

HIST 231 – Asylum for Mankind: US Refugee History in Global Perspective

Tuesday/Thursday, 12:00-1:30pm

Spring 2019

(Note: Preliminary syllabus, subject to change)

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Office Hours: Monday 3:00-4:00pm; Thursday 11:00am-12:00pm; by appointment

This course examines the history of refugee resettlement in the United States. In 1776, before the United States was an independent nation, political thinker Thomas Paine heralded the country as an “asylum for mankind,” a place where any individual might find refuge from oppression. More recently, the US has adopted a decidedly less welcoming view on whether refugees and asylum seekers should be able to enter the country. Students in this course will examine how and why the United States has struggled to live up to its national mythology as a safe haven on the world stage in the past and in the present. Readings will explore how concepts of refuge in law, society, and political thought have changed over time and place, and how those concepts shape refugee policy today. Our aim will be to better understand the role of the United States in a global system of refugee regulation in which governments have historically welcomed, excluded, and created refugees.

Several questions will drive our exploration of US refugee history, including: How have understandings of moral and legal obligations to accommodate refugees changed over time and place? What is the difference between refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced peoples, and migrants? What does it mean for the United States — a nation that legalized slavery and sanctioned the dispossession of Indigenous peoples — to be a place of refuge? What role do nation-states play in creating and perpetuating refugee migrations? How do domestic and international political concerns shape refugee policies? In addition to texts composed by refugees and historical scholarship, we will read and discuss a range of interdisciplinary work written from the perspective of settler colonial theory; anthropology; sociology; and critical race and ethnic studies.

Examples of course themes and prospective readings include:

Theoretical and Methodological Foundations

Peter Gatrell, Introduction to *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)

Liisa Malkki, “Refugees and Exiles: From ‘Refugee Studies’ to the National Order of Things,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 24 (1995): 495-523

Yên Lê Espiritu, "Toward a Critical Refugee Study: The Vietnamese Refugee Subject in US Scholarship," *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*, Vol. 1., No. 1-2 (2006): 410-433

Aristide Zolberg, "The Formation of New States as Refugee-Generating Process," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, Vol. 467 (1983): 24-38

Linda K. Kerber, "The Stateless as the Citizen's Other: A View from the United States," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 112, No. 1 (2007): 1-34

Antecedents

Benjamin Gray, "Exile, Refugee and the Greek Polis: Between Justice and Humanity" (190-219); Peter J. Heather, "Refugees and the Roman Empire" (220-242); Susanne Lachenicht, "Refugees and Refugee Protection in the Early Modern Period" (261-281), *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (2017)

Karl Shoemaker, *Sanctuary and Crime in the Middle Ages, 400-1500* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011)

Refugees and Exiles in Colonial and Early America

Marilyn C. Baseler, *Asylum for Mankind": America, 1607-1800* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998)

Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011)

Kit Candlin, "The Expansion of the Idea of the Refugee in the Early-Nineteenth Century Atlantic World," *Slavery and Abolition*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (2009): 521-544

Harvey Amani Whitfield, *Blacks on the Border: The Black Refugees in British North America, 1815-1860* (Lebanon, NH: University of Vermont Press, 2006)

Settler Colonialism and Native Americans as Refugees

Waziyatawin Angela Wilson, "Decolonizing the 1862 Death Marches," *American Indian Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 1/2 (2004): 185-215

Lorenzo Veracini, Introduction to *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)

Patrick Wolfe, "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native," *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (2006): 387-409

Richard White, "Refugees: A World Made of Fragments," in *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)

Christopher D. Havemen, *Rivers of Sand: Creek Indian Emigration, Relocation, and Ethnic Cleansing in the American South* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016)

John P. Bowes, *Exiles and Pioneers: Eastern Indians in the Trans-Mississippi West* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007)

Slavery and Emancipation

Cheryl Jennifer LaRoche, "Rethinking African American Migration," in *Free Black Communities and the Underground Railroad* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014)

Rebecca J. Scott and Jean M. Hebrard, *Freedom Papers: An Atlantic Odyssey in the Age of Emancipation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012)

Chandra Manning, *Troubled Refuge: Struggling for Freedom in the Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2016)

Philip S. Foner, ed. *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1999)

Charles Blockson, *The Underground Railroad: First-Person Narratives of Escapes to Freedom in the North* (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1987)

American Citizens, American Refugees

Sanora Babb, *On the Dirty Plate Trail: Remembering the Dust Bowl Refugee Camps* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007)

Thomas A. Krainz, "Fleeing the Big Burn: Refugees, Informal Assistance, and Welfare Practices in the Progressive Era," *Journal of Policy History*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (2012): 405-431.

Henry Hill Collins, Jr., *America's Own Refugees: Our 4,000,000 Homeless Migrants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1942)

Refuge as a Human Right

Laura Madokoro, "Written Out: The 1951 Convention and Refugees in Asia," in *Elusive Refuge: Chinese Migrants in the Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016)

Mimi Thi Nguyen, *The Gift of Freedom: War, Debt, and Other Refugee Passages* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012)

Stephen R. Porter, *Benevolent Empire: US Power, Humanitarianism, and the World's Dispossessed* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017)

Refugees and the Cold War

Carl Bon Tempo, *Americans at the Gate: The United States and Refugees during the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008)

Jana K. Lipman, "A Refugee Camp in America: Fort Chaffee and Vietnamese and Cuban Refugees, 1975-1982," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (2014): 57-87

Aihwa Ong, *Buddha is Hiding: Refugees, Citizenship, the New America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003)

The Global Refugee "Crisis"

A. Naomi Paik, "Abolitionist Futures and the US Sanctuary Movement," *Race and Class*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (2017): 3-25

Harald Bauder, "Sanctuary Cities: Policies and Practices in International Perspective," *International Migration*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (2017): 174-187

Alexander Betts and Paul Collier, *Refuge: Rethinking Refugee Policy in a Changing World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017)

Maria Cristina García, *The Refugee Challenge in Post-Cold War America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017)