



Western

Centre for Research on
Migration and Ethnic Relations

Winter Colloquium
Series 2015



Dr. Jenna Hennebry

(Ph.D. in Sociology) is an Associate Professor with the Balsille School of International Affairs, and is the Director of the International Migration Research Centre (IMRC) at Wilfrid Laurier University. Her research focuses on international migration and mobility, with a specialization in lower-skilled labour migration. Dr. Hennebry's research portfolio includes comparative studies of migration policy and labour migration with an emphasis on migrant rights and health, migration industries, transnational families, gender and migration, the role of migration and remittances in development (e.g. www.mappingmigration.com and www.migrantworkerhealth.ca).

For more information visit:

<http://www.balsillieschool.ca/people/jenna-l-hennebry>

4:00pm
Thursday February 5,
SSC 5220

*Please join us beforehand for
refreshments at 3:30pm
in SSC 5230, All Welcome!*

*For More Info email: Mers-
sis@uwo.ca*

Co-sponsored by the :

Re/Producing Vulnerability Post-Palermo: A Comparative International Analysis of Women Migrant Workers

Around the world record numbers of women are migrating internationally to seek work and better livelihoods for their families in their countries of origin, and make up 48% of global migration flows, numbers that indicate a feminization of the global labour market (UNDESA, 2013). In the process, women migrants are occupying more complex roles and identities as partners, workers, mothers, bread-winners and agents of development. Yet prevailing discourse and governance practices perpetuate perceptions of women migrant workers as either docile care-workers or victims of trafficking, and who are, in both cases in need of protection. This dominant ideology is reflected most apparently in the UNODC's 2000 Palermo Protocol which lays the roadmap for states to adopt a *protection from harm* (Anderson, 2012) approach to victims of trafficking, while pursuing more rigid security policies at the border and domestically. Yet, "harm" is in many ways produced and reproduced through the migration governing practices of states and dominant discourses embedded in policies and public narratives. These discourses, structures and practices converge to re/produce women migrants as targets of programs that seek to 'rescue' them from certain peril while 'securing' citizens against illegal movements, making their complex motivations, agency, capacity and abilities virtually invisible. Actors such as IGOs and NGOs and other groups in the 'rescue industry', security groups and law enforcement actors 'protecting citizens from harm', and for-profit 'gatekeepers' such as airlines and transportation companies further produce and disseminate ideologies espousing women as docile victims in need of 'saving'. In addition, methods of research and data collection tend to reinforce the normative approaches of migration governance. What results, is the centrality and importance of women's real, lived experiences (which can range from empowerment to exploitation, or somewhere in between) are often lost. Ironically, this has meant a failure to *protect the rights* of women migrant workers, and has resulted, in many cases, in greater vulnerabilities to violence and exploitation. Drawing on work underway with UN Women, this presentation will include preliminary findings and data from an international comparative project of women migrant workers from Mexico, Moldova, and the Philippines. In particular, a case study on the experiences of Moldovan women migrants in Italy will be highlighted.

Department of Sociology