

Title: Honneth's Theory of
Recognition: A More
Hospitable Asylum
Seeker Policy

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Abstract

Given the ongoing refugee crisis in Europe, the realities of asylum seeker policy outcomes are in the media almost every day, as is debate about what works and what does not. Policy directions in this space can have profound effects on those seeking help from the state.

This thesis critiques contemporary asylum seeker policy using Axel Honneth's theory of recognition as a basis for analysis. Honneth's theory challenges the contemporary securitisation of asylum seeker policy and suggests that justice based approaches alone are not sufficient in this space. Using Honneth's theory, the thesis imagines asylum seeker policy positions that are more hospitable, generous and caring compared to the status quo, without discounting the need for appropriate security for citizens.

As Honneth and his concept of recognition sit within the school of critical theory, the thesis incorporates a *Gesellschaftskritik* methodology, an approach that identifies societal behaviours that are damaging or morally questionable and offers alternatives that, it is hoped, will improve society. The critique focuses on three case studies of contemporary asylum seeker policy: the United States of America, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. These case studies were chosen because their asylum seeker policies show traits consistent with securitisation. Moreover, all three countries have the political stability, infrastructure and wealth to be more hospitable if the political will existed.

Statement

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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