



**FUSE: Portraits of Refugee Households in
Metropolitan Phoenix
April 3rd to October 3rd 2008
Education Package**

This exhibition was produced through the support of:

Community Outreach & Advocacy for Refugees (COAR),
The Arizona State University Museum of Anthropology,
The Students in ASB 591: Exhibition Development
The Arizona Commission on the Arts and
The Ted Decker Catalyst Fund

Table of Contents

Overview of the Exhibition	Page four
Guided Group Visit Information	Page five
Background Information	Page six
PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES	
Current Events Group Discussion	Page eight
Where in the World	Page nine
Where Did Your Family Come From?	Page ten
Talking about Photographs	Page twelve
POST-VISIT ACITIVITIES	
Fact or Fiction	Page fourteen
Becoming American? Refugee youth and their parents?	Page sixteen
Some other refugee related films	Page eighteen
Web resources	Page nineteen

Overview of the exhibition

This photographic exhibition was produced in collaboration between the ASU Museum of Anthropology, photographic artist Eliza Gregory and Community Outreach & Advocacy for Refugees (COAR), a Tempe based non-profit organization. As well as large format photographic portraits of locally resettled refugees, the exhibition includes explanatory text panels and audio portraits of many of the photographed individuals. The exhibition is an attempt to provide a sense of the complex worlds of resettled refugees in the Phoenix metro area. It hopes to foster critical thinking on who refugees are and how, through sharing experiences, the Phoenix metro community can seek common ground. The photographs validate the struggles and triumphs of these families, portraying them in a way that cultivates a deeper sense of belonging in the community. The exhibition also invites visitors to reflect on issues of context, representation, art and culture. All the photographs and audio portraits are available on-line at www.coarweb.org/fuse.

“FUSE: Portraits of Refugee Households in Metropolitan Phoenix” is showing concurrently with “MOSAIC: Cultural Identity in America,” a juried show of art by students at Arizona State University. The pieces on display were picked by a panel of judges from among many entries. The curator of MOSAIC was interested in how the artists feel about contemporary American identity and how they feel about their own identities in the United States.

Gallery activity

At the back of the gallery are several playful interactive exhibits that bring together the two different exhibitions, MOSAIC and FUSE. They invite the visitors to think about their own ideas about identity.

GUIDED GROUP VISIT INFORMATION

1. If you would like to schedule a visit to ASUMA, please contact Catherine Nichols at anthro.museum@asu.edu
2. Please arrive at least 10 minutes prior to your scheduled time.
3. The museum can accommodate up to 30 students, but 10-15 students are ideal. Please include the number of students that plan on attending so arrangements can be made to have sufficient staff for your visitation.
4. One chaperone must be present at all times for each group of 20 children. Two chaperones are preferred.
5. Please schedule your visit one week prior to the date you want to visit the museum.
6. Discuss museum behavior before your scheduled visit. Students should have an understanding of museum etiquette. They will not be allowed to touch the art in the gallery, but there are a few interactive exhibits.
7. The museum is ALWAYS free; there are no fees for students, teachers, or volunteers. Museum hours are Monday through Friday, 11AM to 3PM. Other times can be arranged by appointment.

Please share this material with other educators. This packet is available for download at <http://shesc.asu.edu/asuma>

Background Information

There are many reasons why people travel and move from one place to another. Whether it's a holiday or temporary trip for business, a more permanent relocation for a new job or to go to school, or a move that is about the adventure of a change, mobility is a part of the contemporary human experience. However, sometimes leaving home is neither voluntary nor pleasurable.

Refugees Defined.

What is the difference between an immigrant and a refugee?

An **immigrant** is foreign-born individual who **voluntarily** leaves his/her country of origin and has been admitted to reside permanently in the United States as a lawful permanent resident. Immigrants often come to the United States seeking economic prospects and other opportunities. They usually have the freedom to return to their native countries for visits and may even still have family ties in those countries. Many citizens of the United States have ancestors who came to the country as immigrants.

According to 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees a **refugee** is a person who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality..." Refugees are **compelled to leave** their countries of origin because of these fears or because they or their family have already suffered persecution, often at the hands of their government.

The **key difference** is that an immigrant voluntarily leaves his/her country of origin. Refugees, on the other hand, are compelled to seek asylum in another country because of war or political turmoil in their own country which puts their life or liberty at risk.

Why do we need to learn about refugees?

There are around 14 million refugees in the world and another 25 million people are displaced within their own countries. Every year the U.S government invites up to 70,000 displaced individuals to enter the United States as refugees. Since 1980, 44,000 refugees have been placed in the Phoenix area. The number of refugees in Arizona grows by over 2,000 people each year.

It is important for students to learn about refugees in order to understand the challenges that these individuals have undergone as they start a new life in the Phoenix area. It also helps students to connect with current events by learning about the situations which might cause individuals to flee their homelands.

Learning about refugees also helps students to develop an understanding of cultural differences and similarities, human rights issues, and social responsibility.

Which countries do most refugees come from?

Afghanistan	3,260,300
Former Palestine	3,036,400
Iraq	1,687,800
Burma (Myanmar)	693,300
Sudan	648,000
Colombia	453,300
Democratic Republic of Congo	412,300
Somalia	410,300
Burundi	393,700
Vietnam	308,000
Eritrea	255,400
Angola	195,000
China	158,700
Liberia	141,100

Based on World Refugee Survey 2007

The United States hosts less the half of one percent of the refugees in the world. What countries and territories host most of the world's refugees?

Pakistan	2,161,500
Syria	1,329,300
Iran	1,025,000
Gaza Strip	1,017,000
Jordan	862,700
West Bank	722,000
Tanzania	485,700
India	435,900
Thailand	408,400

Based on World Refugee Survey 2007

SOME PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Current Events Group Discussion

Have students bring in news articles about current events that might lead to people fleeing their home countries and becoming refugees. Some good places to look for this include: www.unhcr.org, www.bbc.co.uk and the International news section of major newspapers such as the New York Times.

Break the class into small groups and have each group discuss the articles that they brought in. Have each group report back to the class.

Some questions to consider include:

- 1) What are some of the reasons that people are running away? How similar or different are these reasons?
- 2) Where are they running to?
- 3) Who is helping these people? What new problems might they now face?
- 4) What might happen next for these groups of people?

In-class Discussion

Have each student write down three things they would take with them if they had to leave their homes in a hurry with the knowledge that they would likely never be able to return.

Lead a class discussion using the following prompts:

Why did you choose these three things?

How easy are these items to take a long distance? What if you had to walk and carry them?

How would these things help you start over in a new place?

Could they help you to find a job?

Could they help you to prove who you are if you landed up in a foreign country?

Would these be things that would be useful to anyone else but you? For example, your family?

Could you sell them if you need food or medicine?

Are these things so valuable that they might be stolen by someone looking to profit by attacking vulnerable people?

Where in the world

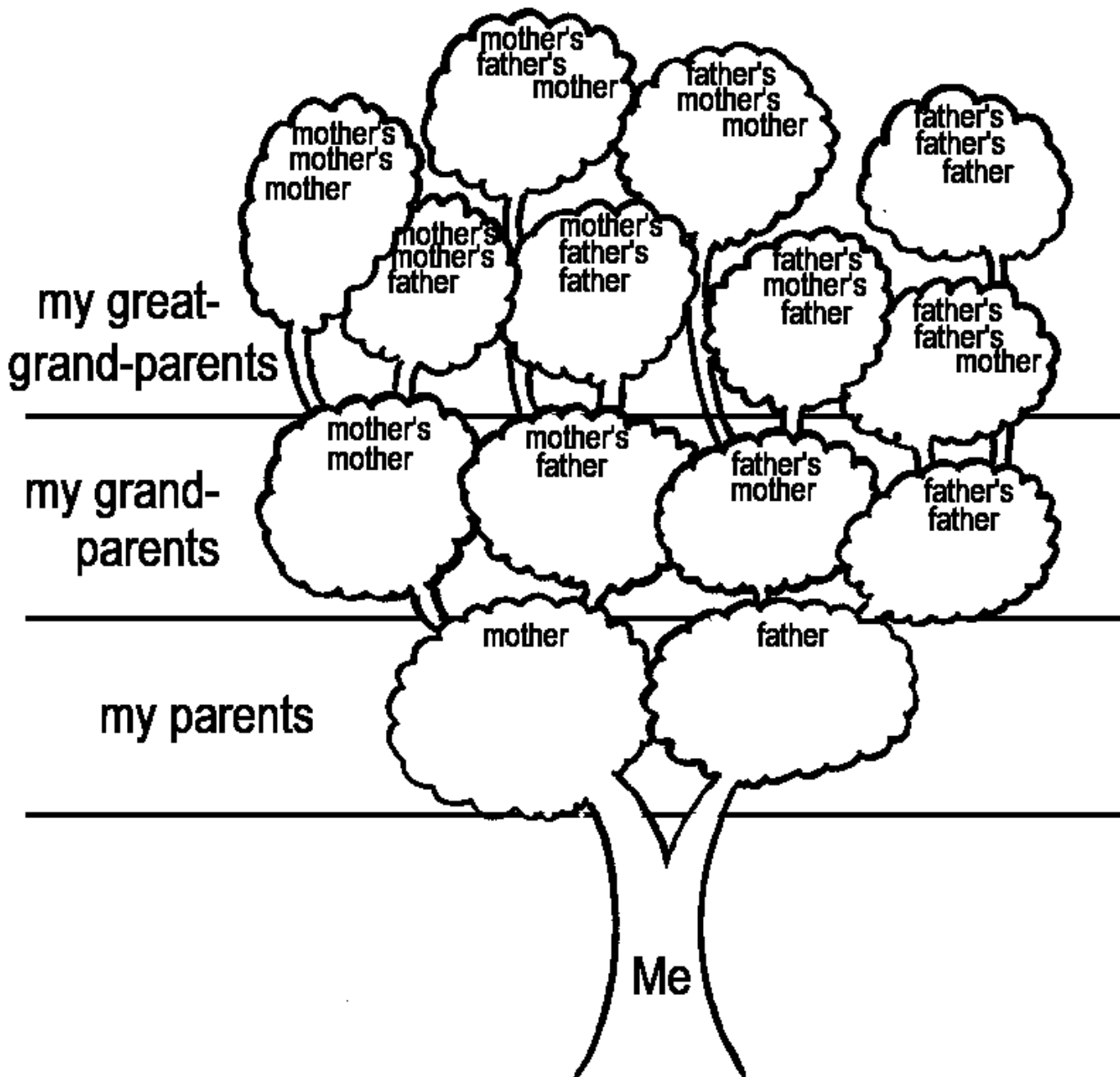
Have you students look at the list of 14 countries (on page 7) where most refugees came from in the year 2007. Using an atlas or map find these places on the map, and label them. Now look at the list of place where most refugees live, find them on a map and label them.



Where did your family come from?

Use the family tree below to fill in the name of members of your family and where each of them originally came from and when they left their homelands. You may need to talk to your parents or grandparents in order to find out some of this information

My Family Tree



Discussion Questions for the family tree exercise

- How many ancestors do you have who came from another country?
- What are some of the reasons that they might have left their homeland? Were they looking for a better life or did they leave because they or other members of their family were in danger? If the latter is the case, why were they in danger and who was threatening them?
- Does your family have any stories about leaving their homeland or about starting a new life in the United States?
- Were any of your ancestors refugees? Why or why not?

(If students are unable to say for sure why their ancestors might have left their homelands, using the date that a family member left their county of origin to help students to explore some of the historical reasons people might have left that particular country.)

Adapted from:

<http://www.unhcr.org/teach/9-11tre.htm>

Talking about photographs



Students can use the above photo or any of the other photographs on www.coarweb.org/fuse to do the below activities.

Activity 1: Writing exercise

Write a story about the person/people in this picture. Who are they? Where are they? What are they doing? Where are they going? Where have they been?

Activity 2: Class Discussion

- What are your initial thoughts about this picture?
- What type of clothes are the people in the picture wearing?
- What sorts of things do you see in the background?
- What does this tell you about this family?

- What don't you see in this photo?
- What kind of things does the photo not tell you about the people in it?

- Is this photo “the truth”? Why or why not?

- How important is it that this picture is in color?
- How would it be different if it were in black and white?
- Do you think this photograph is ‘art’? Why or why not?
- Why do you think that a Museum of Anthropology might have an exhibition of these kinds of photos?
- Eliza Gregory, the photographic artist who took the pictures featured in Fuse once said “*Photography is essentially a reductive process, whereas drawing or painting is additive.*” Discuss this statement. Do you agree with her? Why or why not?

Activity 3: Audio Portraits, Class discussion.

Select another photograph to look at as a class, make sure that it has a corresponding audio portrait. (These can be found on the website under the section marked ‘portraits’) Look at the photograph and then listen to the audio portrait.

- What does the audio portrait add to what you can tell about the subjects of the photographic portrait? What can sound tell you that a picture cannot?
- Why do you think the curators of the exhibit decided to call these audio component “portraits”?
- How are audio portraits similar to or different from photographic portraits?
- Are these audio portraits art? Why or why not?

SOME POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Fact or Fiction

Below are a series of questions about refugees or immigrants. Based on what you have learned, decide if each statement is fact or fiction. Answers and explanations of the answers are on the following page.

Fact or Fiction.

1. Most refugees can seek protection in their own countries.
2. A refugee can return to his or her country of origin any time they want.
3. Most Americans have ancestors who where immigrants.
4. A refugee leaves his or her country voluntarily.
5. The United States hosts more refugees than any other country.
6. Governments may deport persons who are found not to be refugees.
7. The largest group of refugees in the world comes from some Sudan.
8. Refugees relinquish their rights upon entering a country of asylum.
9. Refugees enter and live in the U.S. illegally.

Answer Key.

1. Fiction

A refugee has to flee his or her country of origin in order to seek safety elsewhere.

2. Fiction

Many refugees are never able to go back to their country of origin because threats to their lives and liberty are on-going.

3. Fact

The ancestors of many American immigrated here from all over the world.

4. Fiction

Refugees are forced to flee their home countries.

5. Fiction.

The United States hosts only a small percentage of all refugees. Most refugees flee to a neighboring country and live in refugee camps there for 10 or more years waiting for a chance to restart their lives.

6. Fact

All governments have the right to control entry to their territory and to refuse admission to those without a valid refugee claim.

7. Fiction.

Based on numbers from the World Refugee Survey 2007, there are approximately 3.2 million Afghans, 3 million Palestinian refugees, and 1 million refugees from Iraq.

8. Fiction

Under international law, a refugee has the right to receive safe asylum and to enjoy at least the same rights and benefits as the country provides other legal foreign residents.

9. Fiction

Resettled refugees are screened overseas and enter the U.S. legally.

Sources for fact and fiction questions www.churchworldservices.org and <http://www.unrefugees.org/usaforunhcr/dynamic.cfm?ID=73>

Becoming American? Refugee youth and their parents.

The exhibition tried to draw attention to the fact that most refugees arrive in Phoenix with their families, so that their experiences of setting up a new life have to be seen in the context of the support and obligations that being part of a family entails. The following three documentaries offer a significant degree of insight into the frictions that can occur between the first and the second generation in US-based refugee communities.

Take a look at the websites for each of these films to select one that is the most appropriate for your students.

1. “Kelly loves Tony” (<http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov1998/kellylovestony/>) is about a young newly-married Mien couple in California who struggle to balance their hopes and aspirations with the expectations of their families.
2. “Saigon USA” (<http://home.earthlink.net/~saigonusa/>) traces a political conflict in Little Saigon, California that divided the Vietnamese community along generational lines.
3. “Monkey Dance” (<http://www.monkey-dance.com/>) is about three Cambodia- American teens in Lowell Massachusetts, whose involvement in a Cambodian dance troupe helps them to stay connected to both their parents and Cambodian culture.

In preparation for the film screening, read and discuss the following quote that appeared in the exhibition:

“I was five years old when my family made the 8,000-mile journey from the refugee camp on the Thai-Cambodian border to Phoenix, Arizona. Upon arrival, we struggled to adjust to a new life in a strange land. With limited English proficiency, my mother and two older siblings worked multiple jobs to provide for our family. It took me many years to appreciate how frightening it must have been for my mother to witness countless other Cambodian families survive unspeakable horrors only to lose their children to drugs, gangs, and violence in the lower strata of the land of opportunity. Like countless other refugee and immigrant women, she had to learn to entrust her children to a social structure in which she was an outsider. Growing up, I did not find it extraordinary that my mother left behind all she knew to bring us to where we are today. But as time and reflection has revealed the sacrifices my family made and the challenges we overcame, it instills in me a growing sense of awe, gratitude, and purpose.”

Sambo Dul; 24; Cambodia; second year law student at NYU. Sambo founded COAR while she was an undergraduate at ASU.

Suggested discussion questions:

What sort of obligations might a child in Sambo's position feel that she has to her family? Specially, if she learnt to speak, read and write English better than her parents did, what kind of responsibilities might fall on their shoulders? Do you think these expectations are similar or different to the ones you face in relations to your own family? Why or why not? What kinds of tensions might come out of this kind of a situation? Try and see it from both the perspective of both the child and the parent.

After watching your selected documentary be sure to go back and re-read Sambo's quote and discuss it in light of the film.

Suggested discussion questions:

Has the meaning of the quote changed for you since watching the film? Would you answer any of the discussion questions differently? Why or why not? Why do you think the curators for FUSE thought that this was an important quote to include? If you were the curator of the show would you have included it? Why or why not.

Some other refugee related movies

“Lost boys of Sudan” (<http://www.lostboysfilm.com/>) and the more recent “God grew tired of us” (<http://www.godgrewtiredofus.com/>) follows Sudanese refugees, known as the ‘lost boys’ who were orphaned by conflict as children as they resettled in the United States. Their stories provide an interesting contrast to the experience of being resettled as a family.

“The Refugee All-Stars” (<http://www.refugeeallstars.org/>) is the story of a group of Sierra Leonean refugees who formed a band while living in a refugee camp in the Republic of Guinea.

“Sentenced Home” (<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/sentencedhome/>) follows three young Cambodian American men whose teenage mistakes come back to haunt them when a strict immigration policy, that entails deportation for even minor convictions, is enforced. The three men must face leaving the only home they know

“Dreaming of Lhasa” (<http://www.dreaminglhasa.com/>) is a fictional film that follows a young Tibetan American who travels to the Dharamsala, India (home of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan capital in exile) to make a film about political prisoners who have escaped from Tibet.

“ Rain in a Dry Land” (<http://makepeaceproductions.com/rain-in-a-dry-land.html>) follows the resettlement experiences of two Somali Bantu families, one in Springfield Massachusetts and the other in Atlanta, Georgia .

Website Resources

COAR's website: <http://www.coarweb.org>

American Refugee Committee: <http://www.archq.org/index.shtml>

Amnesty International: <http://www.amnesty.org/>

International Rescue Committee: <http://www.intrescom.org/>

International Rescue Committee – Phoenix Branch:

http://www.theirc.org/where/the_irc_in_phoenix.html

Office of Refugee Resettlement (US Department of Health and Human Services):

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/>

Office of Refugee Resettlement (Arizona Department of Economic Security):

<http://www.azdes.gov/csa/programs/refugee/>

US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants:

<http://www.refugees.org>

Human Rights Watch:

<http://www.hrw.org/>

The United Nations:

<http://www.un.org/english/>

The UN Refugee Agency:

<http://www.unhcr.org/>

The Cultural Orientation Resource Center (orientation resources for refugee newcomers and service providers throughout the United States)

<http://www.cal.org/co/>

Foreignborn.com (for foreign born individuals entering or living in the US, has self-help information sections on banking, driver licenses, health insurance, careers, visas and immigration, etc)

<http://www.foreignborn.com>