



GOING VIRAL?

BORDERS, MIGRATION, AND CITIZENSHIP IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Today's most intractable problems transgress the borders modern nation states have drawn to define their territories. They reveal the interconnectedness of the globe and blur the boundaries between seemingly separate realms: the private and the political, work and home, what is near and what is distant. Yet crises such as COVID-19, global warming, poverty, and human rights violations also energize attempts to police national borders, curtail migration, tighten definitions of citizenship, and ratchet up cultural and social divisions. In this course, we explore the pressure of transnational emergencies on contemporary ideas about citizenship, boundaries, and belonging. We approach our topic from a variety of angles—from political science and history, to law, sociology, literature, and the arts—in order to better understand how our contemporary world collapses some borders while fortifying others. A wide-ranging group of scholars, activists, artists, and writers will join us as guests to illuminate the way citizens and humans might better navigate our both borderless and bordered present. Students sign up for lectures on Mondays and Wednesdays (section 01) and one of four available discussion sections on Friday (sections 02-05). AXLE: HCA

Instructor	Lutz Koepnick (lutz.koepnick@vanderbilt.edu)
Office Hours	Koepnick: W 1-3, Th 2-3 (Zoom Meeting ID: 956 3939 8564 Passcode: 086110)
Teaching Assistants	Wendy Timmons (wendy.c.timmons@vanderbilt.edu) Michael Uhuegbu (chiedozie.m.uhuegbu@vanderbilt.edu)
TA Office Hours	Timmons: Th 9am-10am, F 3pm-4pm CT (Meeting ID: 864 368 5951 Passcode: 021130) Uhuegbu: M 2-3, Th 12-1 CT (Meeting ID: 960 8370 2044 Passcode : 036306)
Class Time	MW 11:30-12:20 (online)
Subsections	F 11:30-12:20 (02: Timmons) F 11:30-12:20 (03: Uhuegbu) F: 9:10-10:00 (04: Timmons) F 1:50-2:40 (05: Uhuegbu)

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Explore different political, cultural, economic, and legal concepts important to the study of migration, citizenship, exile, belonging, and displacement in our contemporary world
- Evaluate different histories of migration and competing political and legal frameworks regulating human movement
- Interpret representations of migration, asylum, exile, statelessness, and displacement in contemporary fiction, film, and art
- Compare and contrast different historical, political, cultural, and geographical regimes of division and exclusion
- Investigate historical origins of contemporary border discourses and walling efforts
- Critically engage with different ideas of deportation and integration
- Understand important connections between contemporary crises caused by climate change or poverty and calls for fortifying borders of all sorts
- Approach questions of migration and citizenship from a human right's perspective
- Recognize the extent to which questions of migration and citizenship are some of the central questions of the 21st century

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

- Final paper (6-8 pages) or project: 20% (due December 10, 12 noon)
- Mid-term Exam: 15%
- Group Presentation: 10%
- Group Work: 5%
- Reading responses: 15%
- Weekly reviews: 15%
- Film responses: 5%
- Subsection: Attendance and Participation: 15%

You will need to complete the work for each and every of these eight categories with a passing grade in order to receive a passing grade for the class as a whole.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following required books are available for purchase at the Vanderbilt University Bookstore:

- Jose Antonio Vargas, *Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen* (ISBN: 978-0062851345)
- Sonia Shah, *The Next Great Migration: The Beauty and Terror of Live on the Move* (ISBN: 978-1635571974)

All other materials will be made available electronically through Brightspace.

ACTIVITIES & ASSIGNMENTS

A NOTE ON DEADLINES AND WORKFLOW: Since this class will be taught online, we have developed all kinds of work modules on Brightspace to help you prepare, complement, and reflect on what we do during our zoom class meetings. In many cases zoom meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays might be shorter than posted on YES simply because some work, whether in groups or individual, will take place asynchronously and on your own terms. Monday and Wednesday sessions will be recorded, so students unable to attend them live due to time zone differences will be able to watch them later; deadlines for responses to these meetings take into considerations that some students might be in very different time zones. Subsections on Friday will always meet as indicated. Should your time zone categorically prohibit participation, we will develop alternative plans for you. Please be aware of the sequencing of work modules each week. You will be asked to carry out various activities before our zoom meetings and some after them. We will remind you of deadlines for different module components each week, but it is important that you stick to these deadlines and the workflow they set up in order to learn effectively. All

activities associated with a weekly class module will typically need to be completed by Friday 2pm of a week in question.

READING RESPONSES: Once a week you will be asked to respond to some of our assigned readings. Good responses are about 150-250 words in length. Unless you receive a specific prompt, please use the space to reflect about the reading in general, raise questions or concerns you might have. What is your main take away? Reading responses are due one hour before the class meant to discuss the texts in question.

REVIEW: Once a week you will be typically asked to reflect on the readings, lectures, screenings, and discussions and synthesize some of your thoughts and insights about the issues at hand. Good responses are about 150-250 words in length. In many cases, you will be asked to follow a specific prompt. In others, you can simply share some additional thoughts about the week's topic.

FILM RESPONSES: We will watch and discuss a number of films during the course of the semester. Unless specified otherwise, film responses reflect on your viewing of assigned films within two hours of you viewing the film. Share some thoughts about your viewing experience: What did you like? What did you dislike? Your response does not need to be deeply analytical; it can formulate some "gut reactions." But please write in complete sentences. Film responses are due one hour before the class meant to discuss the film in question. 150-250 words.

GROUPWORK: We will divide the class into a certain subgroups early in the semester to enable a number of groupwork assignments throughout the semester. While the whole class of course will still meet every week to discuss texts and listen to lectures, subgroups may at times convene outside class time to carry out certain tasks, inquiries, and assignments. Groups may use zoom to connect with each other at agreed times to work on these special tasks. In certain weeks such meetings may take place during official class time, at others either before or after, following our instructions and your availability. When constituting the group, we will ensure that group members will always be members of one and the same subsection. We will also take into consideration whether you attend class remotely and from a different time zone. "Groupwork" groups are not identical with groups presenting the one required presentation described in the next section.

PRESENTATIONS: Each student will participate in one group presentation. Students will sign up after the first week of classes for particular topics and groups. Presentations are due 24 hours before their class session. They are delivered in the form of a self-contained and time-based media presentation (e.g., PowerPoint, mov file), include a voice-over track, and should last between 10 and 15 minutes. Other students will watch these presentations before class. Presenters will respond to questions and comments during class and receive feedback from all students after their presentation. Groups working on these presentations are not identical with the groups constituted to carry out "groupwork" during the semester.

FINAL PAPER OR PROJECT: Options for final papers and projects will be posted on November 4, 2020. Anticipate to write a 6-8 paper or developing a media project that reflects on some of the key issues we covered in the course of the semester

COURSE POLICIES

ZOOM PROTOCOLS: Please mute your mic when not speaking. Please keep your camera on during class time even if you do not actively contribute to class discussion. Use a virtual background if your physical setting calls for this.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Students are bound by the University rules on academic integrity in all aspects of this course. All references to ideas and texts other than the students' own must be so indicated through appropriate footnotes, whether the source is a book, an online site, the professor, etc. All students are responsible for following the rules outlined at: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/studentaccountability/>. I will not tolerate plagiarism or other violations of Vanderbilt's Honor System.

READINGS: Readings should be completed as noted in the course schedule. Not everything in the reading will be covered in class and some readings can be difficult. Thus it is important that you read closely and take notes. You are responsible for the content in the readings even when the material does not come up explicitly in class. If you do not understand elements of the reading, you should feel free to ask questions in class or in office hours, or use the reading response discussions to ask your question

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: We are committed to making educational opportunities available to all students. In order for its faculty members to properly address the needs of students who have disabilities, it is necessary that those students approach their instructors as soon as the semester starts, preferably on the first day of class. They should bring an official letter from the Opportunity Development Center (2-4705) explaining their specific needs so that their instructors are aware of them early on and can make the appropriate arrangements.

WARNING: We will be watching films and read some texts that may contain graphic violence and other emotionally disturbing themes. If you think this content will offend or disturb you, you should reconsider your enrollment in this class. Please feel free to talk to me if you have questions or concerns.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS: Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or any other assignment as a consequence of their religious observance should provide me with notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent no later than September 3, 2020.

OFFICE HOURS: I am happy to talk to you during scheduled zoom office hours (and by appointment) about the material in this class. Please make use of your faculty's office hours!!

SCHEDULE

Week One: Identity

8/24/2020 | Introduction

- Prashant Rao, “The Declining Power of the American Passport” (July, 2020)

8/26/2020 | The Lies that Bind

- Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Lies that Bind : Rethinking Identity* (Chapter 1: “Classification” & Coda)

8/28/2020 | Not Black, Not White (Subsection)

- Jose Antonio Vargas, *Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen* (Part I: “Lying”)

Week Two: Migration

8/31/2020 | Life on the Move

- Sonia Shah, *The Next Great Migration: The Beauty and Terror of Live on the Move* (Chapter 1: “Exodus”)

9/2/2020 | Regulating Movement

- John C. Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State* (Chapter 1: “Coming and Going”)

9/4/2020 | Narratives of Migration

- 🎬 *Winged Migration* (dir. Jacques Perrin et al, 2001) [selection]
- 🎬 *Human Flow* (dir. Ai Wei Wei, 2018)

Week Three: Belonging, Nation, Citizenship

9/7/2020 | The Soul of the Nation

- Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation” (1882)

9/9/2020 | The Fiction of the Nation

- Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Lies that Bind : Rethinking Identity* (Chapter 3: “Country”)

9/11/2020 | Lying and Belonging

- Jose Antonio Vargas, *Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen* (Part II: “Passing”)

Week Four: The Age of Walling

9/14/2020 | To Wall or not to Wall

- 🎬 *Walled Unwalled* (dir. Lawrence Abu Hamdan, 2019)
- Sonia Shah, *The Next Great Migration: The Beauty and Terror of Live on the Move* (Chapter 2: “Panic”)

9/16/2020 | Desiring Walls?

- Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (chapter 1: “Waning Sovereignty, Walled Democracy”; Chapter 4: “Desiring Walls”)

9/18/2020 | On Walls: Past, Present, and Future

- Sonia Shah, *The Next Great Migration: The Beauty and Terror of Live on the Move* (Chapter 10: “The Wall”)
- Greg Grandin, *The End of the Myth* (Epilogue: “The Significance of the Wall in American History”)

Week 5: Divided Nations, Torn Cities

9/21/2020 | Germany

- GUESTLECTURE: Chancellor Daniel Diermeier (Vanderbilt University)



9/23/2020 | Student Presentations: Korea, Vietnam, Spain/Catalonia, Ireland/Northern Ireland

9/25/2020 | Student Presentations: Hong Kong, Jerusalem, El Paso/Juarez

- 🎬 Kwame Anthony Appiah, “On Cosmopolitanism” (2012)

Week 6: Exile, Migration, and the Stateless

9/28/20 | The Stateless

- John C. Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State* (Chapter 5: “From National to Postnational”)
- 🎬 *Casablanca* (dir. Michael Curtiz, 1942)

9/30/20 | The Rights of Others

- GUESTLECTURE: Ayten Gundogdu (Barnard College)
- Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (sel)
- Jeremy Adelman, “Pariah: Can Hannah Arendt Help Us Rethink Our Global Refugee Crisis?”



10/2/20 | Subsection

- 🎬 *Liquid Traces: The Left-to-Die Boat Case* (dir. Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani, 2014)
- Hannah Arendt “We Refugees”

Week 7: From the Frontier to the Border Wall I

10/5/20 | The Myth of the Frontier

- Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History"
- Greg Grandin, *The End of the Myth* (Chap 7: "The Outer Edge")

10/7/20 | Frontier to Fortress

- Greg Grandin, *The End of the Myth* (Chap 9: "A Fortress on the Frontier")
- 🎬 *The Searchers* (dir. John Ford, 1956)

10/9/20 | Midterm Exam

Week 8: From the Frontier to the Border Wall II

10/12/20 | Borderlands

- GUESTLECTURE: C.J. Alvarez (University of Texas)
- C. J. Alvarez, *Border Land, Border Water* (sel)



10/14/20 | A Border Crosses

- GUESTLECTURE: Paul Kramer (Vanderbilt University)
- Paul Kramer, "A Border Crosses"



10/16/20 | Subsection

Mid-term Survey

Week 9: Border Regimes

10/19/20 | The Deportation Machine

- GUESTLECTURE: Adam Goodman (University of Illinois Chicago), with Sarah Igo (Vanderbilt University)
- Adam Goodman, *The Deportation Machine: America's Long History of Expelling Immigrants* (Chapter 6: "Deportation in an Era of Militarized Borders and Mass Incarceration")



10/21/20 | Deportation vs Integration

- David Abraham, "Immigrant Integration and Social Solidarity in a Time of Crisis: Europe and the United States in a Postwelfare State"



10/23/20 | Subsection

- Jose Antonio Vargas, *Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen* (Part III: "Hiding")

Week 10: Lives and Labors in American Borderlands

10/26/20 | Border Economy and International Labor Laws

- GUESTLECTURE: Jeff Cowie (Vanderbilt University)
- Jonathan Blitzer, “The Deportees Taking our Calls”



10/28/20 | Miles of Walls and No Time to Sleep

- GUESTLECTURE: Aaron Bobrow-Strain (Whitman College), with Eddie Wright-Rios (Vanderbilt)
- Aaron Bobrow-Strain, *The Death and Life of Aida Hernandez: A Border Story* (sel)



10/30/20 | Subsections

- Aaron Bobrow-Strain, *The Death and Life of Aida Hernandez: A Border Story* (sel)
- Karla Cornejo Villaviencio, *The Undocumented Americans* (Chapter 1: “Staten Island”)

Week 11: Narcotrafficking

11/2/20 | Narcotrafficking

- GUESTLECTURE: Eddie Wright-Rios (Vanderbilt University)
- 🎧 El Velador (Natalia Alamda, 2011)



11/4/20 | Cinema and Narcotrafficking I: *Sicario*

- 🎧 *Sicario* (dir. Denis Villeneuve, 2015)
- Julien Mecille, “The Media-Entertainment Industry and the ‘War on Drugs’ in Mexico”
- Greg Grandin, *The End of the Myth* (Chapter 15: “Crossing the Blood Meridian”)

11/6/20 | Cinema and Narcotrafficking: *Traffic* (Subsection)

- 🎧 *Traffic* (dir. Steven Soderbergh, 2000)
- Oswaldo Zavala, “Imagining the U.S.-Mexico Drug War: The Critical Limits of Narconarratives”

Week 12: Contemporary Art on Migration and Border Walls

11/9/20 | Border Cantos

- GUESTLECTURE: Guillermo Galindo (San Francisco)
- Richard Misrach and Guillermo Galindo, *Border Cantos* (sel)



11/11/20 | Border Art

- 🎬 Francis Alÿs, *El Ensayo* (2002)
- 🎬 Francis Alÿs, *The Green Line* (2004)
- 🎬 Francis Alÿs, *Don't cross the Bridge before you Get to the River* (2008)
- 🎬 Josh Begley: *Field of Vision: Best of Luck with the Wall* (2016)
- 🎬 Teresa Margolles, *La Busqueda* (2011/2019)

11/13/20 | Subsection

- 🎬 *Sleep Dealer* (dir. Alex Rivera, 2009)

Week 13: The Writing on the Wall

11/16/20 | Student Presentations

- Peter Schneider, *The Wall Jumper*
- China Mieville, *The City and the City*

11/18/20 | Student Presentations

- Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West*
- Jeannine Cummins, *American Dirt*
- Reyna Grande, *The Distance Between Us*

Friday | Subsection

- Reading: TBD

Week 14: No Class

Week 15: Borders, Nature, and Climate Change

11/30/20 | Alien Species?

- Sonia Shah, *The Next Great Migration: The Beauty and Terror of Live on the Move* (Chapter 8: The Wild Alien")

12/2/20 | Climate Refugees

- Todd Miller, *Storming the Wall: Climate Change, Migration, and Homeland Security* (Chapter 1: "On the Front Lines of Climate and Borders")
- ["The Great Climate Migration" \(New York Times, July 2020\)](#)

12/4/20 | Subsection

- Julie Livingston, *Self-Devouring Growth: A Planetary Parable* (2019) (sel)
- Suketu Mehta, *This Land is Our Land: An Immigrant's Manifesto* (sel)