

International student safety: sharing responsibility in a global context

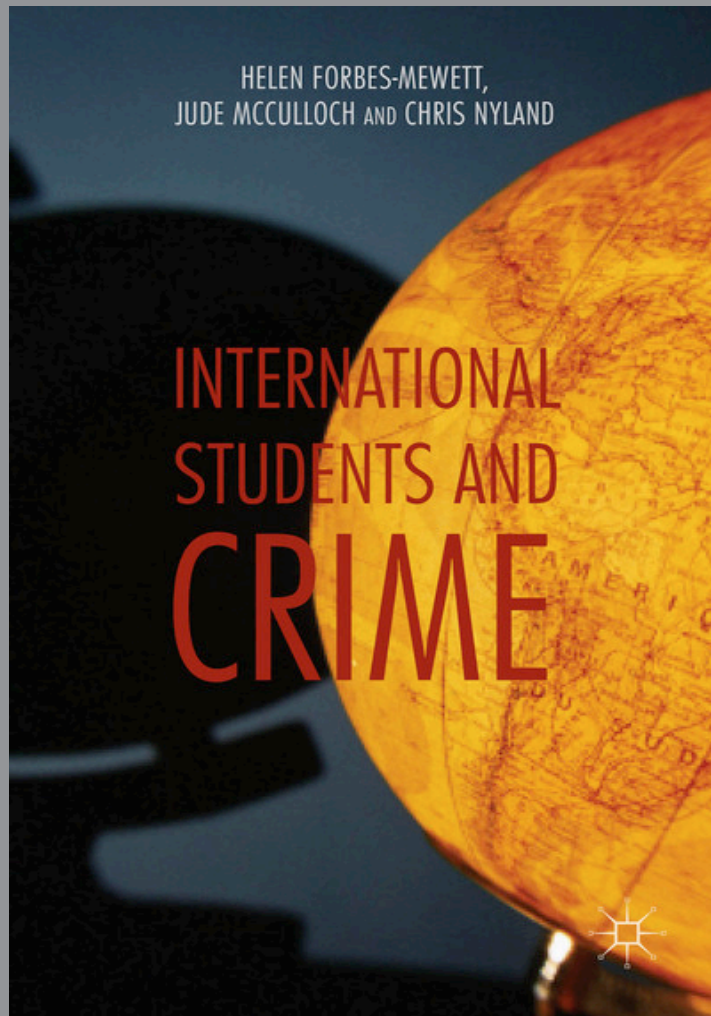


The study

- ARC Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship
- 150 in-depth interviews with US, UK and Australian participants
- International students & key stakeholders

Publication outcomes

- Responsibility, in Arrigo (ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Surveillance, Security, and Privacy*, Sage: Thousand Oaks. (Forbes-Mewett 2016)
- Identity, in Arrigo and Golson (eds) *Encyclopedia of Criminal Justice Ethics*, Sage (Forbes-Mewett 2014)
- International Students and Gender-Based Violence, *Violence Against Women*. (Forbes-Mewett and McCulloch 2015)
- **New book: *International Students and Crime*** (Forbes-Mewett et al, Palgrave Macmillan 2015)



Chapter 10 Responsibility

The chapters

1. Background
2. Comparing Australian, UK and US international education markets
3. Victims (vulnerability)
4. Perpetrators
5. Non-violent crime
6. Serious and violent crime
7. Gendered crime
8. Organised crime
9. *Staying safe from crime
- 10. Responsibility**
11. Conclusion

Responsibility

- “Responsibility in many cases concerning US colleges and universities parallels to some extent with the UK but is less similar to that of Australia.”
- Forbes-Mewett, H. (2016) ‘Responsibility’, in B.A Arrigo (ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Surveillance, Security, and Privacy*, Sage: Thousand Oaks. (Forthcoming)

Who is responsible?

	US	UK	Australia
Students	●	●	●
Parents	●		
Education institutions	●	●	●
Police	●	●	
Government		●	●

Shared responsibility

- Australia – responsibility believed to rest with the individual student as well as education institutions and governments
- UK – responsibility believed to rest with students, education institutions, police and governments
- US – commonly believed that students and their parents, universities and police should be responsible

Comparing local & international students

Students	Local	International
US	Live away from home	Live away from home
UK	Live away from home	Live away from home
Aust	Live at home	Live away from home

Comparing support structures

Students	Support for local and international students
US	Hand holding
UK	Hold one hand
Aust	Independent approach

The US

- All students considered vulnerable
- The *Clery Act* mandates the disclosure of information about crime and policies to address student vulnerability
- A ‘hand-holding’ approach
- Govt not held responsible



Safety of international students

- “...we’re trying to get the message out that it is a shared responsibility”

(University Chief of Public Service, US)

Shared responsibility in the US

- “I don’t like to separate out the international students.... Students, regardless of whether you’re international or domestic ... certainly the university has a responsibility to help do that [keep them safe]. The student themselves have a responsibility to help do that. The community, the city police have a responsibility to help do that. We all sort of share in the process”. (Director of University International Services, US)

University Public Safety Officer, US

- “Well I think we all have a responsibility to do that. At [the University] we say that public safety is everybody’s mission. You know ... faculty staff, students, everybody has a certain level of responsibility for their own safety and for the safety of their colleagues.... You know, in America after 9/11 there’s an expression we use, ‘If you see something say something’. So if we all take collective responsibility ... here it’s the police department, strangers, you know, we’re a community, the city is a community, the university is a community. We all have a responsibility to make our environment safe is the philosophy that we espouse here”.

University Chief of Public Safety, US

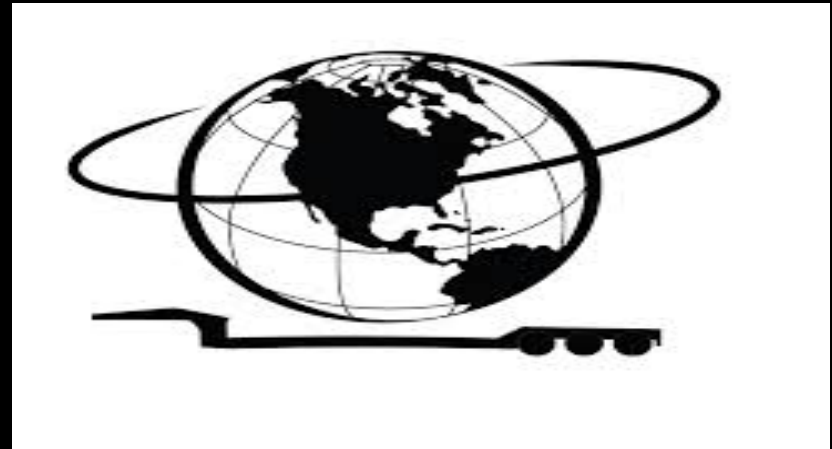


- “I’m trying to make sure we understand it’s a shared responsibility. Parents can’t just drop them off and then leave. They’ve got to understand that they’re still their kids, and just don’t look at and blame me for the dumb things that your child has done. Or look to me to stop them from doing dumb things. You got to work with me to make that happen. Students, you got to understand you have a responsibility....”

Turkish International student , US

- “The university gave a lot of information about daily crimes. Almost every day there was a report ... probably the issue was exaggerated. I mean I come from Istanbul and if they started reporting what happens in Istanbul every day people would go crazy. No one was killed (in the US reports), they were about petty crimes, mostly theft and some with assault, you know, some physical attack that doesn't involve guns”.

- Similar views expressed from the UK
- Students should be informed about safety issues



Shared responsibility in the UK

- “I think it’s a joint responsibility. I think it’s joint between the universities, the police, the Home Office, the student unions. I think anybody who has some input with international students has a responsibility to make sure that they’re aware of their vulnerability and not overstating it, but just to make sure that they have the knowledge in which to make informed decisions about their own safety”. (Police Constable, Student Liaison Officer, UK)

International Student Advisor, UK

- “I think it’s a collective responsibility really.... I mean a lot of institutions will have three or four day residential inductions and they’ll go to the police [to] talk about things like crime and protecting your belongings and stuff”.

Senior Police Officer, UK

- “I think there’s a shared responsibility. I think the Foreign Commonwealth Office, I mean whatever represents that in other countries, should take responsibility for inviting young people, particularly, where they’re going, what the pitfalls are. Don’t expect them to buy a Lonely Planet guide. Give them something in their hand saying, ‘These are the issues’. I think the university or the college that is taking money from that individual has a responsibility. That perhaps needs to be more enforced than arbitrary....”

Shared responsibility in Australia

- “Well, because they are on a student visa, then automatically the people that are responsible are the university. So the education providers, the Federal Government the Victorian Police.... Because a student is attached to a course at a particular institution in order to remain in Australia on their student visa, it should be that particular institution, which means they’d be studying within a state, so then it should be the State Government as well”. (Student Rights Officer, Australia)

Senior Police Officer, Australia

- “One of the things we’ve certainly advocated to the tertiary institutions is to make sure that their agents, offshore, don’t paint rosy pictures, which will never be met when the students actually arrive. We want an honest ‘fair dinkum’ [realistic] appraisal of what the students can expect, and the sort of areas in which they need to take, no longer necessarily geographical areas but the sort of things and behaviours where they need to take care”.

Columbian international student, Australia

- “I would say that’s between the government and the schools. I think it is the government allowing these schools, because anyone can open a school, I could be opening a school for international students and ... just be getting their money. So there should be more regulation and more control on what these people are doing with schools....”

Individual responsibility

- Students in the US not thought to be willing to take precautionary safety measures (hence the hand-holding approach)
- US took a 'serious' approach to safety and Australia thought to be more 'casual' (Australian International Student, US)
- UK presented an 'in between' model

Australia

Independent
'no-hands'
approach



American International student, Australia

- “I don’t think I’ve ever heard anything about the safety of the [Australian University] to be honest. But I guess it’s in the middle of the city and it’s more ‘chilled’. I don’t know, it seems more casual.... I mean we didn’t have police officers speaking to us at orientation and all these warnings and stuff. It was just ‘look after yourself, you’re a big kid’”.

Indian-American international student, Aust

- “I think first is yourself. You need to, you know, you need to take responsibility. When you come here you’re an adult ... [so] take your own responsibility, don’t go out on the streets at like three o’clock at night at Dandenong Station or something like that. If you’re doing that you are being stupid, you are calling your death upon yourself. You know, just don’t do it”.

The remaining sections of Chapter 10

- Responsibility of universities
- Responsibility of police
- Responsibility of government
- Responsibility to disclose incidence of crime:
The Clery Act

Important note:

For further information about this study including referencing details for the contents of this presentation please contact :

Dr Helen Forbes-Mewett

School of Social Sciences

Monash University

Helen.ForbesMewett@monash.edu

Thank you



Helen.ForbesMewett@monash.edu