



FORDHAM | IPED

Fordham University's graduate program in International Political Economy and Development trains graduate students in the advanced interdisciplinary analysis of global economic relations and international development issues. Graduates frequently pursue professional careers in international finance and banking, international economic policy, and in international relief and development.

Global Briefs is a student-run newsletter of Fordham's IPED program. It aims to share the public policy insights of students, alumni and faculty on global economic relations, international development, and regional conflict.

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Alumni Profile: Holomo Koni Kourouma

Holomo Koni Kourouma is currently a Member of Parliament of the National Assembly of Guinea, the government's legislative body. He sits on the Economic and Financial Affairs, Planning, and Cooperation Committee where he, along with 11 other members of the parliament, examines and brings attention to all matters pertaining to national economic policy and public finances to the National Assembly.

Prior to being elected in 2013, Holomo worked with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in Guinea as a Finance and Administration Manager (2004-2008) and as an Acting Country Representative (June - December 2006 and April-August 2008). He enrolled in IPED in 2008 and specialized in International Banking and Finance. Upon completion of the program in 2010, he resumed his work with CRS as the Head of Programs (June 2010 - December 2013), where he was responsible for building staff capacity in implementation of projects and fulfillment of donor requirements including producing high quality reports. He adds that during his term as the Head of Program, CRS Guinea was able to develop and successfully implement small and large scale projects impacting the lives of millions of Guineans in the areas of health, education, water and sanitation, and governance.

He credits his successful transition from international development work to governance and policy making to IPED. He noted that IPED's rigorous and multi-disciplinary approach to development is essential to public policy making.

"On a daily basis, we grasp with issues—such as free trade, regional integration, economic growth promotion, employment, and minimum wage policy,



among others—, that were discussed in the program. As of now, for example, we are in the process of deliberating on a trade agreement with the European Union to substantially reduce barriers and levies. Considering the gains and losses of either course of action while not overlooking the paramount politics that is involved takes me back to IPED," he adds.

When asked on his insight on public policy, he shared that most of the development debate in developing countries like Guinea is about foreign aid, which has little to no impact in alleviating poverty. He stresses "The fact that resource-rich countries like mine are trying to get out of the water while resource-poor countries like Rwanda are doing far better in terms of development indicates that aid may complement, but it cannot substitute for good policies. But pushing for reforms in countries that has been marred by poor governance is a daunting, if not an improbable task, that takes courage and patience to address. Building trust and fostering cooperation are essential to create the conditions for good policies to take hold."

Identities in Peril in Former Yugoslavia

Effects of Gender Based Violence on Conception of Identity

BY ALEXANDRA STRZEMPKO

The Bosnian War was a brutal conflict notable for its personal nature. Before the war, the three major ethnic groups—Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs—lived harmoniously together under one united Yugoslav state. In the wake of the breakup of Yugoslavia, ethnic Serbs became increasingly nationalistic and were focused on the idea of “Greater Serbia.” During the three years of the conflict, from 1992-1995, Bosnian Serbs perpetrated a campaign of genocide against ethnic Muslim Bosniaks. The Serbs were systematically raping Bosniak women that contributed to the genocide and could even be considered a genocide in its own right.

To understand the targeting of the Bosniaks during the war, it is important to note that they had traditionally been considered as “traitors and heretics,” for converting to Islam during the Ottoman Occupation. During the same period, the Serbs had also been “feminized” by the conquering Turks. The transformation of the Bosniaks into “Turks,” by their conversion to Islam was a necessary strategy implemented in order to implant the idea of an ethnic difference between Slavic people that did not, in fact, exist.

The systematic nature of the rapes by the Serbs indicates that they were an inherently political act undertaken to assert masculinity and dominance. The targeting of very young girls and women shows that they were attempting to systematically destroy the identity of these children. The fact that many women were gang raped in front of family members and children served to further humiliate them and to announce to society that they would be unfit for society and motherhood even after the conflict. The manner of these rapes were intended to destroy the identity of the victims and as they were targeted against a specific ethnic group, they can be characterized as acts of genocide.

In a patriarchal system, a rape victim is considered tainted and not fit to rear the next generation. Following this reasoning, when a certain ethnic group of women are targeted for rape, the perpetrators are in fact conducting genocide by marking an



UN Special Envoy Angelina Jolie, UK Foreign Secretary William Hague and Dr. Denis Mukwege, Director of Panzi Hospital of DR Congo depart from Number 10 Downing Street. Jolie and Hague co-chaired the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict last June 2014. The summit marked the largest gathering to end rape as a weapon of war. (Photo Credit: Simon Davis/Department for International Development)

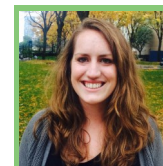
entire generation of women as tainted and unfit for rearing children. The use of rape in conflict zones is also used to exert control and instill fear among the civilians, which is largely gendered during conflicts.

This kind of account is often very difficult for western observers to understand, and the narrative has often been portrayed in the western media as one of ethnic hatreds and tensions that had been tangible for years. Nationalist, religious, and ethnic tensions were present, at least in the minds of the Serbians, but Tito, former president of Yugoslavia, had been successful in burying these tensions for at least a full generation. It is important to make this distinction, as the Bosniak people during Tito’s rule and the existence of Yugoslavia had developed a distinctly Yugoslav identity. Vicious attacks from friends, colleagues, and neighbors came as a severe shock to citizens who had grown up in an ethnically diverse but united country. In the wake of the conflict, Bosniak victims had to grapple with the loss of their identity as a part of Yugoslavia, which was the only identity the majority of them had ever known.

Rape, systematic and otherwise, has been happening to women in wartime throughout history. Since rape was not largely considered a crime in the past, in-

stances of rape were not investigated enough in scholarly work. The body of scholarly work surrounding the events in Bosnia-Herzegovina is a testament to the way that media coverage did in fact change the way that the international community understood crimes of sexual violence in conflict zones. Although much has been said about the changes in the international legal code regarding the rapes, many women are still unable to find justice. With the passage of time it becomes increasingly difficult for women who never admitted to the crimes that they endured to come forward. However, the wounds left behind by the trauma have not and will not disappear.

In the decades after the war, the Bosniak victims of rape and the Bosniak population in general still struggles with questions of identity and closure. Thus, the Bosniaks must continue to seek and be granted justice for the crimes that were committed against them if they are ever to claim a nuanced identity of their own.



Alexandra Strzempko is a Peace Corps Coverdell Fellow pursuing her MA in International Political Economy and Development at Fordham University.

IDEASCAPE — Proposals in Development and Public Policy

Children's Fate Determined by the Media?

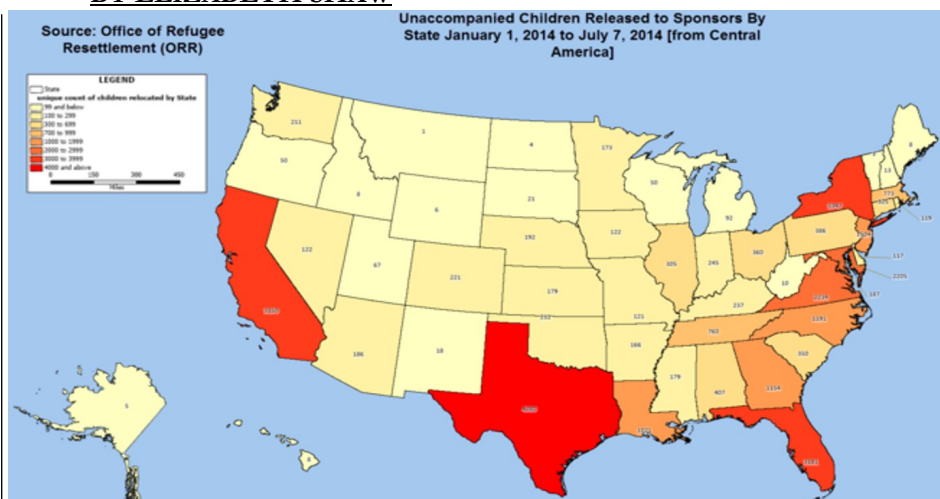
A Research Proposal on The Power of Public Opinion in the Political Economy of Immigration

BY ELIZABETH SHAW

In 2014, 66,120 unaccompanied alien children (UAC) crossed the United States (US)-Mexico border¹. This number has increased by 35,200 from the year prior. While overall migrant apprehensions along the US border have decreased over the past few years, an increase in the amount of UACs didn't begin until 2012, and within two years, has increased by 88 percent. While American discourse has concentrated on Mexican immigration over the past decade, these children contribute to an emerging migrant demographic from the Northern Triangle of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

The fragile economies of these three nations have been challenged by natural disasters and increasing inequality. These children, however, do not fit the mold of a job-seeking migrant. Their desire to leave home is further impelled by the societal and gang violence growing in these poor states. Gang violence deteriorates the social structure important for childhood while intentionally targeting children to fuel their work. Youth face "forced conscription, extortion, physical assault, threats and sexual violence. They are increasingly used by gangs to monitor territories, sell drugs, and collect extortion payments²." Interviews with 322 children returned to El Salvador affirm that this reality was the source of their migration.

One might expect the sharp increase in numbers taking place in a short period of time to yield a restrictive policy environment in response to uncertainty or fear. One may also assume, however, that in this circumstance, that the public response may be more hospitable than normal with empathy towards children as its starting point. Thus, an immediate political positioning would be unanticipated as these conflicting concerns would nullify a political shift in either direction. The swift political response seeking restrictions for UACs at the end of 2014, therefore, warrants an exploration of its motivations.



Map of Unaccompanied Children Released to Sponsors in the US from January 1 to July 7, 2014. (Photo Credit: Metric Maps)

Specifically, the change in support for the Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Reauthorization Act of 2008 (TVPRA) deserves analysis. This legislation permitted apprehended UACs from non-contiguous states to be placed in the care of the office of Health and Human Services/Office of Refugee Resettlement and entered into legal proceedings in which the case could be made for the child to remain in the States. Following the increase in UAC migration during 2014, however, this support was revoked. By July 21st, eight (8) new pieces of legislation were introduced by Republican politicians seeking to amend TVPRA and reduce the protections previously agreed upon for UACs. These restrictions likely represent a shift in public opinion and a catering to the electorate which deserves rigorous exploration. I propose a study to gain understanding of how American public opinion was formed in response to the 2014 UAC influx. A sustainable and humane response will only be conceived when both the needs of UACs and the fears of the public are understood fully.

Immigration is both an economic and social phenomenon. Since host countries enjoy net gain for national welfare, immigration is less disagreeable due to economic threat than the average consumer

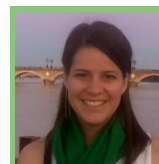
of media may assume. What economic arguments are often masking are the cultural fears of immigration. As globalization pulls distant peoples increasingly closer, nationalism and identity are made vulnerable. As such, restrictive immigration policies are paradoxically on the rise despite an otherwise widely accepted hegemon of liberalization. These policies appear to cater to the fears of the public placing the fate of immigrants on an incumbent's reelection platform.

These social dynamics of the UAC issue are particularly daunting. It appears that the cultural threat has hardened the public against these children. I hypothesize that the media nurtured this fear through their use of dehumanizing vocabulary pulling the electorate away from empathy to protectionism. The findings of such a study will offer important insight into how and why policy preferences for UACs shifted during 2014 and suggest mechanisms which can be explored to counter this shift.

Sources

¹Renwick, Danielle. Background: The U.S. Child Migrant Influx. New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2014.

²Hershberg, Eric and Dennis Stinchcomb. Unaccompanied Migrant Children from Central America. Washington: Center for Latin American & Latino Studies, American University, 2014.



Elizabeth Shaw is an Arrupe Fellow pursuing her MA in International Political Economy and Development at Fordham University.

Faculty Feature: Dr. Ida Bastiaens

Dr. Ida Bastiaens is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Fordham University, teaching a course in Comparative Political Analysis. Concurrently, she sits as a member of various committees including Global Studies Curriculum Committee, Peace and Justice Executive Committee, and International Studies Committee, among others.

She received her B.A. degree in Economics with minor in Spanish from Davidson College and Ph.D. degree in International Affairs from University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. She received methodology training at University of Michigan's Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research and Syracuse University's Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research.

She is also an author and co-author to a number of scholarly publications including *"Does Dialogue Work? The Effectiveness of Labor Standards in European Union (EU) Preferential Trade Agreements (PTA)"* which assesses the effectiveness of labor standards of EU PTAs in improving labor rights in developing countries. In contrast to US trade agreements, EU PTAs lack sanctions and utilize forums of dialogues to implement the provisions of the agreement. Improvements in labor rights in developing countries will be gradual over time after the adoption of the PTA.



Additionally, she is currently working on a co-authored book manuscript titled *"Democracies in Conundrum? Globalization, Democracy, and the Poor,"* which explores the challenges that developing democracies face with trade liberalization and its impact on revenue mobilization. She noted that much scholarship and media have focused on the labor, environmental, and price impacts of free trade but not its effect on international trade taxes, which used to be the primary form of government revenue in developing countries. This decline in revenue generated from international trade makes it difficult for governments to finance their development and poverty reductions programs. The book then argues that developing countries must actively and rigorously pursue domestic tax reform and implementation alongside trade liberalization. The book

will feature case studies on India, China, Jordan, and Tunisia.

When asked about the IPED program, Dr. Bastiaens believes that it is "a great opportunity for individuals to delve deeply and critically into development challenges of our generation—a complex, yet critical task."

She shared that the diversity in IPED fosters an environment of strong deliberation and learning. "The students are smart, experienced, and dedicated. I know that my colleagues and I greatly enjoy the opportunity to teach in IPED and learn from the students in return," she added.

Public Service Assistantship

Designed to attract highly qualified full-time students into the IPED program who are interested in pursuing a career in public service with the United States Government, the Public Service Assistantship include a generous stipend combined with a full tuition scholarship. Awardees are expected to do a summer internship with the federal government, preferably overseas at a US Embassy. Additional stipends to cover the travel and living expenses of a summer internship are included with the assistantship. Eligibility criteria are: US citizenship, intent to apply for a US Presidential Management Fellowship or a Fulbright-Clinton Public Policy Fellowship, and willingness to complete one of IPED's economic specializations (international, development, or environmental). The application deadline is early January for the following fall semester.

For further information, go to iped.fordham.edu and follow the link to "Financial Aid."



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