Critical Refugee Studies and the Wars in Southeast Asia

The current Syrian crisis has alerted us once again to the plight of the tens of millions of displaced people who in recent times have been forced to seek refuge from political persecution, wars, and violence. Yet too often mainstream representations of generic “refugees” have figured them as merely objects of pity and benevolence, or in the worst cases into populations whose diasporic condition is in part a result of their own inability to survive in the modern and contemporary world. This symposium takes last year’s fortieth anniversary of the official end of the Vietnam War as an occasion to question mainstream memories and representations of the wars in Southeast Asia, while also calling attention to the resilience, alternative memories, and self-making of those who have relocated to the United States and Canada.

**Monday, March 14, 2016**

1:00 PM – 2:45 PM
Dr. David Chu
Distinguished Visitor Lecture

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Panel Discussion

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Reception

The Vivian and David Campbell Conference Facility
Munk School of Global Affairs
1 Devonshire Place

» Registration and Event Information: http://uoft.me/criticalrefugeestudies

**PANEL DISCUSSION**

**Panelists:**
- Vinh Nguyen, Assistant Professor, English and East Asian Studies, Renison University College, University of Waterloo
- Ma Vang, Assistant Professor, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts, University of California, Merced
- Bee Vang, Actor (including lead opposite Clint Eastwood in *Gran Torino*), activist, writer

**Commentator:**
- Thy Phu, Associate Professor, Department of English and Writing Studies, Western University

**Chair:**
- Takashi Fujitani, Professor & Director of the Dr. David Chu Program in Asia-Pacific Studies, Asian Institute, University of Toronto

**DR. DAVID CHU DISTINGUISHED VISITOR LECTURE**

The Vietnam War and Militarized Refuge(es): The Production of Memories of the “Generation After”

Yen Le Espiritu, Professor, Department of Ethnic Studies, UC San Diego

Focusing on the multiple recollections of the US War in Vietnam, this talk examines the ways in which the mutually constituted processes of remembering and forgetting work in the production of official discourses about empire, war, and violence as well as in the construction of refugee subjectivities. Challenging conventional ideas about memory as recuperation, this talk analyzes the production of the “postmemories” of the post-1975 generation: the young Vietnamese who were born in Vietnam or in the United States after the official end of the Vietnam War.