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## Book Review

### Leanne Weber (ed.) (2015) *Rethinking Border Control for a Globalizing World: A Preferred Future*. Oxfordshire and New York: Routledge.

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At a time of financial crises and ongoing threats to national security, border control issues have catapulted to the top of the political agenda, eliciting divisive public debate. In the 2016 United States (US) election, border control was a key and unifying concern for Trump supporters with 80 per cent in favour of building a wall along the Mexican border to prevent the entry of unauthorised migrants (Gramlich 2016). In Britain, concern about unfettered mass immigration was central to the decision of 17 million voters to leave the European Union despite the threat of substantial economic fallout (Pettifor 2017). Thus, in an increasingly globalised economy, the national border remains a hard barrier for vulnerable populations who hope to cross. Asylum seekers and other unauthorised migrants are labelled as the enemy by politicians and face highly punitive consequences. Casualties and violence are not uncommon as nations in the Global North set about policing their borders and enforcing strict border control policies. Indeed, the former leader of the Alternative for Deutschland, Frauke Petry, proposed border guards turn their guns on Syrian migrants who cross the country's borders illegally (Connolly 2016). Set against this backdrop, *Rethinking Border Control for a Globalizing World: A Preferred Future* presents an alternative approach to border control, placing an emphasis on a more positive and peaceful direction. The edited volume is presented as ten substantive chapters followed by three commentaries which explore a range of interdisciplinary themes related to border control including law, citizenship, governance, morality, security, economy, culture and civil society.

Editor Leanne Weber begins with a chapter contextualising the current challenges of border control in a globalising world before introducing scenario planning as a method for thinking about change in a complex, global system. Weber opts for a preferred future approach to conducting this thought experiment, given it 'assumes rather than derives a particular outcome' (p. 9). As such, contributors are able to concentrate on exploring what *could* happen in a future with significantly relaxed borders applied on an equitable basis rather than justifying why such a future *should* happen. Each contributor offers a different lens to explore this imagined future.

In Chapter 2, Valsamis Mitsilegas examines how international borders shape the operation of the law. Mitsilegas considers both the 'law of borders'—discussing transformations in immigration law in recent decades—and the 'borders of the law'—exploring the extent of national law and

sovereignty. In the following chapter, Leonidas Cheliotis considers the role of international borders in regulating capital, production and labour. Cheliotis argues that the enforcement of strict, impermeable national borders contrasts the need for a cheap and flexible labour force.

In Chapter 4, Raymond Michalowski reflects on the militarisation of the US-Mexico borderlands and considers how it has created a climate of insecurity for inhabitants in US and Mexican borderland communities. Michalowski highlights how the racialised nature of border control policies has led to an unequal enforcement of the law against Mexicans and other Central Americans who cross the US-Mexico border compared to those crossing the relatively 'white' US-Canada border. This differential enforcement reflects racialised fears amongst certain subsets of the US population and a strong desire to protect 'normative whiteness'.

In the following chapter, Tiziana Torresi presents an argument for moving beyond citizenship as the primary solution for protecting migrant rights and assisting with integration. Torresi argues that citizenship fails to address the temporary migration experience and thus puts forward an alternative framework of migrant governance that is better suited to a highly mobile migrant community. In Chapter 6, Galina Cornelisse offers an assessment of issues related to social welfare, suggesting that social inequalities are reinforced by border controls. Cornelisse therefore considers the feasibility of an equitable social welfare system in a world with relaxed borders.

In Chapter 7, George Vasilev tackles the question of whether relaxed borders would lead to the demise of national culture, a commonly perceived threat of immigration by the general public. Vasilev argues that maintaining national culture *is* possible in a world with fewer restrictions on human mobility and presents strategies for ensuring the survival of national cultures alongside an open border system. In the following chapter, Barbara Hudson, explores the particularism of law and the universalism of ethics in relation to the boundaries of moral communities. Here, Hudson focuses explicitly on the rights of migrants at the border. It is at this juncture that universal human rights are often disregarded in a quest to protect national sovereignty and security.

In Chapter 9, Vanessa Barker sets out an argument for a harm reduction approach to border control and explores the role of civil society in securing peace at the border. Barker's harm reduction approach emphasises the prioritisation of human rights and human security and pushes for the demilitarisation of border controls, the elimination of violence at the border, and the decriminalisation of migration. To achieve such an approach, Barker calls for global border protests, the development of universal personhood, and the creation of global institutions such as a mobile human rights court. Weber's concluding chapter is followed by three commentaries that offer innovative and radical possibilities for new approaches to demarcating borders. Rainer Baudock reconceptualises borders as membranes, regarding them as 'stable but at the same time permeable' (p. 172) while both Saskia Sassen and Nancy Wonders argue for fundamental structural change, decentring the state and calling for change from below.

Overall, *Rethinking Border Control for a Globalizing World: A Preferred Future* makes a unique contribution to the available migration literature by looking for possibilities outside of the box. Since its publication, tensions at borders have heightened. President Trump has targeted immigrants in a series of executive orders, threatening to slash federal funding for sanctuary cities (Chishti and Pierce 2017) and hiring 10,000 additional immigration officers (Cowger, Bolter and Pierce 2017). Trump also enacted an unprecedented travel ban (later deemed illegal) on the grounds of national security which restricted the entry of migrants from seven Muslim majority countries (Cowger, Bolter and Pierce 2017; Pierce and Meissner 2017). In the same executive order, Trump suspended the country's refugee program for 120 days and introduced a cap on refugee numbers (Cowger, Bolter and Pierce 2017). Similar actions are being taken elsewhere. Although Sweden was celebrated in 2015 for welcoming over 160,000 refugees, in 2016, the Swedish government introduced new laws that limit the intake numbers to the European Union

minimum (Swedish Migration Agency 2017). Other countries failed to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis altogether by refusing to extend the number of capped visas available for refugees and asylum seekers (Ferris and Kirisci 2016). In this climate, Australia continues to maintain one of the harshest border control policies in the world, enforcing an indefinite period of mandatory detention on asylum seekers (including children) who do not arrive via 'appropriate' channels (Australian Human Rights Commission 2014). Given these current advancements in the global political landscape, the arguments presented in this multidisciplinary collection are of continuing importance.

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