

**Wednesday 22 April 2015**

**Award given to book which says that tightening Europe's border controls doesn't stop illegal migration**

A book which argues that tightening Europe's border controls puts refugees in greater danger but doesn't stop illegal migration has won a major prize.

'Illegality Inc: Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe' was announced as the winner of the 2015 BBC-British Sociological Association Ethnography Award. The author, Dr Ruben Andersson, of the London School of Economics, will receive £1,000.

The award was announced at last week's British Sociological Association conference in Glasgow by Professor Laurie Taylor, the presenter of the BBC Radio 4 programme Thinking Allowed.

The book looks at the dangerous and desperate circumstances of the illegal migrants, who are frequently demonised as global pariahs. Dr Andersson focused on the Spanish section of Europe-African border and spoke to refugees, jailers, smugglers, journalists and policy-makers. He discovered that when border controls increase in one place the flow of migrant moves to another more dangerous route.

Two-thirds of the EU home affairs budget, amounting to billions of Euros, has been spent on trying to stop migration. Despite this illegal migration increases, as does the numbers dying in boat tragedies.

Professor Taylor described the book, published by the University of California Press, as "excellent – a very fine piece of sociological research."

He told the BSA conference that the judges felt the book was "an outstanding entry because of its truly original take on the subject of migration, its perceptive analyses of the self-perpetuating nature of migration and its success in capturing the views and attitudes of those controlling and those controlled. He uncovers a regime of controls which is out of control – a solution to illegal migration which only creates more illegal behaviour."

The BBC has produced an interactive video about migration at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/b2NpfdLqhTr5r1z1Y0s0G/do-tighter-border-controls-lead-to-increased-migrant-illegality>

- This is the second year of the Ethnography award. This year's judges were: Professor Taylor; Professor Bev Skeggs, Goldsmiths, University of London; and Dr Coretta Phillips and Professor Adam Kuper, London School of Economics.

The winning book was chosen from a shortlist of seven. For more details see:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/HwtN1fMVDNFf64qJ680ZFy/7-things-we-learned-from-the-ethnography-awards-shortlist>

**For more information, please contact:**

Tony Trueman

British Sociological Association  
Tel: 07964 023392  
[tony.trueman@britsoc.org.uk](mailto:tony.trueman@britsoc.org.uk)

**Notes**

The British Sociological Association's charitable aim is to promote sociology. The BSA is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England and Wales. Company Number: 3890729. Registered Charity Number 1080235 [www.britsoc.co.uk](http://www.britsoc.co.uk) The British Sociological Association's annual conference took place at Glasgow Caledonian University from 15 to 17 April 2015. Around 800 research presentations were given.