

Globalization and Borders: Death at the Global Frontier.

By Leanne Weber and Sharon Pickering. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. Pp. 264. GBP £55 cloth.

As part of the *Transnational Crime, Crime Control and Security* Series, Leanne Weber and Sharon Pickering's timely publication, *Globalization and Borders: Death at the Global Frontier*, brings the reader into the hidden world of border deaths. With growing numbers of asylum-seekers dying on the high seas on their way to Australia and continued political debate over how to address this issue, Weber and Pickering draw our attention to people around the world, whose travel documents are deemed less desirable by immigration authorities and are therefore forced to navigate an entirely different terrain of risky border zones. Presenting compelling data as to how border deaths are hidden by state practices and impossible to account for and even count, this work shows us what happens along what the authors call "migratory fault lines" (3). Importantly *Globalization and Borders: Death at the Global Frontier*, includes the first ever attempt at recording border-related deaths in Australia. For this achievement alone the authors are to be commended. By re-directing the focus of border issues to the women, men and children whose lives are lost at borders, Weber and Pickering add a moral layer to discussions of responsibility and accountability that makes this book compelling and confronting reading. It is highly recommended as a reference tool and commentary on asylum issues.

Both criminologists Weber and Pickering's work draws widely from international relations, sociology and international law, and is aided by a recognition of the nexus between criminalization-migration-security. To this end they go beyond what they characterize as a limited human rights approach, to incorporate human security in a way that enhances their analysis. Using 'illegalized travellers', which the authors acknowledge as being unwieldy, as their frame of reference, Weber and Pickering traverse a remarkable range of sites in order to lay bare state practices of border control and the affects they have on illegalized travellers from heightened border crossings, to deportations, that all result in death. Reading of Australian border practices alongside what takes place at the US-Mexico border, and the perimeter of the European Union, allows for comparisons and contrasts of unique borders that is lost in other works focusing on single sites. Highlighting the risks people are increasingly forced to take by drawing on a combination of personal accounts, NGO reports and the authors' own analysis, is necessarily confronting and personalises an issue too often discussed with reference to subjective and impersonal terms alone like 'push-pull' factors and 'sending-receiving' countries. What they achieve in scope, they also match in depth by drawing on Dauvergne's (2008) innovative concept of ice core sampling to look through, and within borders, in a deeply structured way.

Noting that coronial records in Australia do not capture the visa or migration status of a deceased person, and that the Australian Deaths in Custody database does not include immigration detention centres - two matters that will hopefully be re-dressed following the publication of this book, the authors conduct their own Inquiry. Notably for Australia, where certain sections of the media and

politics revel in tallies of boat arrivals, Part 1: 'Border Autopsy' cautiously approaches the issue of counting border deaths, including the authors' own sub-project on border-related deaths at the Australian frontier. As a sign of their ongoing commitment, these records continue to be updated and maintained through an online portal *Border Crossing Observatory*, available at <http://artsonline.arts.monash.edu.au/bordercrossings/>. Yet the authors refuse to be distracted by the sub-project of counting alone, due to the many invisible deaths that simply cannot be counted and the bigger issue of accounting for deaths at the border. It is here that the authors present some of their strongest work, in the shape of counter-narratives of border deaths, through compelling and poignant testimony. They also complicate what occurs at borders and in territories, arguing that it increases risk with "[t]his matrix of risk play[ing] a significant role in determining *who* dies a border-related death, *how* they die, and *where*" (27).

Working through the risk matrix, Part 2: 'Border Inquest', shows how the selective practices at borders are felt in a gendered, racialised and classed manner. For example, Sub-Saharan Africans are considered more at risk in trying to reach Europe due to longer journeys (103), and "women as a group have also been found to be at higher risk of death during illegalized travel in the US-Mexico borderlands" (104). Bringing together data such as border-related suicides, from various sources can be hard to keep track of, and I found the index somewhat lacking in trying to locate specific details again. Yet the authors are to be commended for such meticulous research and, in a most powerful move, the inclusion of the deceased's names to what is known of their cause of death. Many local catastrophes, from the sinking of the SIEV X to suicides in immigration detention, will be familiar to the reader yet they have been joined together in an entirely new way with incidents at other border sites. Moving to questions of border practices and border deaths, will hopefully shift the entrenched asylum debate in Australia and other rich nations, bringing in as it does new actors, fresh insights and a broader perspective on the issue without abrogating domestic responsibility. Part 3: 'From Finding Truth to Preventing Border Harm' takes the issue of border deaths to its most difficult conclusions around risk, responsibility and action'; sustaining a sense of the border as actual and as symbol.

Such an eye-opening account implicates the reader and is a call to think more deeply about the heightened practices of exclusion taking place along state borders, including our own in Australia. For those of us who are increasingly concerned about the rising tide of anti-asylum seeker sentiment and the race to the bottom to find harsher deterrence measures, Weber and Pickering have produced a book that is an invaluable arsenal in the fight to see more humane approaches to migration and people movement globally.

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