Refugees, Asylees, Migrants and Trafficked Persons: Global Displacement in a Hostile Time

Overview of Course
This community-based research seminar on migration combines anthropology and principles of activist research. With 65 million people forcibly displaced, and over 244 million more migrants living abroad worldwide, migration in its various forms is one of the most pressing human rights issues today. As an anthropology class, we will read about the lived experience of migration – spotlighting the distinctions and commonalities between migrants, refugees, asylees, and trafficked persons. And as members of a 4-credit community-based research class, students will conduct field research and create advocacy opportunities on behalf of migrants in the Metropolitan D.C. area. In this way, you will learn from the communities around you while contributing to migrant justice in ways that community members identify.

Research and Advocacy with and For Migrant Communities
This is a community-based learning course (see explanation below). This means you will not just read about migration -- you will conduct field research and create advocacy opportunities on behalf of migrants in the Washington Metropolitan area. You will design your research projects with community needs in mind that you will learn about from the community. How? You will work closely with community-based organizations (cbo’s) that work on the issue you choose for your semester-long research project (such as language acquisition, access to health care, labor protections). You will build on your own connections and networks in town, as well as on past research interests. In other words, this course encourages you to continue and deepen your past activist commitments and classroom learning. In the case of those who are new to the issue, I will help you find community commitments that community members identify and that dovetail with your interests. I highly encourage some of you to work together – this class pivots on the idea of collaboration!

While some of you will focus on working with one organization, others of you might divide your time between cbo’s that work on the same issue. Regardless of how you allocate your time, I expect you to be “in the community” working from a grass-roots perspective (not at the national headquarters of an organization or a cause) 4-5 hours a week. Some weeks you may do more community work, as you attend protests, community meetings, strategy sessions, potlucks, festivals, art openings, poetry slams etc. on top of your regular commitments. Regular
commitments may include tutoring in English, offering translation services, coaching soccer – or simply helping out with a variety of office-related tasks. Much of this work is not glamorous (answering phones, typing, babysitting during community meetings), but it will give you a sense of how social change only happens with a lot of hands helping out.

Community-Based Learning
and Doyle Engaging Difference Seminar
At Georgetown University “community-based learning (CBL) is an academic course-based pedagogy that involves student work with disadvantaged and underserved individuals or groups, or organizations working with and for disadvantaged and underserved individuals or groups, that is structured to meet community-defined needs. Critically, course objectives and student community work are fundamentally integrated.” Students will receive a 4th credit in this CBL course.

The course is also a Doyle Seminar, part of the Doyle Engaging Difference Program, “a new campus-wide curricular initiative, that gives faculty the opportunity to enhance the student research component of upper-level seminars that address questions of national, social, cultural, religious, moral, and other forms of difference. The Doyle seminars are intended to deepen student learning about diversity and difference through enhanced research opportunities, interaction with thought leaders, and dialogue with the Georgetown community and beyond.” For us, this means that the course is writing intensive, with different opportunities for feedback. It also means that we will engage in learning outside of the classroom through “field trips” (to community meetings, museums, films, book readings etc.) and that we will have outside speakers (from both scholarly and advocacy communities) join the class.

Course Requirements
1. For the second day of class, January 23: Please write a 1-page single-spaced paper on what brings you to the topic of migration. What do you think you understand and not understand? Please circulate by posting your reflection on Blackboard by Sunday, January 22nd by noon. Please read your fellow students’ reflections before class on the 23rd.

2. You will be “in the community” working with one or more community-based organizations at least 4-5 hours every week. In collaboration with your community partners, you will engage in an advocacy project. Some examples include organizing a phone drive or letter-writing campaign. You could write editorials to media outlets in WDC or in local newspapers in communities facing anti-migrant actions, legislation, or law-enforcement (local or federal) crackdowns. Or, you could write a grant on an organization’s behalf. Another idea closer to home: organize a panel discussion or workshop at Georgetown that involves speakers from the community. You will produce a 1-page single-spaced reflection paper on your time working in a migrant community and producing an advocacy project – due the last day of class.
3. You will keep field notes every week of your observations, experiences, and insights. I will look over your notes at different points in the semester. These notes will serve as a research tool, and you will hand in your field notes at the end of the semester with your final research paper. **Hand in with final research paper. 10% of grade.**

4. You will write a 5-page paper (double-spaced) mid-point in the semester that lays out the analytical framework of the final paper. In this way, you will begin to suture together readings on migration scholarship with your own experiences in the migrant justice world. **20% of final grade. Due in class: March 27th. No extension, no exceptions (other than with a Dean's intervention).**

5. You will write a 20-page research paper on a topic of your choice that integrates your community work, your field notes, and your own reading. Your advocacy in the community should inform the paper (and your thinking throughout the semester), but it is not the sole foundation for the paper. **60% of final grade. Papers and field notes are due May 8th by noon, in a box outside of my office on Laura’s desk. No extensions without a dean’s intervention.**

6. You will produce an oral history recording related to migration. It might be of a family member, a migrant with whom you are working, a community organizer or other advocates, or a community member who would like to see immigration decrease in their community. We will listen to a couple of recordings during each class period (starting mid-point in the semester). Regardless of how long your oral history is, we will listen in class to 10 minutes of your recording. You can choose to share different sections of the recording or one 10-minute section. **We will produce a schedule of sharing recordings in class. 10% of grade.**

7. As a class we will produce a bibliography -- on a google doc. You are responsible for at least 5 contributions -- they can be novels, photography projects, films, art, graphic novels, poems, radio, media or of course academic books and articles -- that deal with issues related to migration, mobility, displacement, and return or settlement. There are so many wonderful migration materials -- too many for me to assign. In this way we will learn from one another's interests and personal experiences as well as consider the benefits and limitations of different forms of storytelling and documentation.

8. You will work collaboratively with your classmates. We will form “research teams” based on your research interests. The teams will meet regularly to discuss their ongoing community work, and hopefully, to attend issue-related events together (festivals, movies, community meetings, protests etc.). Some of you may even work with the same organizations and travel together to and from your community work. You also will work with classmates preparing to lead class discussion two times during the semester. Each week assigned "discussants" are responsible for introducing the major themes from the readings and will be “on call” to raise questions and contribute to the class discussion about the readings. You will get together outside of class to prepare to lead discussion.
9. As a class we will attend events – paid for by the Doyle Engaging Difference Program -- related to the course themes. Keep an eye out for exhibits, performances, films, book readings and lectures. One exhibit we will schedule a tour for is at the Smithsonian – it commemorates the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 which led to the internment of individuals of Japanese descent. (Opening February).
http://americanhistory.si.edu/exhibitions/righting-wrong-japanese-americans-and-world-war-ii

In New York City, there is a an exhibit “State of Exception/Estado De Excepcion” at Parsons (Feb. 3-April 17th) that features objects left behind in the desert by migrants as well as other forms of data – all collected as part of Jason De Leon’s “Undocumented Migration” project. (We are reading his book).

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** Required Reading **
The following books are on sale at Bridge Street Books (located at 2814 Pennsylvania Avenue – at the end of M street near the short bridge that enters into Foggy Bottom). Their hours are 11-9, Sundays 12-6. 202-965-5200.

** All other readings are on Blackboard.


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**Week 1**

**Overview of Course**

**January 11**

Getting up and running: Migration, Anthropology, and Rights

**January 16 – No class, Martin Luther King Day**

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**Week 2**

**Setting Out: By Choice, By Force**

**January 23**

We begin lived and theoretical approaches to understanding migration. What global and local structures and processes shape people's decisions to migrate and the level of control they have over their border crossing, their debt, and their living and working conditions in their new communities? What are some of the up-to-the-current-moment pressures on displaced individuals?

*These are a lot of readings, I know! Focus on the Khosravi book for our first class. The historical readings are for you to dip into throughout the semester.*

**Contemporary**


http://compasanthology.co.uk/waiting/


**Historical**


**Week 3**
**Migrants as Vulnerable, Migrants as Resourceful:**
**Trafficking and “Almost Trafficking”**

**January 30**
Weeks 4 and 5
Challenges to Making Home

February 6
Chosen as Refugees; Rejected as Newcomers

February 13
Anti-Migrant and Anti-Black Violence

February 20 – No class, Presidents’ Day

Week 6
Profiling, Panics, Scapegoating and Excluding

February 27


March 6 – Spring Break

Week 7
Border Making and Enforcing:
At Sea

March 13
Week 8
Border Making and Enforcing:
In the Desert

March 20
*See his documentation of a migrant trail in the Sonoran desert using Go-Pro: http://undocumentedmigrationproject.com/home/multimedia-projects/

We will watch the documentary *Becky's Journey* by Sine Plambech.
Here's the trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOnL0Ib1H-k
https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/sine-plambech/becky-is-dead

Week 9
Documenting Lives, Resistance, and Justice

March 27th
*** 5-page paper due in class

We are fortunate to learn from community advocates who will join the class.
How can we best use anthropological fieldwork to shed light on the experience of migration?
How do you keep field notes? How do you build collaborative research projects with members of a community? What are creative ways, as a class, that we can turn research findings into advocacy?

I will hand out a list of (non required) resources to inspire! Dip into them as the semester unfolds. You will help build this resource list as you unearth other documentary and story-telling projects.

Week 10
Round Ups, Detention and Deportation– Past and Present

April 3

(pp. 3-10; Uchida, Yoshiko: "Desert Exile" (pp. 69-81); Gerard Skerak, Eleanor: "A Teacher at Topaz" (pp. 126-137); Ganor, Solly: "Light One Candle" (pp. 377-387).
* See the Executive Order 9066
* And archives
http://www.densho.org/archives/
https://calisphere.org/exhibitions/t11/jarda/
* Photographers Ansel Adams and Dorothea Lange documented life in Manzanar
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/manz/
https://www.nps.gov/media/photo/gallery.htm?id=CA29BB4E-155D-4519-3E5456896E1C2E6C

Contemporary “registry” of fellow community members, the NSEERS (National Security Entry-Exit Registration System)
* http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/special-registration-program
* https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2016/12/america-already-had-a-muslim-registry/511214/

Kunstler, Daniel. 2014. Passaic: The True Story of One Man's Journey Through American Immigration, Detention and Deportation. Sausalito, CA: Tamalpais Press. Selections: Chapter 1, “Disbelief” (pp. 1-20); Chapter 9, “Code of Contempt” (pp. 241-274); Chapter 10, “The Most Wicked of the Cast” (pp. 275-297); Chapter 11, “Mr. Mohabir, Wait!” (pp. 300-320); Epilogue (pp. 321-357).


Short clip (a New York Times Op-Doc) on detention in Britain, “Indefinite”

Week 11
Race, Identity, and Youth

April 10

Read what resources you are drawn to below -- and we will create a Google Doc as a class to build on to this list to reflect your interests, activisms, and own experiences.

Listen to interviews with novelists Junot Diaz and Jhumpa Lahiri on National Public Radio in a series, “Becoming American.”


*Undocumented and Unafraid*. UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education. Selections.

  - “Breaking Through” (Four Young Latinos in WDC), by Brooke Lea Foster, *Washingtonian*, May 2001

Read selections from: Students of John O’Connell High School. 2010. *We the Dreamers: Young Authors Explore the American Dream*. 826 Valencia; McSweeney’s.

Listen to Episode 177 “American Limbo” which aired on 2/9/01 on Ira Glass’s radio show *This American Life* that is archived at: [http://www.thislife.org/](http://www.thislife.org/)

  - Listen to Act 3 which is about Sylvia. It’s 11 minutes long.

Documentary: *Papers: Stories of Undocumented Youth*
April 17 – No class, Easter Break

Week 12
Resistance and Resilience

April 24
As a class we will share examples we learned throughout the semester of how loved ones separated by borders stay connected, how they strategize to avoid detection and stay together, how they contribute to and fight for their larger communities, and how they challenge local and national laws that discriminate, exclude, and criminalize migrants.

We will build the reading list as the semester -- and your community engagement and reading -- unfold. Here's an example:
https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/linked-mobile-phones-syrian-refugees-stay-connected

There is a lot of activism – and art as resistance -- about the border. To get you started check out:
Artist Ana Teresa Fernandez who “erases” the border
http://anateresafernandez.com/borrando-la-barda-tijuana-mexico/
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fxyApQb6oM
And her mother, Mara Teresa Fernandez, who has photographed families meeting at the border every Sunday since the 1990’s:

Week 13
Class Presentations on Advocacy Projects and Final Papers

May 1