

# English 4577.01 Refugee Culture

Professor Amy Shuman  
Email: [shuman.1@osu.edu](mailto:shuman.1@osu.edu)  
Location: 151 BARROWS  
Times: TUTH 12:30-2PM

**Texts** (All readings not listed are on bspace or are available in online journals):

1. McMahon, Felicia *Not Just Child's Play: Emerging Tradition and the Lost Boys of Sudan* University Press of Mississippi
2. Bohmer, Carol and Amy Shuman *Rejecting Refugees: Political Asylum in the 21st Century* Routledge
3. *Newcomer Arts: A Strategy for Successful Integration* (available through The Institute for Cultural Partnerships. I will make a discount group order and collect payment on September 2. Anyone not able to order before the 2<sup>nd</sup> can order it at [www.culturalpartnerships.org](http://www.culturalpartnerships.org).)
4. *The Art of Community: Creativity at the Crossroads of Immigrant Cultures and Social Services*. Available online at [www.culturalpartnerships.org](http://www.culturalpartnerships.org)

## Assignments:

November 16: Write a 2-3 page account of your field observation. Include the following: any arrangements you made beforehand or how you found out about the community/event you observed; what did you know beforehand; your relationship to the community/event; what you saw/heard. What interests you; what did you learn; what do you not know; how do you plan to continue this work for your term project. You may use photographs or video as well as words.

November 23, November 30, December 2: Brief (10 minute) descriptions of the work you have done.

Term Paper due December 13; please submit to [shuman.1@osu.edu](mailto:shuman.1@osu.edu)

## Exams:

Mid-term exam October 14

Final exam: apply three of the readings to a discussion of one or more other student's oral presentation (at least one not given on the same day as your own)

## **Readings:**

### **August 26** Introduction

Listen to podcast about refugee from The Moth: Andrew Solomon August 2, 2010  
<http://www.themoth.org/>

### **August 31**

*Not Just Child's Play* through page 115

### **September 2**

*Not Just Child's Play* through the end

### **September 7**

Lisa H. Malkki "Refugees and exile: from refugee studies to the national order of things" *Annual review of anthropology* 1992

Lisa H. Malkki "Speechless emissaries: refugees, humanitarianism, and dehistoricization" *cultural anthropology* 1996

<http://littlebillclinton.csmonitor.com/littlebillclinton/2009/07/14/what-its-like-to-be-a-refugee-in-america/>

### **September 9** Rosh HaShanah and Eid Ul-Fitr

Discussion of the intersection of Jewish, Muslim and other refugee religious practices and American secular life

Materials will be presented in class and available on bspace but no readings are required

### **September 14**

*Crossing the Blvd* (on bspace)

Recommended:

"*I Lift Up My Lamp By the Golden Door*" blog from the NY Times

### **September 16** (Choose one of two options)

Option 1: Watch any two episodes of *The Sopranos* and read:

"Prince of New Jersey" (on bspace)

"North Jersey" (on bspace)

Option 2: Attend any part of the San Francisco Human Rights Conference (attendance is free but you need to register and pay for the optional lunch)

<http://www.h-net.msu.edu/~law/index.html>

### **September 21** narrative

"Refugee Stories" (on bspace)

FE Baer "Give Me...Your Huddled Masses": Anti-Vietnamese Refugee Lore and the Image of Limited Good" *Western Folklore*, 1982

JA Koltyk "Telling narratives through home videos: Hmong refugees and self-documentation of life in the old and new country" *Journal of American Folklore*, 1993

### **September 23**

Myerhoff, Barbara "We Fight to Keep Warm" in *Number Our Days* (on bspace)

Westerman, William "Central American Refugee Testimonies and Performed Life Histories in the Sanctuary Movement pp 167-181 in *Migration and Identity* eds rina Benmayor and Andor Skotnes International Yearbook of oral history and life histories, vol III Oxford 1994. (on bspace)

"The Year of Living Nervously" (on bspace)

### September 28

Wendy Ewald *Lives Words Pictures from Towards a Promised Land I* (on bspace)

*The Art of Community: Creativity at the Crossroads of Immigrant Cultures and Social Services*

### September 30

*Weavings of War* (on bspace)

*Newcomer Arts: A Strategy for Successful Integration*

### **October 5** language and place

Blommaert, Jan "Investigating Narrative Inequality: African Asylum Seekers' Stories in Belgium" *Discourse and Society* 12:4: 413-449.

Mendoza-Denton, Norma "'Muy Macha': Gendered Performances and the Avoidance of Social Injury from *Homegirls* (on bspace)

Modan, Gabriella "The Moral Geography of Mount Pleasant" *Turf Wars* (on bspace)

Recommended:

Jacquemet, Marco "Transidiomatic practices: Language and power in the age of globalization" *Language and Communication* 25 (2005) 257-277.

### **October 7** (Dance, Food, Music)

McMahon, F. F. (Felicia Faye)

Repeat Performance: Dancing DiDinga with the Lost Boys of Southern Sudan  
*Journal of American Folklore* - Volume 118, Number 469, Summer 2005, pp. 354-379

Algren "Many Nations" *America Eats* (on bspace)

Zelinsky "The Roving Palate" *Exploring the Country* (on bspace)

Barrett, Giles A. and David McEvoy "The Evolution of Manchester's Curry Mile: From Suburban Shopping Street to Ethnic Destination" (on bspace)

**October 12** Guest Lecture: Professor Charles Briggs  
Briggs, Charles Chapter 3 of *Stories in the Time of Cholera*  
Das, Veena Chapters 4 and 5 from *Life and Words*

**October 14** Midterm exam

**October 19** labor/economies

"Welcome to Mi-Pueblito" [www.seattleweekly.com/2010-07-14/news/welcome-to-mi-pueblito-washington/](http://www.seattleweekly.com/2010-07-14/news/welcome-to-mi-pueblito-washington/)

Stoller "The Way of the Jaguar" on bspace

Canclini "Artisanal Production as Capitalist Necessity" pp 37-53 (on bspace)

**October 21**

O'Connor, Bonnie "Hmong Cultural Values, Biomedicine, and Chronic Liver Disease" in *Healing Traditions* (on bspace)

"Magic tattoos in Cambodia" (on bspace)

Recommended:

Adler, Shelley R. "Refugee stress and folk belief: Hmong sudden deaths" *Social Science & Medicine*, 1995 vol 40:12 pp 1623-1629

**October 26** *Rejecting Refugees*, Introduction and Chapter 1

**October 28** *Rejecting Refugees*, Chapters 2 and 3

**November 2**, *Rejecting Refugees*, Chapters 4 and 5

**November 4** *Rejecting Refugees*, Chapters 6 and 7

**November 9**

Steiner, Niklaus "Arguing About Asylum: The Complexity of Refugee Debates in Europe" (on bspace)

Being Arab in NY (on bspace)

Khanna, Ranjana "On Asylum and Genealogy" (on bspace)

**November 11** (no class; school holiday)

**November 16**

**Field Observation Due**

Ranger, Terence "The Narratives and Counter-narratives of Zimbabwean Asylum: female voices" (on bspace)

Good, Anthony "Anthropologists as Expert Witnesses: Political Asylum Cases involving Sri Lankan Tamils" (on bspace)

Harrell-Bond, B.E. and E. Voutira "Anthropology and the Study of Refugees" 1992 *Anthropology Today* 8:4, pp 6-10.

Recommended:

Ong, Aiwaha *Buddha is hiding: Refugees, citizenship, the new America*

Einhorn, Bruce "Consistency, Credibility, and Culture" (on bspace)

**November 18** Refugee Music

Baily, John and Michael Collyer "Introduction: Music and Migration" *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 2006 32: 2 pp 167-182.

Reyes-Schramm, Adelaide "Tradition in the Guise of Innovation" Music Among the Refugee Population" *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 1986

-----"Music and Tradition: From Native to Adopted Land through the Refugee Experience" *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 1989.

**Recommended:**

Keila Diehl *Echoes from Dharamsala: Music in the Life of a Tibetan Refugee Community*

**November 23** student presentations

**November 25** Thanksgiving

**November 30** Student presentations

**December 2** Student presentations

Finals week

Finals week of dec 13

### **Disability Accommodations**

I will accommodate any disabilities. University policy requests that you contact the office of disability services and request accommodations through them. Often, the accommodations requested by one student serve many students, and I am open to suggestions for providing greater accessibility/accommodations.

### **Academic Honesty and Ethical Responsibilities**

In this class, you will be observing cultural practices; you are expected to learn from others, and your grade reflects your observational work. You are required to 1) give credit to all those whose ideas/practices/knowledge you represent in your work and 2) secure permission to reproduce anything not already in the public domain (Consent forms are available on the course website and must accompany your work as relevant.)

### **Attendance/Participation**

This class depends on dialogue. Everyone is expected to attend all classes. The University stipulates that students are not obligated to attend classes that meet during religious holidays. Please notify the instructor if you observe a religious holiday other than September 9. Students observing Rosh Hashanah or Eid Ul-Fitr are not obligated to attend class on September 9. If you are ill, you may make arrangements to get notes from one of the class note-takers. You may participate in the dialogue either during class time or by posting comments on the class website.

### **Note Takers**

Students may volunteer to take notes for classes and make those notes available to others who miss class due to illness, other excused absences, or for students whose disabilities require a note taker. Excellent notes will augment grades on the mid-term or final either ½ or a full grade.

### **Grading**

Term Paper: 55%

Mid-Term Exam: 15%

Final Exam: 15%

Field Observation and Oral Presentation: 5% each: Total 10%

Participation: 5%