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REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT WOMEN: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

An Introductory Note

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Research in migration has historically either failed to include women in the analysis, or has conflated women's experience with their male counterparts, and has subsumed it under men's experience. This is true with regard to both migration theories and methodologies, which have ignored women's situation and experience as the basis of inquiry. The female domain of production and reproduction is considered uninteresting to many migration researchers, they are therefore left unconceptualized and uninvestigated. This one-sided notion of social research has been challenged by feminist theorists who have developed an epistemology for women. Most recently, feminist migration researchers have begun to conceptualize the relations of race, ethnicity, class, gender and region, and have moved from location to political grounds of contestation.

This issue of *Refugee* provides a space for the voices of immigrant and refugee women from diverse race, class, culture and nation to be heard. The papers presented here represent the

views of academic researchers, as well as NGOs and practitioners working on issues involving refugee and immigrant women. They argue for legislative changes, improvement of immigrant and refugee women's conditions, and protection for their legal, social, physical and sexual rights. These articles include theoretical dis-

cussions, empirical research, and policy issues with a focus on the social, economic, legal and political consequences for refugee and immigrant women. They demonstrate that immigrant and refugee women as activists, workers, mothers, and daughters are actors who labour and toil alongside their male counterparts, who struggle

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