INTD 497
Theorizing Refugees:
Citizenship and Displacement in the Middle East
Fall 2015

Class time: Wednesdays, 2:35-5:25pm
Room: Education Building, 3700 McTavish St, room 434
Instructor: Professor Diana Allan
Office hours: Wednesdays, 9:30 – 11:30, Leacock Building, Room 922
Email: diana.allan@mcgill.ca

Course description: How does anthropology study those defined as exceptions within the political order of citizenship? Refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, and “illegal aliens” challenge this order at its core. We engage anthropologists, political theorists, legal scholars and sociologists who explore the political implications of such others, as well as the theoretical and practical implications of the terms themselves. Readings trace the theoretical evolution of the refugee from state threat and abject other in need of containment and therapeutic care to agent of political change, ranging from studies of citizenship and exclusion, humanitarianism and the biopolitics of refugee management and control, to “experience-near” ethnographies of refugee life and forced migration. We examine how people experience displacement, confinement and exclusion; how home, community and belonging are (re)configured; and the lived experience of exile. While the geographic focus of the course will be the Middle East and North Africa, materials will be drawn from other areas as well.

Learning Objectives
By the end of this course, students should be able to:

• Understand how anthropology and related disciplines approach the study of displacement and forced migration
• Recognize and evaluate the ways refugee status, and the experience of belonging and exclusion shape societies and human subjects
• Critically analyze, from an interdisciplinary perspective, scholarly debates about forced migration, citizenship, belonging and exclusion in the Middle East and other contexts
• Develop and present persuasive oral and written analyses of the topics under discussion
• Conduct independent research and writing that explores the themes of the course further

The teaching methods used to achieve these objectives include:

• Brief lectures to introduce key terms and theoretical debates
• Class discussions;
• Student presentations;
• Audiovisual materials;
• Guest lectures;
• Guided reading and independent research.

** iPods and cell phones are not allowed in class; use of laptops and iPads should be limited to accessing class texts and course-related materials only**
There is no course reader for this class. All the texts for this course are available as e-books (with unlimited access), and the articles and additional readings will be accessible through the course website. For those of you like to hold texts in your hands, I have ordered the three books we will be reading during the second half of the semester, which are available at Paragraphe Books.


**Course Requirements**

*Attendance and participation:* Timely attendance, preparation, and active participation count towards the final grade and are expected of all class participants. Because the class is conducted as a seminar rather than a lecture series, **students are expected to come to class having closely read all the assigned texts and prepared to speak about them** (I will call on students if necessary). Identify striking passages that warrant deeper analysis, note questions that the texts raise, and come to class ready to engage in constructive debate. **All students must note down at least three questions or comments for each set of readings and bring them to class.**

*Leading Discussion:* Each week three students will be responsible for leading and facilitating part of the discussion. Students should work together in advance of class to prepare an overview of the assigned readings, addressing the main themes and arguments of the texts. Presenters should identify the particular themes they wish to address in the seminar; develop creative strategies for facilitating discussion and stimulating debate (where relevant, drawing on case studies beyond assigned readings, audiovisual materials, etc.); and a clear timeline for the activities. The presentations should run for approximately 75 minutes and should include at least 30 minutes of class discussion and/or small group activities. All group facilitators will receive the same grade. A laptop and power point projector will be provided. If presenters wish students to review additional texts or sources, these need to be made available to students by Monday 5pm.

*Reflection papers:* Over the course of the semester students are required to write five short reflection papers on the weekly readings. Students will be graded on the overall clarity of their writing; their critical engagement with the literature; and on the strength of their analytical skills. The reflection paper should be 1-2 pages double-spaced and are an opportunity to draw connections with previous readings and the themes of the course, pose questions, express frustration or pleasure, and hone analytical skills. **Reflection papers should not simply summarize the argument, but should critically engage with it.** For weeks where there are three or more assigned readings, students should treat a minimum of three; where relevant, students may also draw on additional sources. Papers must be submitted by Tuesday, 5pm.

*Final Paper and in-class presentation of research proposal:* Each student will design, research, and write about a topic of their choice that engages the ideas of the course. Papers should not exceed 15 pages double spaced, 12 point font and should be not less than 10 pages. The paper must have a clear thesis, identify key terms, and draw on both empirical and theoretical materials from the course. Topics should involve independent research in related areas, and might focus on particular cases, debates, institutional actors or ethnographic studies in the field of forced
migration. For students wishing to conduct field research and interviews for the final paper, please consult me to discuss the IRB/ Human Subjects approval procedure.

**Students are required to submit a 2-3 page paper proposal in class on October 28**, and to present their research topics to the class for peer review during the last month of classes. The proposal should include 1) a justification of how it relates to course themes; 2) an annotated bibliography of texts. **The final paper is due Wednesday, December 2.**

**Absence**: Each student is permitted one unexcused absence. Additional unexcused absences will lower the class participation grade by 3 points. Excused absences require advance approval and a letter of explanation. Students will be responsible for all work missed.

**Grading and Assessment:**

- 15% Participation in class
- 20% Short reflection papers
- 20% Group facilitation of seminar
- 5% Paper proposal and bibliography
- 5% Presentation of paper proposal for peer review
- 35% Final research paper

**Important dates**

- 9 September: Course begins
- 23 September: No office hours or class
- 15 October: McDonald Currie Lecture, 5 – 6.30pm.
- 28 October: Proposal for research paper topic (due in class)
- 2 December: Last class, final papers due

Further information on writing guidelines and extra credit opportunities is available at the end of the syllabus.

*Please note this syllabus may be subject to change*

**Class 1: Wednesday 9 September**
Introduction: Defining refugees and forced migration in the Middle East

**PART I – FRAMINGS**

**Class 2: Wednesday 16 September**
Boundaries of community: Citizenship and exclusion

Required reading:

Optional reading:

In-class screening: *The Displaced* (2014)

**NOTE: Wednesday 23 September: No office hours or class**

**Class 3: Wednesday 30 September**

The national order of things: Anthropology and the study of people in and out of place

Required Reading:

Optional reading:
INTD 497: Theorizing Refugees: Citizenship and Displacement in the Middle East


Class 4: Wednesday 7 October
The “refugee regime”: Camps, biopolitics and humanitarian intervention

Required Reading:

Optional readings:
Class 5: Wednesday 14 October

**Representing refugee experience**

**Required Reading:**

**Optional readings and additional resources:**

In-class screening: *A World Not Ours* (2012), dir. Mahdi Fleifel

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**PART II – CASE STUDIES**

Class 6: Wednesday 21 October

**The protracted displacement of Palestinians in Lebanon: Camps as spaces of belonging and exclusion**

**Required Reading:**

**Optional readings:**

In class screening: *Terrace of the Sea* (2010), dir. Diana Allan.
Class 7: Wednesday 28 October
Sudan: Living as Internally Displaced Persons in Khartoum (IDPs)
Required Reading:

Optional readings and additional resources:


*Paper topic and tentative bibliography for seminar paper due - Student research presentations I*

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Class 8: Wednesday 4 November
Included or excluded?: Palestinian citizens of Israel
Required Reading:

Optional:

In-class screening: *Slingshot Hip Hop* (2008), dir. Jackie Salloum

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Class 9: Wednesday 11 November
Gendering displacement in the Western Sahara and guest lecture - Dr Fiddian Qasmiyyeh
Required Reading:
Optional readings:

* Student research presentations II

Class 10: Wednesday 18 November
Urban refugees: The Iraqi case
Required Reading:

Optional:

In-class screening: From Riches to Rags (2015).

*Student research presentations III

Class 11: Wednesday 25 November
The Problem of Europe
Required Reading:

Optional:

*Student research presentations IV

Class 12: Wednesday 2 December

Refugees and migrants as agents of political change

Required Reading:
— Bridget Anderson, Nandita Sharma and Cynthia Wright, “‘We are all Foreigners’: No Borders as a practical political project.” *Citizenship, Migrant Activism and the Politics of Movement*, edited by Peter Nyers and Kim Rygiel (Routledge, 2012).

Optional readings:

Writing Guidelines

*Format:* Hard copies of written work should be submitted to me during class. All written work should conform to these guidelines: one inch margins, double spacing, and 12-point, Times New Roman font. Include your name, date and title on the first page of your paper, and number and staple your pages. Proofread your drafts carefully before turning them in.

Late submission: Late work will not be accepted unless arrangements have been made in advance.

Academic Integrity: The work you submit for this course must be written by you; all sources must be appropriately acknowledged. Please review McGill’s Academic Integrity Code: www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information.

Language: As per university policy, written assignments may be submitted in French or English.

Special Needs: Requests for academic accommodations for students with disabilities must be made during the first three weeks of the semester, so that arrangements can be made. For more information, please contact the McGill Student Disability Services.

McDonald Currie Lecture: Extra credit opportunity
The Institute for the Study of International Development (ISID) annual McDonald Currie Lecture will take place on October 15, 2015, from 5:00-6:30 PM. The location, speaker and topic will be confirmed shortly. Attending students will receive an extra 1% that will count toward their participation grade. At the lecture, there will be a sign up sheet. Before the lecture begins, students should sign up, providing their name, student ID number, and provide a signature. Attendance for the full lecture is necessary to receive the extra credit.

Major legal agreements and standards:

Other useful resources:
Canadian Council for Refugees: www.ccrweb.ca
Forced Migration On-line: www.forcedmigration.org
Forced Migration Review: www.fmreview.org
Human Rights Watch: www.hrw.org
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada: www.irb-cisr.gc.ca
International Committee for the Red Cross: www.icrc.org
International Crisis Group: www.crisisweb.org
Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre: www.idmc.org
MSF Virtual Refugee Camp: www.refugeecamp.org
Norwegian Refugee Council: www.nrc.no
Refugees International: www.refintl.org
Relief Web: www.reliefweb.int
UNHCR: www.unhcr.org
University of Oxford Refugee Studies Centre: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk
Women’s Refugee Commission: https://womensrefugeecommission.org
http://reliefweb.int/organization/womens-commission-refugee-women-and-children