



Public Lecture Series Fall 2015
Exclusion – Discrimination – Borders.
Dynamics of Inequalities in Migration Regimes

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Thursday, 15 October 2015
Air Deportation: Statecraft, Aircraft,
and the In/visibility of Forced Mobility
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Discussant: Prof. Christin Achermann, University of Neuchatel and
nccr – on the move

18:15 – 19:45 h, University of Neuchatel, Rue Abraham Louis Breguet 1, Lecture Hall 301

Abstract

Besides being a powerful symbolic technology, and a mode of precarization, deportation is also a practice of forced mobility. Yet scholars have often overlooked the fact that contemporary deportation is a complex logistical exercise that moves large numbers of people between states under varying degrees of unfreedom. Although there is no deportation without transportation, the actual infrastructures of moving deportees have been somewhat neglected. So while the place and practice of detention within the deportation regime has received sustained scholarly attention the same cannot be said of the activity of actually removing people. This lecture seeks to redress this imbalance through a focus on a zone of activity it names as air deportation. In speaking of air deportation

I stress that modern deportation involving countries of the Global North has become densely entangled with airlines, airports and aeroplanes. Statecraft and aircraft intersect in complex ways.

This lecture has two main objectives. First, it aims to give a preliminary mapping of the phenomenon of air deportation. Drawing largely on the UK experience for case material, this mapping of air deportation will expand and complicate the who, what, how and where of migration control. What roles do pilots, crews, transportation regulations, escorting guards, restraining methods, deportees, passengers, and others play in the politics of control and the politics of resistance that plays out in and around the air-craft of deportation? The second objective of the presentation is to connect this mapping of air deportation to the question of the in/visibility of forced mobility in the public sphere. Air deportation is a clandestine practice, its engineered opacity being key to its efficacy as a mode of removing people. In bringing the infrastructures of civil aviation more fully into the study of deportation and forced mobility the lecture adds scholarly research to the work of artists, journalists, activists and campaigners who have already identified the in/visibility of the deportation flight as a site of struggle.

Curriculum Vitae

William Walters is a professor of political sociology. He is based at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada, where he is cross-appointed in the Departments of Political Science and Sociology & Anthropology. His areas of interest are contemporary political and spatial theory, especially the political thought of Michel Foucault; studies of citizenship and non-citizenship; borders, migration and security research; and the politics of publics and secrecy. He is co-editor of the book series *Mobility & Politics* (Palgrave Macmillan), and on editorial committees with the journals *Citizenship Studies*; *Foucault Studies*; *Materiali Foucaultiani*; *Palgrave Communications*; and *Economy and Society*. His most recent book is *Governmentality: Critical Encounters* (Routledge 2012), the Japanese translation of which should be published in 2016.

Selected Publications

- Walters, W. 2012. *Governmentality: Critical Encounters*, Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 171 pp.
- Walters, W. and Haahr, J.H. 2005. *Governing Europe: Discourse, Governmentality and European Integration*, London: Routledge, 177 pp.
- Walters, W. 2015. “Reflections on Migration and Governmentality”, *movements: Journal der Kritischen Migrations- und Grenzregimeforschung* 1(1) URL: <http://movements-journal.org/issues/01.grenzregime/04.walters-migration.governmentality.html>
- Walters, W. 2014. “Migration, Vehicles, and Politics: Three Theses on Viapolitics”, *European Journal of Social Theory*. Online First DOI: 10.1177/1368431014554859
- Walters, W. 2014. “Parrhesia Today: Drone Strikes, Fearless Speech, and the Contentious Politics of Security”, *Global Society* 28(3): 277–299.
- Andrijasevic, R. and Walters, W. (2010) “The International Organization for Migration and the International Government of Borders”, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 28(6): 977–99.
- Walters, W. (2008) “Bordering the Sea: Shipping Industries and the Policing of Stowaways”, *Borderlands e-journal*, 7(3): 1–25.
- Walters, W. (2006) “Border/Control”, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 9(2): 187–203.
- Walters, W. (2002) “Deportation, Expulsion and the International Police of Aliens”, *Citizenship Studies*, 6(3): 265–92.
- Walters, W. (2002) “Mapping Schengenland: Denaturalizing the Border”, *Environment & Planning D: Society and Space*, 20(5): 561–80.