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Editors' Introduction

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Editors' Introduction

Melanie O'Brien edited this Special Issue on Justice and the Prevention of Genocide. She was the the head of the 2017 IAGS Conference in Brisbane and also part of the GSP Editorial Team for more than three years. All members of the Editorial Board that have worked with her in the past are grateful for her contribution to the journal and the excellent work she has done on this special issue.

We wanted to briefly highlight that this Special Issue has a few components that do not quite fall within the issue's theme. However, these other submissions are well within the rubrics and topics we address in GSP, and therefore have been included in this publication.

We have added a full article by Emily Willard. Based on newly declassified documents, she has reanalyzed the withdrawal of UN Peacekeepers during the Genocide in Rwanda. It has been argued that the so-called Somalia syndrome (the catastrophic outcome of the US-intervention in Somalia in October 1993) led to the reluctance of the U.S. Government regarding its involvement in Rwanda. Willard, however, argues that the political actors decided on how to act in the Rwanda case before the Somali experience. Willard disentangles the many factors and actors and creates a better understanding of these rather complex political and organizational processes.

Field notes are about research practices and ideally discuss innovative approaches. In this sense, the paper of James Tyner, Andrew Curtis, Sokvisal Kimsroy, and Chhunly Chhay fits perfectly, as it constructs a geo-narrative account/analysis of the evacuation of Phnom Penh under the Khmer Rouge regime. The method featured, Spatial Video Geonarrative, confronts witnesses with filmed places of the event. This method "may trigger specific recollections and thereby contribute to a deeper, more nuanced understanding of previous experiences." We hope to initiate a discussion on the merits and weaknesses of such an approach.

Finally, Jolene Hansell's case note discusses how Eritrean nationals bring their claim against a Canadian company that operates in Eritrea before a Canadian court. The plaintiffs argue, "their treatment as laborers (...) violates customary international law prohibitions against forced labor." The paper sheds light on the complexities, but also on the possibilities to bring economic entities operating internationally to justice.

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