altman – Logics of humanitarianism and notions of citizenship among volunteers providing services to asylum seekers in Melbourne</p> <p>2.30 Harriet McHugh-Dillon – ‘If they are genuine refugees, why?’ Public attitudes to unauthorised arrivals in Australia</p> <p>2.45 Kathleen Blair – ‘Stop the boats!’ Anti-asylum seeker sentiment in the 2013 federal election campaign and its impact on the voting decision of Australians from Western Sydney</p>
<p>3:00 – 3:20</p>	<p>Afternoon Tea</p>
<p>3:20 – 4.50</p>	<p>Session 4 – Resettled Refugees in Australia Chair – John van Kooy</p> <p>3.20 Leonie Crowe and Christiane Barton – Don’t ask, don’t tell: Refugee women’s experience of routine domestic violence screening in NSW health services</p> <p>3.35 Zena Lythgo and Juliana Lobo de Queiroz – Social entrepreneurship and refugee background women’s microbusiness start-up experiences</p> <p>3.50 Karen Dunwoodie – Understanding career adaptability for refugees and asylum seekers</p> <p>4.05 Tori Stratford – Identity Narratives of Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers</p> <p>4.20 Belinda Liddell – Neural mechanisms underlying emotion processing in traumatized refugees and survivors of torture: Preliminary fMRI evidence</p> <p>4.35 Ashraf Hosseini – Resilience vs anxiety: An exploratory study of Iranian refugees in Australia</p>
<p>4.50 - 5:00</p>	<p>Conference Close</p>

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

ATTITUDES OF HOST COMMUNITIES TO ASYLUM SEEKERS -

NYADOL NYUON

Nyadol Nyuon and her family arrived in Australia in 2005 as refugees. Soon after arriving in Australia, Nyadol worked in paid and volunteering positions with various communities. She has sat on the board of The African Think Tank and Ethnic Community Council of Victorian. She is an ambassador for the Social Studio and has been an ambassador for Australian Day (Victoria). In 2012 and 2013, she was named in the 100 most influential African Australian.

Nyadol has a law degree (JD) from The University of Melbourne and holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Psychology) from Victoria University. She has published articles, presented in numerous forums and conferences, and appeared in various media commenting on issues related to the South Sudanese and African community. Nyadol is currently a Law Graduate at Arnold Bloch Leibler (ABL).

SESSION 1: ATTITUDES AND REPRESENTATIONS

'DELETE THE TERM "ETHNIC" - THE NARRATIVE OF A DISAPPEARING ASYLUM GROUP OF 'STATELESS ARABS'

SUSAN KENNEDY

In this presentation I frame the attack on seeking asylum as a human right through the development of a narrative of erasure. By way of example, I present my progress on my dissertation on a disappearing asylum group of 'stateless Arabs,' the Bedoun of Kuwait. The term 'stateless Arabs' is so general and diffuse, it is almost meaningless. A 'human pool' portrayed as a faceless swathe of humanity, this pointless terminology contributes to the groups vulnerability to identity trafficking, identity theft and erasure by diverting from established knowledge about the social and cultural histories of these groups. I wish to explain how cultural destruction is being waged against the stateless Bedoun, a vulnerable ethnic group who are no longer allowed to reach Australia where previously, the caselaw on the group had developed in favour of their refugee applications. The ethnic and tribal identity of the group has been actively 're-negotiated,' reflecting a narrative theme used by academics to deny the group's presence as an ethnic group historically embedded within the Bedouin community, portraying them as an isolated, marginalised anomaly of 'invisible' people that cannot be explained. Observing the language used to describe the group, it becomes clear that this discourse circumscribes an ideology of erasure. The change in attitudes towards asylum seekers including the ease with which the cultural identity of a group can be diminished without supporting evidence, should raise alarm bells for any researchers working with marginalised, hard-to-reach ethnic groups.

Susan Kennedy is a doctoral student in the School of Education at the University of Adelaide. Her previous publications have addressed the participation of stateless people in society, and the mediation of their identity through asylum law, country advice information and human rights discourse.

The construction of displaced people as a threat to Australian security is set in a haze of nationalist rhetoric used by successive governments as part of the articulation of our national identity. This focus on displaced people as a security threat has seen the indefinite detention of thousands of asylum seekers seeking refuge in Australia. They have been subject to harsh living conditions raising concern from the international community who question whether the Australian government is violating international human rights protocol through its treatment of displaced people.

Through engaging with the performance art of Mike Parr, a prominent Australian artist, my paper will utilise his creative work *Close the Concentration Camps* to focus on the inhumanity of Australia as a host nation. Parr considered the Australian people to be generally indifferent to the suffering caused by governmental practices of exclusion and indefinite detention of asylum seekers, and his work brings into relief such concerns.

Drawing on Giorgio Agamben's concept of 'bare-life' as a theoretical framework, I will discuss the construction of the asylum seeker as a non-citizen and a security threat that is to be quarantined and excluded from the Australian population. I will consider how this construction is central to the Australian government's policies and practices of indefinite detention, and how this construction further negates the suffering of those whose lives are framed by it.

Lizzil Gay is an artist and PhD candidate at RMIT's school of Media and Communications. Lizzil is researching the framing of the lives of asylum seekers in Australian detention centres as 'non-grievable', and the capacity of live artists to make known the suffering of those whose political voice is silenced.

This paper draws on two creative case studies to demonstrate how ethnomusicological research into radio-as-research is enabling Melbourne community radio to function as a safe space and mode for asylum seeker self-representation.

This paper will explore the creative processes, products and diverse outcomes of two case studies. Both were collaborative engagements between myself, as a radio broadcaster and trainer from community radio station PBS FM, and asylum seeker musicians. Both were aimed at producing pre-recorded radio pieces for broadcast on PBS.

The first case study is a half-hour radio documentary made with the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre's music group about their group. The second is a 10-week training program in radio story-making for a group of twelve current, former, and second-generation asylum seekers.

This research draws on practice-as-research methodologies and positions radio – the radio content creation process, products and their dissemination – as the research practice. In positioning radio as research, the potential violence of research – unequal power, dominance, colonialism, academic privilege, authorship, censorship, representation – became an important consideration directed at my radio practice.

This paper will also touch on listening as a significant relationship underpinning consent, collaboration, negotiation and self-representation in research and in radio.

Maddy Macfarlane is a current PhD student in the faculty of music at the University of Melbourne. Her applied research explores the potential for an ethnomusicological perspective to support Australian community radio to work collaboratively with its communities. Maddy is a broadcaster at PBSfm in Melbourne, and also volunteers with the ASRC's music group.

This paper will look at practice-as-research as a potentially decolonising, self-determining, anti-positivist, collective and alternative knowledge producing methodology through the creative arts, particularly theatre. It will look at how the form may include multiple knowledge's, challenge modernity, build and theorise from lived experiences and in so doing challenge the expectation, power-dynamics and ethics of staging of refugee and asylum seeker narratives on stage.

This work-in-progress paper will share the initial finding of my current PhD research at the Centre for Cultural Partnerships, VCA.

Tania Cañas is the Arts Director at *RISE Refugee* and PhD student at the VCA. She sits on the Editorial Board for the International PTO Academic Journal and recently completed a research assistant internship at NYU's Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics.

Her research and work focuses on applied theatre as self-determination. She has presented at conferences both nationally and internationally: including University of California- Berkley, DePaul University – Chicago and Rhodes University -South Africa. She recently returned from a research graduate school in the Netherlands 'Stolen Memories: Museums, Slavery and (De)coloniality.'

She has done theatre residencies in Northern Ireland (working in operational prisons and a youth group in Strabane), worked in the Solomon Islands to develop a Forum Theatre play with local women. Most recently she conducted Theatre of the Oppressed workshops with honours and masters students at Rhodes University and worked with the Soweto Theatre of the Oppressed group as well as local schools and prison groups in Grahamstown.

MAX WALDEN

The late 1970s saw the first major wave of Asian immigration after the dismantling of the White Australia policy, as the Fraser government resettled tens of thousands of Indochinese refugees. During this period, the media played a vital role in defining language and attitudes towards multiculturalism and refugee migration, introducing phrases into Australia's political vocabulary that continue to characterise contemporary debates. This paper argues that the news media's depiction of refugees altered significantly, however, according to various factors including the frequency of boat arrivals, Commonwealth policy responses, a rapidly evolving international situation, and changes within the Australian media itself. Recurring motifs are identified in media representations of Vietnamese refugees through three distinct periods: from April 1976 to late 1977 it was rescue, from late 1977 to mid-1978 it was threat, and from mid-1978 to 1979 it was contribution.

Max Walden works in the Widening Participation unit at Macquarie University as a Research Officer. He completed a Master of Human Rights and Democratisation at the University of Sydney in 2015, and graduated with Honours in History in 2013.

SESSION 2: CHILDREN AND SEEKING ASYLUM IS A HUMAN RIGHT

CHILDREN AS THE FACES OF WAR: REFLECTIONS ON BOSNIA

SARAH GREEN

This paper looks at the way images of individual children are used - both figuratively and literally - to elicit support for intervention in war zones and refugee crises. In 2015 international news outlets have carried images of and from many refugee children; most famously three year old Alan Kurdi, but also drawings from children at a train station in Hungary, photos of children walking across Europe, and stories about a five year old Iranian asylum seeker with PTSD. This paper looks back twenty years to a time when a different cohort of children was in the international spotlight: children living through the Bosnian war of 1992-1995.

Images of Bosnian children were frequently used to call for international intervention during the war and some of these children became household names. Zlata Filipović was nicknamed the “Anne Frank of Sarajevo”, Irma Hadžimuratović had a major airlift named after her, and Natasha Mihaljic became the subject of a book and film. On top of this, children’s drawings were used by UNICEF to call for action, for the sake of the children. This paper offers some reflections on how these images of children in need were used and to what purpose. It also suggests some ways in which community expectations of children may determine which images are used and which are not. Finally, it will question the longevity of such campaigns, including whether or not their longevity actually matters.

Sarah Green is a PhD student in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne. Her research interests include histories of childhood, welfare and migration. Her current work examines the experiences of Bosnian child refugees who came to Australia in the 1990s.

This paper shall examine the political and ethical implications of the use of children on the Palestinian theatrical/political stage. Based on my PhD fieldwork in the West Bank during 2011-12, I will analyse theatrical productions performed by, with, and for Palestinian young people living in refugee camps.

I argue that the Oslo 'peace' Accords of the 1990's led to the creation and entrenchment of the supposedly 'apolitical' international humanitarian regime in the West Bank. This led to the professionalisation and 'NGO-isation' of indigenous theatre companies, with a focus on reaching international audiences in addition to local ones. However, funding determinants from donor agencies have resulted in competing agendas and the marginalisation of Palestinian companies deemed to be working 'against the grain'. From the Second Intifada (2000-05) onwards, theatre companies have used child 'actors' on the theatrical/political stage to raise awareness and garner sympathies for the Palestinian cause on a global scale. This practice shall be scrutinised in terms of the rights of the child, especially for those refugee children living under seemingly unending military occupation.

Elin Nicholson is currently a McKenzie Postdoctoral Fellow (2015-18) at the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne, researching refugees and cultural production in Australia. Having spent two years living in the Mashreq (especially Israel/Palestine, Jordan and Syria) and becoming proficient in both colloquial and Modern Standard Arabic, Elin completed her doctoral dissertation on contemporary Palestinian theatre as cultural resistance against both the Israeli military occupation and the more conservative elements of Palestinian society, in 2014. Her book based on this doctoral dissertation should be completed by the end of 2015.

Elin's current research focuses on refugee theatre in Melbourne and Victoria as creating 'exceptional spaces' in a revised version of Agamben's 'state of exception'. She is investigating the extent to which spatial practices of theatre can enable cultural resistance against a neoliberal government with strict policies against refugee communities.

As the attitudes of host nations are considered, there is value in making a distinction between the attitudes of government on the one hand, and civil society or the public on the other. Examining Malaysia as a case study; while government attitudes towards refugees may be driven by political and security imperatives civil society is driven by the provision of services to refugees, premised on international legal theory.

While civil society and the public can do little to impact or influence government decision-making in general and refugee protection in particular for a variety of social, political and legal reasons, there is room to support and strengthen efforts that exercise checks on state abuse of power through judicial review of decisions.

The challenge for Malaysia is inaccessibility to justice. Within a context where the suppression of democratic institutions is a key feature, the small number of Malaysian civil society actors advocating for a diverse range of human rights are often forced to contend with the prospect of retaliation by the executive. Managing state persecution on bogus charges which could result dire consequences for future activism as well as for their personal careers are a major distraction and inconvenience.

Notwithstanding, these possibilities moral and financial support from international organizations and other non-state actors, actively engaged in strengthening democracy in the region and who align themselves with strategic litigation initiated by these very civil society actors can provide practical reinforcement to the steady development of executive accountability. Two case studies demonstrate how.

Renuka T. Balasubramaniam is a Malaysian lawyer currently researching the temporary humanitarian protection of refugees in Malaysia at La Trobe University's school of law. Over her ten year career she has represented refugees appealing the punishment of caning for illegal entry and negative status determination by the UNHCR

Migration law in affluent Western states is no longer restricted to admittance and exclusion decisions. As a legal sphere, the border now reaches both outward and inward from the physical border. As it reaches inward, characteristics once unique to migration law, are taken up by other legal fields. In Australia, one of these is the replacement of enforceable rights with executive discretions.

In the refugee sphere, this discretion takes the form of humanitarianism. The offshore resettlement program, which occurs in a field free of legal obligations, is held up as more legitimate than the onshore program, based on our international legal obligations. Meanwhile, the Migration Act eschews any reference to rights; even ‘protection obligations’ are conceived as owed to other states, rather than individuals. Increasingly powers relating to asylum-seekers are framed in terms of non-compellable, non-justiciable Ministerial discretions — benefits that can be given and taken away with no redress.

This preferencing of humanitarianism over rights inverts the underlying rationale of the international refugee protection system, which is designed to prevent future harm, rather than address the consequences of past events. The border’s regulatory dominance means that when refugees and asylum-seekers come into contact with the criminal law, protections that are, in principle, available to them, are rendered ineffective.

However, the danger lies not in humanitarianism per se, but in the Australian expression of it, which takes place in the absence of a legal human rights framework. By way of comparison, Canada’s offshore resettlement program affords a great deal of weight to attributes other than protection needs, but it also has an onshore protection system that explicitly confers rights on refugees and asylum-seekers. The Canadian concept of humanitarianism, a stated objective of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, and frequently cited as an aspect of Canadian national identity, is given expression through enforceable rights.

Bernice Carrick is a PhD Candidate in Melbourne Law School, supervised by Dr Jenny Beard and Prof Beth Gaze. My thesis looks at Legal Equality for Non-Citizens in Australia and Canada. Previously, I worked as refugee lawyer for the Humanitarian Group (previously CASE for Refugees) in Perth.

THE EXTRA-TERRITORIALISATION OF MIGRANT CONTROL AND THE RIGHT TO SEEK ASYLUM:
THE LEGALITY OF AUSTRALIA'S DISRUPTION AND DETERRENCE ACTIVITIES BEYOND ITS
BORDERS

ASHER HIRSCH

In an age of increasing border control and securitisation, many states have attempted to restrict access to asylum through a range of extra-territorial measures that seek to prevent asylum seekers from reaching territorial borders in order to apply for protection. Australia employs a range of extra-territorial border control measures in Southeast Asia, including carrier sanctions, disruption activities in countries of origin and asylum, the use of immigration officials and law enforcement agencies in foreign countries, the support and training of foreign law enforcement agencies, the offshore detention of asylum seekers, and the interception and turn-backs of boats on the High Seas. However, rather than controlling migration, it is argued that these policies have forced those who seek protection to use irregular, unauthorised and dangerous pathways to find safety.

This paper will examine Australia's practice of deterrence and disruption activities beyond its borders with reference to its international human rights obligations. It will be shown that Australia cannot escape its obligations under international law by acting outside its territorial borders. Where Australia exercises effective control it is legally responsible for upholding the human rights of asylum seekers and refugees.

Asher Hirsch is a Policy Officer with the Refugee Council of Australia, the national umbrella body for refugees and the organisations and individuals who support them. Asher has worked in the community sector with refugees and asylum seekers for several years, including previously with the Centre for Multicultural Youth. Asher holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Juris Doctor, and a Master of Human Rights Law, and is currently completing a Master of Legal Practice.

There is a growing understanding that asylum seekers who arrive by sea are particularly demonised and they experience abhorrent treatment in offshore detention centres, but often forgotten by both the media and public are those living in the community awaiting an outcome on their humanitarian visa applications. These people make up the vast majority of asylum seekers in Australia but there is little understanding about the reality of awaiting that decision.

On paper, it seems that we all agree; seeking asylum is a human right. Australia is a signatory to the UN convention relating to the status of refugees and has a process in place for people to lodge protection visa applications. What is often hidden from view is the reality of this process. Although asylum seekers exercise a human right by lodging paperwork, this act allows our Government to systematically strip vulnerable people of further fundamental human rights throughout a process that can take a decade or more.

A lot of information about asylum seekers is kept from the public and it's this strategy that removes their humanity. People seeking asylum are referred to only as numbers. Lentara UnitingCare – Asylum Seeker Project (ASP) Social Worker, Amanda Johnson, will present client case studies to try and reinstate the humanity of people seeking safety in Australia. These case studies depict the effect of; no work or study rights, no right to Medicare, living on an income of \$23 per week (or \$1,200 per year), the effect of not being believed and living without purpose.

Amanda Johnson has an Arts/Social Work background and works as a Case Manager at the Asylum Seeker Project. Amanda has six years' experience working with asylum seekers, refugees and women and hopes to one day merge her passions; the arts and social justice, by writing a TV show about Social Workers and refugees.

SESSION 3: HOST NATION ATTITUDES

LOGICS OF HUMANITARIANISM AND NOTIONS OF CITIZENSHIP AMONG VOLUNTEERS PROVIDING SERVICES TO ASYLUM SEEKERS IN MELBOURNE

TESS ALTMAN

Over the past quarter century or so, Australian asylum seeker policy has increasingly shifted from a humanitarian to a militaristic response. Throughout policy changes, NGOs and their volunteers have provided services to asylum seekers in need. Indeed, their services have become ever more crucial due to a combination of government cuts to assistance and outsourcing of responsibility for delivery of services. In this climate volunteers are at the front lines of service provision and, corresponding with the recent Syrian refugee crisis in Europe and the responses of Europeans compelled to help, numbers of volunteers continue to grow. My current fieldwork with volunteers in Melbourne is in its early stages, and will explore what volunteering looks like and means to volunteers providing services to asylum seekers in two different contexts – an NGO and a volunteer-run community group. As Liisa Malkki has noted in her recent ethnography (2015) on Finnish Red Cross aid workers and volunteers, “Who wants to work in humanitarian aid and emergency relief, and why?

What are their motivations and aims? ...What do we really know about the humanitarian subject?’ Going into the field, I reflect on how global logics of humanitarian reason (Fassin 2011) may resonate in an Australian context. I posit that perhaps volunteering may provide an avenue for political and moral expression in an increasingly restrictive policy environment. Could volunteers be (re)defining their notions of citizenship and asserting membership of a moral community through the volunteer experience?

Tess Altman is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Anthropology at University College London, and a visiting scholar at the University of Melbourne for the duration of her fieldwork.

In 1976, the first fishing boat carrying asylum seekers sailed into Darwin with five Vietnamese men on board. Since then, opinion polls have indicated overwhelmingly negative public attitudes to asylum seekers. Yet the polls are generally silent on why certain attitudes or beliefs are widespread. This paper reviews the research that probes the basis for public attitudes towards unauthorised arrivals. It examines what is known about the beliefs and concerns which form the basis of negative attitudes; the factors associated with attitudes, from personality traits through to demographic factors; and the influence of external sources such as the media and political rhetoric. A final section reviews what is known about attitudes towards 'boat arrivals' compared to public sentiment towards 'air arrivals', resettled refugees and non-humanitarian migrants. The paper concludes with a summary of the main findings, highlighting gaps in our knowledge and potential avenues for future research. Commissioned by the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, it is hoped that this paper will contribute to the ongoing discussion of how negative attitudes might be addressed. To this end, some of the implications for advocacy that might be drawn from the research are discussed. However, the focus of this paper remains on what is known about attitudes rather than how they might be changed.

Harriet McHugh-Dillon is an Investigation Officer with the Victorian Ombudsman. She has consulted for the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture and volunteers with the Red Cross' Immigration Detention Monitoring Program. She holds a Master in History from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Paris. Her thesis compared French and Australian policy responses to 'Indochinese' refugees in the 1970s.

'STOP THE BOATS!' ANTI-ASYLUM SEEKER SENTIMENT IN THE 2013 FEDERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND ITS IMPACT ON THE VOTING DECISION OF AUSTRALIANS FROM WESTERN SYDNEY

KATHLEEN BLAIR

Issues pertaining to asylum seekers and refugees have long been the focus of negative political interest. Such interest however, appears to coalesce in the lead up to and throughout federal election campaigns. Most recently, throughout the 2013 Federal Election campaign the Liberal Party campaigned most fervently on 'stopping the boats'. Their 'Stop the boats!' campaign slogan summed up a raft of controversial policy decisions and legislation that have been enacted by the Liberal Party since their coming to power. Choosing to campaign on this issue provided the opportunity for the Liberal party for crystallise its rhetoric on the issue of asylum seekers – and in so doing – to secure wide political support for policies designed to further deter, exclude and reject 'illegal boat arrivals'. To understand the impact (or lack thereof) of the government's discursive strategy on the voting decision of Australian citizens, 38 interviews were conducted with Australian voters from Western Sydney. This paper presents preliminary findings of an ongoing study and provides an insight into the way in which the rhetoric presented by the government is reflected in the sentiments of Australians and also suggests the emergence of resistant readings of the dominant discourse.

Kathleen Blair is a PhD candidate at the University of Western Sydney (UWS) and Research Assistant on the Challenging Racism Project in the School of Social Sciences and Psychology at UWS. Her doctoral work explores marginal vote seeking strategies and the use of anti-asylum seeker sentiment in federal election campaigns. Her research interests include asylum seekers, refugees, discourse analysis and prejudice.

SESSION 4: RESETTLED REFUGEES IN AUSTRALIA

DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL: REFUGEE WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE OF ROUTINE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SCREENING IN NSW HEALTH SERVICES

LEONIE CROWE AND CHRISTIANE BARTON

According to The World Health Organisation Domestic Violence represents a serious threat to the health, safety and dignity of women and children worldwide refugees being particularly susceptible.

To address this NSW Health introduced routine screening in 2003 into four key areas including Ante-Natal clinics. A recent study suggested that all women make decisions about whether to disclose based on several key factors including how they are asked; trust in those asking; perceived safety and past experience with disclosure. While there is little evidence that refugee women experience DV more frequently than other women, we know they experience unique barriers to benefiting from supports available in Australia as a result of their gender, ethnicity and cultural diversity.

This presentation aims to explore refugee women in Auburn's experience of routine domestic violence screening through case studies from Auburn Ante natal clinic as well as outline a study commencing in the clinic in collaboration with University of Notre Dame . Auburn LGA is one of the most diverse communities in Australia with a high proportion of newly arrived people and the highest birth rates in Sydney

Through qualitative interviews and analysis of the maternity data bases, we hope to learn more about the unique experience of women from refugee backgrounds .We will seek to find how similar or different their experience of DV screening is to that of the Australian born population. Asking the question-why do they disclose or not? This will potentially guide health services so these women might access available supports.

Leonie Crow BSW is a social worker with many years clinical experience in women's Health and in particular with Domestic Violence in refugee communities. She has working for several years in the diverse community of Auburn and developed strong links with various cultural groups and organisations in the area as well as sitting on advisory committees.

Christiane Barton RN ,Post Graduate Diploma in Paediatrics and Child and Family Health, Post Graduate Certificate in Midwifery and Parenting Practitioner. In her current position as GP Liaison Nurse, Auburn HealthOne Christiane works, alongside the Child and Family Health team, with families with multiple vulnerabilities and complex needs including domestic violence and refugee/asylum seeking experiences .She has daily experience with post- natal Routine Domestic Violence Screening in NSW Health and contributes to interagencies including Stop Domestic Violence Action Group

Abstract:

Refugee protection is justified internationally in humanitarian terms calling on moral sentiments of compassion. Refugee integration, on the other hand, is measured in terms of economic participation. People of refugee background experience many pressures for achieving economic self-sufficiency as a way of integrating 'successfully' in the countries where they receive protection. Starting a small business can therefore become a viable alternative to the many barriers to finding other forms of employment. This is especially the case for women given the gender-specific barriers and vulnerabilities related to forced migration and loss of livelihood.

In this paper we discuss our experiences supporting refugee background women to develop their own micro-enterprises. These experiences are based on the authors' distinct perspectives working with SisterWorks Inc., a social enterprise dedicated to facilitating refugee and migrant background women's entrepreneurship: i) the role of project manager, and ii) the role of the engaged researcher. We will present case scenarios in order to examine issues faced by women of asylum seeker background in their endeavours to become self-sufficient in Australia.

Zena Lythgo studied Fashion Design and International Development before joining SisterWorks Inc. as a program manager to support women of asylum seeker, refugee and migrant backgrounds to develop business and work experience in Australia and move towards their goal of financial independence.

Juliana Lobo de Queiroz has over 10 years of experience working in the refugee settlement sector in Australia. She is currently completing a PhD in Anthropology at Swinburne University examining the experiences of entrepreneurial refugee background women.

My research has been prompted by the issue of needing to understand refugees and asylum seekers and how they adapt to new careers. Using an integrative approach drawn from vocational psychology and refugees and asylum seekers studies, this research explores the working lives of refugees and asylum seekers and what it is they are doing to adapt to their careers in Australia. Bauman (2004) in his book 'Wasted Lives' argues that refugees and those seeking asylum are the 'wasted lives' of globalisation, stripped of all identities but one, that of being stateless, statusless and functionless. In Australia at present refugees and asylum seekers undoubtedly face enormous challenges and this label is both poignant and confronting, conjuring up images of suffering, loss, trauma and victimisation. This research project in support of the work completed by Morrice (2011) is not about re-telling the stories of passive victims; rather it explores the resourcefulness of people who are actively adapting to new circumstances in which they have found themselves. It is hoped this research will demonstrate how refugees and asylum seekers resist the limiting social positioning and identities imposed by the asylum process and how they negotiate the somewhat difficult political, policy and cultural conditions in Australia in order to plan, adapt, attain or retain their careers.

Karen Dunwoodie is currently completing a full-time PhD at Monash University and teaches in the areas of Cross-Cultural Communication and Negotiation. She is also part of the Volunteer group called the 'Welcome Committee' who supply food, material aid and support to a number of NFP asylum seeker agencies around Melbourne.

The objective of my research is to open up discourse about unaccompanied minor asylum seekers (UAMs) living in Australia and to provide a compelling argument that whilst situated at a point of vulnerability during their early settlement in Australia, UAMs are actively partaking in the complex activity of forming their identity. The project suggests that UAMs are able to develop and sustain their sense of agency despite their apparent 'vulnerabilities'. The following questions provide the basis for this exploration: what do the narratives of individual UAMs say about their sense of self, and what choices do individual UAMs make that act upon these narratives and are thus active in identity making.

The project combines various theoretical perspectives to explore questions relating to selfhood, agency and identity formation of former UAMs during their early years of settlement in Australia. Drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and doxa and inspired by Jackson's work on Existential Anthropology, the project is interested in UAMs during points of 'crisis', displacement and change. Narrative Inquiry has been utilised to frame the theoretical content, construct a methodology and develop research instruments.

The project will involve conducting one on one interviews with 20-25 UAMs living in Australia.

Tori Stratford is midway through her PhD at Deakin University's Alfred Deakin Research Institute, Melbourne. Tori's previous and current employment in multicultural youth space has greatly informed her project which focuses on the settlement experiences of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers in Australia. In addition to completing her doctoral studies, Tori is employed fulltime at the Centre for Multicultural Youth.

NEURAL MECHANISMS UNDERLYING EMOTION PROCESSING IN TRAUMATIZED REFUGEES AND SURVIVORS OF TORTURE: PRELIMINARY FMRI EVIDENCE

BELINDA LIDDELL, JESSICA CHEUNG, KIM FELMINGHAM, GIN MALHI, ANGELA NICKERSON,
PRITHA DAS, AND RICHARD BRYANT

Over 20% of resettled refugees are survivors of torture and frequently experience ongoing difficulties with managing emotional responses and interpersonal relationships. Yet it remains unclear how the neural systems that govern emotion are impacted by torture trauma, and how this impact may relate to post-traumatic stress symptoms. We will present preliminary data from an ongoing study investigating the neural bases of emotion processing in a group of 61 refugee and asylum-seeker participants both with and without a history of torture exposure. Participants underwent functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) scanning whilst viewing fear, happy and neutral faces. Preliminary analyses indicate that torture survivors exhibit neural patterns reflecting a reduced reactivity and emotional withdrawal during the processing of fear faces. Neural activation to fear was associated with the severity of torture experienced, after controlling for current PTSD symptoms and post-settlement adjustment stress. The findings point to the long term effect of torture exposure on the emotional brain, which has implications for guiding psychological treatments to alleviate ongoing distress and the healthy settlement of refugees in Australia.

Belinda Liddell is a Research Fellow in the School of Psychology UNSW Australia and Neuroimaging Program Director at the Refugee Trauma and Recovery Program (RTRP). Her research focuses on examining the psychological and neural mechanisms underlying refugee trauma, as well as how culture impacts on emotion and social processing.

Forced migration is a challenging and often life changing experience. While some individuals manage to maintain their wellbeing, others, because of their life circumstance or/and genetic reasons, are more vulnerable to development of psychological problems such as anxiety. Resilience and anxiety among Iranian refugees living in Australia was investigated using an online questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The main risk factors associated with high anxiety score in Iranian refugees in Australia were: being unemployed, cultural differences, discrimination, and difficulties with social cohesion in the Iranian community. In contrast, access to social support and services, spiritual faith, and personal and social competencies were found to be the main factors associated with a lower anxiety score. Moreover, being married and employed were associated with lower anxiety score mediated by resilience. Higher levels of anxiety correlated with lower levels of resilience ($r = -0.61, p = 0.000$). This study suggests possible approaches aimed at reducing vulnerability to anxiety among refugees, including: setting up community support groups that strengthen social cooperation; creating strategies to enhance employment opportunities; and raising awareness of Iranian culture in the larger Australian community to reduce discrimination. This research also highlights the need for further study to assess whether interventions that strengthen resilience will reduce anxiety in refugees.

Ashraf Hosseini is a PhD candidate in the Centre for Mental Health at the University of Melbourne. She has an educational background in psychology, family counselling, advanced learning and leadership, and mental health. Her expertise is in resilience factors associated with migrant mental health and well-being.