

Humiliation and Asylum Seekers

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Abstract presented at 2011 Workshop on Transforming Humiliation and Violent Conflict,
Columbia University New York, December 8-9, 2011

Humiliation and Refugees: All refugees seeking legal relief in the form of, for example, asylum, are seeking refuge from one form of conflict or another. While the host countries who are signatories to the controlling international conventions have a duty of non-refoulement, in order to obtain legal relief, the refugees are put through humiliating and legal processes that often include a cross-examination by a government attorney.

The process is even worse for female refugees who have survived gender-based violence but who must present their case within a gendered framework that recognizes and even values certain forms of persecution that are most often inflicted on men - persecution that takes place in a public forum, committed by a state actor, that is equal or analogous to political persecution.

Further, because this gendered framework values linear, cohesive narrative, to obtain legal relief, female refugees are forced to speak about the unspeakable and defend why such acts do not conform to the legal system's preconceived notions of rationality. In addition, because speaking about such things is typically taboo, if they are forced to return to their home countries, female refugees face at worst, life-threatening consequences, at best more humiliation.

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