

# WAR AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT

History 200



Fall Semester 2023

Lecture Time: Monday 1:20pm – 3:15pm

Location: University Club 313

Professor: Cindy I-Fen Cheng [she, her, hers]

Office: 5106 Humanities

Office Hours: Monday 11:00am – 1:00pm and by appointment

E-mail: [CICHENG@wisc.edu](mailto:CICHENG@wisc.edu)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

War drives the movement and dislocation of people. But while many are forced to flee and escape war in their home countries, they are not always able to find new countries that will take them in. For instance, the United States only allows certain groups to enter as refugees. It also sets a quota to determine how many could be admitted per year. For those who are not admitted as refugees but are nevertheless asylum seekers, they enter the U.S. as undocumented immigrants. Refugee, Asylee, and Undocumented - what purpose do these labels serve and who makes these determinations? This semester, we will examine these questions together. We will focus on three wars - WW II, the Cold War in Southeast Asia, and the Cold War in Central America - to explore the special

circumstances that enabled some groups to enter the U.S. as “refugees” and others as “undocumented.”

Additionally, we will examine the lived experiences of the displaced as they are represented in films, memoirs, graphic novels, oral histories, and historical writings. Thus, outside of learning why the federal government created different immigration statuses to distinguish one group from another, we will analyze how these labels shaped where immigrants lived and worked and how their rebuilt their social networks. Ultimately, the goal of this exploration into war and forced displacement is to gain a deeper understanding of U.S. immigration history. Given that immigration has been the touchstone of U.S. political debates, the hope is that this course will help us navigate through the many refugee- and undocumented- related issues that have been raised in our national forums.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

The credit standard for this 3-credit course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course’s learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week), reading, writing, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

Discussion Attendance and Participation	40%	400 points
Response Papers [4 write-ups; 100 points each]	40%	400 points
Final Group Project	20%	200 points
Extra Credit		20 points
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

### COURSE POINT BREAKDOWN

Letter Grade	Point Range	Percentage Range
A	925 to 1000	92.5% and higher
AB	875 to 924	87.5% to 92.4%
B	825 to 874	82.5% to 87.4%
BC	775 to 824	77.5% to 82.4%
C	695 to 774	69.5% to 77.4%
D	595 to 694	59.5% to 69.4%
F	594 and below	59.4% and below

## COURSE POLICIES

Technology-Free Learning Environment: This is a technology-free class. Please take notes using a pencil or pen and a notebook and put away your laptops, phones, and tablets.

Attendance: Regular and prompt attendance, active participation, and mature attentiveness during class meetings are mandatory. Excused absences may be granted in cases of personal emergencies, subject to prompt notification, valid documentation of emergency, and the discretion of the professor.

Readings: Please complete all required readings *before* Monday's class meeting each week. And please bring your readings to each class meeting.

Response Papers: Response papers are due during the first ten minutes of class. Any assignment received after the first ten minutes on the due date is considered late. Late assignments will receive a 15-point deduction. E-mailed submissions are not permitted and will not be graded. Extensions may be granted in cases of personal emergencies, subject to prompt notification, valid documentation of emergency, and the discretion of the professor. Students are responsible for retaining a copy of all assignments.

Honesty: <https://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/> All information borrowed from print sources or the web, including ChatGPT, must be clearly identified and properly credited. Any instance of plagiarism or cheating on assignments will result in a "F" grade for the assignment and the course. Please note that submitting AI-generated text for class assignments is plagiarism.

Abilities: Any student who feels that they may need special accommodation should contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center (<http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/>) at 608-263-2741 (phone); 263-6393 (TTY); 263-2998 (FAX); [FrontDesk@mcb.wisc.edu](mailto:FrontDesk@mcb.wisc.edu) (e-mail) to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

- Thi Bui, *The Best We Could Do: An Illustrated Memoir* (New York: Abrams ComicArts, 2018).
- Mine Okubo, *Citizen 13660* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983).

All required texts are available on reserve at the College Library.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### WEEK 1: Introduction

---

M 9.11

### WEEK 2: The Policy of “Calculated Kindness”

---

M 9.18

Reading:

- Carl J. Bon Tempo, “The Age of the Uprooted Man” from *Americans at the Gate: The United States and Refugees during the Cold War* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015).

### WEEK 3: Jewish American Refugees of Postwar America

---

M 9.25

Readings:

- Hannah Arendt, “We Refugees,” *Menorah Journal* 31, no. 1 (1943): 69-77.
- Beth Cohen, “Welcome to America” and “Unaccompanied Minors” from *Case Closed: Holocaust Survivors in Postwar America* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2007).

### WEEK 4: War and Internal Displacement

---

M 10.2 Response Paper #1 DUE

Readings:

- Mae M. Ngai, “The World War II Internment of Japanese Americans and the Citizenship Renunciation Cases” from *Impossible Subjects: The Making of Modern America* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014).
- “Japanese Latin Americans,” *Densho Encyclopedia*:  
[https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Japanese\\_Latin\\_Americans/#After\\_the\\_War](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Japanese_Latin_Americans/#After_the_War)
- “Japanese Canadian Exclusion and Incarceration,” *Densho Encyclopedia*:  
[https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Japanese\\_Canadian\\_exclusion\\_and\\_incarceration/](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Japanese_Canadian_exclusion_and_incarceration/)

**WEEK 5: Japanese Americans during WW II**

---

M 10.9

Reading:

- Mine Okubo, *Citizen 13660* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983).

**WEEK 6: The Southeast Asian Refugee Crisis**

---

M 10.16

Reading:

- Erika Lee, "Chapter 14: In Search of Refuge: Southeast Asians in the United States" from *The Making of Asian America: A History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2015).

**WEEK 7: Southeast Asian Refugee Resettlement in the U.S.**

---

M 10.23 Film: *aka Don Bonus*  
Response Paper # 2 DUE

Readings:

- Yen Le Espiritu, The "We-Win-Even-When-We-Lose" Syndrome: U.S. Press Coverage of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the "Fall of Saigon," *American Quarterly* 58 no. 2 (2006): 329-352.
- Thi Bui, *The Best We Could Do*, 1-166.

**WEEK 8: The Best We Could Do**

---

M 10.30

Reading:

- Thi Bui, *The Best We Could Do*, 167-329.

**WEEK 9: Central American Asylum Seekers**

---

M 11.6 Response Paper #3 DUE

Readings:

- María Cristina García, “The Wars in Central America and the Refugee Crisis” and “Refugees or Economic Migrants? The Debate over Accountability in the United States” from *Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).
- Norma Stoltz Chinchilla, Nora Hamilton, and James Loucky, “The Sanctuary Movement and Central American Activism in Los Angeles” from *Latin American Perspectives* 36, no. 6 (November 2009): 101-126.

**WEEK 10: Migrant Caravans**

---

M 11.13 Film: *Fear and Learning at Hoover Elementary*

Readings:

- Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, UC San Diego, *The Migrant Caravan: From Honduras to Tijuana (2018-2019)*, 2019.
- Heather M. Wurtz, A Movement in Motion, *Mobilities* 15, no. 6 (2020): 930-944.

**WEEK 11: The End of Asylum**

---

M 11.20 Response Paper #4 DUE

Reading:

- Andrew I. Schoenholtz, Jaya Ramji-Nogales, and Philip S. Schrag, *The End of Asylum* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2021), 31-107.

**WEEK 12: Final Project**

---

M 11.27

**WEEK 13: Final Project**

---

M 12.4

**WEEK 14: Final Presentations**

---

M 12.11