STOP PRESS! BOb’s Sharon Pickering nominated for Australian Human Rights Award

On the 9th of November it was announced that BOb's Professor Sharon Pickering has been nominated as a finalist in this year's Australian Human Rights Award (Print Media category). The nomination is for her leadership of the Australian Academic Expert Panel on Asylum Seekers featured on The Conversation. Winners will be announced 10th December.

BOb campaigns for the deaths of asylum seekers in Australian migration custody to be counted

It is common knowledge that people are dying trying to come into Australia by boat (almost 1,000 asylum seekers died at sea in the last 12 years), and others are dying in Australian immigration detention centres or in Australian migration custody. What isn’t common knowledge is the fact that these deaths are not counted in Australia’s official deaths in custody statistics.

On 15th October 2012, The Observatory’s Sharon Pickering and Leanne Weber’s article ‘If we care about asylum seekers, we must count deaths in detention’ was published by The Conversation. It launched a three week campaign to raise awareness and encourage the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) to start counting these deaths in its National Deaths in Custody Monitoring Program (NDICMP). The campaign received media attention in Australia and overseas. Read more here.

Did you know?

Some facts from the UK

… The UK is home to less than 2% of the world’s refugees – out of more than 15 million worldwide (UNHCR Global Trends 2011).

… There have been a number of High Court cases in the UK resulting in the last minute halt of deportation flights returning Tamils to Sri Lanka after successful appeals that the deportees risk torture on return. Read more here.

… The 12th of October marked the two year anniversary since the death of Jimmy Mubenga, who died during a forced removal flight from the UK to Angola whilst restrained by three G4S guards. In the two years since this incident, no one has been held accountable or charged for his death. His family now await an inquest into his death. Read more here.
Life as a detainee in UK Immigration Removal Centres

What is the quality of life like for detainees living in immigration detention centres? Professor Mary Bosworth and Dr Blerina Kellezi of Oxford University recently completed the first academic account of life in immigration detention (immigration removal centres – IRCs) in Britain. Entitled, *Quality of Life in Detention: Results from MQLD Questionnaire Data Collected in IRC Yarl’s Wood, IRC Tinsley House and IRC Brook House*, August 2010-June 2011, it found that detainees experienced high levels of depression, feelings of distress, and difficulties in trusting immigration staff. It also uncovered some positive aspects of life in detention. Read more [here](#).

BOb focus project: Deaths at the Global Frontier

The publication of the Australian Border Deaths Database in the book *Globalization and Borders: Death at the Global Frontier* (by BOB’s Professor Leanne Weber and Professor Sharon Pickering) provides a recorded account of all known deaths associated with Australia’s borders. The ‘Deaths at the Global Frontier’ project now hosts this Database which is updated regularly. The project intends to shift the debate about contemporary border controls towards the acceptance of a more mobility-tolerant future. See project page [here](#).

Spotlight Story: Outsourcing of asylum seeker detention and transportation in the UK and Australia

Both the UK and Australia use the services of a multinational corporation, Serco, for the detention and transportation of asylum seekers. In the UK and Australia, respective governments have ventured into long standing contracts with Serco, despite the fact that operations in both countries have been categorised by contract breaches, abuse of detainees, inappropriate restraint techniques and poor training procedures. Read more [here](#).

There are a number of other Spotlight Stories on topical border crossings issues [here](#).

UN Day Trafficking in Persons Forum

The United Nations Association of Australia (UNAA) held a forum in Melbourne on the 29th October to mark United Nations Day and raise awareness about human trafficking worldwide. The focus was on Australia’s contribution to addressing trafficking in persons. Representatives from Australia’s anti-trafficking NGOs including World Vision, Childwise, Stop the Traffik, AusAID and The Age newspaper took part in the panel discussion facilitated by BOB’s Sharon Pickering (pictured).

Researcher Profile: Dr Leanne Weber

Dr Leanne Weber is a Senior Research Fellow at Monash School of Political and Social Inquiry and a chief investigator with BOB, specialising in migration policing. She completed her Doctorate in the UK on the detention of asylum seekers. While I was investigating the detention of asylum seekers in England, I developed a great admiration for British NGOs and immigration lawyers who fought constant...
battles against these injustices. I still keep in close touch with the Institute of Race Relations who have become our NGO partner on the Border Crossing Observatory.


**Higher Degree Student Profile: Maie Noweir**

Maie Noweir completed a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Criminology in 2009 at Monash University. Maie’s Master’s thesis, *Supporting Victims of Trafficking: examining the design and implementation of victim support*, critically examines victim support frameworks within Australia and the United Kingdom. The research explores how key theories of migration; gender and victimhood have been translated into the implementation of victim support. Maie will be conducting interviews with UK NGOs involved in supporting and advocating for victims of trafficking. The research aims to provide more detailed knowledge of the types of services offered to victims, how services are implemented in practice, and the types of issues that arise in the implementation of support.

**Opportunities**

**Post Doctoral Research Fellowships at Oxford University**

The Oxford University, Centre for Criminology has advertised three Post Doctoral Research Fellowships:

- Oxford Transitional Justice Research Post-Doctoral Fellowship
- Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship, “Home and away: Gender, nation, deportation”
- Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship, “The postcolonial prison: citizenship, punishment and mobility”

The application **deadline is Friday November 23, 2012**. Fellowship appointments will be advised in January 2013. For more information click [here](#).

**Call for papers: Anti-Trafficking Review**

The Anti-Trafficking Review is currently calling for papers to be featured in its Special Issue #2 ‘Human Rights at the Borders’ to be published in Autumn 2013. The submission **deadline is 31 December 2012**. For more information click [here](#).

**BOB Internship Program**

We are currently finalising dates for the 2013 Internship Program. Keep an eye out for our next newsletter and on our [website](#) for updates.

**Events**

**Academy Of Social Sciences Australia Workshop**

4-5 April 2013, Sydney, Australia.

Convened by BOB’s Professor Sharon Pickering and Dr Claudia Tazreiter, the ASSA’s Workshop, “Precarious migrants and national migration systems-Rethinking the mobility/security nexus for a human rights perspective”, will bring together academics from interdisciplinary backgrounds that are active in research and public policy debates on migration processes.

For more information about events, visit our [website](#).
Featured Publications

*Borders and Crime: Pre-Crime, Mobility and Serious Harm in an Age of Globalisation*, edited by Professor Sharon Pickering and Professor Jude McCulloch (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). This book explores how state activity on the border simultaneously creates and responds to crime, criminalising individuals who irregularly cross borders while ignoring far more harmful cross border activities committed by powerful actors.

*Borderline Justice: The Fight For Refugee and Migrant Rights*, by Frances Webber (Pluto Press, 2012). From pre-arrival to detention and deportation, *Borderline Justice* describes the exclusionary policies, inhumane decisions and obstacles to justice for refugees and migrants in the current legal system. Click here for more information.


NGO News

Vision First hold ‘March for Protection’, Hong Kong

Vision First held a ‘March for Protection’ on October 30 to raise awareness and challenge the Hong Kong Government over its zero per cent recognition rate for refugees. Over 300 protestors marched to the government headquarters in Admiralty protesting against the intolerable conditions in Hong Kong’s immigration detention centres. They delivered a petition to the Legislative Council and the Director of Immigration demanding fairer and more humane treatment for refugees, in line with the UN Refugee Convention. Read more here.

The BOb network

The Border Crossing Observatory has an expansive academic network of esteemed experts from universities around the world.

BOb also welcomes NGO partners to the network.

If you are interested in joining our academic or NGO network, please contact BOb’s Managing-Director, Rebecca Powell, rebecca.powell@monash.edu

Feedback and submissions

We welcome your feedback and submissions for future newsletters, including information about relevant research, discussions or events.

Our focus for the next issue will be on issues associated with irregular migration and border crossings in Italy. If you wish to contribute to our next newsletter, please contact the Border Crossing Observatory at bcrossingobservatory@gmail.com.