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# Intersectionality and Other Critical Approaches in Refugee Research

## An Annotated Bibliography

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## Executive Summary

This literature review highlights migration and refugee research engaged with intersectionality as a critical framework that challenges homogenizing experiences and categories in the global refugee context. Intersectionality seeks to enable the analysis of multiple experiences, recognize multiple and fluid identities that are context dependent, and demonstrate how such identities intersect to create disadvantages as well as privileges for different individuals. An intersectionality framework has the potential reveal the systematic discrimination in refugee and migration policies and systems, point to disparities in accessing durable solutions, highlight oppression as well as emancipation due to refugee-ness, and challenge rigid labels and categories. After recognizing the gender blindness in the 1951 Refugee Convention, a growing number of international and domestic policies began paying more attention to refugee women and gender-based violence. One prominent example is the UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity policy, which aims to consider the implications of policies and programs for male and female refugees of different ages and from different social groups. Feminist scholarship has offered important insights into the lived experiences of refugee women. Critical literature within refugee studies has questioned the ability of the "refugee" label and other categories to capture the complex social realities of the people on the move, instead engaging with how refugees self-identify and define their own situations. Decolonial approaches explore new methodologies (such as community-based participatory research) and the power dynamics inherent in North-South research partnerships that often reproduce hierarchies. Overall, an intersectional approach highlights that "refugees" are a diverse group and refugee experiences are shaped by multiple identities such as gender, race, national origin, class, age, (dis)ability and sexual orientation. Refugee policies and programs must be flexible to take into account this diversity of experiences instead of applying a singular universal approach for all refugees.

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## Introduction

After recognizing the gender blindness in the 1951 Refugee Convention, a growing number of international and domestic policies began paying more attention to refugee women and gender-based violence. Only recently has such international awareness, reflected for the first time in the first world conference on women in 1995, grown to recognize “the way in which multiple forms of discrimination intersect to inhibit the empowerment and advancement of women”. As a repercussion, different UN agencies have collaborated to organize an Expert Group Meeting on “gender and racial discrimination” to further explore the “multiple forms of discrimination [that] affect the lives of women” (Pittaway and Bartolomei, 2001, 23). In 1997, the UN Economic and Social Council introduced “Gender mainstreaming” as a process that allowed to consider the implications of any action, policy or program on men and women. Shortly after, gender mainstreaming has evolved into age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) strategy in 2004 which aimed to “empower all disenfranchised groups” instead of just focusing on gender or age (Edwards, 2010). A major concern about AGDM was whether it reinforces stereotypes through focusing on rigid categories instead of paying attention to how they intersect to exacerbate disadvantage. Moreover, many studies critiqued the (neo-liberal) international approach as well as the strand of research that has simplified the issue into solely gender analysis (Grosfoguel, et al, 2018; True, 2003). Here, it is important to distinguish between intersectionality as an analytical framework and studies that consider one or more categories, such as gender, class, or race, in their analysis (Carastathis, et al, 2018).

Intersectionality is a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to challenge homogenizing and essentializing (initially women’s) experiences and identities. Intersectionality seeks to enable the analysis of multiple experiences, distinguish multiple and fluid identities/categories that are time and context dependent and demonstrate how such categories intersect to create inequalities, disadvantages as well as privileges to different individuals. In particular, it scrutinizes how each category creates positions of oppression to some people and positions of privilege to others. In turn, an individual might experience oppression in one position/intersection and privilege in another (see for instance, Aberman, 2014; Vervliet, et al., 2013). Later work has also tried to

highlight the hierarchy of privilege and oppression, that not all people experience privilege or oppression at the same level or the same way (Joseph, 2015).

There are different schools that sought to theorize intersectionality (see for instance Crenshaw (1994/2005), Collins (1998) and Anthias and Yuval Davis (1983, 1992)). There have also been different methodologies as McCall (2005) suggested which contribute to different kinds of knowledge about social positions and inequalities. As she posits, intersectionality can broadly be looked at as anti-categorical or deconstructing; inter-categorical (examining the relationship among existing categories), or intra-categorical (acknowledges the stable and even durable relationships that social categories represent at any given point in time, though it also maintains a critical stance toward categories (McCall, 2005; Joseph, 2015). Thus, the contribution of intersectionality lies not only in drawing attention to multiple forms of oppression but also in challenging the idea of homogeneous and essential social identities, categories or labels (Anthias, 2012).

Moreover, as an analytical framework, Intersectionality helps respond to some critiques in refugee research which often focuses on the problems and tend to overlook strengths and resilience since one of the objectives of intersectionality is to give voice to the oppressed or the invisible groups (Vervliet, et al, 2013). Below are a few examples of how incorporating an intersectional lens in refugee research can contribute to refugee research:

- **Revealing the systematic discrimination in refugee and migration policies and systems:** Koirala & Eshghavi (2017) used an intersectional lens to show how discrimination is exacerbated among the Iranian Refugee Community in the United States due to the intersection of several perceived threats due to ethnicity, national origin, and religion. They highlight that such discrimination doesn't just take form in multiple levels of discrimination and oppression but how it takes form in policies. For instance, many Iranians who do go through the visa process are subjected to a longer clearance and administration process. Similarly, instances of banks spontaneously freezing accounts of Iranian students and refugees have been reported.
- **Pointing to subtle gaps in durable solutions:** Yacob-Haliso (2016) argued that age, disability, and residence are “key demographic variables that regularly intersect with gender to determine access to and availability of durable solutions for refugee women”. For example:

The location of refugee women, whether in camps, rural or urban areas, has implications for their access to durable solutions. That's to say, women in camps are easier to identify and assist compared to women in urban areas who are more susceptible to harassment. Similarly, with respect to personal intersectional disadvantages, there are some women who are further at risk due to the fact that they have individually opposed certain social and cultural norms such as dress code or political and religious views.

- **Highlighting oppression as well as privilege/emancipation due to refugee-ness:** Ayoub (2017) used the example of the Syrian refugees in Egypt to highlight how in research, Syrian women are treated as a single category ignoring the impact of social class. She asks How does class impact the experience of being a refugee? To what extent does “class identity” overshadow “refugee identity”? To what extent are the gender problems faced by Syrian women in Cairo directly linked to class? The chapter argues that the exile experience is not always negative and in some cases, it could have an emancipatory effect on some other women.
- **Rethinking, dissecting and challenging rigid labels/categories:** In the same vein, in refugee research, there is a growing number of studies that are skeptical of the ability of the existing labels and categories in migration policies and their strict boundaries to capture the messy social realities of the people on the move (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018; Kyriakides et al 2018a; 2018b; Ludwig, 2016; Phillips, 2011) and the fact that the definition of labels such as “refugee” vary between the people on the move themselves and the policy makers. It also varies from participant to participant and moment to moment (Kumsa, 2006; Ludwig, 2016; Hyndman & Giles, 2016). By challenging the narrow legal labels, intersectionality questions the refugee determination system that is based on narrow and often neo-liberal and orientalist labels describing the deserving and undeserving forced migrants. In the same sense, it exposes discursive mechanisms that justify exclusionary and unequal policies, rules and regulations (Urbanek, 2012)

Other studies also reveal how Intersectionality:

- Assists in rephrasing or posing the right questions. For instance, regarding family reunification policies, it reveals the heteronormative function of birth and citizenship (Carastathis, et al, 2018; Lee & Brotman, 2013).

- Questions the systems that accept certain forms of violence against those “out of place” from the nation-state which leads to questioning the assumption around what is referred to as the refugee crisis (Carastathis, et al, 2018).
- Demonstrates how new identities emerge because of migration, hence rejecting linear or entitlement of a single social identity (Chulach & Gagnon, 2013)
- Challenges Western-centric preconceived ideas about “the racialized and orientalist ways refugee claimants should perform their gender and their fear within their narratives of persecution” during the refugee determination process (Aberman, 2014).

That said, critiques of intersectionality highlight its lack of attention to hierarchy, the over-reliance on identities, that it often fails to capture the dynamic process of identity formation, the lack of clear intersectional methodology and that it is largely about black women (or focused often on race and gender) (Carbado, 2013; Joseph, 2015; Anthias, 2012). Attempts to respond to the shortcomings of intersectionality framework included for instance Anthias (2012) who proposed the notions of “translocation” and “translocational positionality” in intersectionality analysis to account for the transnational dimension and diversity in national issues that structure gendered differences. Similarly, Joseph (2015) proposed to substitute the notion of Confluence for the interlocking and intersectional approach. He argued that “a confluence is never static, no part is completely distinct from another, and there are multiple perspectives from which one can examine or trace the same idea, system, factor, or influence” (p.17).

The notion of confluence (Joseph 2015), draws attention to the impact of the colonial legacy and how many technologies and disciplines are often centered around a normative subject that is: “white, Christian, able-bodied, -minded, heterosexual, cis-gendered, male, speaking the King’s English, compliant with the law, etc.” (Joseph, 2015). Such a normative subject identifies itself in relation to the uncivilized/irrational Other. This annotated bibliography highlights decolonizing literature in refugee research that explores the potential of anti-colonial theory and its contribution to intersectionality. In particular, through challenging seemingly absolute notions such as emancipation, empowerment and victimhood to be, in fact, socially constructed, an anti-colonial lens can advance our understanding of the factors shaping identities and subjectivities. Moreover,

anti-colonial theory questions the “either or” relationship between notions such as empowerment or exploitation, oppression or emancipation, privilege or disadvantage, and agency or victimhood.

In addition to challenging Eurocentric conceptions, absolute notions and binaries, decolonizing intersectionality should scrutinize disciplines such as psychology for instance which reinforces a Eurocentric understanding of the human subject and social experiences (see for instance Joseph, 2015; Sokoloff, 2008; Aberman, 2014; Lee & Brotman, 2013). It should also attempt to seek solutions that give refugees (and the marginalized for that matter) a voice, a choice and an opportunity to collaborate in deciding what works for them (Yacob-Haliso, 2016). Cross-cultural collaboration (including working with “Othered” and indigenous groups and North-South Partnerships in large) was addressed in many critical and anti-colonial projects. Community-based participatory research (CBPR) (Stanton, 2014; Atallah et al, 2018) and other innovative methodologies such as Critical/cultural narratives and testimonies and arts-based methods (Burrell & Horschelmann, 2019), were a few attempts to decolonize partnerships and knowledge production in forced migration.

In particular, regarding North-South collaboration, issues such as the systematic privileging of Northern values, geographical, linguistic, cultural and time differences despite technological advances (Hynie et al 2014), and the asymmetry between partners, ethics and politics of partnership, the impact of neocolonialism and globalization on equitable collaboration (Bradley, 2017) were some issues that were argued to hinder a meaningful partnership. Rather, they continue to reinforce the hierarchies it is supposed to challenge (Landau, 2012). Suggestions to overcome the latter inequality included reinforcing shared leadership and investing in building trust (Hynie et al 2014) as well as recognizing and altering the (often political) Northern gaze that views the quality of collaborators who are considered acceptable by the Northern elite/funders who often try to find their mirror image (Banerjee, 2012).

Furthermore, there is a growing body of literature that recognizes the ways that Eurocentrism and the colonial legacy dictate knowledge production and North-South collaboration. Such literature aims not just to identify tools and strategies but to create a paradigm shift in how knowledge is produced. Examples such as pushing for the concept of Refusal (Simpson, 2014), advocating for



researching back, writing back and talking back (Smith, 1999), looking white people in the eye (Razack, 1998), recognizing and rejecting “epistemic violence” (Spivak, 1988) and further attempts lead by subaltern studies and transnational feminism are at the center of such literature. By recognizing and linking such work to refugee research, one of our objectives from this literature review is to provoke the question of whether we can imagine a “decolonized” intersectional approach in refugee research that challenges Western hegemonic knowledge production and offers remedies to the imbalance in North-South partnerships? Moreover, are we able to find ways in which such challenge and rejection (whether lead by scholars in the North or from the South) is not ignored and is translated in global dialogues?

The below annotated bibliography starts with literature overviewing the notion of intersectionality and how the international refugee regime has gradually come to adopt a gender-informed then later intersectional approach, reluctantly, nevertheless. The following section identifies refugee research that attempted to incorporate or engage with the intersectional framework. Since one of the most valuable contributions of intersectionality is that it seeks to problematize fixed categories of identity and the universality of categories such as gender, age, ethnicity, nationality and sexuality, the third section elaborates the growing literature that is skeptical of the ability of the existing categories in migration policies to capture the complex social realities of the people on the move by focusing on labeling and racialization. Section four attends to the critiques of intersectionality, some of the alternatives offered to overcome its shortcomings as well as some critical and feminist approaches that could move intersectionality frameworks and debates forward. The final two sections indicate attempts in decolonizing refugee research, methodology and North-South partnerships.

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## 1. UN frameworks, gender mainstreaming and intersectionality

**CARSTATHIS, A., KOURI-TOWE, N., MAHROUSE, G. and WHITLEY, L. (eds.) (2018).** **Special issue: Intersectional Feminist Interventions in the “Refugee Crisis”, *Refuge: Canada’s Journal on Refugees* (34) 1.** The special issue seeks to make an intersectional feminist intervention in research produced about (forced) migration. It surveys work in migration studies

that engages with intersectionality as an analytic, interrogates assumptions about “deserving” subjects within refugee law and humanitarian reason; and responds to the misuse and misconceptions in using intersectionality through challenging binary and fixed categories and underlying the simultaneity of their effect.

**EDWARDS, A. (2010). Transitioning gender: Feminist engagement with international refugee law and policy 1950–2010. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 29(2), 21-45.** Traces the history of feminist engagement with international refugee law and policy through five periods from 1950 to 2010. It highlights the conflation of women-children-sexual violence-vulnerability and how it has further led to instrumental yet unhelpful assumptions about refugee women and added hurdles to bringing women onto an equal footing with men through “gender mainstreaming” and “age, gender and diversity mainstreaming”.

**GROSGOUEL, R., OSO, L., & CHRISTOU, A. (2014). ‘Racism’, intersectionality and migration studies: framing some theoretical reflections. *Identities*, 22(6), 635-652.** The introductory text of this special issue highlights the need for migration theory to take into consideration race and racism in processes of migration incorporation, analysing transnational migratory experiences in relation to colonial legacies and shedding light on the various distinctions between experiences of migrant incorporation provided by the perspective of coloniality. More articles in this special issue: <<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/gide20/22/6>>.

**HYNDMAN, J. (1998). “Managing Difference: Gender and Culture in Humanitarian Emergencies”, in *Gender, Place and Culture*, 5 (3): 241-260.** Analyzes the discourse of ‘UN humanism’ to reveal how “the ways in which the organization conceives of gender and culture in this humanitarian context are problematic because they tend either to essentialize ‘woman’ and ‘culture’ in the planning process or to minimize the meaning and implications of these differences vis-a`-vis gender policies which focus on integration”.

**PITTAWAY, E. & BARTOLOMEI, L. (2018). From Rhetoric to Reality: Achieving Gender Equality for Refugee Women and Girls.** Defines gender-responsiveness as “recognizing and responding to the ways in which gender shapes opportunities, experiences, and governance” (UN

Women, 2015). It also scrutinizes the application of the concept and how so far it hasn't moved beyond rhetoric.

**TRUE, J. (2003). Mainstreaming gender in global public policy. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 5(3), 368-396.** This article offers an overview of gender mainstreaming in global policy through analysing some of “the factors that have brought gender analysis into the global policy mainstream and assesses some of the factors that continue to constrain and weaken the mainstreaming agenda.”

**UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Policy (January 2019).** The policy aims to design effective and accountable humanitarian responses that incorporate and analyze the impact of intersecting personal characteristics (age, gender and diversity – AGD) on people's experiences of forced displacement or statelessness. It highlights six areas of engagement that comprise the framework for achieving accountability to persons of concern, within an AGD approach. More information is available at: <<https://www.unhcr.org/protection/women/4e7757449/unhcr-age-gender-diversity-policy-working-people-communities-equality-protection.html>>.

**BASTIA, T. (2014). Intersectionality, migration and development. *Progress in Development Studies*, 14(3), 237-248.** This article discusses the relevance of intersectionality in the context of development theory and practice, particularly by reviewing how intersectionality has been used in the area of migration studies. In migration studies, it has enabled the opening up of new areas of inquiry, destabilizing the centrality of gender while at the same time maintaining its strong relationship to the original feminist preoccupation with equality and social justice. There are, however, also a number of significant limitations such as its lack of a specific methodology; vague terminology; its inherent tension between structure, agency and identity; and lack of precise and novel conceptualizations of power.

**MCCALL, L. (2005). The complexity of intersectionality. In *Intersectionality and beyond* (pp. 65-92). Routledge-Cavendish.** It evaluates the complexity and limitations of intersectionality due to the lack of a clear methodology. It highlights the three approaches that can be considered broadly representative of current approaches to the study of intersectionality (inter, intra, and counter-

categorical). The author argues that different methodologies produce different kinds of substantive knowledge and that a wider range of methodologies is needed to fully engage with the set of issues and topics falling broadly under the rubric of intersectionality.

**NASH, J. C. (2008). Re-thinking intersectionality. *Feminist review*, 89(1), 1-15.** Identifies four tensions within intersectionality scholarship: the lack of a defined intersectional methodology, the use of black women as quintessential intersectional subjects, the vague definition of intersectionality, and the empirical validity.

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## 2. Refugee research engaged with intersectionality

**ABERMAN, T. (2014). Gendered perspectives on refugee determination in Canada. *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, 30(2), 57-66.** Discusses refugee determination from an intersectional perspective to unpack the impacts of gender on the refugee determination hearing in Canada. It also discusses how the dominant discourses – which are racialized, gendered, and hetero-normative – affect refugee determination, and how feminist theories of intersectionality could be of use to deconstruct the ways they affect different groups of refugee claimants.

**AYOUB, M. (2017). 6 Gender, social class and exile. A gendered approach to the Syrian refugee crisis, 77.** The Syrian case in Egypt in particular necessitates an analysis of the impact of class on the experience of exile. It asks how does class impact on the experience of being a refugee? To what extent does “class identity” overshadow “refugee identity”? To what extent are the gender problems faced by Syrian women in Cairo directly linked to class? The chapter argues that the exile experience is not always negative and in some cases it could have an emancipatory effect on women.

**BASTIA, T. (2011). Migration as protest? Negotiating gender, class, and ethnicity in urban Bolivia. *Environment and Planning A*, 43(7), 1514-1529.** A transnational, multi-scalar, multisided, and intersectional approach is applied to the study of social change through migration, with the aim of investigating whether labour migration provides avenues for greater gender

equality. It concludes that at the individual level there are certainly indications that women achieve greater independence through migration. However, the multi-scalar and intersectional analysis suggests that women trade 'gender gains' for upward social mobility in the class hierarchy. By doing so, they also contribute to the reproduction of patriarchal social relations.

**CHULACH, T., & GAGNON, M. (2013). Rethinking the experience of HIV-positive refugee women in the context of pregnancy: Using an intersectional approach in nursing. *Research and theory for nursing practice*, 27(4), 240-256.** Illustrates how intersectionality is a useful framework to understand the experiences of HIV-positive refugee women to acquire a more meaningful understanding of the historical, social, cultural, political, and structural influences that shape women's health, women's lives in the context of pregnancy, and their access to support and services. Intersectionality helps reveal the barriers those women often experience including language, discriminatory, financial, and transportation barriers as well as racialization and gender role adjustment.

**CLARK-KAZAK, C. (2013). Theorizing Age and Generation in Migration Contexts: Towards Social Age Mainstreaming?. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 44(3), 1-10.** This special issue contributes to an understanding of the complex age and generational dimensions of migration to Canada. The introduction proposes social age as an analytical framework within which to understand and respond to age and generation in migration contexts. It argues that comprehensive social age analysis can lead to greater age sensitivity in migration research, policy and programming.

**EREZ, E., ADELMAN, M., & GREGORY, C. (2009). Intersections of immigration and domestic violence: Voices of battered immigrant women. *Feminist criminology*, 4(1), 32-56.** Analyzes the relationship between immigration and domestic violence in the US. Aligning with the intersectionality framework, rather than consider immigration as a variable or static category within race, it considers immigration as part of the multiple grounds of identity shaping the domestic violence experience. It concludes that immigration shapes how women understand domestic violence, their access to resources, and responses to domestic violence.

**HEYSE, P. (2010). Deconstructing fixed identities: An intersectional analysis of Russian-speaking female marriage migrants' self-representations.** *Journal of intercultural studies*, 31(1), 65-80. Deconstructs the category of 'Russian female marriage migrants' and highlights the diversity within the group of Russian-speaking female marriage migrants in Belgium. The intersectional approach helps uncover social categories and power relations shaping Russian-speaking females' senses of identity and (self-)representations, how these categories and power relations intersect, and what intersections are particularly salient in certain situations.

**KOIRALA, S., & ESHGHAVI, M. (2017). Intersectionality in the Iranian Refugee Community in the United States.** *Peace Review*, 29(1), 85-89. The objective of this study is not only to report various types of discrimination toward Iranian Americans of various ethnicities, languages, and religious affiliations, but also to shed light on how these injustices take shape at the level of policies. The intersection of an Iranian identity, refugee status, and other deeper discriminations, such as identifying as a member of a religious minority, make both transition and integration much more difficult.

**LEE, E. O. J., & BROTMAN, S. (2013). SPEAK OUT! Structural intersectionality and anti-oppressive practice with LGBTQ refugees in Canada.** *Canadian Social Work Review/Revue canadienne de service social*, 157-183. Drawing from the findings of a community-based research project, the paper identifies unique aspects of how refugee subjectivity is constructed among sexual minorities and the complex ways in which the Canadian refugee regime organizes their everyday realities. Specifically, by focusing on structural intersectionality, the article reveals the ways in which the refugee determination process over-determines the material realities of sexual minority refugees.

**NASSER EDDIN, N. (2011). The intersectionality of class and gender: women's economic activities in east and west Amman (Doctoral dissertation, University of Warwick).** uses intersectionality to sheds light on the fact that class in Jordan is very much related to place of residence, and the differences between East and West Amman are very influential in determining women's experiences. This research also identifies the strategies adopted by women to deal with

patriarchy – resistance, negotiation and accommodation – and how those strategies differ depending on class.

**PEASE, B., & REES S. (2008). Theorising men's violence towards women in refugee families: towards an intersectional feminist framework. *Just policy: a journal of Australian social policy*, (47), 39.** Demonstrates how an intersectional lens helps situate domestic violence as a manifestation of universal patriarchal foundations as well as with culturally and socially mediated causes, thus, the responsibility for violence lies on both the perpetrator and the government and societies that perpetrate inequalities and disadvantages. Rather than focusing on pathologizing broader cultural frameworks, an intersectional analysis reveals the collusion of male privilege, racism, colonialism and class privileges and thus should inform policies and health and welfare practices concerning refugee communities and domestic violence.

**PISANI, M., & GRECH, S. (2017). Disability and forced migration: Critical intersectionalities.** For poor disabled people, then, the decision and possibility to flee is also influenced by the existence of, and participation in social networks meaning that those with fewer social networks may be more likely to turn to smugglers who are dishonest. This exposes them to further risk of violence, robbery, rape and trafficking and more precarious routes (see for example Somaliland Sun, 2012). This is a critical concern for disabled women and girls, who are more vulnerable to sexual abuse, violence and trafficking, especially in situations of conflict (see also Buscher, 2014). Such a reality cautions once again against homogenous and essentialist categories, to look instead at the complexity and multiple positions of disabled forced migrants, how disability intersects with gender, age, socioeconomic status and legal status, and how social relations of power never shift out of focus (see also Integra and UNHCR, 2015).

**PITTAWAY, E., & BARTOLOMEI, L. (2001). Refugees, race, and gender: The multiple discrimination against refugee women. *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, 19(6), 21-32.** Highlights how racism and sexism intersect to compound the human rights violations that refugee women experience through examining the Australian Women at Risk Program as a case study. It advocates that a “human rights” approach to the intersectionality of race and gender in refugee situations must be adopted by UN agencies and governments.

**RATKOVIC, S. (2013). The location of refugee female teachers in the Canadian Context: “Not just a refugee woman!”.** *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, 29(1), 103-114.

Challenges the master narrative of refugeehood in Canada by exposing the ways in which race, class, gender, age, ethnicity, and professional identity, in addition to refugeehood, shape the oppression and the privilege of refugee women in the Canadian context. It identifies both structural and self-imposed barriers as expressed by the narratives of four female teachers from Yugoslavia who immigrated to Canada in the 90s.

**SINATTI, G. (2014). Masculinities and intersectionality in migration: transnational Wolof migrants negotiating manhood and gendered family roles.** In *Migration, gender and social justice* (pp. 215-226). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.

Challenges the notion of men as a unitary category of social power. By extending the concept of intersectionality to study the experience of Senegalese men migrants as breadwinners, transnational families were analysed as sites where social interactions can reproduce hegemonic and dominant masculinities, whilst also challenging and questioning them.

**SONKLOFF, N. J. (2008). Expanding the intersectional paradigm to better understand domestic violence in immigrant communities.** *Critical Criminology*, 16(4), 229. Tries to deepen the understanding and translation of culturally competent services for battered women. It identifies the unique problems and dynamics of domestic violence among immigrants and how they deal with them using an intersectional and interlocking analysis.

**STEVENS, M. R. (2016). The collapse of social networks among Syrian refugees in urban Jordan.** *Contemporary Levant*, 1(1), 51-63. Demonstrates how social networks that traditionally provided support in times of hardship, in pre-conflict Syria often based on intersecting relational identities such as religion and ethnicity, have collapsed under the punishing financial and social strain of years of displacement in Irbid, Jordan. It concludes that relational identities are themselves intersectional: that individuals carry a multitude of labels which mark potential grounds on which to forge unity or foment conflict.



**URBANEK, D. (2012) Forced Marriage vs. Family Reunification: Nationality, Gender and Ethnicity in German Migration Policy, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 33:3, 333-345.** Highlights elements of intersectional hyper-visibility, intersectional invisibility, individualisation and ranking of norms to detect the discursive mechanisms that justifies exclusionary and unequal policies, rules and regulations. It uses the example of the policy debate on the German New Immigration Act (2007) which adds restrictions to family reunification in order to “protect” migrant young women from issues such as forced marriage.

**VERVLIET, M., DE MOL, J., BROEKAERT, E., & DERLUYN, I. (2013). ‘That I Live, that's Because of Her’: Intersectionality as Framework for Unaccompanied Refugee Mothers. *British Journal of Social Work*, 44(7), 2023-2041.** Uses intersectional analysis to reveal how the unaccompanied refugee mothers’ multiple categories/social identities: refugee, unaccompanied, adolescent and mother affect their refugee experience. In particular, it demonstrates how their narratives show salient gaps in the way the categories are interpreted and prioritised for those women and in (Belgian) migration policy.

**VIRUELL-FUENTES, E. A., MIRANDA, P. Y., & ABDULRAHIM, S. (2012). More than culture: structural racism, intersectionality theory, and immigrant health. *Social science & medicine*, 75(12), 2099-2106.** Highlights the shortcomings of cultural explanations as currently employed in the health literature and argues for incorporating intersectionality to address how multiple dimensions of inequality intersect to impact health outcomes. It recommends examining the racialization of immigrants, particularly within the US context, to shift the focus from immigrant cultures to the racial ideologies, policies, and day-to-day “othering” practices that serve to assign privilege to some groups and strip others from health-promoting resources.

**YACOB-HALISO, O. (2016). Intersectionality and Durable Solutions for Refugee Women in Africa. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 11(3), 53-67.** This article proposes a re-evaluation of the classic ‘durable solutions’ being applied to refugee women in Africa, and argues that they, and their supporting literature, largely ignore the reality of diversity among refugee women. The author highlights the intersectionality of disadvantage: intertwined personal and

systemic factors that make refugee women in Africa doubly deprived in accessing and experiencing sustainable durable solutions.

**ZAVRATNIK, S., & KRILIC, S. C. (2018). Addressing Intersectional Vulnerabilities in Contemporary Refugee Movements in Europe. *Družboslovne Razprave*, 34(87), 85-106.**

Explores the question of how vulnerabilities are constructed through representations of suffering, and who is excluded from such classifications of vulnerable groups (e.g. those who use technological advancement and don't show financial need). It shows how narrow interpretations of vulnerability can have the effect of minimising women and children's access to assistance by insisting on a pre-existing and feminised notion of vulnerability. Implications also affect men who do not conform to the heteronormative standards of masculinity, who might be viewed as vulnerable individuals, facing multiple insecurities while being on the move.

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### 3. Labeling and Racialization

**COLE, G. (2017). Beyond Labelling: Rethinking the Role and Value of the Refugee 'Label' through Semiotics. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 31(1), 1-21.** The article proposed semiotics as a theoretical approach to studying labelling through exploring the patterns and structures of meaning that individuals associate with the word "refugee". The semiotics approach shows that the word 'refugee' has many more functions than simply to label an individual. For instance, it can also serve to shape others' attitudes towards refugees and subsequently how 'solutions' to their situation are envisaged.

**CRWALEY, H., & SKLEPARIS, D. (2018). Refugees, migrants, neither, both: categorical fetishism and the politics of bounding in Europe's 'migration crisis'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(1), 48-64.** Argues that the problematic of politicized and rigid categories is not a mere issue of semantics rather they have consequences, where they entitle some to protection, rights and resources but not others. It shares a few points to overcome the limitations of the "categorical fetishism" such as having critical awareness of the social construction of categories or that one category is more deserving.

**HYNDMAN, J., & GILES W. (2016). “It’s so cold here; we feel this coldness” Refugee resettlement after long-term exile, in *Refugees in extended exile: Living on the edge*. Routledge.** The chapter proposes revisiting the perception to refugee resettlement as a (durable) solution, a perception reinforced by Canada’s self-image as a savior of helpless (grateful) refugees. Rather it argues resettlement is often viewed by refugees as a protection strategy, hence highlighting the gap between the refugees’ self perception and how the Canadian society reads the racialized refugee body.

**KUMSA, M. K. (2006). ‘No! I’m not a refugee!’ The poetics of be-longing among young Oromos in Toronto. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19(2), 230-255.** Analyzes the complex identities of the Oromos refugees through their instability in defining notions such as the refugee, the nation, belonging, and in a particular example relevant to refugee studies, refugee cheating. It argues that belonging becomes an act of longing to perceived healing and liberation and moving away from perceived violence and oppression. Therefore, it is not bound by a territory or a status and varies from participant to participant and moment to moment.

**KYRIAKIDES, C., BAJJALI, L., MCLUHAN, A., & ANDERSON, K. (2018a). *Beyond Refuge: Contested Orientalism and Persons of Self-Rescue*. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 50(2), 59-78.** Drawing on qualitative interviews, this article shows how the victim-pariah discourse has a significant effect on the refugee-host relationship, particularly in determining the resettlement experience. The article proposes that sponsors who were involved in pre-arrival contact with the sponsored were able to challenge cultural scripts and orientalist refugee discourses to perceiving the “refugees” as “persons of self-rescue” and hence moving beyond the victim-pariah construct.

**KYRIAKIDES, C., MCLUHAN, A., ANDERSON, K., & BAJJALI, L. (2018b). *Status Eligibilities: The Eligibility to Exist and Authority to Act in Refugee–Host Relations*. *Social Forces*. 1-23.** Drawing on qualitative interviews, this article tries to define and assesses the “success” of the Canadian private sponsorship program (PSRP). It suggests that undermining paternalism and viewing the refugee as a mere victim, along with allowing the narrative of self-rescue and autonomy creates trust between the sponsored and sponsors prior to departure in a way

that reaffirms the sponsored self-worth and pre-conflict status eligibility, which in turn increased resettlement success.

**LACROIX, M. (2004). Canadian refugee policy and the social construction of the refugee claimant subjectivity: Understanding refugeeness. *Journal of refugee studies*, 17(2), 147-166.**

This article argues that despite the fact that there is no universal subject, all refugees have a universal experience of uprootedness and crossing borders which becomes a permanent element of their present subjectivity, that arguably goes beyond gender. That said, it looks into how the refugee claimant subjectivity is imposed on them by the (Canadian) refugee policy system.

**LUDWIG, B. (2016). “Wiping the refugee dust from my feet”: advantages and burdens of refugee status and the refugee label. *International Migration*, 54(1), 5-18.** This study suggest that the legal refugee status should not be conflated with the informal label of refugee. It demonstrates how the term refugee has different meanings and implications hence is sometimes embraced and some other times rejected by the forced migrant depending on the definition usage and context (e.g. when the notion refugee is tied to resources and protection v. when it’s a reminder of suffering).

**MALKKI, L. H. (2012). *Purity and exile: Violence, memory, and national cosmology among Hutu refugees in Tanzania*. University of Chicago Press.** Shows how essentialized categories of identity such as 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' are produced through violence and exile. In particular, this ethnographic research shows how displacement and deterritorialization in the contemporary “national order of things”, problematizes refugeeness as a category while at the same time tracing the refusal to be categorized and “to be fixed within one and only one national or categorical identity and one and only one historical trajectory” (p. 4).

**NILES, C. A. (2018). Who gets in? The Price of Acceptance in Canada. *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis* 7(1), 148-162.** Using critical disability studies and critical race theory, the author illustrates how Canada continues to discriminate against people with disabilities. She explores the assumptions the “excessive demand,” point system, and medical exam make in labelling and disregarding disabled applicants who are read as undesirable and unworthy.

**PHILLIPS, M. (2011). Convenient labels, inaccurate representations: Turning Southern Sudanese Refugees into 'African-Australians'.** The author critiques the bureaucratic blanket label 'African Australian' South Sudanese during the resettlement process. Homogenizing their experience (out of bureaucratic convenience) reflects a history of racializing and stigmatizing and can result in costly mistakes during the resettlement process. The author calls for developing a language beyond simplistic labels but does not offer suggestions as to how to go about this process.

**PITTAWAY E. & PITTAWAY, E. (2004). 'Refugee woman': a dangerous label: Opening a discussion on the role of identity and intersectional oppression in the failure of the international refugee protection regime for refugee women. *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 10(1), 119-135.** Examines the occurrence of sexual and gender-based violence experienced by refugee women (using Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya as a case study) and the inadequacy of the international protection regime to address this phenomenon. It argues that the label of 'refugee woman', which carries with it multiple intersecting and compounding layers of oppressions, in itself becomes a major risk factor leading to the rape and sexual abuse experienced by many refugee women as becomes a marker of their exploitability and denies them the expression of other identities.

**ZETTER, R. (2007). More labels, fewer refugees: Remaking the refugee label in an era of globalization. *Journal of refugee studies*, 20(2), 172-192.** This article highlights the trends of continuity and change in the concept of "refugee labelling" which was introduced by the author in 2001. He demonstrates how labeling might show in the apparent a legitimate and an apolitical process but in reality is a discriminatory tool in the hands of neoliberal ideologies. At best it has shifted the refugee status from a right to a prize and at worst it has served a tool to discriminate and criminalize claimants.

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#### 4. Further Critical and Feminist Approaches

**ANTHIAS, F. (2012). Transnational mobilities, migration research and intersectionality 2(2), 102-110.** Attempts to rethink intersectionality using a translocational lens, which, as argued,

is able to pay attention to the challenges for intersectionality of transnationalism, and considers the importance of context, meaning and contradictory locations. It argues that using the notions of “translocation” and “translocational positionality” in intersectionality relates to both: structures of power and how these impact on people’s lives and identifications in complex and often highly contradictory ways.

**BURRELL, K., & Hörschelmann, K. (2019). Perilous Journeys: Visualising the Racialised “Refugee Crisis”. *Antipode*.** The article uses racial discourses, visibility, storytelling and decoloniality approaches to analyze graphic narratives animating the refugee experience of Syrian men created by an NGO in an attempt to offer alternative framings and resist dehumanization. It reminds that the visual dimension of the refugee crisis is raced, faithed and gendered and argues that art and visual texts can help create decolonial archives in a way that creates closer empathy through personalizing suffering not distant pity through shocking images.

**CHIMNI, B. S. (2009). The birth of a ‘discipline’: From refugee to forced migration studies. *Journal of Refugee studies*, 22(1), 11-29.** The author traces the history of refugee studies to emphasises the strong relationship between knowledge and power. It argues that the shift from refugee studies to forced migration studies still served the purpose of employing “political humanitarianism” in order to legitimize an imperial world order which reinforces the colonial project, the geopolitics of the hegemonic states, and to legitimize subordination of the Other.

**HYNDMAN, J. (2004). Mind the gap: bridging feminist and political geography through geopolitics. *Political Geography*, 23(3), 307-322.** Explores the intersections and conversations between feminist geography and political geography through elaborating the notion of a feminist geopolitics to bridge scholarship in feminist and political geography by creating a theoretical and political space in which geopolitics becomes a more gendered and racialized project, one that is epistemologically situated and embodied in its conception of security.

**HYNDMAN, J. (2010). Introduction: the feminist politics of refugee migration. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 17(4), 453-459.** This introduction to a themed section highlights the contribution feminist critique could have in refugee studies and in understanding the multilayers and instability

in the category “refugee”. In particular, the contributions highlight transnational migration and the cultural politics they engender using feminist analysis.

**HYNDMAN, J. (2011). Feminist geopolitics meets refugee studies. *Refugees in international relations*, 163-183.** Argues that Feminist geopolitics attempts to: (a) challenge the prevailing scales and epistemologies of knowledge production in relation to international relations and (b) rework the ways in which humanitarian practice and programming is conceived. Moreover, By focusing on refugees, the unit of analysis shifts. Feminist geopolitics decentres the state, though does not ignore it, and insists upon multiple scales of security, from the state to the refugee household.

**HYNDMAN, J. (2019) Unsettling Feminist Geopolitics: forging feminist political geographies of violence and displacement. *Gender, Place and culture*, 26(1), 3-29.** This article makes the case for consolidating feminist work under the umbrella of (feminist) political geography that is responsive to postcolonial critique and goes beyond ‘feminist geopolitics’ with all its strands. The author showcases the contribution this theoretical approach could bring to issues of protracted human displacement and the Canadian private refugee sponsorship program (PRSP) revealing neoliberal, orientalist and racialized elements in the latter.

**JOSEPH, A. J. (2015). Beyond intersectionalities of identity or interlocking analyses of difference: Confluence and the problematic of “anti”-oppression. *Intersectionalities: A Global Journal of Social Work Analysis, Research, Polity, and Practice*, 4(1), 15-39.** Tries to respond to some of the critiques of intersectionality approaches namely lack of attention to hierarchies to relations of power and the formation of subjectivities, and an overreliance on identities or subjectivities. It does that by substituting the notion of confluence for the interlocking or intersectional approach in its study of the practice of deportation for people identified with mental illness.

**LEE, D. (2018). What is Feminist Foreign Policy? Analysis of Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy. University of Ottawa.** Explores what feminist foreign policy is and if it’s evident in Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy. It argues that a feminist

foreign policy is profoundly transformative in its conceptualization of security, power and implementation, and that Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy is ineffective in embodying this transformative potential for development and security.

**LENETTE, C., & BODDY, J. (2013). Visual ethnography and refugee women: nuanced understandings of lived experiences. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 13(1), 72-89.** Offers an innovative intersectional approach combined with visual ethnographic research to demonstrate the complexity of refugee women's lives, and challenge the assumption of a universal female experience. It shows how the effective use of visual ethnographic methods with a small group of single refugee women (divorced or widowed) yielded key information in the context of mental health research. More specifically, findings around a sense of achievement, pride and accomplishment, and a sense of health and well-being, add a rich dimension to refugee women's resilience and well-being discourses.

**PISANI, M., & GRECH, S. (2017). Disability and forced migration: Critical intersectionalities. *Disability and the Global South*, 2 (1), 421-441.** Urges the need for disability studies to engage with migration, to inform other areas as well as challenge its own eurocentrism (especially with most forced migrants located in the Global South), and to broaden its epistemological horizons. The same applies to migration studies, which the article argues adopts an ableist approach. It pushes to explore the disability/forced migration nexus with a view to understand some of the critical intersectionalities that emerge, and their implications for theory and practice.

**TURNER, L. (2017). Who will resettle single Syrian men?. *Forced Migration Review*, 54, 29-31.** The article highlights the particular challenge faced by single Syrian men with resettlement policies. Such policies reflect the widely held (gendered, racialized and orientalist) view that 'authentic' refugees are women and children who meet the (politicized) humanitarian definition of vulnerability. Such definition reinforces portrayals of Muslim Arab men as threatening, and as potential terrorists, rather than as victims and survivors.



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## 5. Decolonizing methodology

**ATALLAH, D. G., SHAPIRO, E. R., AL-AZRAQ, , N., QAISI, Y., & SUYEMOTO, K. L. (2018). Decolonizing qualitative research through transformative community engagement: critical investigation of resilience with Palestinian refugees in the West Bank. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 1-31.** The article reflects on community engagement strategies used in a qualitative study of resilience with Palestinian refugees. In particular, it identifies seven transformative community engagement strategies that highlight principles of community-based participatory research (CBPR) while emphasizing decolonial qualitative methods such as critical reflexivity and recognizing the researcher as “colonized within”.

**BARNES, B. R. (2018). Decolonising research methodologies: opportunity and caution. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 48(3), 379-387.** The author interrogates some of the assumptions of decolonizing methodologies such as including photovoice, autoethnography, visual methods, storytelling, and participatory approaches. He discusses how they often lack clarity of the concepts that they draw on, reproduce problematic representations of the marginalised, and does not address the systemic barriers to decolonisation scholarship. The author urges to collate projects that use innovative methodologies among others.

**MACDONALD, M. T. (2017). " My Little English": a Case Study of Decolonial Perspectives on Discourse in an After-School Program for Refugee Youth. *Community Literacy Journal*, 11(2), 16-29.** This essay draws from a case study of refugee student discourse to discuss how a more explicit *decolonial* approach to literacy sponsorship can help sponsors rethink a giver-receiver paradigm. It summarizes the main tenants of decolonial perspectives and notes the difference between inclusion, recognition and reclamation of Othered voices.

**SMITH, L. T. (1999). Introduction, in *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Zed books [pp.1-18].** This master work draws the qualitative researcher’s attention to the fact that the word research itself is Western and might seem as a dirty word to many indigenous cultures who were sick of and suffered from previous fieldwork. The author shares strategies and examples to decolonize research grounded in two principles: reciprocity and embracing other

(especially Othered) ways of knowing. Chapter 8 covers 25 projects/examples that were pursued by indigenous communities.

**STANTON, C. R. (2014). Crossing methodological borders: Decolonizing community-based participatory research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(5), 573-583.** This article discusses participatory research design and its implementation in cross-cultural contexts, especially as connected to shifting decolonizing theory to practice. It draws upon lessons learned during a community-based participatory research (CBPR) project with Native people while highlighting key areas of epistemological tension to re-envision the epistemological power structure in CBPR.

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## 6. North-South Partnership

**BRADLEY, M. (2007). North-South research partnerships: challenges, responses and trends; a literature review and annotated bibliography. *Canadian partnerships working paper; 1*.** This paper provides an overview of the major issues and themes in the English literature on North-South development research partnerships. It discusses issues such as the asymmetry between partners, ethics and politics of partnership, the impact of neocolonialism and globalization on equitable collaboration and the lack of interdisciplinary dialogue in addressing the problem. It concludes by offering some solutions to overcome the aforementioned obstacles.

**HYNIE, M., McGrath, S., Young, J. E., & Banerjee, P. (2014). Negotiations of engaged scholarship and equity through a global network of refugee scholars. *Scholarly and Research Communication*, 5(3).** This article reports on how the challenges of achieving and maintaining meaningful North-South academic partnerships are similar to, and different from, those of building community-university collaborations, and how these challenges shed light on structural issues in how Northern academic institutions approach partnership. E.g. the systematic privileging of Northern values, as well as geographical, linguistic, cultural and time differences despite technological advances. The article concludes by making some suggestions to overcome obstacles such as shared leadership and investing in building trust.

**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*, 25(4), 555-570. And responses: CASTLES S. (2012). Response to Landau. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 25(4), 573-576 and BANERJEE, P. (2012). Response to Landau. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 25(4), 570-573.** The author discusses an implication of the power and knowledge nexus, namely the unequal relationship in North-South research collaboration which, as he argued, continues to reinforce the hierarchies it is supposed to challenge. Among the reasons discussed are funding conditions from the North and limited capabilities of the South. He concludes by proposing some practical steps to improve research in the South and the success of future collaborations. Responses to this article, though agreeing with the main argument, contested that not all research produced in the South is inadequate as claimed by the author, rather it's the northern (often political) gaze that views the quality of collaborators who are considered acceptable by the northern elite/funders who often try to find their mirror image (Banerjee, 2012). Another critique centered around the proposed strategies and a few assumptions around them such as the conflation of Africa with the South, the negative impact of relying on "slyness and subterfuge" on trust and reawakening colonial stereotypes and the overall pessimistic undertone regarding change (Castles, 2012).

**SIMPSON, A. (2014). *Mohawk interruptus: Political life across the borders of settler states*. Duke University Press.** Introduces another alternative to resistance, a strategy which could reinforce weakness as an inherent characteristic of the Othered identities and might reinforce perceptions of superiority and inferiority. Instead, a strategy of refusal denies the authority and the legitimacy of the power instead of just seeking its interruption. Such perception could be helpful in shifting the dynamics of the relationship between the Global North and the Global South and the nature of their collaboration.

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## Further Readings

- ANTHIAS, F., & YUVAL-DAVIS, N.** (1983). Contextualizing feminism: Gender, ethnic and class divisions. *Feminist review*, (15), 62-75.
- ANTHIAS, F., & YUVAL-DAVIS, N.** (1992). Racialized Boundaries: Race. *Nation*, 303.
- CARBADO, D. W.** (2013). Colorblind intersectionality. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 38(4), 811-845
- COLLINS, P. H.** (1998). It's all in the family: Intersections of gender, race, and nation. *Hypatia*, 13(3), 62-82.
- CONNELL, R.** (2014). Margin becoming centre: For a world-centred rethinking of masculinities. *NORMA: International Journal for Masculinity Studies*, 9(4), 217-231.
- CRENSHAW, K.** (2005). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color (1994).
- NASSER-EDDIN, N.** (2017). Gender performativity in diaspora: Syrian refugee women in the UK. In *A Gendered Approach to the Syrian Refugee Crisis* (pp. 152-164). Routledge.
- PATIL, V.** (2013). From patriarchy to intersectionality: A transnational feminist assessment of how far we've really come. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 38(4), 847-867.
- RAZACK, S.** (1998). *Looking white people in the eye: Gender, race, and culture in courtrooms and classrooms*. University of Toronto Press.
- SPIVAK, G. C.** (1988). Can the subaltern speak?. *Can the subaltern speak? Reflections on the history of an idea*, 21-78.
- TURNER, S.** (2017). Victims of chaos and subaltern sexualities?: Some reflections on common assumptions about displacement and the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence (pp. 44-57). New York: Berghahn Books.



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