

Lives in Limbo

The Voices of Refugees in Australia under
Temporary Protection

Michael Leach & Fethi Mansouri

There may be fewer boats these days but boat people have not gone away. Those recognised as genuine refugees, even by Australia's harsh standards, live in Australia in permanent insecurity, deprived of the ordinary supports made available to immigrants, often alone without their families.

In this book, 35 such genuine refugees, all temporary protection visa (TPV) holders and mostly from Iraq and Afghanistan, talk directly about their quest for asylum in Australia. They provide poignant details of persecution in their home country, their journey to Australia, prolonged periods of mandatory detention, and life under Australia's controversial temporary protection regime.

The book allows refugees to speak of the psychological impact of temporary protection, and respond to media labels such as 'illegals' and 'queue jumpers'. Against the narratives, Michael Leach and Fethi Mansouri provide a background of current government policies, media representations and social climate, all in the context of the War on Terror and the invasion of Iraq.

Two of those interviewed in *Lives in Limbo* are survivors of the SIEV X tragedy, in which 353 people drowned. Their stories are particularly painful, and bleakly highlight darker aspects of Australian responses to forced migration. Another interviewee had first been detained on remote Manus Island, Papua New Guinea, under the 'Pacific Solution' arrangement.

This book provides an important opportunity for refugees on TPVs to have their stories heard.

About the Authors

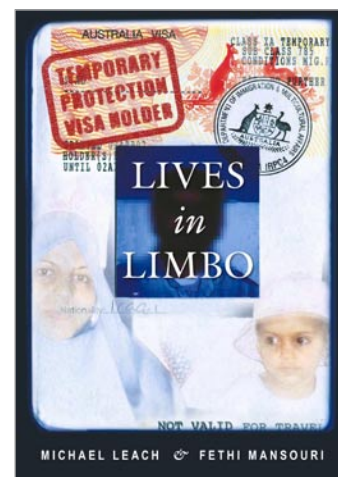
Authors Michael Leach and Fethi Mansouri are both academics at Deakin University in Melbourne.

Michael Leach is a Research Fellow in the Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, and has interests in issues of national identity, immigration and asylum policy and Australian multiculturalism. He was a co-editor of *The Rise and Fall of One Nation* (2000).

Fethi Mansouri is a Senior Lecturer in Middle Eastern studies, with his major areas of interest being refugee policy, Middle Eastern affairs, as well as applied linguistics.

Comments

'*Lives in Limbo* gives voice to Australia's "temporary" refugees. Their compelling stories reveal that border protection has an unconscionable human cost.' – Peter Mares, author of the award-winning *Borderline: Australia's Treatment of Refugees and Asylum Seekers*



www.unswpress.com.au/isbn/086840599X.htm

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0 86840 599 X, June 2004, UNSW Press, 160 pp
210 x 147 mm, PB, **\$29.95**

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