

140A_{ethn} – Fall 2023

REFUGEE SAN DIEGO



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Office: SSB 228

Office Hours: Wed. 9:00 - 10:30 a.m. **via zoom**; and by appointment.

Course Zoom link (for online classes and office hours): <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/91917832766>

Course Description

San Diego has been a resettlement hub for refugees dating back to the arrival of Vietnamese evacuees in 1975. It now has the distinction of being home to one of the largest concentrations of refugees in the United States. Through this course, students will learn when, how, and why refugees from all over the world have resettled in San Diego and how they have adjusted to and transformed their local environments. Students will also have an opportunity to engage with local refugee organization leaders and learn about their work to uplift refugees in San Diego.

***Note:** This syllabus is subject to change; the syllabus of record is kept updated and posted on Canvas.

Who Is a Refugee?

Following the [Critical Refugee Studies Collective](#), we define refugees as human beings forcibly displaced within or outside of their land of origin as a result of persecution, conflict, war, conquest, settler/colonialism, militarism, occupation, empire and environmental and climate-related disasters, regardless of their legal status.

Discussion Ethics

This class is designed for students interested in challenging commonly held understandings of race, gender, sexuality, nation, and class. Please engage one another in discussion with respect, generosity, and

consideration. Abusive and harsh language, intimidation and personal attacks will not be tolerated. These norms are reflected in the [UCSD Principles of Community](#) that we are all expected to follow.

Accommodations

I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its instruction and design. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or to accurate assessment of your achievement, please notify me immediately. You may also seek assistance or information from the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#).

If you prefer to be called by a different name or referred to as a different gender than the one under which you are officially enrolled, please inform me, so that we can adjust accordingly.

Course Requirements

Assignments/Exams	Grading Scale			
Group Presentation – 20%	94-100	A	73-75	C
“No Immigration Porn” – 15%	90-93	A-	70-72	C-
“A People’s Guide” – 20%	86-89	B+	66-69	D+
Final Project – 25%	83-85	B	63-65	D
Classroom Engagement – 15%	80-82	B-	60-63	D-
Offsite Engagement – 5%	76-79	C+	0-60	F

1) Group Presentation – Due date: varied (20%)

For each guest lecture, each group (of 3-5 students) will serve as “host” for the class.

Responsibilities include:

- meet with the community speaker(s) two weeks prior to their lecture to learn about their personal history and their community work in San Diego
- deliver a 8-10 minute presentation on the day’s topic (see syllabus). Please use visuals, infographics, charts, music, etc. to engage and inform your audience.
- introduce the community speaker
- moderate the Q&A

Some useful links to get you started:

<https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/prm/releases/statistics/index.htm>
https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/sd/community_action_partnership/OfficeofRefugeeCoord2.html
<https://www.rescue.org/united-states/san-diego-ca>

2) “No Immigration Porn” Assignment – Due Date: 10/20 (15%)

Drawing on Héctor Tobar’s article, “Avoiding the Trap of Immigration Porn,” (Week 1 reading), this assignment asks you to critically analyze how migrants and refugees are visually represented.

- Choose one photograph from a mainstream news source that represents an example of “immigration porn)
- Choose one photograph from [this collection](#), [this collection](#), or [this collection](#), or your own original photo that engages the beauty and complexity of the lives of migrants and refugees.
- Write an essay that compares and contrasts the 2 images: 700-800 words
- More information will be available on Canvas

3) A People’s Guide to Refugee San Diego – Due Date: 11/10 (20%)

[A People's Guide Series](#) is a series of guidebooks that tell histories from the “bottom up,” and show how landscapes are the product of struggle. It is a counter-history and counter-mapping project.

For this assignment:

- Submit a photo (original photo, if possible) of a **refugee place**: it could be a very well-known place, reinterpreted; or one invisible, unknown, or erased story.

Here's a sample of refugee places in San Diego to help you get started:

<https://www.refugeesandiego.com/interactive-directory>

- Your site entry should be accompanied by a writeup of roughly 300-400 words and should describe the physical site itself; the significance of the site for refugee life in San Diego; and how the site and/or its struggles illuminate relations of power.

- More information will be available on Canvas

4) Final Project – Refugee San Diego website – Due Date: 12/13 @ 11a.m. (25%)

The [Refugee San Diego](#) website was designed to showcase the rich and multifaceted lives of refugees in the San Diego region. It is intended to be a live, interactive website. We invite you to help build this repository by sharing your own experiences as and with refugees through artwork, essays, reports, photos, short stories, and poetry about refugee life in San Diego.

For your final project, please submit a piece of original work to the Refugee San Diego website. The [submissions page](#) is open and we can upload any content you submit- a video, a piece of art, a report, short story, etc.

More information will be available on Canvas

5) Classroom Engagement (15%)

Class participation and attendance.

6) Offsite Engagement – Complete any one of the following activities (5%)

1) Watch *1948: Creation and Catastrophe* by film director Ahlam Muhtaseb. Available online via UCSD Library. [Note: Muhtaseb is guest speaker on 10/19. It'd be great to watch the film prior to her visit].

2) Virtual book Talk by Anita Casavantes Bradford, author of [Suffer the Little Children: Child Migration and the Politics of Compassion in the United States](#). Nov. 16, 4 p.m.

3) Listen to podcast, [Waiting Bodies in Dictatorial and Bordering Regimes](#) with Shahram Khosravi.

4) [Critical Refugee Studies Collective Website Engagement](#)

- Read and contribute 3 comments to the [Refugee Archives](#) section and 3 comments to the [Blog](#) section.

Unit 1 – Critical Refugee Studies

Week 0 – Sept. 28 | Introduction

Week 1 - Oct. 3 & 5 | Departures

Tuesday 10/3

Espiritu et al. “A Refugee Critique of the Law.” Ch. 1 in *Departures: An Introduction to Critical Refugee Studies*. UC Press, 2022.

Annick Pijnenburg & Conny Rijken. “Moving Beyond Refugees and Migrants: Reconceptualising the Rights of People on the Move.” *Interventions*, vol. 23, 2021, pp. 273-293.

Recommended:

Kira Monin, Jeanne Batalova, and Tianjian Lai. ["Refugees and Asylees in the United States"](#). *Migration Information Source*, May 13, 2021.

Thursday 10/5

Héctor Tobar. "[Avoiding the Trap of Immigration Porn.](#)" *New York Times*, Aug. 7, 2017.
Harsha Walia. "Historic Entanglements of US Border Formation." Ch. 1 in *Border & Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism*. Haymarket Books, 2021.
Hope-Siihasin Alvarado. "[The Red Nation and Beyond Borders Caucus.](#)" *Critical Ethnic Studies* 6 (1), 2021.

Unit 2 – Refugee San Diego

Week 2 – Oct. 10 & 12 | Refugees in San Diego: Then and Now

Tuesday 10/10

Abraham Schragge, "[I Like the Cut of Your Jib.](#)" *The Journal of San Diego History* 48, no. 2 (Summer 2002).
Megan Burks. "[How the Fall of Saigon Made San Diego a Refugee Hub.](#)" KPBS, April 24, 2015.
Yến Lê Espiritu. "Toward a Critical Refugee Study: The Vietnamese Refugee Subject in US Scholarship." *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*, 1(1-2): 410-433.
Yusufi, H. (2021). *San Diego County Refugee Experiences Report* (Rep.). San Diego, CA: Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans. <https://www.panasd.org/refugee-experiences-report>

Thursday 10/12 – via Zoom

Thuy Vo Dang, "The Cultural Work of Anticommunism in the San Diego Vietnamese American Community," *Amerasia Journal* 31, no. 2 (2005), 64-86.
Student Group Presentation: Vietnamese refugees in San Diego
Guest speaker: [Thuy Vo Dang](#), Archivist, Community Organizer, and UCLA Professor of Information Studies.

Week 3 – Oct. 17 & 19 | Militarism & Migration

Tuesday 10/17

Harsha Walia. "US Wars Abroad, Wars at Home." Ch. 2 in *Border & Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism*. Haymarket Books, 2021.
María Christina García. "The Wars in Central America and the Refugee Crisis." Chapter 1 in *Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, The United States, and Canada*. UC Press, 2006.
Yazan Zahzah. "Warcare Economies: San Diego, Refugees, and Countering Violent Extremism" (CVE). *Amerasia Journal* 47:1, 35-43.

Thursday 10/19 – via Zoom

Student Group Presentation: Palestinian refugees in San Diego
Guest speaker: Ahlam Muhtaseb, Palestinian Feminist Collective
Recommended: Watch *1948: Creation and Catastrophe* by film director Ahlam Muhtaseb. Available online via UCSD Library.

"NO IMMIGRATION PORN" ASSIGNMENT DUE 10/20
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Unit 3 – Refugee Education

Week 4 – Oct. 24 & 26 | Teaching Refugees

Tuesday 10/24

Linda Morrice. ["The Promise of Refugee Lifelong Education: A Critical Review of the Field."](#) *International Review of Education* (2021).

Varasy Yi and Judy Marquez Kiyama. *Failed Educational Justice: Refugee Students' Postsecondary Realities in Restrictive Times*. ASHE-NITE Paper Series.

Mandy McLaren and Megan Wood. ["Trauma and Transitions: How San Diego Schools Grapple with Educating Refugees."](#) *inewsourc*e, August 28, 2017.

Thursday 10/26—via Zoom

Student Group Presentation: Refugee Students in El Cajon

Guest Speaker: Farida Erikat, [Majdal Center](#)

Week 5 – Oct. 31 & Nov. 2 | Refugee Teaching

Tuesday 10/31

Alexandra Greene, Yen Le Espiritu, and Dan Nyamangah. "Social and Curricular Inclusion in Refugee Education: Critical Approaches to Education Advocacy." *Social Inclusion*. Vol. 11, No. 2, 2023. <https://www.cogitatiopress.com/socialinclusion/article/view/6376>

Khatharya Um. "Refugee Teaching: Making Education Meaningful through Student-Informed Approach and Curriculum." Keynote speech given at the [Refugee Teaching Symposium](#), Nov. 3, 2017.

Yvonne K. Kwan. "Navigating Refugee Subjecthood: Cambodian American Education, Identity, and Resilience." *Journal of Southeast Asian American Education and Advancement* 15 (2), 2000.

["Refugee Teaching Symposium,"](#) Nov. 3-4, 2017. East African Community and Cultural Center, City Heights, CA.

Thursday, 11/2 – Via Zoom

Student Group Presentation: Crawford High School – New Arrival Center

Guest Speaker: Famo Musa, [Parent Student Resident Organization](#)

Unit 4 – Refugee Health

Week 6 – Nov. 7 & 9 | Refugee Health

Tuesday 11/7

"Refugee Policy Implications of U.S. Immigration Medical Screenings: A New Era of Inadmissibility on Health-Related." <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5664608/>

Gada Mahrouse. "Producing the Figure of the 'Super-Refugee' through Discourses of Success, Exceptionalism, Ableism, and Inspiration." Chapter 7 in *Refugee States: Critical Refugee Studies in Canada*, edited by Vinh Nguyen and Thy Phu.

https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/106645/1/Refugee_States_UTP_9781487541392.pdf (read Ch. 7 only).

San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition. *COVID-19 Refugee Community Impact Report*. September 2020.

Rucha Chitnis. ["The Refugee-Led Coalition Creating Collective Care."](#) *Yes! Magazine*, May 6, 2021.

Thursday 11/9 – via Zoom

Student Group Presentation: Refugee Health in San Diego

Guest Speaker: [Amina Sheik Mohamed](#), Refugee Health Unit | UCSD

Week 7 – Nov 14 & 16 | Refugee Mental Health

Tuesday 11/14

Michael Wessells. "Do No Harm: Toward Contextually Appropriate Psychosocial Support in International Emergencies." *American Psychologist*, Nov. 2009.

Michaela Hynie. "The Social Determinants of Refugee Mental Health in the Post-Migration Context: A Critical Review." *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 2018, Vol. 63 (5): 297-303.

Nile Sisters Development Initiative. *Advancing Equity: Refugee and Ethnic Mental Health*. May 2017.

Thursday 11/16 – via Zoom

Student Group Presentation: Refugee Mental Health in San Diego

Guest Speaker: Meshate Mengistu, [United Women of East Africa](#) (UWEAST)

UNIT 5 – REFUGEE CURRENTS

Week 8 – Nov 21 & 23 – Top Refugee Stories

Tuesday 11/21

Student Group Presentation: Refugees from Burma/Myanmar in San Diego

Guest Speaker: Nao Kabashima, Executive Director, [Karen Organization of San Diego](#)

Thursday 11/23 – Thanksgiving Break (NO CLASS)

Week 9 – Nov 28 & 30 – Detention Resistance

Tuesday 11/28

Jessica Ordaz. "Migration Detention Archives: Histories of Pain and Solidarity." *Southern California Quarterly* (2020) 102 (3): 250-273.

Kate Swanson. "Silent Killing: The Inhumanity of U.S. Immigration Detention." *Journal of Latin American Geography*, (2019) 18 (3): 176-187.

Gilberto Rosas and Virginia Raymond. "Migrant Detention Turns Deadlier." NACLA Report on the Americas, (2020) 52 (3): 289-295.

Thursday 11/30

Student Group Presentation: Otay Mesa Detention Center

Guest Speaker: Ruth Mendez and Alexis Meza, [Detention Resistance](#)

Week 10 – December 5 & 7 – Wrapping Up

December 5

"Top Refugee Stories" Assignment – more information will be posted on Canvas

December 7

Class meets via Canvas

"End-of-quarter Reflection" assignment (post on Canvas; more information to come)

