

# Thinking Through Borders and “Illegality”

**A Survey of the Resources Available to Migrants with  
Precarious Status in the Calgary Area**

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# Abstract

Harsha Walia, in *Undoing Border Imperialism* (2013), criticizes the securitization of borders and the ideology of citizenship and how those who do not hold full “legal” status are criminalized and denied certain human rights in the interests of the racist, capitalist nation-state. Walia and the many others behind the migrant justice movement known as No One Is Illegal seek to disrupt those neoliberal ideologies and social inequalities through social movements. Meanwhile, they effect direct changes in the lives of “temporary” or undocumented migrants by protesting and sometimes preventing their incarcerations and deportations.

This paper examines these issues within the context of Calgary, Alberta – a hub for both “permanent” and “temporary” migrants, with diverse and numerous diasporic communities, but lacking a No One Is Illegal chapter of its own. Informed by Canadian policies and Walia’s critique of border imperialism as well as postcolonial theories and Critical Discourse Analysis, I conduct a survey of the services and support available (or unavailable) to migrants in the Calgary area. I then analyze the discourses and practices of existing governmental and non-governmental (im)migrant-serving organizations, and identify any ways in which they exclude certain human beings - deliberately or unwittingly - on the basis of their precarious status.

“Yet the struggle of identities continues, the struggle of borders is our reality still. One day the inner struggle with cease, and a true interrogation will take place...”

- Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*<sup>1</sup>

“Many of us have made the boundaries of national states the boundaries of our own identities. It is this identification with national citizenship that grants legitimacy to the global system of nation states with their highly regulated labour markets. *It is these identities that prevent us from moving towards social justice and a world without borders.*”

- Nandita Sharma, *Canadian Nationalism and the Making of Global Apartheid*<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction

The study of the those living without citizenship or full legal status has been undertaken in a variety of disciplines in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, motivated by political changes across the world, such as Europe’s adoption of the “borderless” Schengen Area and the securitization of borders in North America following the 9/11 attacks. “Illegal” immigration is an extremely pervasive and visible subject in the United States because of the highly securitized U.S.-Mexico border, as well as the massive population of undocumented migrants living in the U.S., estimated at 12 million people.<sup>3</sup>

Attention to migration issues in Canada and its so-called “illegal” or undocumented population – generally estimated at half a million people<sup>4</sup> – is budding and continues to grow. A migrant justice movement has gained traction over the last decade, in part through the efforts of No One Is Illegal (NOII), a group of collectives based in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and Vancouver.

These groups criticize the securitization and militarization of borders and the racist ideology of citizenship. They envision a world without borders, wherein all humans are recognized as equally valuable and worthy, and where everyone has “the right to remain, the freedom to move, and the right to return.”<sup>5</sup>

Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard emphasize the important differences in each nation-state’s geography and policies, which shape the different forms of entry into the country and the different pathways to becoming “illegal” or undocumented. They thus call for reconceptualization of formal status in each different context.<sup>6</sup> They put forth the term and framework of what they call “precarious” status to reflect the varying gradations of “less than full” migratory status in Canada, and to reject any binary or tripartite models of citizenship.<sup>7</sup> My analysis will adopt the framework and terminology of “precarious” to refer to those living with different forms of “less than full” legal status in Canada, which include but are not limited to: international migrant workers, inland refugee claimants, sponsored spouses and family members, and those with no legal or pending documentation whatsoever.

Furthermore, I suggest that these different state policies, modes of entry, and “pathways to illegality” that Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard speak of should be considered at both the national and local scale. While the majority of scholarship has focused on major points of entry in Canada like Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal, where there are high concentrations of international and precarious migrants, I seek to re-contextualize this issue within the city of Calgary, Alberta. Calgary is not a “borderland” community in the conventional or geographical



sense, and has no NOII chapter of its own. Yet it, too, is home to a significant number of international migrants, both “permanent” and “temporary,” who are entitled to or denied different services, and who experience different forms of discursive inclusion or exclusion. In this analysis, I survey the resources offered by (im) migrant-serving agencies and other advocacy groups in Calgary in order to identify the ways in which certain migrants are excluded – in discourse or in practice – on the basis of their precarious status. These instances of exclusion help illustrate how the ideological counterparts of faraway national borders take shape as sociocultural categories of identity in the lives of migrants in the Calgary area, and render them more or less deserving and visible.

## Theoretical Framework

In 1987, queer Chicana feminist Gloria Anzaldúa published *Borderlands/La Frontera*, in which she deconstructs both physical and ideological borders and their damaging and exclusionary effects – particularly those produced by the U.S.-Mexico border, by heteropatriarchy, and by the epistemic violence inflicted upon Spanish-speaking people by dominant Anglo societies. Though at that time, Anzaldúa was primarily concerned with the identity struggle of Chicanos, whose culture and language she saw as a hybrid of Mexican, indigenous, and American roots, the relevance of her work still resonates decades later. The struggles of identities (national, “racial,” ethnic, cultural, sexual) and of borders are very much a reality today, and are the subject of both academic and political debates.

For Anzaldúa and those behind NOII, borders are both physical and conceptual, and take shape

in different ways in our everyday lives, creating material and ideological differences and social, economic, and cultural inequalities.<sup>8</sup> NOII-Vancouver (Indigenous Coast Salish territories) member Harsha Walia, in her framework of border imperialism, explains how global capitalism has impoverished and displaced millions of people, who are then criminalized for their attempted migration to other countries like Canada in their attempts to support themselves and their families. This issue has received immense media coverage as of late, generated by the ongoing migration crisis taking place in Europe, where tens of thousands of refugees and economic migrants have already arrived (mostly in Italy, Spain, and France) in the first half of 2015. Many of these migrants die attempting to reach their destinations, during their passage through dangerous (and securitized) routes, often via illegal human smugglers. Further, as Walia argues, if these migrants *do* gain entry to these destination states, through either “legal” or “illegal” pathways, they are then organized into a “racialized hierarchy of citizenship,” denied certain rights and entitlements, and exploited for their labour, and are thereby rendered vulnerable and disposable.<sup>9</sup>

Many current immigration scholars<sup>10</sup> have supported their works with the ideas of anthropologist Nicholas P. De Genova, who has theorized and attempted to denaturalize the notion of migrant “illegality” and its counterpart condition, deportability, in the U.S.<sup>11</sup> In his thinking through of status and “illegality,” De Genova argues that the category of “illegal alien” is produced by the state through sociopolitical processes he terms “illegalizations,” which differentiate between categories of migrants in the interest of the state.<sup>12</sup> Those segregated into

the category of “illegality” find themselves in a “social space” wherein they are subjugated to poor living and working conditions, a loss of dignity, and an “erasure of personhood” (427).

De Genova emphasizes the importance of the historicity of immigration law, and shows how revisions and reconfigurations of citizenship and non-citizenship throughout the years have resulted in the production of “illegality” through policy and practice. The law’s categorization of certain migrants as “illegal” creates a class that is sub-human or less deserving, who are afforded fewer privileges than “citizens” (if any at all), but who usually contribute to the economy and thus benefit the state through their cheap labour. They offer this cheap labour out of desperation for the means to support themselves and their families, coming from countries where it is not necessarily possible to do so, and finding themselves in a country where they are socially excluded, and denied the same rights and entitlements as others, on the basis of their dehumanizing “illegal” status.

This differentiation and categorization between “legality” and “illegality” creates a justification for allotting the work considered “undesirable” by “citizens” (for example, domestic work, seasonal agricultural work, and certain food service jobs) to the more desperate individuals. As such, the state does not want to fully expel all of these people from its borders, but to (in De Genova’s words) “socially *include* them under imposed conditions of enforced and protracted vulnerability,” in order that they will remain in the country, and remain willing to accept such standards of labour.<sup>13</sup>

De Genova is careful to explain his use of quotation marks for terms like “legal,” “illegal,” and “illegality,” as well as “immigrant” and

“immigration” in an attempt to “denaturalize” their meanings and especially the distinctions between them.<sup>14</sup> He favours to use the term *undocumented* to describe those without formal “legal” status recognized by the state, and prefers “migration” to “immigration” in order to, in his words, “problematize the implicitly unilinear teleology of these categories.”<sup>15</sup> In other words, the *im* in immigrant(ion) positions the state as the receiver of “outsiders” entering its borders, rather than acknowledging human migration as a multilinear form of movement with several directions, destinations, routes, and sites of reception.<sup>16</sup>

Further advancing the conversation regarding these problematic concepts and their nuanced terminologies, Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard recontextualize the issue of migration in Canada. In their view, migration status is a concept with many “gradations,” or possible configurations, and thus one that cannot be explained in terms of binary opposition or dichotomous relationship. While De Genova employs the use of quotation marks, he still relies on the binary of legal/illegal, and thus implies that the differentiation between the forms of migration status have a “bright” or distinct boundary between them.<sup>17</sup> In fact, as Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard work to show, migration status cannot even be explained as a hierarchical tripartite in the form of, for example, legal/temporary/illegal or secure/insecure/nonexistent, which would still rely on the hard lines of distinction that these writers wish to dismantle. Instead, it should be understood that migration status has many forms that are easily overlapped or slipped between, differentiated only by “fuzzy” boundaries. As they explain, “A review of relevant policies and programs, available research, and observations led us to propose

that the Canadian context produced a confusing array of gradations of uncertain or ‘less than full’ migration status.”<sup>18</sup> As such, they put forth the word “precarious” as a type of umbrella term for varying forms of irregular and insecure status.<sup>19</sup> In this framework, forms of migrant status can be conceptualized by their *presence/absence of rights and entitlements*.<sup>20</sup> Precarious status, then, refers to those in Canada who lack any of the following conditions: work authorization, the right to permanently remain in Canada (also known as a residence permit), the *independent* right to remain in the country (e.g. not depending on a sponsoring spouse or employer), and not being entitled to *all* of the social rights normally available to citizens (e.g. suffrage, public education, or health care).<sup>21</sup>

As Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard explain, there are multiple benefits to using “precarious.” First, it encapsulates the multidimensionality and variability of formal status, as per their non-essentializing discussion. Second, it can help align and make visible those groups determined by states as having different categories of non-citizenship, in order that they and their struggles might be better recognized, and their resistance to their common but varied struggles more widely supported. As the authors assert, “Lack of visibility compounds the vulnerability and marginalization of people with precarious status and their families by reproducing an underclass that is vulnerable on several fronts.”<sup>22</sup> Instead of isolating these individuals and families with varied and overlapping forms of insecure or incomplete status, the use of “precarious” to describe the population can work to unite them and make their shared struggles more visible to the public (without intending to erase individual differences of situation).

This terminology of “precariousness” is also, possibly, the “best case scenario” among a slough of negative and essentializing terms that have been used to describe migrants entering, living, or working in a country other than that of their origin. As Peter Nyers importantly illustrates, the discourse used to identify these individuals is generally characterized by “lack” or “absence”.<sup>23</sup> In their worst form, the words dehumanize migrants (“alien”) and criminalize them (“illegal”); at best, they refer to them in the negative sense of something they are missing (be it status, identification, documentation, rights, etc.). Though using “precarious status” via Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard is based on the same logic (i.e. an absence of rights and entitlements), and still has somewhat negative connotations, the term, at least, does not rely on fixed or absolute oppositions to something positive, as is the case with *non-status*; *undocumented*; *illegal*. Rather, like the framework it represents, “precarious” refers to something not quite stable or predictable, *with the potential to change or shift at any moment*.<sup>24</sup> This is crucial to rethinking the categorization of human beings as “legal” or “illegal,” and in adopting the viewpoint of migrant status as a changeable state of being, as determined by the nation-state in which they are currently located, and not as an inherent characteristic of a person.

These concepts of “citizenship” and formal or migratory status can be incredibly difficult not only to name and describe, but to effectively contest and reconfigure in our own understanding of the (bordered) nations and societies we currently inhabit. Nandita Sharma asserts that “most of us think like a state. We see others and ourselves as either ‘foreigners’ or ‘citizens’.”<sup>25</sup> In the eyes of Sharma, anyone

who identifies as being Canadian, and therefore in terms of their relationship to the Canadian nation-state, by necessity defines others by their non-Canadianness; their non-citizenship – just as the state and its policies do.<sup>26</sup> This manner of identification and of differentiation or “othering” is extremely problematic in its inherent justification of the denial of rights and entitlements of certain human beings on the basis of their “status.” Consistent with Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard’s hopes of “shift[ing] responsibility for precarious status and illegality away from individual failure to the terrain of policy and structural processes,”<sup>27</sup> my view in this paper does not find fault with an individual because of where they were born, where they currently are in the world, or what type of permit or documentation they hold. On the contrary, I recognize the equal right to dignity and personhood that should be afforded to every person regardless of formal status, and hope to promote alternative ways of “naming” and thinking about these individuals and migrant issues in general, in recognition of the fact that discourses affect the physical experiences of those they describe, and that they help shape the status quo.

## Context

There are many factors that make Calgary a unique “borderland” community to consider in an analysis of migration issues in Canada. Calgary has the highest population in Alberta, reaching nearly one and a half million people.<sup>28</sup> In recent years, it has become the fourth highest city in Canada in terms of net international migration rates (FIGURE 1). This may be due in part to Alberta’s reliance on the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP), which has brought

thousands of workers to the province, many of whom have then applied for permanent residency. In 2013, 1.74 percent of Alberta’s workforce was composed of individuals employed through the TFWP – a figure nearly double that of British Columbia, and significantly higher than that of any other provincial workforce.<sup>29</sup> While Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal, are much closer to international borders and waters, Calgary is centrally located in the landlocked Alberta, which shares its only international border with the state of Montana. With some estimates of Alberta’s undocumented population hitting 100,000,<sup>30</sup> this calls for the analysis of Alberta’s particular pathways to “illegality,” and the need for a reconceptualization of borders and migration status specific to the province and its different hubs for migrants.<sup>31</sup>

**FIGURE 1: NET INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION BY CENSUS METROPOLITAN AREA**

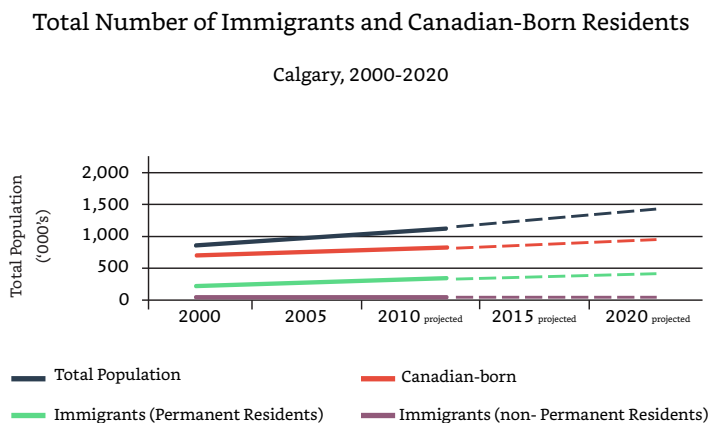
	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Toronto	87,510	84,443	91,791	93,894	87,070	80,583
Vancouver	36,581	42,107	38,714	29,241	31,820	21,719
Montreal	40,278	45,651	46,044	44,514	45,243	45,241
<b>Calgary</b>	<b>18,563</b>	<b>19,153</b>	<b>12,845</b>	<b>6,494</b>	<b>19,072</b>	<b>23,817</b>
Ottawa	5,077	6,128	7,686	12,228	7,918	6,951

*Data adapted from Statistics Canada<sup>32</sup>*

Calgary’s cultures are influenced by the decades-long dynasty of the Progressive Conservative provincial government in Alberta – which changed very recently with the NDP’s landslide majority election in May 2015 – as well as Calgary’s images as a “cowtown” or cowboy city and a wealthy oil and gas town. At the same time, Calgary has been called a “global city.”<sup>33</sup> Calgary mayor Naheed Nenshi, perhaps the new face of Calgary, is a Muslim and the son of (im) migrant parents of South Asian origin, and was the first visible minority mayor to be elected in a major North American city.<sup>34</sup> Demographically,

Calgary is quite diverse. In 2012, the City of Calgary reported that 30% of its population was comprised of immigrants (FIGURE 2). Future projections predict the immigrant population of Calgary will rise to nearly half a million by the year 2020 (FIGURE 2). Their definition of “immigrant” in this case refers to non-Canadian-born “landed immigrants” (or those who have been granted permanent residency), and thus does not account for international migrants living with precarious status, who influence Calgary’s demographics.<sup>35</sup>

**FIGURE 2: PROJECTION OF DEMOGRAPHIC MAKE-UP OF CALGARY’S POPULATION**



*Projection data was calculated using the average rate of growth for the past four Federal Census cycles (1991-2006). Note: City-level data is provided. Source: Statistic Canada 2001 and 2006 Census Canada*

*Source: City of Calgary<sup>36</sup>*

Calgary can perhaps be seen as more conservative than other Canadian cities in its approach to migration issues when considering the resources and advocacy available (or unavailable) to migrants in the Calgary area. There is currently no NOII chapter in Alberta, nor does a “Sanctuary City” exist anywhere in the province.<sup>37</sup>

Comparatively, Ottawa is similar in population size to Calgary, and has a very active NOII chapter of its own, which launched a Sanctuary City campaign in 2014.<sup>38</sup> Migrante Canada, an alliance of Filipino migrant rights groups, does have an active chapter in Alberta, though it appears to be

more visible in Edmonton.<sup>39</sup> These comparisons suggest that, when compared to other major Canadian cities – even those of the same size – Calgary is relatively inactive when it comes to migrant rights advocacy.

Moreover, the changes to the TFWP that groups like Migrante Canada are protesting mean potentially increased pathways to “illegality” in Alberta, and, by association, its main hubs for international migrants. With predictions of many workers affected by the recent TFWP changes going “underground” rather than leaving Canada when their permits expire, estimates of the undocumented population could rise.<sup>40</sup> The need for a rethinking of “illegality” and precarious status in Alberta and a reassessment of the services available to these vulnerable individuals in a main metropolitan centre like Calgary are thus pertinent, perhaps now more than ever.

## Analysis

In terms of the resources available to migrants in the Calgary area, there are many organizations that exist to help facilitate the settlement, integration, and wellbeing of newcomers in Calgary.<sup>41</sup> Most of these organizations are at least partially funded by the Government of Canada and/or the Government of Alberta, and as such, their resource allocation and program eligibility criteria are largely dependent on what the government approves or does not approve. My research revealed that the majority of these organizations require identification or immigration documents when a client is referred to or applies for the agency’s services, in order to confirm eligibility and/or to keep track of demographics for records and funding purposes.<sup>42</sup> Those who lack the necessary documentation, or



“status,” must seek assistance elsewhere.<sup>43</sup>

In the public information offered by these agencies, including their program descriptions as well as their mission statements and visions, the term “immigrant” is most often used.<sup>44</sup> Sometimes “newcomer” is deployed<sup>45</sup> – the latter is perhaps a more appropriate term in the context of this analysis, since the condition of such a category is not implied as being permanent in nature, but changeable with time. The word “migrant” is hardly ever used. The wide use of the term “immigrant” by certain agencies may indeed be a reflection of the fact that services are more commonly available only to “landed immigrants,” a reality that is determined by government policies and funding allocations. But using mainly “immigrant” in the discourse of this industry, as well as in the city’s official reports mentioned above, works to imply that all of the migrants in Calgary are “landed immigrants.” This decreases the visibility of other migrants with precarious status, as well as their needs for various public and social services.

Not surprisingly, none of these agencies advertise help or support for undocumented migrants or persons without “legal” status, and in general any agencies that receive funding from the provincial or federal government cannot help migrants with precarious status or no status at all.<sup>46</sup> However, some programs in Calgary welcome people with certain types of precarious status in addition to the typical clientele made up by “permanent” residents. There are also a select few programs offered exclusively to people with specific forms of precarious status in Calgary, such as the Mosaic Refugee Health Clinic<sup>47</sup> and the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)’s Temporary Foreign Worker Support Services.<sup>48</sup> Recently, though,

the provincial government decided to cut its funding of all temporary foreign worker (TFW) support programs offered by immigrant-serving agencies. Unless those involved in the agencies and their allies can convince the new government otherwise, or secure alternative funding, the CCIS’s TFW program and others of the same category will cease to exist as of September 2015.<sup>49</sup>

These differentiations of eligibility for social services are, of course, some of the material manifestations of the ideological differentiation between the “deserving/desirable/legal immigrant” and “undeserving/undesirable/temporary/illegal” migrant.<sup>50</sup> Those who entered Canada through the TFWP – especially in “low-skilled occupations” – have already been rendered, by government policies and funding allocations, as undeserving or less deserving of many rights and entitlements than those with Permanent Residency status.<sup>51</sup> This inaccessibility of many services will be exacerbated by the recent austerity, thereby positioning TFWs in Alberta as *even less* “deserving” than before.<sup>52</sup> Austerity for public and social services has been an issue for those with other forms of precarious status as well. The campaign for better health care for refugees is ongoing; Doctors for Refugee Health Care and its allies have been fighting to reverse what they call the “cruel and inhumane” cuts to the Interim Federal Health Program, which have significantly restricted health care access for certain types of refugees – again positioning some migrants as more or less “deserving” than others.<sup>53</sup>

What resources, then, *are* currently available to individuals with precarious status, and especially to those with no “legal” or currently

valid status in Calgary? As a program that receives no governmental funding, the Calgary Workers' Resource Centre (CWRC) will continue to support workers in Alberta, including TFWs and live-in caregivers.<sup>54</sup> CWRC prioritizes free advocacy and education related to labour, and they have no real eligibility requirements. As such, they will help anyone, within the law, who is willing to book an appointment in person. CWRC also offer a New Alberta Worker program, which aims to inform TFWs about health and safety rights and responsibilities in the workplace.<sup>55</sup> In their eligibility and programs, then, CWRC makes visible both TFWs and their needs, while not excluding any specific form of status and therefore uniting the workers of Calgary in a more equal category. By extension, some of the basic needs-serving agencies in Calgary, including the Calgary Drop-In Centre, The Mustard Seed, and the Women's Centre, do not require any identification from potential clients. These organizations can thus technically act as providers of safe shelter, food, and support to anyone, regardless of their (non)citizenship – though challenges to reaching more vulnerable populations should be taken into account. By leaving status-based categories out of their eligibility criteria, organizations like these move away from a deserving/undeserving migrant discourse, and toward a model that prioritizes human need over legal status.

## Conclusions

In my survey of the resources available to persons with precarious status in Calgary, I found significant gaps in the areas of service provision and advocacy – an issue that deserves more attention given the recent overhauling of the TFWP and the increased pathways to “illegality” and an “underground” workforce

that were created with the changes that took effect on April 1, 2015. Furthermore, the discourse used by immigrant-serving agencies reflects the inaccessibility and invisibility of those living with precarious status in the city. These findings suggest that Calgary is in need of a reconceptualization of borders and status, which should move away from paradigms of the deserving/permanent/immigrant that is recognized as part of Calgary's citizen population, and the undeserving/temporary/migrant that is largely ignored and marginalized into Calgary's underclass. These views of identity and belonging are no longer sufficient in a city or province with significant concentrations of people living with precarious status.

The time to interrogate these borders – physical, material, ideological, social, and otherwise – has come, and cities like Calgary are falling behind in many ways. And yet, the aforementioned statistics about Calgary's diverse demographics and workforce, as well as its increasingly progressive politics, lend credibility to the idea that Calgary is in need for – and ready for – a change, in both discourse and practice. The definitive causes of Calgary's inadequacy in migrant rights advocacy and support is beyond the scope of this research, and I am not certain whether lingering conservative attitudes are to blame – or whether it's a matter of lacking infrastructure in the face of rapidly increasing rates of migration to the city, for example. More Calgary-focused research and scholarship are required,<sup>56</sup> and both advocacy groups and academic- or community-based studies concerned with the experiences of people living with precarious status in Calgary should consider the unique factors that shape Calgary into an unconventional “borderland.”

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1999) 85.

<sup>2</sup> Nandita Sharma, "Canadian Nationalism and the Making of Global Apartheid." *Women & Environments International Magazine*, 68/69 (2005): 12, *ProQuest*, 3 Mar. 2015. Emphasis added.

<sup>3</sup> Luin Goldring, Carolina Berinstein, and Judith K. Bernhard, "Institutionalizing Precarious Migratory Status in Canada," *Citizenship Studies*, 13.3 (2009): 240, *Taylor & Francis Library*. 20 Feb. 2015.

<sup>4</sup> In their 2009 publication, Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard collect several estimates that ranged from 200,000 to 500,000 (242). According to Sarah Marsden, in 2012, the House of Commons estimated that of the number of undocumented workers in Canada fell anywhere between 50,000 to 800,000 (220).

<sup>5</sup> This is a direct quote from NOII-Vancouver's page ("About Us"). The preceding descriptions have been synthesized from Harsha Walia's *Undoing Border Imperialism* and from other public information about the NOII groups.

<sup>6</sup> Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard 240.

<sup>7</sup> People living with precarious status include international migrant workers, inland refugee claimants, sponsored spouses and family members, and those with no legal or pending documentation whatsoever (Marsden; Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard). Their different levels of status are linked by a lack of certain legal rights and entitlements, which causes their experiences to be marked by vulnerability, social exclusion, inaccessibility of services, lack of visibility, and fear of deportation (De Genova; Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard; Marsden; Taylor and Foster). Borders of nations and citizenship, then, are felt both physically and ideologically (Sharma, "On Not Being" 417).

<sup>8</sup> Harsha Walia, *Undoing Border Imperialism*, Institute for Anarchist Studies ed. (Oakland: AK P., 2013) 2.

<sup>9</sup> Walia 5.

<sup>10</sup> See: Peter Nyers, 2010; Jean McDonald, 2010; Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard.

<sup>11</sup> Nicolas P. De Genova, "Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31.1 (2002): 419-47, *ProQuest*, 21 Feb. 2015.

<sup>12</sup> De Genova.

<sup>13</sup> De Genova 429, emphasis added.

<sup>14</sup> De Genova 420.

<sup>15</sup> De Genova 421.

<sup>16</sup> Most current scholars and activists opt for the same terminology (including Goldring, Berinstein and Bernhard; McDonald; Dauvergne; Walia and NOII; Migrant Canada, etc.).

<sup>17</sup> Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard 241.

<sup>18</sup> Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard 240.

<sup>19</sup> Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard 241.

<sup>20</sup> Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard 240.

<sup>21</sup> Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard 240-41.

<sup>22</sup> Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard 241.

<sup>23</sup> Peter Nyers, "No One is Illegal between City and Nation," *Studies in Social Justice* 4.2 (2010): 132, *ProQuest*, 24 Feb. 2015.

<sup>24</sup> Of course, even this statement about “precariousness” causes the word to be thought of in terms of other negative opposites (instability, insecurity, unpredictability, etc.), perhaps further exemplifying the extremely problematic nature of attempting to describe persons in relation to their formal “status” (or lack thereof).

<sup>25</sup> Sharma, “Canadian Nationalism” 10.

<sup>26</sup> Sharma, “Canadian Nationalism” 10.

<sup>27</sup> Goldring, Berinstein, and Bernhard 241.

<sup>28</sup> Canada<sup>a</sup>, Statistics Canada, *Population of census metropolitan areas (2011 census)*, last modified 11 Feb. 2015, accessed 20 Apr. 2015.

<sup>29</sup> Farahnaz Bandali, *Work Interrupted: How federal foreign worker rule changes hurt the West*, Canada West Foundation (2015): 08, 1 Apr. 2015.

<sup>30</sup> Estimate from Bouzek, 2012, as quoted in Taylor and Foster (165). In their analysis of workers employed in Alberta through the TFWP, Taylor and Foster discuss the tendency of some workers to go “underground” if they fail certification exams or if their work permits expire, largely because of the high fees they have paid international recruiters to facilitate their entry to Canada (165).

<sup>31</sup> The main migrant hubs in Alberta generally include the metropolitan centres of Calgary and Edmonton, as well as the Fort McMurray township and its surrounding oil sands projects, which fuel Alberta’s economy and employ thousands of international migrant workers (Foster and Taylor).

<sup>32</sup> Canada<sup>b</sup>, Statistics Canada, Table 1.2-2 *Annual estimates of demographic components by census metropolitan area, Canada, from July to June – Net international migration*, last modified 29 Apr. 2015, accessed 30 Apr. 2015.

<sup>33</sup> David Taras, qtd. in Bill Graveland, “Calgary’s new mayor shreds city stereotypes.” *The Star* 19 Oct. 2010, accessed 15 Apr. 2015.

<sup>34</sup> Graveland.

<sup>35</sup> *Diversity in Calgary: Looking Forward to 2020*, City of Calgary, Diversity and Inclusion (2011): 2, 17 Feb. 2015. Though (some) migrants with precarious status are accounted for in the graph as “Non-permanent residents,” they are not mentioned elsewhere in the City’s actual report.

<sup>36</sup> *Diversity in Calgary* 2.

<sup>37</sup> When a city achieves Sanctuary City status, it employs a “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” (DADT) policy to ensure that all residents can access city services, without fear of being reported to immigration authorities. Toronto has taken considerable steps to achieving status and success as a Sanctuary City through its Solidarity City Network.

<sup>38</sup> Fani, “2014: A year in review,” *No One is Illegal-Ottawa*, 13 Mar. 2015, 20 Apr. 2015.

<sup>39</sup> Migrante Alberta prioritizes the rights of international migrant workers, which are of particular importance in Alberta, as the province with the highest reliance on the TFWP. Migrante Alberta seems to be more visible in Edmonton; in March of this year, the group staged a protest as part of the “no4x4” campaign in response to the changes to the TFWP that recently took effect on April 1, 2015. These changes now limit the work terms of TFWs in Canada to four years, which must be followed by four years out of the country before they can apply to return (*Overhauling*). There was no “no4x4” protest scheduled in Calgary (“Events”).

<sup>40</sup> See articles such as: Chandra Lye, “Thousands of temporary foreign workers face deportation due to program changes,” *CTV News Edmonton*, 21 Mar. 2015, 22 Apr. 2015; and Amanda Stephenson, “The federal government has quietly thrown a lifeline to Alberta’s temporary foreign workers,” *Calgary Herald*, 4 Feb. 2015, 5 Feb. 2015.

<sup>41</sup> Similar to other organizations elsewhere in Canada, these organizations in Calgary, usually referred to as



“immigrant-serving agencies,” provide services and referrals related to language training and interpretation, health, employment, housing, counselling, and specific services for families, youth, and seniors (*Services for Immigrants*; “Immigrant Services”).

<sup>42</sup> From private emails with Paisley Dresler; and Dolores Coutts.

<sup>43</sup> As Goldring, Berenstein, and Bernhard explain, “Agencies that receive federal or provincial funding to operate (the vast majority) cannot serve people with precarious or no status. They are forced to turn people away, or to serve them without being able to report the services provided. This adds work to overworked and underpaid workers” (255).

<sup>44</sup> E.g. Calgary Immigrant Women’s Association, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, Immigrant Services Calgary, as well as the City of Calgary’s *Diversity in Calgary* report that I reference above.

<sup>45</sup> Here, I refer to the organization names and website information of agencies such as the Centre For Newcomers, the Calgary Local Immigration Partnership, and Centre d’accueil pour les nouveaux arrivants francophones.

<sup>46</sup> Alison Taylor, and Jason Foster, “Migrant Workers and the Problem of Social Cohesion in Canada,” *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 16.1 (2015): 161, 20 Feb. 2015; and Goldring, Berenstein, and Bernhard, 255.

<sup>47</sup> The Mosaic Refugee Health Clinic-

<sup>48</sup> CCIS’s Temporary Foreign Worker Support Services program aims for what the website description calls “Retention Through Integration,” and encourages the settlement and integration of TFWs into the local community (“Temporary”).

<sup>49</sup> From private email.

<sup>50</sup> Walia 77.

<sup>51</sup> Taylor and Foster.

<sup>52</sup> A full review of the different international migrant worker (IMW) programs in Canada and an account of some of the lived experiences of IMWs in Alberta can be found in the work of Rida Abboud.

<sup>53</sup> A history of this austerity and the subsequent campaign against it can be found on the Canadian Doctors for Refugee Care website (“The issue”).

<sup>54</sup> The CWRC is funded by the United Way of Calgary and Area and the Alberta Law Foundation.

<sup>55</sup> For more information about the CWRC’s programs, which also include case work for employment standard-related issues and Employment Insurance appeals, see the CWRC website (“Services”).

<sup>56</sup> For Calgary-based studies already published, see Yvonne Herbert’s analysis of the Francophone migrant population of Calgary, as well as Wood, Burke, and Young’s case study on refugee settlement in Calgary. The progress of ongoing Calgary-focused research projects will also be interesting to follow; for example, the Migrant Mothers Project, led by sociologist Rupaleem Bhuyan, recently partnered with the University of Calgary in a new study on the relationship between precarious status and domestic violence among live-in caregivers and sponsored spouses (*Migrant Mothers*).

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