Contemporary Issues in Sociology

Refugees and Displacement

SCIL10080, Spring 2016
Course Organisers:
M. Holmes & L. Riga

Course lecturers:
D. Anderson, K. Baxter, A. Dakessian, 
H. Gorringe, M. Hamel, J. Langer, L. Riga

The so-called ‘refugee crisis’ of the summer of 2015 appeared to shift debates around refugees, asylum seekers and immigration. This course aims to apply a more sociological approach to understanding how such a ‘crisis’ came about and how it can be understood as part of more ongoing problems around the displacement of people. The teaching team is staff and PhD students doing research around refugees and displacement. They are involved with the Edinburgh University based NGO Lived, which deals with refugee children and displacement. UNHCR and other international humanitarian organizations serving the displaced have increasingly become what one scholar calls ‘permanent crisis bureaucracies’, with policy practices designed to sustain populations in moments of intense crisis becoming routinized and embedded as permanent as most refugee crises become protracted situations. And these practices are replicated globally across numerous displacement contexts. Moreover, policy innovations developed to address the needs of protracted displacements tend to be top-down initiatives. So the very real diversities of lived experiences are compressed and homogenized. The course will explore displacement from a comparative perspective to capture the importance of context. It will also critically interrogate present policy on displacement and examine actual experiences of displacement, drawing on research done and documentaries made by the team, as well as examining the wider literature on refugees.

COURSE FORMAT

The class meets Tuesdays 2:00-4:00, in CMB Seminar Room 2 during Weeks 1-4 and weeks 9-10. During weeks 5-8, lecture will be between 2:00-3:00, and there will be tutorials at the following times: Tuesday 3:00-4:00, Wednesday 10:00-11:00, 12:00-1:00, and 1:00-2:00. Information on how to sign up for tutorial will be given at the first lecture.

COURSE AIMS

• To provide a sociological analysis of refugees, forced migration and displacement, while also drawing upon political, historical, anthropological and geographical accounts.
• To lay out the key concepts, theories and issues involved in forced migration.
• To explore the ways in which policy and intellectual frameworks grasp lived experiences.
• To illuminate the ways substantive case material informs theory-making.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students who have taken the course will have an understanding of differing theoretical accounts of refugees and forced displacement, and be able to critically embed these in different social settings.
ASSESSMENT

ALL STUDENTS are required to submit BOTH a short essay* worth 25% of the total grade and a long essay worth 75% of the total grade. A 10% portion of the long essay mark includes a small group work project undertaken in preparation of the essay.

Your short essay should be between 1400-1600 words. Essays above 1,600 words will be penalized using the Ordinary level criterion of 1 mark for every 20 words over length: anything between 1,601 and 1,620 words will lose one point, between 1,621 and 1,640 two points, and so on. Note that the lower 1400 figure is a guideline for students which you will not be penalized for going below. However, you should note that shorter essays are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark. Short essay
deadline: Monday 8th February, 12 noon.

Your long essay should be between 3500-4500 words. Essays above 4501 words will be penalized using the Ordinary level criterion of 1 mark for every 20 words over length: anything between 4501 and 4520 words will lose one point, between 4521 and 4520 two points, and so on. Note that the lower 3500 figure is a guideline for students which you will not be penalized for going below. However, you should note that shorter essays are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark. Long essay
deadline: Monday 25th April, 12 noon.

Students will be given a list of suggestions for displacement contexts to follow in groups throughout the course. For the long essay, students will individually be required to lever key concepts of the course onto the specific context of displacement they / their groups are following. During Week 11, a school-wide open event will be held where student groups present their findings having engaged with specific contexts of displacement.

THE OPERATION OF LATENESS PENALTIES

Unlike in Years 1 and 2, NO EXTENSIONS ARE GRANTED WITH RESPECT TO THE SUBMISSION DEADLINES FOR ANY ASSESSED WORK AT HONOURS LEVEL.

Managing deadlines is a basic life-skill that you are expected to have acquired by the time you reach Honours. Timely submission of all assessed items (coursework, essays, project reports, etc.) is a vitally important responsibility at this stage in your university career. Unexcused lateness can put at risk your prospects of proceeding to Senior Honours and can damage your final degree grade.

If you miss the submission deadline for any piece of assessed work 5 marks will be deducted for each calendar day that work is late, up to a maximum of five calendar days (25 marks). Thereafter, a mark of zero will be recorded. There is no grace period for lateness and penalties begin to apply immediately following the deadline. For example, if the deadline is Tuesday at 12 noon, work submitted on Tuesday at 12.01pm will be marked as one day late, work submitted at 12.01pm on Wednesday will be marked as two days late, and so on.

Failure to submit an item of assessed work will result in a mark of zero, with potentially very serious consequences for your overall degree class, or no degree at all. It is therefore always in your interest to submit work, even if very late.

Please be aware that all work submitted is returned to students with a provisional mark and without applicable penalties in the first instance. The mark you receive on ELMA is therefore subject to change following the consideration of the Lateness Penalty Waiver Panel (please see below for further information) and the Board of Examiners.
HOW TO SUBMIT A LATENESS PENALTY WAIVER FORM

If there are extenuating circumstances beyond your control which make it essential for you to submit work after the deadline you must fill in a ‘Lateness Penalty Waiver’ (LPW) form to state the reason for your lateness. This is a request for any applicable penalties to be removed and will be considered by the Lateness Penalty Waiver Panel.

Before submitting an LPW, please consider carefully whether your circumstances are (or were) significant enough to justify the lateness. Such circumstances should be serious and exceptional (e.g. not a common cold or a heavy workload). Computer failures are not regarded as justifiable reason for late submission. You are expected to regularly back-up your work and allow sufficient time for uploading it to ELMA.

You should submit the LPW form and supply an expected date of submission as soon as you are able to do so, and preferably before the deadline. Depending on the circumstances, supporting documentation may be required, so please be prepared to provide this where possible.

LPW forms can be found in a folder outside your SSO’s office, on online at: http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/on_course_students/assessment_and_regulations/coursework_requirements/coursework_requirements_honours

Forms should be returned by email or, if possible, in person to your SSO. They will sign the form to indicate receipt and will be able to advise you if you would like further guidance or support.

Please Note: Signing the LPW form by either your SSO or Personal Tutor only indicates acknowledgment of the request, not the waiving of lateness penalties. Final decisions on all marks rest with Examination Boards.

There is a dedicated SSO for students in each subject area in SPS. To find out who your SSO is, and how to contact them, please find your home subject area on the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Name of SSO</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>Irena Coubrough</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Irena.Coubrough@ed.ac.uk">Irena.Coubrough@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>0131 650 4253</td>
<td>Room 1.11, Chrystal MacMillan Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>Rebecca Shade</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rebecca.shade@ed.ac.uk">rebecca.shade@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>0131 651 3896</td>
<td>Room 1.10, Chrystal MacMillan Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Anthropology</td>
<td>Vanessa Feldberg</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vanessa.feldberg@ed.ac.uk">vanessa.feldberg@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>0131 650 3933</td>
<td>Room 1.04, Chrystal MacMillan Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Policy</td>
<td>Louise Angus</td>
<td><a href="mailto:L.Angus@ed.ac.uk">L.Angus@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>0131 650 3923</td>
<td>Room 1.08, Chrystal MacMillan Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>Jane Marshall</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jane.marshall@ed.ac.uk">jane.marshall@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>0131 650 3912</td>
<td>Room 1.07, Chrystal MacMillan Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>Karen Dargo</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Karen.Dargo@ed.ac.uk">Karen.Dargo@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>0131 651 1306</td>
<td>Room 1.03, Chrystal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you are a student from another School, you should submit your LPW to the SSO for the subject area of the course, Karen Dargo.

**Students with Disabilities.**
The School welcomes students with disabilities (including those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia) and is working to make all its courses as accessible as possible. If you have a disability special needs which means that you may require adjustments to be made to ensure access to lectures, tutorials or exams, or any other aspect of your studies, you can discuss these with your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor who will advise on the appropriate procedures.

You can also contact the Student Disability Service, based on the University of Edinburgh, Third Floor, Main Library, You can find their details as well as information on all of the support they can offer at: [http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service](http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service)

**SUBMITTING WORK ELECTRONICALLY**
Coursework is submitted online using our electronic submission system, ELMA. You will not be required to submit a paper copy of your work.

Marked coursework, grades and feedback will be returned to you via ELMA. You will not receive a paper copy of your marked course work or feedback.

For information, help and advice on submitting coursework and accessing feedback, please see the ELMA wiki at [https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SPSTITWiki/ELMA](https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SPSTITWiki/ELMA). Further detailed guidance on the essay deadline and a link to the wiki and submission page will be available on the course Learn page. The wiki is the primary source of information on how to submit your work correctly and provides advice on approved file formats, uploading cover sheets and how to name your files correctly.

When you submit your work electronically, you will be asked to tick a box confirming that your work complies with university regulations on plagiarism. This confirms that the work you have submitted is your own.

Occasionally, there can be technical problems with a submission. We request that you monitor your university student email account in the 24 hours following the deadline for submitting your work. If there are any problems with your submission the course secretary will email you at this stage.

We undertake to return all coursework within 15 working days of submission (feedback for the short essay will be returned online via ELMA on Monday 29th February 2016; feedback for the long essay will be returned online via ELMA on Monday 16th May 2016). This time is needed for marking, moderation, second marking and input of results. If there are any unanticipated delays, it is the course organiser’s responsibility to inform you of the reasons.

All our coursework is assessed anonymously to ensure fairness: to facilitate this process put your Examination number (on your student card), not your name or student number, on your coursework or cover sheet.
**Important note to students**
To ensure your course work is submitted successfully, students should aim to upload their submissions at least 1 hour before the deadline.

Students are responsible for ensuring they have sufficient internet access and connection to submit their course work electronically. Technical difficulties and poor internet connection are not acceptable reasons for submitting work late.

You should monitor your university student email account in the 24 hours following the deadline for submitting your work. If there are any problems with your submission the course secretary will email you at this stage.

**PLAGIARISM GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS**
Avoiding Plagiarism:
Material you submit for assessment, such as your essays, must be your own work. You can, and should, draw upon published work, ideas from lectures and class discussions, and (if appropriate) even upon discussions with other students, but you must always make clear that you are doing so. **Passing off anyone else’s work** (including another student’s work or material from the Web or a published author) **as your own is plagiarism** and will be punished severely. When you upload your work to ELMA you will be asked to check a box to confirm the work is your own. ELMA automatically runs all submissions through ‘Turnitin’, our plagiarism detection software, and compares every essay against a constantly-updated database, which highlights all plagiarised work. Assessed work that contains plagiarised material will be awarded a mark of zero, and serious cases of plagiarism will also be reported to the College Academic Misconduct officer. In either case, the actions taken will be noted permanently on the student’s record. **For further details on plagiarism see the Academic Services’ website:**
http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academicservices/students/undergraduate/discipline/plagiarism

**DATA PROTECTION GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS**
In most circumstances, students are responsible for ensuring that their work with information about living, identifiable individuals complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The document, Personal Data Processed by Students, provides an explanation of why this is the case. It can be found, with advice on data protection compliance and ethical best practice in the handling of information about living, identifiable individuals, on the Records Management section of the University website at:
http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/records-management-section/data-protection/guidance-policies/dpforstudents

**FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION**
The course will be evaluated by Sociology-organized questionnaires given to students at the end of the course. All courses in Sociology are evaluated in this way, and the results are reviewed in staff meetings. Comments made by students, staff and external examiners will be fed back into course revision.

**EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**
The External Examiner for this course for session 2015-16 is: Professor Bernadette Hayes, University of Aberdeen

**LEARNING RESOURCES FOR UNDERGRADUATES**
The Study Development Team at the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) provides resources and workshops aimed at helping all students to enhance their learning skills and develop effective study techniques. Resources and workshops cover a range of topics, such as
managing your own learning, reading, note making, essay and report writing, exam preparation and exam techniques.

The study development resources are housed on 'LearnBetter' (undergraduate), part of Learn, the University's virtual learning environment. Follow the link from the IAD Study Development web page to enrol: www.ed.ac.uk/iad/undergraduates

Workshops are interactive: they will give you the chance to take part in activities, have discussions, exchange strategies, share ideas and ask questions. They are 90 minutes long and held on Wednesday afternoons at 1.30pm or 3.30pm. The schedule is available from the IAD Undergraduate web page (see above).

Workshops are open to all undergraduates but you need to book in advance, using the MyEd booking system. Each workshop opens for booking 2 weeks before the date of the workshop itself. If you book and then cannot attend, please cancel in advance through MyEd so that another student can have your place. (To be fair to all students, anyone who persistently books on workshops and fails to attend may be barred from signing up for future events).

Study Development Advisors are also available for an individual consultation if you have specific questions about your own approach to studying, working more effectively, strategies for improving your learning and your academic work. Please note, however, that Study Development Advisors are not subject specialists so they cannot comment on the content of your work. They also do not check or proof read students’ work.

To make an appointment with a Study Development Advisor, email iad.study@ed.ac.uk

(For support with English Language, you should contact the English Language Teaching Centre).

DISCUSSING SENSITIVE TOPICS
The discipline of sociology addresses a number of topics that some might find sensitive or, in some cases, distressing. You should read this Course Guide carefully and if there are any topics that you may feel distressed by you should seek advice from the course convenor and/or your Personal Tutor.

For more general issues you may consider seeking the advice of the Student Counselling Service, http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling
Journals, resources & organizations relevant for the course:

New Issues in Refugee Research: http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=&comid=4a1d3be46&cid=49aca93a6a&scid=49aca93a3b


Forced Migration Online Digital Library: http://www.forcedmigration.org/digital-library

Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies: http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cjms20/current

International Migration Review:
http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/%28ISSN%291747-7379

Forced Migration Review: http://www.fmreview.org/

Internal Displacement Monitoring Center: http://www.internal-displacement.org/

United High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR): http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home


UNRWA (United Nations Relief Works Agency for Palestinians in the Near East): http://www.unrwa.org/

PART I: CONCEPTUAL DEPARTURES

Week 1 (12 January)

Studying Displacement and ‘Learning to Swim’ (RIGA)
We ground the course with an introductory session on the conceptual, moral and epistemological landscapes that underlay academic and policy work on refugees and displacement. This will also provide the basis for the intellectual structure of the course. We do this in three ways: with a brief documentary, ‘Learning to Swim’; with a conceptual mapping exercise to emphasize the ways in which a number of relevant issues are empirically and theoretically interconnected; and finally, we think about these issues more sociologically, in terms of ‘structures of power’ and ‘structures of meaning’.

Required Reading:


(browse) UNHCR Refugees/migrants Mediterranean data: http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php

(browse) UNHCR Twitter from Za’atari: https://twitter.com/zaataricamp
Week 2 (19 January)

Understanding Forced Displacement: Causes, Categories, Data (RIGA)

Our language, definitions and statistical data on refugees critically and consequentially shape scholarly work and policy discussions – and therefore impact the lives of millions of people. So to better understand the experiences and policy practices that affect 60 million forcibly displaced people in the world today, we ask: What is ‘forced migration’? What are the differences among refugees, IDPs, ‘illegal migrants’, climate refugees, ‘development refugees’? What does it mean to be ‘stateless’, whether in formal camps, informal settlements or in the invisibility of urban displacement? We explore some of the causes and complex dynamics of displacement and the nature of the refugees’ journeys – those of flight, smuggling or trafficking, and those that are conflict, crisis, climate and development induced.

Required Reading:


Further Reading:

Further Reading:


Week 3 (26 January)

**Refugees: Perspectives from ‘Race’, Ethnicity and Nation (LANGER)**

Refugees face a variety of responses, and often challenges, when entering new societies. In many of the increasingly exclusionary European States (and beyond), their integration is problematised in terms of cultural and national identity. This lecture will briefly introduce the underlying concepts of race, ethnicity, and nation, before exploring contemporary forms of racism and the rhetorical shift to “cultural difference”. We will link this discussion to different dynamics of the categorisation of refugees and immigrants, such as homogenisation, essentialisation, criminalisation, racialisation, and dehumanisation. To illustrate the theory, we will analyse examples of how these concepts and strategies are implemented by rightist populist parties, as well as other public actors, aiming to stigmatise and exclude certain groups from European societies.

**Required Reading:**


Further Reading:


**Week 4 (2 February)**

**Theorizing and Caring for the Displaced: Frameworks, Rights, Ethics (RIGA)**
The epistemological and policy frameworks we use to understand and care for refugees determine their lives and possibilities in displacement. We illustrate this by considering some of the most compelling: the humanitarian and institutional practices of crisis / aid bureaucracies; human rights frameworks; ethics of care; protracted displacement as development policy; ‘rights of the child’ and ‘trauma’ frames for unaccompanied minors; the securitization and ‘illegalization’ of bodies and borders; ‘camps vs. city’ policy structures; trafficking and smuggling regimes; and theorizations of ‘bare life’ and its assumptions of...
agency. Against these, however, we explore the ways in which, in the process of reclaiming new lives, refugees’ own stories bear witness to and make sense of displacement, violence, repression, aspiration, resilience, home and intimacies. So as you do the required readings and watch the brief documentaries – all based on lived experiences – ask to what extent and how these dimensions of refugee journeys are captured, homogenized or compressed, rendered (in)visible or understood under these frameworks.

**Required Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


PART II: ISSUES IN CONTEXTS

Week 5 (9 February)

Being Placed: Cities, Camps and Making a Home After Displacement (ANDERSON)
Displacement is fundamentally linked to space, place and territory, from the simple fact of physical movement to more complex relationships of the self, home, livelihoods and belonging. How we conceptualise the role of space within the lives of people who have been displaced therefore has important consequences for academic thought and policy responses. This lecture will explore the pivotal role of space within discourses of displacement, situating this within broader relationships of how responses to displacement and the livelihood strategies of the people affected are rooted in contested meanings of what is to be ‘placed’, ‘displaced’, and ‘home’. Through engagement with the example of people living on the fringes of urban areas in Bogotá, Colombia, we will particularly focus on how people and state/aid bureaucracies handle the growing phenomenon of displacement to urban areas.

Required Reading:

* see other articles in this journal (same issue) from Agier and Bauman for further discussion.


PLUS please browse the UNHCR goals in:


Further Reading:

’Childhood’ in Forced Displacement: Frameworks, Constructions and Agency (BAXTER)

In situations of forced displacement, the conceptual and empirical space of ‘childhood’ becomes jolted into question as young people confront unique challenges in the face of such disruptions. This lecture explores ‘childhood’ in forced displacement, with a particular focus on the experiences of unaccompanied minors or ‘abandoned children’, by examining (1) the policy frameworks through which the experience of forcibly displaced young people are mitigated and articulated (2) the normative constructions of ‘childhood’ which inform these policy frameworks (3) the agency that ought to be credited to young people in their ability to uniquely, creatively cope with and make sense of these experiences in their own myriad ways and (4) how an appreciation of this agency and the originality of lived experiences can be more effectively taken into consideration in policy-making spaces.

Required Reading:


AND Browse through the following:

On Child Trafficking:
https://www.unicefusa.org/mission/protect/trafficking
http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/6505.html
http://www.maitinepal.org/
http://www.nextgenerationnepal.org/

Further Reading:


Video Materials:
Week 7 (1 March)

Gendered Impact of Displacement: Challenges and Opportunities (HAMEL)
Drawing on the experiences of refugees in Kenya, this lecture will explore the gendered impact of displacement. It will discuss certain vulnerabilities faced by men and women - such as early marriage, gender-based violence, unemployment and challenges to hegemonic masculinity - before elaborating on the opportunities available to challenge traditional gender norms, criticising narratives of women-as-victims.

Required Reading:


Further Reading:


**Week 8 (8 March)**

**The Cultural Production of Refugees (DAKESSIAN)**
In this lecture we will look more closely at the production and representation of refugees in the collective social and cultural imaginary. Taking stock of previous lectures in the course, we will deconstruct present-day media representations of refugees (in films, television, news) and discuss how these influence and shape public perceptions of displacement and form an image of what, or who, a refugee is.

**Required Reading:**

Available at: http://www.livedprojects.org/blog/2015/10/12/the-power-of-a-single-story


**Further Reading:**


**PART III: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS**

**Week 9 (15 March)**

**Protest and Passivity in Response to the Refugee Crisis (GORRINGE)**
Barely a week goes by without further news of refugees drowning in the Mediterranean, seeking to escape the jungle camp in Calais, or attempt to cross the border between Mexico and the United States. Whilst we all know what is happening, however, most of us choose not to get involved. Drawing on Cohen’s work on human rights and Sutton and Norgaard’s work on Cultures of Denial, this lecture will probe the sociological processes that explain why most of us, most of the time, choose not to see what is happening.

**Required Reading:**

**Further Reading:**
Davies, T and Isakjee, A. 2015. ‘Geography, migration and abandonment in the Calais refugee camp’, *Political Geography* 49(November 2015): 93–95


Puggioni, R. 2015. ‘Border politics, right to life and acts of dissensus: voices from the Lampedusa borderland’, *Third World Quarterly* 36(6): 1145-1159


**Vaughan-Williams, N. 2015.** “‘We are not animals!’ Humanitarian border security and zoopolitical spaces in Europe’, *Political Geography* 45 (March 2015): 1–10

Williams, J. 2015. ‘From humanitarian exceptionalism to contingent care: Care and enforcement at the humanitarian border’, *Political Geography* 47(July 2015): 11–20
**Week 10 (22 March)**

**Livelihoods, Belonging and the Search for ‘Durable Solutions’ (RIGA)**

Fundamental to so-called durable solutions are understandings of the entwining of livelihoods and belonging, most especially for those whose lives are lived in long term or protracted displacement. In this final session we consider some of the complexities involved in creating sustainable livelihoods: (a) local integration, (b) repatriation, (c) resettlement, (d) the challenges of camp and urban life in displacement, (e) the intricacies of ‘rights of return’, and (f) the possibilities of ‘burden-sharing’. For each of these policy responses, we pay particular attention to the implied moral and values frameworks of which they are expressions.

**Required Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


Asylum Access Equador (2011) “‘To have work is to have life’: refugees’ experiences with the right to work in Equador’. Available at: [http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5429052b4.pdf](http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5429052b4.pdf)


