

Rider University
Department of Political Science

Politics of Exile, Asylum and Diaspora
POL 367
Fall 2014

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If ever time was a metaphysical notion that was it: when good and evil were separated by a man-made frontier. Any frontier is man-made, and yet, on one side people died, while on the other they went on living as though the others didn't die.

Elie Wiesel

Course Objectives:

Amidst the broader trends of international politics that address the growing flow of goods, capital, and information across state borders, the movement of people is a permanent and expanding feature. However, central to the notion of the political identity of the nation-state is the ability to regulate the entry of non-citizens. The regulatory power of the nation-state to control its borders is at least threatened by the migratory movements of people. People are driven from their homes by conditions of war, economic difficulty, or environmental disaster. Millions of people migrate permanently each year, and almost 35 million are currently forcefully displaced. At present there are about 10 million refugees and seek political asylum worldwide. The vast majority of refugees are women and children—this is the hidden truth of the post-Cold War order, huge numbers of displaced women and children.

These numbers are significant, particularly since the general movement heads in one direction, toward advanced industrial states, mainly Western Europe and the United States. About 42 million legal and illegal immigrants live in the United States. However, since 2008 more than 2 million immigrants were deported from U.S. shores. Immigrants account for 12 percent of America's total population, the highest percentage in 70 years. Critics warn that if current trends continue, by the end of this decade the immigrant share of the total population will surpass the all time high of 14.8 percent reached in 1890.

Understanding immigration and refugee issues in this interdependent world will help us to gain insights into the workings of political, economic, and social forces both within receiving and sending states as well as the international regime which regulates these movements. The topics addressed in this course go beyond simple models of utility and efficiency since the questions of immigration and political asylum are often deeply emotional issues for societies; the issue also has a significant moral dimension.

Conduct: The success of this course depends entirely on your continued and sustained participation. Therefore, I ask that you be agile participants and intervene as often as possible in class discussion. Moreover, students are evaluated on a daily basis for their individual contributions to classroom discussions. Questions and/or comments on readings, lecture material and related current events qualify as useful participation. Needless to say, I expect you to complete all assigned readings **before** each class meeting, so that you are familiar with the idioms, theories, and controversies with which we are dealing. Failure to attend class, of course, results in the inability to participate in classroom discussions; hence absenteeism is the most direct way to a diminished final grade of the course.

Central to our work are the texts and accompanying readings and activities. From this departure point we will investigate each subject through discussion periods and analytical essays. Again, it is crucial that you do the readings for the class on time and be prepared to participate. My lectures and the class discussions will very frequently stray from the reading material. This is another reason why your class attendance is very important.

Texts: The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore:

Stephen Castles and Mark Miller (2009), *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, Third Edition, The Guilford Press.

Chris Cleave (2010) *Little Bee* Simon & Shuster.

And additional handouts will be distributed throughout the course.

Requirements: Grading will be based on a short paper (10%), an in class midterm examination (20%) on October 30, one discussant work plus handout (15%), a term paper (20%) of approximately 10 pages, the presentation (20%) of your research findings, and on your participation (15%).

1. **Short paper**: The short paper will be about 4 to 5 pages long (typed, double spaced, 12-point font). It will be a well written summary of your Oral History project and is due on September 25. For the project you are required to find a person who immigrated to the US. This can be a parent or grandparent, a teacher, a colleague, an employee at Rider University, a person living in Lawrenceville or in your hometown. You are expected to interview the person and write a short paper about this experience. The best papers will be well-written but can be subjective and creative. They can focus either on a particular aspect of your recorded Oral History or provide a comprehensive summary of the interview experience. In either case please attach a copy of your field notes to your paper. Late papers will be penalized one half grade (0.5 on the four-point scale) per day late.

2. **Midterm**: The midterm exam is the only in class exam in this course. It will be administered on October 30, and will cover more than one half of the course material. The exam will include short essays and identification questions. Specific information on

the content of the exam will be announced as we approach the exam. (If you have approval for personal accommodations in exams or other assignments, please let me know in advance.)

3. **Discussant work:** Almost each week students are required to discuss the week's readings in class. Individual students will sign up for discussant work by the end of the second week of classes. As the discussant, you will read the weekly reading and come to class prepared to ask 6-7 questions to stimulate a discussion. At minimum your questions should recapture the authors' arguments and how the issues covered in the readings are/are not relevant for the class lectures and ongoing current events. Your discussion leadership accounts for 15% of your final grade.

4. **Research paper and presentation:** The 10-page paper is due on November 25. It accounts for 20% of your grade and your presentation of your research is another 20% of your grade. I expect to meet with each of you regularly to discuss your topic, see how the paper is shaping up, review drafts, and to explore ideas and leads.

You have three deadlines concerning your paper and presentation topic:

- for topic approval September 30,
- your research paper is due November 25
- your presentation of the research during the last days of class. Specific sign-up sheets will be circulated as the time approaches.

The Research Project:

Do not feel limited to current events or the latest information. Papers exploring immigration history or papers using a cut-off date in the recent past are acceptable. Each member of the class is required to write a research paper, using PRIMARY source materials where appropriate and available, as well as SECONDARY sources and present your findings to the class in December. You are expected to make extensive use of the library. A semester also gives you enough time to write requests for information and material from governments, organizations, agencies, and groups. Each student will choose a **Refugee/Migrant Group**, a **Policy Issue**, **Policy Topic** or **Refugee/Immigration Behavior** for intensive study. In order to make the topic more manageable, it is suggested that you restrict your paper to a specific issue or group.

You are welcome to choose topics based on your academic interests or your personal background-- refugee camps; refugee behavior; or refugee or immigration policy of a particular country. Papers could deal with:

1. a refugee, migrant or IDP **Group**--either an in-depth study of a group (recent or historical) or of a selected aspect of a refugee group's experience. For example: Sudanese refugees; Sudanese refugees in Chad; mental health of Sudanese in refugee camps;

internally displaced Sudanese in Darfur; voluntary repatriation of Sudanese refugees; EU's policy toward Sudan; Sudanese refugees in the US.

Keep in mind that there have been not only immigrants to the US but also refugees from the US: colonists fled from the Revolution [to Canada and England]; the Civil War [to Mexico and Brazil]; Vietnam and the 2003 Iraq war [to Canada and Sweden]; as well as the violent displacement of indigenous groups such as the Cherokee Trail of Tears.

2. a particular **Theme**--refugee camps; asylum and refuge of women; sexual violence against refugee women; triple discrimination against female immigrants; emergency assistance; voluntary agencies; voluntary repatriation; durable solutions; sanctuary; immigration networks and household structures; the return of migrants; religious refugees; xenophobia; "ethnic cleansing"; the use of the military in interventions; humanitarian intervention; refugee aid and development; unaccompanied minors; elderly immigrants and social welfare; Fortress Europe.

3. **Policy Issue**--the role of UNHCR or UNDP in refugee assistance; foreign policy and refugees; promoting voluntary repatriation; assistance to vulnerable groups; root causes of refugee problems/ immigration waves; detention/ deterrence of asylum seekers; government programs for resettlement; the expansion of the EU and immigration; EU citizenship and immigration; American immigration reform; ethnic enclaves; criteria for accepting refugees; tragic choices: resettlement or overseas aid; prevention and protection; temporary asylum; aid to the poorer host counties; humanitarian intervention.

4. **refugee/immigration behavior**: the decision to flee; survivor's guilt; refugee adaptation; the "dependency" syndrome; the refugee experience; violence and trauma: for women, for children; post-traumatic stress disorder; economic adjustment of refugees; refugee mental health; for immigrants: socio-economic downward mobility; ethnic differences in adaptation; generational problems.

Topics must be approved by September 30. Bring a **typed topic and thesis statement** to class--this can be as brief as two or three paragraphs; however, it is best if you give me everything you know or think you know, at this time (including references). It can be sketchy, outline form; but let me know where you hope to go so that I can provide better advice and direction. Final Drafts of papers are DUE on NOVEMBER 25. No late papers will be accepted.

PAPERS MUST BE TYPED WITH FOOTNOTES and a BIBLIOGRAPHY. Papers should be APPROXIMATELY 10 PAGES IN LENGTH--it is almost impossible for 6-8 pages to get a 4.0. A PROFESSIONAL paper--well written, with complete research, bibliography, spelling corrected, grammatical--is demanded. (Use a STANDARD FORMAT such as Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* or Lester, *Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide*.)

A Note to Academic Honesty: You will be expected to live up to the University's basic honor code as outlined in your student handbook. Cheating on the exams (or helping others cheat), or handing in work that is not original is not acceptable behavior in academia. Plagiarism is a serious violation and will result in failing the course. Be honest and do your own work!

Course schedule

September 4: Global Migration—Introduction of the course, the material, and the workload.

Readings: Castles & Miller, Introduction

Segment 1: Themes, Theories, Policies and History

September 9& 11: Methodology: Oral History project and Migration and the Principle of Citizenship I

Readings: Handout: Araxi Chorbajian Ayvasian-Escape from Armenia
Andrés Aragón-After the death of Spain
Anna Foa Yona-Leaving Fascist Italy
Carl Cohen-A German Jewish Survivor
Anton Tamsaare-From Displaced Person to Distinguished Person
Rodolfo de León-Leaving Cuba
Graciela Mendoza Peña Valencia Mexican Farm Worker
Deborah Padmore-Trinidad Farewell
Brigitte Besimer-Illegal Alien

September 16 &18: Migration and the Principle of Citizenship II & International Tools

Readings: Castles & Miller, Chapter 2, pp. 44-49, Chapter 3
Handout: Castles & Davidson, Chapter 1: Understanding the Dual Crisis

September 23 &25: Current Events: La Bestia and undocumented youth from Central America

Movie 1: Sin Nombre

READING: <http://riderpolitics.com/2014/07/19/la-bestia-and-the-american-dream-why-american-immigration-practice-needs-to-be-changed-immediately/>

Short paper due: Sept. 25

***) September 30: Research paper topic approval** (bring at least a typed thesis statement to class)

******) First Discussant Session!**

October 2: History of International Migration

Readings: Castles & Miller, Chapter 4 &5

October 7: Theories of International Migration

Reading: Castles & Miller, Chapter 2, pp. 20-44, Chapter 11
Cleave, Chapter 1

October 9: Cold War and post-Cold War Refugee Theory and Policy

Reading: Handout:
a. B. S. Chimni, "The Geopolitics of Refugee Studies: A View from the South," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 11 (no. 1) (1998)
b. Alexander Aleinikoff, "State-centered Refugee Law: From Resettlement to `Containment,'" in E. Valentine Daniel and John Knudsen (eds.), *Mistrusting Refugees* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 257-78

October 14 &16: Being a Refugee

Movie 2: Chasing Freedom

Reading: Cleave Chapters 2-5

Segment 2: The Receiving Countries--Xenophobia in America and Europe: The Rest against the West?

October 21 &23: Xenophobia in Europe: From "The boat is full" to Fears of "Overforeignization"

Reading: Castles & Miller, Chapter 8 & 12
Chapters, 6-8

October 28-30: Review and Midterm

November 4-6: American Patriotism, National Security, and Nativist Fears

Reading: Barbara Franz: Letter from America: Still the Land of the Free?
borderlands 4 (1) 2005:
http://www.borderlandsejournal.adelaide.edu.au/vol4no1_2005/franz_letter.htm
Castles & Miller, Chapter 9

Segment 3: The Undocumented and Unwanted: From Illegal Immigrants to the African Diaspora

November 11-13: The “Menace” of Illegal Aliens and the Dream Act!

Reading: Castles & Miller, Chapter 10
Cleave, Chapters 9-10
<http://dreamact.info/>

November 18 & 20: Refugees and IDPs in MENA states

Reading: Castles & Miller, Chapter 7, pp. 159-169 + Chapter 13
Cleave, Chapter 11 & Notes

(Potential third movie; life in urban centers in the 21st century: Beautiful)

*****) November 25: Final Paper Due!**

Thanksgiving Holiday

December 2 & 4: Conclusion & Presentations