

Andrew Peterson • Robert Hattam • Michalinos Zembylas
• James Arthur
Editors

The Palgrave International Handbook of Education for Citizenship and Social Justice

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itors

Andrew Peterson
Faculty of Education
Canterbury Christ Church University
Canterbury, United Kingdom

Robert Hattam
School of Education, Mawson Lakes Campus
University of South Australia
Mawson Lakes, South Australia, Australia

Michalinos Zembylas
Program of Educational Studies
Open University of Cyprus
Latsia, Cyprus

James Arthur
Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues
University of Birmingham
Birmingham, United Kingdom

Acknowledgements

Edited, international handbooks are thoroughly dependent on the support and hard work of many people, and this volume is no exception. We have, therefore, a number of people to thank. First and foremost, we are grateful to the many colleagues who found time in their busy schedules to write the chapters. All were a pleasure to work with, and we thank them for making our task as editors a simple one. Second, we owe thanks to our colleagues at Palgrave Macmillan – and, in particular, Andrew James, Eleanor Christie and Laura Aldridge – for their patience and support in bringing this project to fruition. Third, and finally, we need to thank the young people, teachers, colleagues and other friends who have both inspired and challenged us. Their views, experiences and practices have been – and remain – a constant reminder of the need to take seriously not only the persistence of social injustices, but also how particular responses can offer hope. It is these stories of hope that, in turn, offer positive possibilities for education for citizenship.

ISBN 978-1-137-51506-3 ISBN 978-1-137-51507-0 (eBook)
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51507-0

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016950457

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Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Macmillan Publishers Ltd.
The registered company address is: The Campus, 4 Crinan Street, London, N1 9XW, United Kingdom

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Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Education for Citizenship and Social Justice

Jody L. McBrien

Introduction

During the writing of this chapter, the concept and significance of the term 'refugee' has been in flux and of rising importance. In the summer of 2015, hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers – frequently called 'migrants' by media and national spokespersons whose countries have shut their borders – have flooded into Europe from Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan and other countries experiencing civil unrest and war. Responses from countries to which asylum seekers have fled have included everything from fencing them out to welcoming them in. Observers wonder how long any welcoming spirit will endure, given the constantly rising numbers of desperate people in flight, representing diverse cultures and religions.

This influx of asylum seekers is the largest since the numbers of displaced people resulting from World War II. During World War II, the largest number of displaced people and refugees were Jews who survived the concentration camps. Survivors suffered from severe mental and physical illness due to the brutal treatment they endured in camps. As is the case today, persecution also occurred when they tried to resettle in 'safe' countries, as anti-Semitism remained high during the war and after liberation. For instance, the United States refused admittance

J.L. McBrien (✉)

University of South Florida/Sarasota Manatee, Sarasota, FL, USA

Germany (*Holocaust Encyclopedia* n.d.). As a result, many of these passengers were sent to German concentration camps, where they suffered and died. Jews attempting to flee to Palestine prior to the 1948 establishment of Israel were considered to be 'illegal immigrants'. A famous case was the ship *Exodus* 1947, bound for Palestine with 4500 Jewish asylum seekers. Britain intercepted the ship, forcing its return to Germany. According to research conducted by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), 'In most cases, the British detained Jewish refugees denied entry into Palestine in detention camps on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus' (USHMM n.d.). Pogroms occurred in Germany, Poland, Russia, Romania and other countries during and after the War, resulting in the rapes and deaths of thousands of Jews.

These past tragedies are mirrored in recent world events. In summer 2014, more than 43,000 unaccompanied minors from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala were met at the US border by protesting Americans who held signs telling them to go home (Abdullah 2014). The children were fleeing from rape, beatings and murders by drug cartels, and other situations of national unrest. Australia has enforced harsh restrictions regarding those arriving by sea (Australian Independent Media Network 2014). Slovakia has stated it will only take Christian refugees (BBC 2015a), in spite of being a signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol (hereafter referred to as the 'Refugee Convention' or 'Convention'), which state, 'The Contracting States shall apply the provisions of this Convention to refugees without discrimination as to race, religion or country of origin' (Article 3). Hungary created a 'razor wire fence' on its border with Serbia and used 'tear gas and water cannons' on those trying to break through the fence (Stojanovic 2015). For a few days, the world mourned tragic photos of a two-year old boy, Aylan Kurdi, washed ashore on a Turkish beach. Canada had denied, or at least delayed, refugee status for his family, so the family attempted a dangerous boat passage to Greece (Moyer 2015). The United States has only considered taking in an additional 10,000 refugees in 2016 (Harris et al. 2015). Several Republican presidential hopefuls, notably Donald Trump, have used the November 2015 attack on Paris and December 2015 attack in San Bernadino, California, to rally anti-immigration sympathies against Syrian and Muslim refugees. Currently, Muslim refugees and asylum seekers receive much the same treatment as Jews did as they flee to save their lives and those of their children.

In 2015, the total number of refugees, asylum seekers, and displaced people is at a historical high of 60 million (UNHCR 2015a). Refugees account for nearly one third of that total, and half of the refugees are children. Projections about the war in Syria alone indicate that thousands more will flee the country as the conflict grows more complex and intense.

made compromises, because they believed that the need for such a document would end within three years of the conclusion of World War II. One of the major concessions was hard fought by Australia regarding the rights of asylum seekers. The Australian government favoured refugee rights, as members of this group would be chosen and invited to resettle by signatories of the Convention. However, Australians strongly opposed including the right to resettle as an asylum seeker, who could arrive uninvited and demand residence, arguing that such a right interfered with a nation's sovereignty. As a result, and beginning with the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, people have the 'right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution' (Article 14, emphasis mine) – but countries are not obligated to provide such asylum. The same is true of the Refugee Convention (University of Minnesota 2003) and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (Brennan, p. 2). Other ambiguities – such as the definition of 'persecution' and 'well-founded fear' – have created loopholes for nations as they determine refugee status. Many nations (approximately two thirds) that have ratified the Convention have not subsequently created laws to determine implementation strategies (University of Minnesota 2003).

In spite of national disagreements about who should be considered a refugee and how they should be treated by countries in which they seek asylum, the Refugee Convention and Protocol have provided for rights and protections for, and the responsibilities required of refugees since World War II. Sixty-four years later, the need is even greater with millions of refugees and asylum seekers in need, the largest numbers from Syria, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Iraq and Albania (BBC 2015b).

This chapter will provide some diverse perspectives towards the Convention and its terms, definitions of refugees and asylum seekers, and an examination of several resettlement countries' practices concerning education for refugees and asylum seekers. The author will conclude by considering elements of social justice and citizenship education as it relates to refugee and asylum seekers.

The 1951 Convention Related to the Status of Refugees and Its 1967 Protocol

The Refugee Convention was created as an international document to provide some protection for the hundreds of thousands of people who were displaced as a result of World War II. When world events, such as the Vietnam War and civil wars in African states made clear that refugee situations were enduring, the 1967 Protocol was added to remove the geographical and temporal limitations

of both of these documents – thus agreeing, at least on paper, to abide by the Articles that state the rights of refugees (UNHCR 2015b). The documents also define the term ‘refugee’ as a person who:

owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. (UNHCR 1951)

Given the changes in refugee populations since the 1940s, some nations and legal experts have argued that the Refugee Convention is outdated or imprecise, and unable to address current refugee concerns (Berg 2011; Brennan 2003; Millbank 2000; Rohl 2005; UN n.d.). Concerns include the advent of non-nation-state terrorism, natural disasters and climate change, an increase in internally displaced people and extreme socioeconomic deprivation. Such arguments could expand or reduce the number of people currently considered to be refugees and asylum seekers under the Refugee Convention. An argument for reduction comes from Chris Berg, a Research Fellow with the Australian Institute of Public Affairs. In 2012, he argued that the ‘well-founded fear of being persecuted’ was designed for the Cold War, and that ‘the bulk of today’s refugees are displaced not because of politics, but because of economic hardship or conflict’ (paras 7–8).

Some countries’ policies and laws have expanded their definitions of ‘refugee’ beyond those in the original Refugee Convention in order to reflect world change. For instance, the original document excluded anyone who had actively taken part in war crimes or crimes against humanity (Article 1F). Many countries – including Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the United States – have made an exception for child soldiers and other abducted children who have been forced to commit atrocities by rebel forces and drug cartels. Happold (2002) provides the most complete documentation on national and international arguments for and against granting refugee status to child soldiers. In his conclusion, he argues that, even if child soldiers are excluded from refugee status under Article 1F of the Refugee Convention, they may be protected by the European Convention on Human Rights and the UN Convention against Torture, which ‘prohibit the deportation of any person when there are substantial grounds for believing that the individual will be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in the receiving State’ (p. 1173).

for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY n.d.), recognized systematic rape as a ‘crime against humanity’. Since that time, rape has become a reason to petition for refugee status. Worldwide, young girls are increasingly victims of rape, sexual violence and human trafficking, resulting in the need for international protection.

The term ‘environmental refugee’ has become prevalent in recent years – in part, because of changes resulting from global warming, whereby sea levels are rising and overtaking people’s homes and livelihoods, and droughts are more widespread and long-lasting. Environmental refugees do not currently have the protection of international laws. However, some analysts claim that ‘they face greater political risks than refugees who flee their homes due to conflict or political oppression’ (*National Geographic* n.d., parag. 21). *National Geographic* specifically cited Bangladesh, the US state of Louisiana, Venice, the Maldives and expanding desert areas in Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea as areas losing arable land annually. Others have suggested that the 2015 refugee crisis in Europe was exacerbated by large areas in Syria suffering from extreme drought (Baker 2015).

For now, the UN Refugee Convention remains the most important international document determining who is a refugee, and the rights and responsibilities of refugees. The 2015 refugee crisis and the need to provide social justice to millions living in dangerous situations, as well as balancing the civil rights of citizens already living in resettlement countries, are of central importance as the world considers obligations stated in the Refugee Convention. In this chapter, we will concern ourselves primarily with the obligation of Article 22, with regard to public education:

1. The Contracting States shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education.
2. The Contracting States shall accord to refugees treatment as favourable as possible, and, in any event, not less favourable than that accorded to aliens generally in the same circumstances, with respect to education other than elementary education and, in particular, as regards access to studies, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges and the award of scholarships.

The chapter will proceed with definitions of refugees and asylum seekers. From there, we shall examine educational practices with a consideration of their citizenship education and social justice.

Who Are Asylum Seekers and Refugees?

The description of a refugee, as defined by the 1951 Convention, is quoted above. It does not draw clear distinctions between refugees and asylum seekers, although it clarifies that those still within the borders of their native countries (internally displaced people) are not protected by the Convention. Definitions between asylum seekers and refugees are, in broad terms, as follows:

- Asylum seekers are persons seeking refuge in another country because of 'well-founded fears' based on the 1951 definition of a refugee. They await approval of their petition for refugee status by the UNHCR and/or a country at which they have arrived after fleeing their native country. In some cases, large numbers flee together and arrive at a refugee camp in a neighbouring country. They may be immediately considered 'refugees', depending on a country's laws for processing asylum. In other cases, asylum seekers travel directly to a country in which they seek permanent resettlement. Once they reach the shore, they request permanent asylum and resettlement. In the United States, for example, many asylum seekers came from the USSR as athletes or artists on tour during the Cold War. Many also came from Cuba, Haiti and Central America. Asylum seekers arrive from Asia at Australia on boats. Currently, throngs of asylum seekers from Syria, Afghanistan and some African countries are walking and fleeing by sea, sometimes hundreds of miles, to seek asylum in Western Europe. Asylum seekers are frequently placed in detention while their petitions are processed (Corbett et al. 2014). Nations differ in their processes for adjudicating cases. In the USA, for example, asylum seekers appear before an immigration judge. Due to the volume of applications, asylum seekers may wait for over one year to present their case. It is not illegal to arrive in a country and petition for asylum, even though people doing so are often placed in prison-like conditions. The Australian Human Rights Commission reported that, in 2015, there were 2013 people in immigration detention facilities, including 127 children; and 1189 people in community detention, including 642 children. Australia also operates third-country detention centres. As of June 2015, there were 655 asylum seekers (including 88 children) in detention in Nauru, and 945 adults on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea. Offshore detention began in the early years of the twenty-first century in Australia; this was phased out in 2007, and was reinstated after high numbers of boat people arrived on Australian shores in 2012 and 2013 (Ramzy 2015). Australia maintains strict, mandatory detention

requirements for all asylum seekers waiting to be processed for refugee status. Many refugee advocates, including the UNHCR and Human Rights Watch, have criticized the offshore detention centres, finding them to be dirty, overcrowded and unsafe (Human Rights Watch 2015).

People who are designated as refugees have the protection of *non-refoulement*, meaning that signatory nations may not return them to a country in which they fear persecution or death. There is debate about whether or not asylum seekers have this protection. For instance, Australia's argument against requiring states to accept asylum seekers includes the possibility of returning such people to their homeland. Other groups, such as Amnesty International, declare *refoulement* to be illegal (Pegliario 2010). Unfortunately, *refoulement* can lead to severe punishment, even death, for the asylum seeker. Pegliario cited cases of Cambodia and Thailand returning asylum seekers, and even recognized refugees, to countries in which they were persecuted. Meho (2004) cited cases in which Iranian asylum seekers were returned by the Turkish government and a report of 40 such people being executed on their return (p. 71).

- Refugees are people who have been determined by international bodies (such as the UNHCR) or nations to meet the 1951 definition (or its expanded contexts, as explained above). This does not, however, mean that they will receive third-country resettlement in a country such as the United States, Australia, or New Zealand, or any of the 26 countries currently working with the UNHCR to resettle refugees. To receive third-country placement, their papers and testament will be processed and reviewed by officials from resettlement countries. Countries establish quotas regarding the number of refugees they will resettle annually. Less than 1 % of refugees are resettled in countries of third-placement.

The UNHCR has established three 'durable solutions' for refugees, as follows:

1. Voluntary repatriation, after one's home country has returned to a stable condition and fear of danger is resolved;
2. Local integration in the country of first asylum, in which people can establish the ability to work and provide for themselves/their families; or
3. Resettlement in a third country, one of 26 countries currently contracted with the UNHCR to provide refugees the opportunity to begin again in a third country. This third option is, by far, the least used option, with fewer than 100,000 refugees resettled annually. Some refugees spend their entire lives in camps, waiting for a durable solution (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 2013 Figures by country of resettlement

Country of resettlement	Number of persons
United States	59,548
Australia	10,691
Canada	9,160
Germany	4,775
Sweden	2,456
Norway	1,202
Netherlands	1,029
Finland	929
New Zealand	894
United Kingdom	710
All others	1,832
Total	93,226

Source: UNHCR 2013.

Education of Resettled Refugees: Intercultural Concerns

Approximately one half of all refugees are minors. Thus, according to the Refugee Convention, they must be afforded the same opportunities for elementary education as nationals. When in temporary placement in host countries or in transit, however, refugee children's education depends on services available in camps or other temporary placements. Quality varies greatly, and a large percentage of these children have no access to schools. An analysis by the RAND Corporation (2015) reported that half of Syrian refugee children have no access to education. Those in schools face poor quality situations: overcrowded classrooms, shortened instructional time and inexperienced teachers. Researchers have found educational problems facing refugees in camps and temporary host countries worldwide (Al-Hroub 2015; Kirk and Winthrop 2007; Mareng 2010; Oh and van der Stouwe 2008).

One need for revision of the Convention is with respect to secondary education. Even developing nations are working to meet demands for secondary education (UNESCO 2011). Thus, an addition to the first clause would strengthen refugee rights not only to elementary education, but also secondary education where it is commonly available. An additional concern is in regard to the final commentary in the second clause of Article 22 about the 'recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas, and degrees'. Refugees with certificates and degrees in professional areas, especially health, must often re-apply for certification in their countries of resettlement. This application often results in requirements for refugee professionals to take additional courses and/or exams, frequently costing more than a refugee can afford (Allen 2009; Colic-Peisker and Walker 2003; Tomlinson 2002).

Although education in third-country resettlement is far more stable and organized, as it is available through education offered to all children in the country, challenges remain for refugee students. Global tendencies towards standardized (Western) methods and content of education have led to common issues in supporting refugee education in resettlement states. Language issues remain a top priority (Brown et al. 2006). Until children are able to communicate effectively in the majority language of their new country, they are likely to feel isolated and frustrated as they try to learn and interact with their peers and teachers.

Other concerns include teacher training and communication with refugee communities to increase intercultural understanding and reduce bias. For instance, teachers in countries that value individuality and competitive cognitive styles have been found to judge harshly refugee students and families who place more emphasis on community and dependent cognitive learning styles (Timm et al. 1998). Lee (2002) also found that some US teachers judged their Hmong students to be culturally deficient and educationally inferior to mainstream US students. Other issues involve past years with no schooling, poverty and bullying (Humpage 2009).

Second Language Learning

Methods for acquiring the predominant language in any country have long been a matter of debate. The United States, although it has no official language, holds strongly to a tradition of English language. Some countries have one or more official languages. Even in these circumstances, there is frequently a preferred language. The language of instruction in public schools is typically the preferred, or majority, language. In most cases, the language of instruction, typically the majority language, is the one in which refugees need to acquire proficiency in order not only to complete their academic studies with success, but also to acquire well-paid jobs (Hartley 2013; Hauck et al. 2014; McBrien 2014; Roxas 2011).

Theories of language acquisition differ, from beliefs in language immersion to bilingual instruction. The extreme end of immersion is one in which students of other languages are placed in mainstream classes and must fend for themselves as they try to figure out the content and context of the subjects. Not surprisingly, this method – especially at levels of education above elementary, in which subject content is more complex – frequently results in confused, frustrated and unmotivated students (Roxas 2011). Other forms of second-language learning methods include some of a student's primary

language to learn the language of instruction of their new country. There is often no concern about the importance of retaining the home language; rather, the home language may be used only as a step towards becoming fluent in the new language.

There is some overlap between immersion and bilingual education. In bilingual instruction, two languages are used to teach the academic curriculum. It can be one-way instruction, in which only one group is learning bilingually (for instance, Chinese students learning in Mandarin and English, while English-speaking students in the room do not learn the Chinese language); or two-way bilingual education, in which all students gain proficiency in both languages of instruction. Two-way bilingual instruction allows all students to develop and maintain minority languages, strengthening cultural plurality at the school and community level (Cerdeña and Hernández 2006).

Even though students benefit from being fluent in two or more languages, xenophobic attitudes in some countries limit these opportunities for students by reducing or cutting out international language programmes. Several documents, such as the European Communities Directive on the Education of the Children of Migrant Workers (1977, Article 3) and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and their Families (1990; Article 45.3, 4) point out the importance of the mother tongue in children's education. The UNHCR has also strongly favoured mother tongue instruction for refugee children as one way to reduce the chaos of change that they face (Van Bueren 1998). In the United States, Chinese-American students with limited English proficiency won a Supreme Court case (*Lau v. Nichols* 1974), arguing that their civil rights were violated because they were not provided special accommodations to learn English and thus were victims of educational discrimination. The case led to amendments to the 1968 Bilingual Education Act, broadening funding, programmes and definitions of eligible students.

Teacher Training

In the United States, the country that takes in the most third-placement refugees annually at approximately 70,000, there is no required teacher training to learn how to support either migrant or refugee students. Only two states, Florida and California, require that teacher candidates graduate with a certification in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages).

As a result, there is inadequate training for those who will have resettled refugees in their classrooms, even in top resettlement states such as Texas,

California and Georgia (Anders 2012; McBrien 2005, McBrien and Ford 2012). Studies in other resettlement countries indicate a similar lack of teacher training (Humpage 2009; MacNevin 2012). Lack of training can result in prejudice and discrimination against refugee students, due to teachers' lack of self-examination, as well as frustration on the part both of teachers and of refugee students. Reports from refugee students and parents have referred to exclusion, intimidation and insults from both teachers and peers (McBrien 2005, 2011).

Teachers interviewed in New Zealand expressed comments similar to their US counterparts (McBrien 2014). They felt they received inadequate training; and what they knew, they picked up on their own. Even though New Zealand has Refugee Educational Consultants assigned to each major refugee resettlement area in the country, teachers still felt inadequately prepared. Information from teachers indicates the need for ongoing training in this area. Many said they learned on the job, rather than having training prior to working with resettled refugee students. One teacher recounted an experience with New Zealand students that helped her realize that native-born students also needed to learn about refugee issues so that they could better understand and include the newcomers. Several teachers described incidents of bullying that they believed might be reduced with lessons on global issues that included the plight of refugees. They believed that local students' lack of understanding of worldwide refugee issues reduced their sensitivity towards these students. In Sydney, Australia, Macquarie University has a programme that matches university students with high schools in the city that have large numbers of refugees (Macquarie 2015). The volunteer mentors described both how much their interactions taught them about the challenges encountered by resettled refugee students and their growing interest in social justice.

Communication

Support for refugee students extends beyond language instruction and teacher training. In the realm of globalized (Westernized) education, parent involvement is a major component in student success. Many cultures, such as Chinese and South Korean, have granted respect to teachers to the extent that parents would not consider questioning a teacher's judgement. In a 2011 study, Vietnamese mothers described the need to bribe teachers in order for their children to receive high grades (McBrien 2011). Such practices contrast with Western practices, in which teachers frequently request parental information about their children. Given cultural mores, refugee parents may be intimidated with such requests from educational authority figures.

ne successful model in breaking the communication gap is the use of ref- liaisons (McBrien and Ford 2012). An organization in Atlanta, Georgia A), trained resettled refugee adults who had acculturated well into their communities. Training included a thorough explanation of US schools expectations for parental involvement. Liaisons were trained to provide information about and to their particular culture: for instance, a Bosnian man was a liaison for resettled Bosnians and their children's schools; an Eritrean woman was a liaison for her Ethiopian community and their children's schools; and so on. Liaisons provided extensive cultural training for school personnel about both their culture and the refugee experience. In addition, they provided training to parents of their cultural background about school expectations. Liaisons were also found to go beyond their job requirements, providing basics such as bedding and kitchen provisions to new families, and helping them to navigate the bureaucracy of social security, medical aid and other social needs.

In New Zealand, excellent school models, observed by the author in Auckland, have included ways to educate refugee and other immigrant parents on campus while their children attend school. Additionally, they provide care for babies and toddlers. This has worked particularly well for refugee mothers, many of whom are reticent about turning over their youngest children to others for care. They are never far from their pre-school children, and can call for them if a child is in need of parental care (McBrien 2014, p. 3). And they can learn at the same time as their school-age children, as they can be at home during the hours when children are out of school. Having parents at schools also increases the opportunity for schools to transfer information to parents, and for parents to better understand the school system.

Of course, this model requires additional funding, and not all schools can create this environment. Others have created simultaneous adult learning centres during after-school or early evening homework help for school-age children. Some schools in Christchurch and Nelson have also created community centres at schools that function as a 'one stop' place where refugee parents can go to receive information on medical, legal and psycho-social needs. The use of both cultural liaisons and multi-modal school services increase intercultural understanding through training and through face-to-face contact. A teacher at a cooking class for refugee women in Auckland, New Zealand, told me that the class was so much more than cooking: 'They are learning measurements, health, and food safety. They tell each other about the best economical places to buy food. They also discuss their personal situations. More established refugee women tell new ones that they do not have to

suffer from domestic violence. They explain where they can go for help.' An after-school intervention in Christchurch had native students as well as teachers mentoring refugee students. This created an informal and more comfortable venue for both youth and adults to learn about one another.

Gordon Allport (1954) is credited with contact theory, which posits that prejudice can be reduced by inter-group contact when four conditions are present: (1) the determination of equal status among all group members, (2) common goals among group members, (3) cooperation among members, and (4) acceptance of the over-riding cultural authorities. Although some of his initial theory has been problematized and recast (Pettigrew 1998), the premise remains that face-to-face intercultural dialogue and work can increase understanding between groups and can reduce prejudice and discrimination. Above-mentioned situations are examples of contact theory. Others include involving native-born students and adults to act as language and/or educational tutors; local citizens who volunteer to help refugees acclimatize to their new communities; and task forces that bring numerous resettlement agencies, health care workers, social service employees, law enforcement and the like together to work with refugees. Excellent examples of this latter group interaction occur in Florida with several area Refugee Task Forces, organized under the Department of Child and Family Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Social Justice and Citizenship Education

The theme of this publication involves the correspondence of social justice and education for citizenship. Kibreab (2003) argued that refugees who resettle in developed countries in North America, Western Europe, Australia and New Zealand, where they have a clear path towards citizenship or, at least, permanent status, tend to stay in their country of resettlement. In contrast, those in less-developed countries prefer to repatriate whenever possible (p. 24), as 'the commonly accepted standards of civil, political, and social rights of citizenship, wherever they exist, are in most cases denied to refugees' (p. 62). Still, the incarceration in receiving countries of asylum seekers—who are, by definition, legal immigrants—remains controversial. This practice is particularly disruptive and upsetting to children of asylum seekers who do not make the decisions themselves, but are forced to abide by restrictive policies of the countries from which their parents request asylum, because they typically have no say in the decision and are forced to leave other family members, friends and their school environment (if they are in school). The practice is also bewildering and frightening for unaccompanied minors, many of whom

are also trying to avoid recruitment or persecution by local gangs (Phippen 2015). Levinson (2011) stated that unaccompanied children to Europe often receive more humanitarian aid than in the USA because European nations have signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In some ways, it seems that native-born students, teachers and administrators, more than refugees, are in need of social justice and citizenship education. A need for teacher training has already been addressed, as it could increase knowledge of ways to create inter-cultural activities and opportunities for contact between native-born students and refugees. Although multi-cultural instruction is controversial in numerous Western nations, it is helpful for native-born students to learn about other cultures and the refugee/asylum seeker experience. Additionally, citizenship education for native-born students could help them understand the rights of refugees and asylum seekers.

In general, citizenship education for resettled refugees is needed for naturalization. Some countries, such as the United States, impose requirements that are not imposed on native-born citizens. For example, a Canadian colleague seeking naturalization said she had to agree that she would bear arms for the United States. In contrast, I have no such requirement. It seems unjust that natural-born citizens can be pacifists, while naturalized citizens cannot. Additionally, fees requested for naturalization can be prohibitive for resettled refugees, who tend to earn lower than average wages.

Conclusion

A final note is important in any discussion about the currently overwhelming numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. They are not the problem. In media pieces, one can frequently read the phrase 'the refugee problem'. Refugees and asylum seekers are the result, not the cause, of appalling world situations – civil war, terrorism, torture, child abduction and political crime. If the world is to reduce the crisis situation of millions of refugees, it needs to look to the cause of the issue, not the result. Seeing refugees and asylum seekers as the 'problem' encourages the receiving host country citizens and politicians to view them in a negative and often discriminatory light. Instead, this critique should shine on the terrorists and political bodies that cause the flow of refugees and asylum seekers.

Meanwhile, countries can offer support to refugees and asylum seekers by concentrating efforts on the greatest problem areas for the newcomers. The first is facilitating second language acquisition (while supporting newcomers in maintaining their native language). New Zealand offers a model of

a well-researched second-language learning programme (English Language Learning Progressions) that provides a rubric in listening, speaking, reading and writing for various levels of language learning in public schools. At the same time, the new resettlement strategy compromises the language learning of adults as it places primary importance in gaining any job over the importance of learning the primary language of the country (McBrien 2014). The United States also puts employment above language learning for adult learners, at least since the Refugee Act of 1980. In considering long-term stability for refugees and allegiance for their new countries of residence, resettling countries might consider the positive social effects of supporting language learning for all refugees.

A second priority of resettlement countries could be educating not only refugees about their new land, but also native residents about the needs and the opportunities of welcoming refugee residents. The year 2015 witnessed extreme examples of welcoming and despising refugees, particularly Muslims. History proves the problem of discrimination towards groups of minority religious and ethnic status. Groups such as Welcoming America have devised helpful ways for native citizens to understand why refugees are relocating to their towns. Their methods could be replicated in other cities and countries for both schoolchildren and adults. In schools, citizenship classes could include more information about the notion of global citizenship and activities to provide the message that, in the world, we are also 'the other'.

Education is not only for the sake of self-improvement through the acquisition of knowledge. Along with the teaching of subject matter, public schools are seen as a way to boost the public good and pass on the culture of the society. The new era of globalization has seen unprecedented world migration, including millions of people involuntarily leaving their countries as a result of terrorism, persecution and wars. As a result, nations must conceptualize social and educational policies that include notions of social justice for those who are endangered because of their beliefs, or the involuntary fact of being born in volatile, insecure nations.

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