

Moving Away from the Dominant Mindset

What is the relationship between NGO funded community based film projects and youth living in refugee camps?

LAPS/HUMA 4142 Angie Dang

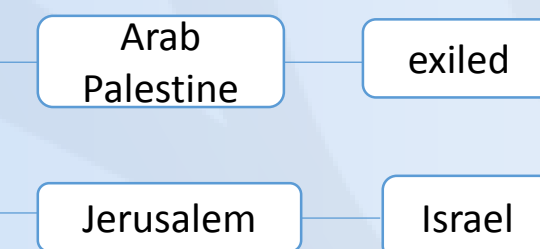
Abstract

Globalization has made it possible for the personal stories of those experiencing the current refugee crisis in the Middle East to reach local and global stages. NGOs have also gotten involved by providing media projects to refugee youth, but not everything is as it seems when we think about the relationship between NGO funded community based film projects and youth living in refugee camps. By drawing overarching connections between different fields of study, findings indicate that several perspectives exist within the context of traumatized refugee youth and NGO funded media programs.

Historical Relevance

NGOs (particularly the UN) essentially started the refugee crisis in the Middle East over 60 years ago.

- 1947: United Nations (UN) decided to split Palestine into 2 parts.
 - Arab Palestine and Jerusalem
- Israel was created instead with Palestinians exiled from their homeland.
- Tensions arose and have led to the current refugee crisis of the Middle East today.



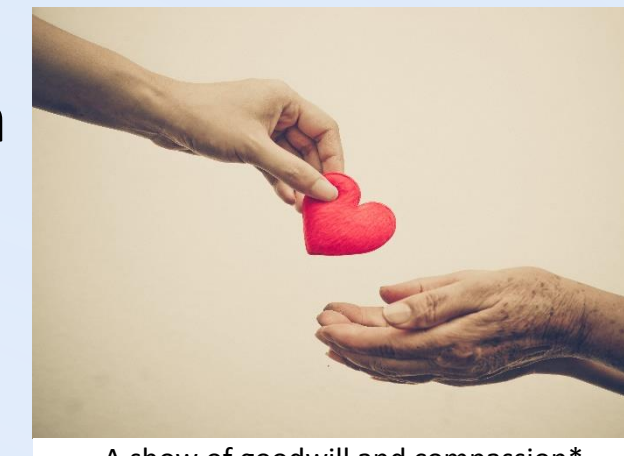
Refugee Crisis*

By drawing connections across different fields of study, I found...

3 Perspectives

There are 3 main approaches to understanding the relationship between NGO funded community film projects and youth living in refugee camps.

- Goodwill and compassionate approach
 - solely out to help
- Biased approach



A show of goodwill and compassion*



Distressed refugee child*

-traumatized youth are understood as potential terrorists, and must be given an outlet to prevent a possible violent outburst.

- Ominous approach



Media program run by NGO*

-provide access to youth media programs (like oneminutejrs.) in the hopes of compelling youth living in refugee camps to feel strongly about bettering their current situation that was essentially started by NGOs.

UNRWA (United Nations Relief Works Agency)



NGO facilitated refugee camp*

-Rules, regulations and policies put in place at refugee camps run by the UNRWA throughout the Middle East restrict and heavily impact the lives of youth living there.

-Loss of cultural identity by receiving solely host country's education system

-Early marriages to keep families registered in camps

Despite it All...

Refugee youth are already strong, resilient, active agents.

- They still live complex, full lives while living in refugee camps.
- They actively participate and fully use the resources that they are provided with by NGOs.
- They are constantly preparing for life as NOT a refugee.



Four youth living in refugee camps showing 'peace' signs with their fingers*

Thinking Differently

Let's not only think stereotypically. We should strive to center actual refugee youth's voices as the default assumption pertinent to refugee youth in contemporary children and youth's culture.

*All images belong to their respective owners. For a full list of references and sources, see attached.