Securitized Borders: The Criminalization of Migration in North American National Security Narratives

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Abstract

Abstract This paper presents an examination of the increasing securitization of migration and its influential role in shaping narratives that criminalize immigrants. The primary objective is to investigate how migration has been progressively reframed through a national security perspec.ve and how this reframing affects public perception, policy formulation, and legal frameworks. Employing a qualita.ve methodology, the paper utilizes critical discourse analysis of political rhetoric, media portrayals, and policy documents to scrutinize the construction of migrants as security threats. Anchored in securitization theory, crimmigration scholarship, and frameworks of risk governance and social control, this work contextualizes contemporary discourses within historical precedents, particularly the shifts in immigration policy that occurred in the aftermath of September 11. Furthermore, it engages with empirical studies on immigration and crime to critically examine the disparity between public fear and statistical evidence. By synthesizing literature across various disciplines and analyzing case studies, the paper seeks to demonstrate how security-driven narratives perpetuate exclusionary and puni.ve immigration regimes. The study concludes with a discourse on alterna.ve, evidence-based approaches to migration governance that challenge the conflation of mobility with criminality.

Biography

Justin Andrada is a Master of Arts student in Criminology and Social Justice at Toronto Metropolitan University. He holds an Honours BA in Criminology and Sociolegal Studies from the University of Toronto. His research explores the securitization of migration, political and media narratives, and the criminalization of immigrants. Justin currently works as a Student Border Services Officer with the Canada Border Services Agency and as a Graduate Research Assistant with Dr. Sara Thompson. His work aims to unpack the intersections of immigration policy, national security rhetoric, and systemic barriers facing marginalized populations.