

**Deterring Transnational Migration:
Public Information Campaigns, Affective Governmentality, And The Family**

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Abstract:

Feminist research has illustrated how ideas of ‘the family’ have been central to projects of border and immigration enforcement, including practices of detention, separation, resettlement and reunification. This work considers how discourses of family are used to sort immigrants and refugees, determining access to or exclusion from national territory. Drawing on a comparative study of government-led public information campaigns (PICs) by the United States and Australia, we expand on this research to explore how ‘the family’ is framed and mobilized in PICs to produce emotional and affective attachments that aim to affect migration-related

decisions. We argue that PICs function as a form of affective governmentality, working to tether potential migrants to place and render them immobile through the strategic circulation of family-based narratives and images grounded in grief, guilt, shame, and familial responsibility. In doing so, PICs obscure the geopolitical and geoeconomic complexities undergirding transnational migration by rendering migration-related decisions as individual and familial decisions. In tracing how ‘the family’ is framed and mobilized in PICs we contribute to existing research on the family in border and immigration enforcement and theories of emotional and affective governance.

Keywords:

Family, border, enforcement, public information campaign

Introduction

In 2016, residents of communities in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador began encountering videos, print and online advertisements, songs, and radio advertisements from the US public information campaign (PIC) titled “Nuestra Patria, Nuestro Futuro” (“Our country, our future”). One radio advertisement began with a gripping monologue from a grieving mother: “I sent you to the US because I thought it was the best for you. More than a year has passed...I don’t know if you’re alive, dead, but I know that you’re not ok...My daughter, I would give anything for you to be here with me. I curse the day that I sent you north.” These pieces explicitly targeted the mothers of potential migrants, emphasizing the possibility that children would face kidnapping, disappearance, or death if they left Central America unaccompanied. The advertisements varied, but each ended with a similar statement, reminding listeners that: “Each year there are children who die or disappear when we send them to the US without documents. Your home is here in [Honduras/El Salvador/Guatemala].”

The advertisements within “Nuestra Patria, Nuestro Futuro” mobilize a particular version of the Central American family, a family bonded by love yet faced with the possibility of violence, loss, and grief. While research has illustrated how ideas of ‘the family’ have been central to projects of border and immigration enforcement, this work largely focuses on how discourses of family are used to sort immigrants and refugees,ⁱ determining who has access to national territory and who does not. “Nuestra Patria, Nuestro Futuro” suggests a different mobilization of the family and different techniques of governance at play. In this paper, we explore how public information campaigns such as “Nuestra Patria, Nuestro Futuro” mobilize affect and emotion through narratives and images of ‘the family’ with the goal of affecting transnational migratory patterns. We further illustrate how PICs work at the emotional and

affective register to align individuals and communities in particular ways that tether people to territory and hinder mobility. In doing so, we make two contributions to feminist research on border and migration enforcement. First, we broaden understandings of the targets of enforcement activity by illustrating the way in which not only migrants themselves, but also their wider familial networks, are targeted through PICs. Research has shown how the effects of enforcement reverberate beyond the individual migrants detained or deported. We further illustrate how PICs expand the target of enforcement activities to include family members as individuals with the power to affect migration related decisions. Second, we draw on work in the field of affective governmentality to highlight the affective and emotive dimensions of PICs and illustrate how these forms of governance draw on and reproduce frameworks of ‘the family’ and familial responsibility. While research has examined punitive enforcement strategies, our examination of PICs illustrates the increasing use of affective techniques of governance to regulate transnational mobility.

This paper proceeds as follows. First, we introduce literature on the family and border and immigration enforcement that frames our approach to PICs and their impacts for potential migrants, their families, and their communities. Next, we provide a brief overview of our wider research project, then present two case studies. Together, these case studies demonstrate how the family becomes mobilized differently in different cultural contexts, but similarly circulated as means of generating emotional and affective responses that align individuals and communities in particular ways with the goal of shape migration decisions and hindering transnational mobility. A focus on how the family is framed and mobilized in PICs highlights how border enforcement increasingly works through affect and emotion and targets a wider range of individuals and communities.

Families, borders, and enforcement practices

Interdisciplinary feminist research has examined the relationship between the family and border enforcement policies, pointing to the role the family—as a social structure and discourse—plays in organizing and structuring migration control (Bonizzoni 2018). This research can be separated in three broad categories: 1) analyses of how discourses and ideologies of family shape immigration policies and practice; 2) analyses of how the narrow definitions of family are perpetuated in immigration law and policies and impact immigrants and refugees; and 3) how immigrants and refugees enact agency as they negotiate state definitions of family alongside their family formations.

Discourses and ideologies of family have been key to shaping border enforcement policies throughout the world. Catherine Lee (2013) uses the term family ideation to refer to how idealized notions of family inform and shape immigration laws and policies. Immigration laws are informed by ideologies of family and, at the same time, serve to reproduce particular notions of family by creating inclusion/exclusion criteria based on culturally-specific normative frameworks of family that are deeply gendered, racialized, and sexualized (Erel and Reynolds 2018; Hua and Nigorizawa 2010; Luibhéid and Cantu, Jr. 2005). In regulating access to national territory and national membership, family-based immigration laws and policies reproduce particular family formations and broader social, economic, and cultural systems and power relations. The impact of these policies extends beyond the border; for instance, the widespread sexual assault of migrant women attempting to reach the US is shaped by whether family members accompany migrant women, which is often influenced by family-based immigration law and policies (Téllez, Simmons, and del Hierro 2018). Rather than fixed, definitions of family

and how familial discourses are mobilized in immigration law and policies emerges from particular social, historical, and economic contexts and are informed by the racial and class characteristics of the immigrant populations whose movement is being regulated (Martin 2011).

Immigrants and refugees are impacted by the framing of family in immigration policies as policies are based on particular notions familial belonging and what a family does (Strasser et al. 2009). Family reunification is only available to individuals seen as rightful members of family units, requiring immigrants and refugees to mold broader familial formations to fit into the boxes created by receiving states (Olwig 2020). Families that fall outside of these notions of the ‘ideal’ encounter challenges. For instance, Kallio and Häkli (2019) show how Finnish refugee management prevents migrant families from recognizing the wider networks of familial relations and people for whom they care. While UNHCR policies suggest that refugees should be able to define who constitutes their family, how family is interpreted and defined in refugee receiving countries such as Finland is often much narrower (see also Bastaki 2019).

Inquiries into migration-related family separation have further complicated how we understand the relationship between ‘the family and border and immigration policies and practices. In the US context López (2020, 242) argues that transnational families “experience the intrusion of the border on their lives” in multiple ways, reinforcing, social, geographic, and economic divisions between family members on either side of the Mexico-US border. This research expands upon other scholarship examining the emotions generated within transnational parenting relationships and how these emotions shape migratory decisions and processes (e.g. Baldassar 2015; Boccagni 2012). Examinations of family separation policies in the US under the Trump administration have highlighted the interconnectedness of family migration policies and racial logics, pointing to the way in which migration policies are always already racialized

policies (e.g. Smith et al. 2019). Feminist scholars have also approached the issue of family separation as an issue of reproductive injustice, tying historical reproductive and gendered violence to current violence against families (Hernández 2019). Taken collectively, this research illustrates how migration policies draw on and reproduce idealized notions of ‘the family’ that are narrow, exclusion, and privilege particular familial formations (e.g., heteronormative, nuclear, white) with negative consequences for those who fall outside these narrow norms.

Despite how particular framings of family impact immigrant and refugee communities, these communities are not passive victims. For instance, Olwig (2020) describes how Somali refugees have adapted and circumvented Danish laws that mandate biometric testing of families to determine ‘legitimate’ familial relationships. Somalis in Denmark have “essentially appropriated this family unit [the biometrically defined nuclear family] for their own purposes as part of their efforts to create a family life and gain social acceptance in a skeptical receiving society”, while also continue to value and respect their wider kin relations (Olwig 2020, 13). Tungohan (2013), meanwhile, shows how Filipina live-in caregivers in Canada navigate the contradictory demands of providing economically for their families through migration, while also continuing to mother from abroad. The challenges associated with meeting these demands, propel Filipina migrant caregivers into civic activism, where they actively draw attention to the negative consequences migration policies have on women and their families.

Throughout this literature, researchers illustrate how ideas of family and particular family formations are both mobilized and reinforced via efforts to control who has access to national territory. Cultural ideologies that privilege nuclear family formations grounded in heteronormative, gendered, and racialized norms exclude particular families or family members, with a range of consequences. Within this literature, the family is ‘seen’ through enforcement

measures as something that is constructed, restricted, excluded, and impacted. However, there is little examination of how familial discourses, narratives, and relationships are actively mobilized to control migratory patterns. To understand how the family is mobilized as a tool of enforcement in PICs, we draw on literature in the fields of emotional geopolitics and affective governmentality.

Emotion, Affect, and Governance

Feminist scholars have challenged narrow understandings of governance and geopolitics by drawing attention to the important role of emotion and affect as governmental technologies (Pain and Smith 2016; Gökarıksel and Secor 2020). Motivated by the post-September 11, 2001 US-led War on Terror that mobilized discourses of fear to justify restrictive governmental policies, scholars pointed to both how fear was used (Lind and Williams 2013), but also how fear was experienced, resisted, and practiced in everyday life (Pain 2009). Research on immigration and border enforcement in particular has highlighted both how discourses of fear are mobilized to justify exclusion immigration and border enforcement practices (Bigo 2002; Mountz and Hiemstra 2014), as well as how which individuals and communities experience these practices (Williams and Boyce 2013).

More recently, scholars of immigration and border enforcement have drawn on emerging work in the field of affective governmentality to address how state policies require and/or produce affective attachments in order to shape the conduct of particular populations. Bissenbakker's (2019) analysis of family reunification policies in Denmark argues that "attachment requirements" in Danish immigration law work to orient migrants away from family as the main axis of belonging and instead towards the state (see also Jeholm and Bissenbakker

2019). In this context, immigrants must demonstrate an affective attachment to the Danish state to gain legal access and belonging is, in turn, becomes a juridical tool through which legal rights and territorial access are regulated. Scholars also consider how affective attachments are mobilized and circulated to compel sympathy for particular immigrant populations, such as trafficking victims or child migrants. These circulations, mediated through and co-constituted by particular cultural ideologies, producing differential access to national territory (Nielsen and Myong 2019; Leser and Pates 2019). Taken collectively, recent inquiry into the affective and emotive dimensions of border and immigration enforcement points to “how the construction, policing and maintenance of borders increasingly occur[s] through the structuring and production of emotion or ‘affects’” (Bissenbakker and Myong 2019, 418).

Drawing on these insights, we examine how particular framings of the family and familial relationships are mobilized to create PICs that aim to affect migration decisions through the strategic targeting and invocation of particular affective attachments and emotional reactions. We extend examinations of the relationship between family formations, familial ideologies, and border enforcement to illustrate how the family is mobilized as a tool of enforcement through affective and emotional messages of familial loss, guilt, shame, and responsibility. The family, we show, is not only affected by enforcement but actively mobilized to affect migration-related decisions and trends.

Public information campaigns: mobilizing affective deterrence in the US and Australia

Public information campaigns (PICs) have been part of enforcement strategies in the Global North since the 1990s. Developed across national contexts, PICs aim to deter irregular migration by increasing awareness of the legal, physical, and emotional consequences of failed

migration attempts. While most often financed directly or indirectly by border enforcing states, PICs are often developed or distributed in partnership with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to spread deterrence messages into spaces of daily life (e.g., schools, community centers, homes) in migrant sending communities and spaces of transit. For instance, in the 1990s the IOM supported European campaigns advertising the risks of migration in Romania (1992-1996), Albania (1992-1995) and Ukraine (1998) (Musrò 2019). Across these national contexts, the use of PICs has emerged alongside increasingly harsh border enforcement tactics, such as walling, detention, and externalization of enforcement into third countries. PICs, as Oeppen (2016, 9) notes, are popular as they “allow governments to be seen to be doing something to control their borders whilst still maintaining a humanitarian image.” Despite the prevalence globally, PICs are a relatively understudied aspect of border enforcement and migration management, with existing analyses focusing primarily on the ethical concerns regarding the use of PICs (Brekke and Thorbjørnsrud 2019), the framing of migrants and borderscapes (Musrò 2019; Watkins 2017); and the impact of campaigns (Browne 2015). Some research has pointed to the emotional and affective dimensions of PICs—such as Vammen’s (2021) discussion of how PICs work to shape aspirations among potential migrants—but how ‘the family’ is mobilized as an emotive and affective tool has not yet been examined.

This paper draws on research funded by the US National Science Foundation (Award XXXXX) that examines the development and implementation of PICs by the US and Australian governments between 1990 and 2018. The research uses mixed qualitative methods to understand the development, implementation, and impact of PICs as a technology of border enforcement and how the mobilization of PICs rework the geographies of border enforcement

and state sovereignty globally. Material for the case studies was collected through the development of an archive (over 1,000 files) of campaign materials, government documents, and media reports and supplemented by secondary source materials. Collection occurred through online research of government documents, Hansard (Australia) and Congressional (US) records, evaluations and other documents produced by the contractors hired to create campaign materials, national and international media coverage; Freedom of Information requests were filed in both national contexts to acquire additional governmental documents. Key informant interviews were also conducted with individuals involved in the development and implementation of campaigns.

We uploaded the data to a qualitative analysis software program (AtlasTI), and thematically coded all written and visual data. We coded and analyzed campaign materials to trace how the family was mobilized in campaign materials, the emotional discourses and affects being circulated (e.g., fear, love, shame, guilt) and the targets of campaign messages. Coding revealed not only the centrality of ‘the family’ as a message, but underlying logics as far as *how* family messages were articulated. While project PIs developed the initial coding structure, our research team also included three graduate research assistants who worked together and with PIs to refine the codebook and interpret the data. Analysis occurred iteratively, as descriptive codes progressed into analytic codes that associated family with different types of affective messaging (see e.g. Cope 2005). In the following sections, we provide summaries of key findings from each site.

US: Redistributing Responsibility, Hindering Mobility

In the US context, the earliest public information campaign was a small-scale effort by agents in the Tucson Sector of enforcement in the mid-1990s. At this time, agents pooled

resources to create simple fliers documenting the physical dangers of unauthorized migration attempts that they then distributed in migrant shelters and low-cost hotels on the Mexican side of the border (Williams 2020). Starting in the early 2000s, PICs were adopted as an agency-wide strategy and independent contractors assisted in the production of high-quality multi-media materials include songs featuring popular musicians, mini-documentaries, traveling interactive exhibits, social media messages, and print ads (personal communication, July 2021). According to individuals involved in the development of PICs in the 1990s through the 2010s, the institutionalization of PICs as a border enforcement strategy was compelled by increasing migrant deaths along the border and political pressure to do something to address the deaths.

Between 1990 and 2018 13 PICs targeting potential migrants were created by or involving US agencies (Border Patrol; Customs and Border Protection; Department of Homeland Security; Department of State). A review of all campaigns identified three that utilized ‘the family’ as a key messaging framework. These campaigns are: No Más Cruces en la Frontera (2004-2013); the Dangers Campaign (2013-2016); and Nuestra Patria, Nuestro Futuro (2016-2017) (see Table 1 for additional information). Analyses of campaign materials from these three campaigns illustrate that despite shifts in who is targeted over time (i.e., migrants themselves, parents, mothers), the campaigns consistently work to produce emotional and affective attachments grounded in familial responsibility and associated feelings of guilt, loss, and grief.

Table 1. US Campaigns Evaluated

Year	Campaign name	Types of selected materials	Target geographic audience of selected materials
2004-13	No Más Cruces en la Frontera	Posters/billboards, videos, songs, interactive exhibits, social media posts	Locations: Mexico (Michoacan, Zacatecas, Jalisco, Guerrero, Guanajuato, Chiapas, Puebla, Veracruz, Estado de Mexico), US (LA, Atlanta, McAllen, Laredo (TX), El Paso, Tucson/PHX, Yuma, San Diego, Chicago, Las Vegas, Houston), Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador
2013-16	Dangers Campaign/Dangers Awareness Campaign	Video, songs, radio announcements, posters/billboards, social media	Locations: Guatemala; El Salvador; Honduras, Mexico (Chiapas, Veracruz, Tabasco, Oaxaca, US (Houston, Los Angeles, NYC, Miami, DC)

2016-17	Nuestra Patria, Nuestro Futuro	Videos, radio announcements, Print, Songs, Website, social media posts	Locations: Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador
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The first large-scale PIC implemented by the US was the No Más Cruces in la Frontera (NMC) campaign, launched in 2004. A variety of campaign materials were produced including migracorridos (i.e., migration ballads), mini-documentaries, public service announcements, and print and social media ads. While the family plays a more minor role in this campaign, how the family enters into campaign materials is telling. While many of the NMC campaign materials focus on the physical dangers of unauthorized migration attempts, using images of bodily decay and narratives of death, sexual assault, and kidnapping to compel feelings of fear among potential migrants, materials that mobilize familial narratives and messages center the impact death and disappearance can have on those left behind. For example, in a series of mini-documentaries, the families of migrants who lost their lives during migration attempts reflect on the factors motivating migration and the impact a death or disappearance has had on the family and loved ones left behind. In one documercial, an elderly woman reflects on when her daughter migrated 20 years earlier. The mother describes how her daughter needed to go to the US and couldn't take her children, but she would send money and one day return for them; however she never returned and has not been heard from since. One of the migrant woman's grown sons reflects on this time: "My sister was one and a half and my brother was two and a half or three and a half. We were babies. We needed love, care, and parenting that a mom gives." The daughter then appears, tears running down her face, as she says: "I really need to see her and know that she's alright. And to hug her. To feel the hug of a mother." The grown children recount how they experienced physical and emotional abuse at the hands of the family members

they were left with. The video ends with speculation around what became of the mother—did she die? Did she fall into prostitution? Why didn't she ever contact her children? The son closes the piece in saying that while others have urged him to migrate, he can't see himself leaving his family. Instead, he works hard to get ahead because it seems foolish to risk your life and not think of the consequences for your family and children.

In this video, familial pain is centered, used to dissuade migration attempts through a tale of unmet promises and the unintended consequences on one's children. In this context, the grief of those left behind is mobilized to tether potential migrants to their home communities by highlighting the more-than-individual consequences of unauthorized migration attempts. In highlighting the impact on children and family members left behind, discourses and ideologies of maternal responsibility are recast to undermine desires to migrate as the potentiality of disappearance or death are rendered more harmful than persevering through the challenges that exist 'at home'. Individual migration decisions become the locus and cause of familial harm, obscuring the central role structural inequities play in creating harm. By centering the potentiality of familial pain and suffering caused by failed migration attempts, PICs work to recast and redistribute responsibility for the pain experienced by children and family members onto individual migrants and the decisions they make.

While the familial pain caused by disappearance or death during migration attempts is well-documented (Crocker, Reineke, and Ramos Tovar 2021), the mobilization of familial pain and loss in NMC oversimplifies the reasons individuals migrate or how migration can effectively serve to remedy economic and other hardships. Instead, by focusing on unmet promises and the physical and emotional pain experienced by children left behind, the drivers of migration (e.g., poverty, parental responsibility to provide) are drawn into question by grieving family members

who suggest that migration was not necessary, as all one needs is their family. The focus on the family and mobilization of familial guilt undermines discourses of necessary or respectable parental sacrifice. Instead, the migrant is recast as irresponsible, transforming migration attempts from a valiant (and necessary) effort to sacrifice in order to provide for one's family into an irresponsible pursuit that leaves loved ones worse off than they would be otherwise.

While NMCs mobilizes discourses, images, and narratives of familial loss and grief to target potential migrants themselves, the Dangers Campaign and Nuestra Patria, Nuestro Futuro instead targets family members, mothers in particular, as individuals who have power over the migration decisions of others—namely, their children.

Across video and audio materials created as part of the Dangers Campaign, a common message echoes: “That it may be easier for our kids to get legal status in the US today is completely false. That we are making them easy prey for coyotes, ‘la bestia’ and the desert is very true.” Here we see parents, often mothers, addressed directly as a female voice warns and uses the pronoun ‘we’ to tie responsibility for dangerous migration attempts to mothers. No longer are mothers or families more broadly simply those affected by the migration attempts gone astray, instead, they are targeted and positioned as having power over migration-decisions. Such materials work to compel mothers to question if they should support or enable migration attempts by highlighting the grief and guilt one will experience if a migration attempt goes awry and a child dies, is assaulted, or goes missing. The context in which the Dangers Campaign emerged is critical for understanding this shift. This campaign was released in 2014 in the midst of a ‘humanitarian crisis’ along the US-Mexico border in which tens of thousands of unaccompanied minors were being apprehended, leading US Customs and Border Protection to release the campaign which it described as: “an aggressive Spanish language outreach effort and

an urgent call to action to community groups, the media, parents and relatives in the US and Central America to save and protect the lives of migrant children attempting to cross the southwest border” (US CBP 2014). This campaign intentionally and explicitly speaks to parents and relatives as capable of and responsible for saving and protecting the lives of migrant children. Discourses of familial responsibility are reworked as parents are targeted once again, but this time not as the migrants themselves but as those who enable migration. This theme is further extended in the Nuestra Patria, Nuestro Futuro campaign.

The Nuestra Patria, Nuestro Futuro campaign was launched in 2016 and specifically focused on reducing migratory flows of children from the Northern Triangle of Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras). This campaign expands on the Dangers Campaign by explicitly targeting parents through emotional and affective messages that work to undermine the belief that migration will bring a better life for their children. For example, in a video entitled “The Sweater,” we see a mother positioned explicitly as having control over migration:

Kid: Mom told me to take good care of my sweater. She sewed on it her phone number and my dad’s number in the US.

Mom: Don’t lose it and don’t get lost.

Kid: She warned me that the trip would be very tough.

Mom: But you have to be strong.

Kid: She told me to obey Mr. Raul [a human smuggler].

Mom: Don’t be afraid, he knows everything and he will take care of you.

Kid: I told her I wanted to stay.

Mom: Everything will be ok; you’ll be better off over there.

Kid: Mom was wrong.

Alongside the narrative, we see the mother preparing the child to leave followed by a dramatic scene in which the child along with other migrants is chased down by men in a pick-up truck and seemingly abducted, compelling the viewer to recall high profile stories of migrant massacres. In this short video shown on television stations throughout the Northern Triangle (nuestrapatrianuestrofuturo.com), the mother is shown actively encouraging and enable their child to make a migration attempt, despite the child's reluctance, and resulting in the child's assumed death or violent abuse. Here the mother is framed as culpable for her child's death. In these materials, grief and guilt are woven together as mothers are compelled to reflect on what life would be like without their child and positioned as responsible for harms that come from illicit migration attempts. A common closing to audio and video materials speaks directly to parents: "A life of regrets won't bring your child back. Your home is here in [El Salvador/Guatemala/Honduras]." Here the possibility of regret and child loss are mobilized to reorient parents away from supporting their child in migrating as a means to access a better life and towards hindering their mobility in the interest of keeping them safe. The potentiality of regret undermines parental hope that in migration children can access safety and prosperity; in doing so, the responsible, caring, and loving parent is imagined as the parent who keeps their child safe by stopping unauthorized migration attempts.

In *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?*, Judith Butler (2009) argues that war and violence are made possible by framing particular lives as ungrievable or expendable (see also Agamben 1998). Scholarship has illustrated how migrant lives are continuously rendered disposable and ungrievable via border enforcement policies that are increasingly deadly (e.g. van Wichelen 2015; Hodge 2015). Perhaps counterintuitively, we see grief figure centrally in PICs as family members mourn the loss of loved ones or are pushed to contemplate the grief that may

come if migration is attempted. In centering familial grief, PICs simultaneously acknowledge migrant lives lost while further obscuring the injustices of border enforcement practices. By focusing on the grieving family and framing the cause of grief as personal and familial decisions, grief and guilt are rendered deeply personal and individual, not the outcome of uneven geopolitical and geoeconomic realities. Through the strategic circulation of emotional and affective messages of familial loss, grief, and guilt, the bodily and familial consequences of failed migration attempts are rendered issues of individual and familial decision-making and responsibility, invisibilizing the role neoliberal globalization and militarized border enforcement play in creating these forms of violence and loss. PICs use emotion and affect to tether people to place and hinder mobility by drawing the desires and motivations that compel migration attempts into question by centering the grieving family.

Australia: Shame and familial responsibility

Australia began to turn to PICs as a strategy of border deterrence in the late 2000s. The increasing use of PICs coincides with the politicization of asylum seekers arriving by boat, which increased after the politicized rescue of asylum seekers by the *M.V Tampa* in 2001. Here, we have collected materials from nine separate PICs between 2009 and 2020, which are listed in the chart below.

Table 2. Campaigns Evaluated, Australia, 2009-2020

Year	Campaign name	Types of selected materials	Target geographic audience of selected materials
2009-11	Malaysian PIC	Posters	Sri Lankans and Afghans transiting through Malaysia
2010	Don't be fooled by people smugglers	Video advertisements	Distributed in Tamil, Sinhalese, Pashto, Farsi, Arabic, Dari and English – locations unknown
2010-11	What will you lose	Videos	Distributed in Arabic, Tamil, English – locations unknown
2009-14	I know people smuggling is wrong	Evaluation reports	Indonesians who may be persuaded to help asylum seekers travel to Australia
2012-13	Hazara campaign	Videos	Hazara Afghans in Afghanistan and Pakistan
2013-14	New Rules	Audio	Wide distribution in multiple languages, locations unknown

2014-15	Don't throw your money in the water	Graphic novel, leaflet	Sri Lankans
2014-16	No Way	Graphic novel	Hazara Afghans in Afghanistan and Pakistan
2018-19	You will be turned back	Horoscope	Sri Lankans
2019-20	Zero chance	Videos	Vietnamese

Messages related to family occurred throughout these campaigns, across years, range of distribution sites, and potential target audiences. Yet they coalesced into clear themes. First was the association of family with possible loss. For instance, posters targeting potential Afghan and Sri Lankan asylum seekers in Malaysia featuring a woman stating “I lost my son.” Below, text states: “The people smuggler's boat sank half way. The boat was overcrowded, nobody survived... It's not worth the risk.” The grief of the mother is depicted through her facial expressions, and the bold text highlighting the death of her child. Another campaign features multiple stories of asylum seekers titled “People Smuggling: What will you lose?” It begins with the sights and sounds of water and simulated drowning. A man speaks in Arabic:

I lost my wife and son... On the fourth night, their boat sank. [Cries.] Now I have no wife, no peace of mind, and no companion. My daughter... because of the sorrow of losing her mother and brother she has not spoken a word since the day their boat sank. [Cries.]

Here, family conveys companionship, stability, and love. The loss of family members results in sorrow and grief, as the crying throughout this section demonstrates, as well as the notion of the daughter remaining silent since the loss of her mother and brother.

Yet the “What will you lose” video continues with two very different stories of asylum seekers and family. The first highlights the false promises of people smugglers. Another narrator describes family who “still have to pay my debt to the people smugglers.” A final narrator, this one a woman, explains that, “I should have kept the money I paid to the people smugglers for my family. That way it would have been better for all of us. Now I have lost everything. I am left with nothing... nothing! [Cries.]” The transition in this single video from stories that associate

family with grief and loss, to stories that highlight the debts and financial responsibilities associated with family illustrate the two central ways in which family messaging takes shape throughout these Australian campaigns. Although grief and loss are present, family is much more often associated with emotions such as shame, humiliation, and loss of respect. These PICs target not only the potential migrant, but the family and community members close to the migrant as well. Messaging that frames the family as connected to possible loss, but also to logics of financial responsibility and community respect, works to expand the logic of responsibility for migration decisions beyond the individual, to the family and community. These messages focus on the relationships linking the migrant to specific places, the family as a stand-in for all sorts of connections that bind people to their places of origin. Similar to the US PICs, these messages tether migrants to particular spaces, envisioning a stable home and community that many asylum seekers fleeing political violence and humanitarian catastrophes assuredly lack.

Other examples echo these themes, including two campaign videos targeting Hazara Afghan asylum seekers and their families. These videos highlighted the family's relationship to financial responsibility and the 'fixing' of migrants to imaginary spaces of home. The first enters a mud brick home into a room filled with women. The narrator describes her husband's trip to Australia, which ended with him in detention. Crying, she continues:

My husband's relatives said they would look after us but now we have neither money nor home. My husband sold everything to fund his journey, and we still had to borrow more. Now my husband is stuck there with increasing debt and uncertain future.

A similar advertisement features a group of men. The narrator describes the overconfidence of his son, who attempted to migrate to Australia. "I was fooled to believe his words," the narrator says, and explains how he also must pay back his son's loan. In both cases, families are depicted as financially ruined by the actions of the migrant and burdened by the debt they are forced to

take on because of the migrant's actions. The family is positioned as the tether to a particular home space, as having the ability to have prevented the migrant from leaving. The strongest emotions generated through these videos are regret and shame.

The production of regret and shame, as Ahmed (2004b) describes, do work in themselves. Shame, in particular, involves the deconstruction and reconstruction of embodied and social spaces, as people disengage or “turn away” from others who witness their shame (Ahmed 2004b, 103). Here, the work of shame is to prompt potential migrants to disengage with other migrants, “turning away” from the shame of the unsuccessful migration attempt, and reengage with their role as caregivers, family members, or good citizen-subjects of their countries of origin. Here, the shame of the unsuccessful migrant is paraded in front of family and friends, heightening the physicality of shame as an affective response – the failure is no longer a secret from the world. Shame not only pushes the potential migrant away from identifying with other migrants, but resolidifies other identifications; as Ahmed (2004b, 106) writes, “In shame, I expose to myself that I am a failure through the gaze of an ideal other.” Here, the ideal other is crafted through the imaginaries of the good family members who stayed in place, the responsible wife or the protective father, who have the ability to stop the potential migrant before their attempt shames the family. Thus, the shame generated through the PIC circulates, pushing away possible new identifications and cementing familiar bonds, working in the space between the real possibilities of mobility and the imagined safety of a sedentary life.

Shame works in similar ways in other geographic contexts. In an example from the ‘Don’t throw your money in the water’ campaign targeting Sri Lankan migrants, the constellation of financial responsibility, shame, and regret are depicted through illustrations. A comic storyboard tells the story of a foolish migrant attempting to travel to Australia against his

wife's wishes. The scene cuts to television news broadcasting that people attempting to reach Australia have been detained. The son turns to his mother, asking, "Mum, are they talking about Dad?" She gazes out the window to the sea, thinking, "All our hard-earned money in the water..." as far away, the father thinks, "If only I had listened!" (See Figure 1)

Figure 1. Excerpt from "Don't throw your money in the water storyboard," 2014-2015.

Shame here involves gendered notions of responsibility: while families like this one are positioned as having resources, the mother is responsible for using them correctly, and here we see the mother regretting the waste of her "hard-earned money." Shame circulates between the imaginary figure of the responsible mother embracing her financial and caretaking responsibilities, and the regretful mother who lost everything. Shame pushes migrants towards identifying with the idealized good family, who uses resources to build lives for themselves in Sri Lanka, rather than attempt to leave.

Across these different geographic contexts, a commonality emerges: in each case, the gendered ideologies underpinning these campaigns position the mother as the guardian of family resources. This finding mirrors research on transnational family separations, where the guilt caused by separation centers on the role of the mother, and how her caregiving preserves both her relationship with her own parents as well as the connections with her children (Baldassar 2015). In PICs, mothers are framed as caregivers but also as trustworthy, 'good' providers, the responsible saver of resources who is jeopardized by the actions of the potential migrant. In each case, whether the money ends up in the water or the provider ends up in prison, what emerges is the responsible mother figure, betrayed by the actions of the migrant. Not only is the gendered

emphasis on the mother as a figure of financial responsibility, but the mother is also positioned simultaneously as the person with the most to lose from migration decisions. Often migration forces women to take on new influential roles and make more collective decisions for the family, yet may also incur new risks, as domestic violence can accompany these changing gender roles (Freedman 2012).

Despite the different geographic contexts in which Australian PICs are deployed, they, like the US PICs, aim to produce affective responses that reorient migrants towards their familial responsibilities, using powerful emotions such as guilt, loss and shame to redirect migrants' aspirations. Affective messages push potential migrants to compare themselves with an imaginary idealized other, the more responsible mother or the good family role model, rather than the risky path they could take as a migrant. Targeting not only potential migrants but also their wider familial and community networks, these relational enforcement efforts frame the family as a node of shared responsibility for migration decisions. Yet in the push to reorient possible migrants towards their responsibilities as family members, what is consistently erased is the geographic, economic, and political context in which migrants make decisions. Everybody has a family, and a home, is the message, yet with that message is also the impression that every family, and every home, is alike. Thus, the focus on the family also depoliticizes the decision to migrate or seek asylum, rendering each migrants' decision a *personal* or *family* decision, rather than a decision taking place within a wider political context.

Discussion: guilt, shame, and the family

Analysis of PICs produced by the US and Australian government illustrate how the specter of the family and familial ideologies work to produce particular emotional and affective

attachments that aim to affect migration related decisions. In working through strategically crafted images, sounds, and narratives, PICs function as a form of affective governmentality. PICs mobilize feelings of grief, guilt, loss, and shame, redistributing responsibility for migration attempts gone awry onto individual migrants and families. In doing so, potential migrants are tethered to place and rendered immobile via the potentiality of causing familial grief, guilt, loss, and shame.

As Sara Ahmed (2004a, 117) argues, emotions “play a crucial role in the ‘surfacing’ of individual and collective bodies....[this argument] suggest that emotions are not simply ‘within’ or ‘without’ but that they create the very effect of the surfaces or boundaries of bodies and worlds.” Our analysis of PICs illustrates that emotions and affective attachments are mobilized to not only create individual and collective bodies, but to attach those bodies to particular territories. The family is mobilized as a vector of both love and responsibility that brings with it the potentiality of causing harm, grief, and shame. The positive attachments of providing for one’s family through migration are countered via images and sounds of grieving used to incite negative attachments. In framing migration-related tragedies and associated experiences of loss, grief, and guilt as resulting from individual and familial decisions, PICs work to (re)orient potential migrants towards home. Rather than contending with the political, economic, or life and death reasons that push individuals to migrate, PICs work to recast immobility as the responsible decision one makes in order to ensure the safety, security, and respectability of one’s family.

As Ahmed (2004a, 119) writes, “emotions *do things*...they align individuals with communities—a bodily space with social space—through the very intensity of their attachments”. In these PICs, affective and emotional attachments work to push migrants to ‘turn away’ from other migrants and to resolidify their identities as family members or caregivers.

Mothers emerge as subjects who have a special type of fiscal and bodily responsibility for the family and family members. Through the mobilization of potential guilt, grief, and shame, PICs urge potential migrants and their family members to identify more strongly with idealized imaginaries of ‘good’ parents, children, or community members who make ‘responsible’ decisions that maintain the physical and financial well-being of their families. Again, what gets erased is the context beyond the family unit or close community ties: by implying that families are the key sites of decision-making about migration choices, PICs obscure the wider political, social, and economic contexts in which migration decisions are made.

This analysis of PICs points to two larger points that we believe should prompt further study. First, PICs illustrate one way in which mechanisms of border enforcement are increasingly expansive, targeting individuals beyond those ‘on the move’. In both the US and Australian cases, we see examples of individuals beyond migrants themselves—e.g., mothers, parents—explicitly targeted. We describe such border enforcement strategies as *relational* in that they work through familial relationships and networks to shape migratory patterns; it is not the potential migrant per se that is the target of enforcement efforts, but their loved ones who are framed as having the power to both enable and foreclose migration attempts (see also, XXXX and XXXX forthcoming). More sustained inquiry into the way PICs (and other forms of contemporary border enforcement) function to expand the subjects and objects of enforcement is crucial for understanding the complex ways in which states attempt to govern transnational mobility and precisely who is targeted and affected by these efforts.

Secondly, the use of PICs focuses attention on the notion of migrants as grievable subjects. Building on insights developed by Butler (2006; 2009), scholars have explored how migrant become frames as non-grievable through state actions, media discourse, and

humanitarian response (e.g. Kovras and Robins 2016; Hodge 2015; van Wichelen 2015). This area of scholarship has begun to reflect upon the power of the migrant body – dead or alive – in reframing the humanity of migrants perceived to be ungrievable (Kovras and Robins 2016), how the notion of grievability is shaped by wider frameworks of humanitarianism and collective subjectivity (van Wichelen 2015), and how rendering of migrants as ungrievable could be contested (Mazzara 2020). PICs push us to extend arguments about grievability in new ways. Here, the grief and loss of migrants is foregrounded, yet framed in terms of individual or family decisions. Such strategies of affective messaging focused on individual loss erase the geopolitical, violent, and often deadly context in which potential migrants are making decisions, rendering migrants as grievable subjects only within particular geographic vacuums. Further study building on work such as Hodge (2015), which explores how visual and discursive discourses intervene to produce grievable or non-grievable subjects, would further examine the relationship between affective messaging and grievability.

The PICs analyzed here represent a diversity of representations and framings of the family and familial ideologies over time and space. This diversity is reflective of the tremendous amount of research, time, and investment that goes into producing PICs: each of the campaigns examined here is based on extensive market research carried out by private contractors in migrant sending communities in order to identify the particular framings of family that is most likely to impact decision-making among potential migrants. The messages circulated and the affective and emotional responses they aim to compel are not happenstance, but rather born from intensive strategizing and discussions between private contractors and border enforcement agencies. Through images and narratives of familial grief, guilt, and shame potential migrants are re-oriented away from the possibilities of mobility and tethered firmly to territory, while

simultaneously erasing the political, economic, or geographical context that shapes migration decisions.

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ⁱ Within this paper, we refer to both im/migrants and refugees, as the populations targeted by PICs encompass both people wishing to migrate for economic or political reasons as well as those who will be able to formally seek asylum. In general, we choose to use the terms im/migrant to refer to mobile people and only use the term 'refugee' where this legal category is actively relevant to the context under discussion. Through this use of terminology, we reject state-based attempts fragment the category of refugee (Crawley and Skleparis 2018; Zetter 2007) as the uncritical use of state categories to define people on the move reinforces the methodological nationalism that treats such categories as both definitive and legitimate.