

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Free World?

Free World? is a major contribution to the transnational history of humanitarianism in the post-war world. Peter Gatrell shows how and why the UN, NGOs, governments and individuals embarked on a unique campaign, World Refugee Year (1959–60), in response to global refugee crises, particularly in Europe, the Middle East and the Far East. Adopted by nearly one hundred countries, the campaign galvanised public opinion and raised money by enlisting celebrities, using the mass media and recreating ‘refugee camps’ in the affluent West. *Free World?* assesses the causes and consequences of the refugee crises, locates the campaign in the broader geopolitical context of the Cold War and decolonisation and shows how it helped to inspire subsequent campaigns such as Amnesty International and Freedom from Hunger. Ultimately the book asks how those who are in a more privileged position might better reflect on their responsibilities towards refugees in the modern world.

PETER GATRELL is Professor of Economic History at the University of Manchester. His previous publications include *Homelands: War, Population and Statehood in Eastern Europe and Russia, 1918–1924* (co-edited 2004), and *Warlands: Population Resettlement and State Reconstruction in the Soviet–East European Borderlands, 1945–1950* (co-edited, 2008).

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Free World?

*The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees,
1956–1963*

Peter Gatrell

University of Manchester



Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by
Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107002401

© Peter Gatrell 2011

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2011

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Gatrell, Peter.

Free world? : the campaign to save the world's refugees, 1956–1963 / Peter
Gatrell.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-00240-1 (hardback)

1. Refugees—International cooperation—History—20th century.

2. World Refugee Year, 1959–1960. I. Title.

HV640.G38 2010

362.87'809045—dc22

2010037096

ISBN 978-1-107-00240-1 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in
this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,
or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

For Peter and Zhenia

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

There are many lives of much pain, hardship and suffering, which, having no stirring interest for any but those who lead them, are disregarded by persons who do not want thought or feeling, but who pamper their compassion and need high stimulants to rouse it.

Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	x
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xiii
Introduction: Refugee histories, refugee concern, transnational histories	1
1 Free world?	10
Introduction: a 'plan to save the refugees'	10
Migration at mid-century: the legacy of the Second World War	14
Migration at mid-century: the bigger picture	20
Displacement on a global scale	25
Varieties of captivity: Cold War, decolonisation and race	29
Freedom, affluence and anxiety	37
Conclusion	42
2 Sites of confrontation, crucibles of displacement: towards World Refugee Year	47
Introduction: refugees and politics	47
Cold War confrontation in Europe: Hungary and the 'hard core'	49
Hong Kong: a British colony meets Chinese refugees	58
Palestine: 'humanitarian relief' in lieu of politics	63
North Africa: French rule and Algerian refugees	66
Asia again: Russians in China, and Tibetan refugees	69
Conclusion	74
3 World Refugee Year: the politics of a global campaign	77
Introduction: locating 'humanitarian' concern	77
Onslaught: the British origins of World Refugee Year	79
United Nations and UNHCR	84
Stakeholders: rich and poor countries	90
God and Caesar: churches and NGOs	122
Conclusion	137
4 World Refugee Year: presences and absences	141
Introduction: elements of the campaign for WRY	141
Citizenship, celebrity and consumption	145
Cultural representations of displacement	168
	vii

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii	Contents	
	Assessing WRY	201
	Conclusion	207
5	Bricks or dynamite? Achievements, disappointments, opportunities	211
	Introduction: the roaring sixties	211
	Beyond WRY	214
	Cuba – an old-style Cold War refugee crisis	219
	Decolonisation, ‘new refugees’ and race	222
	‘After the refugees – the hungry millions’: freedom from hunger and visions of development	226
	Captivity in other guises	235
	Conclusion	238
	Conclusion	242
	Global politics, humanitarianism and refugees in the modern era	242
	<i>Appendix</i>	250
	<i>List of archives</i>	251
	<i>Index</i>	255

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Illustrations

1.1	Cover of <i>Crossbow</i> , Spring 1958 (by permission of The Bow Group)	page 11
1.2	Inside cover of <i>Crossbow</i> , Spring 1958 (by permission of The Bow Group)	12
2.1	Yul Brynner with Auguste Lindt, October 1959 (copyright UNOG Library, UNOG Archives)	58
2.2	Algerian refugees in Tunisia, March 1959 (copyright UNOG Library, UNOG Archives)	68
3.1	Peter Casson in Frobisher Bay, May 1960 (copyright UNOG Library, UNOG Archives)	105
4.1	Irish students en route from Dublin to Cork, April 1960 (copyright UNOG Library, UNOG Archives)	153
4.2	The 'refugee camp' in Trafalgar Square, April 1960 (courtesy of British Pathé Ltd)	164
4.3	Cover of <i>Onslaught</i> magazine	177
4.4–	'Family N.' in Camp Lohmühle, Lübeck, and	
4.6	after resettlement (copyright UNOG Library, UNOG Archives)	181–3
4.7–	Mrs B. in Camp Örrrel, and after resettlement	
4.8	(copyright UNOG Library, UNOG Archives)	184–5
4.9	WRY postage stamps: Austria, Chile and France	186–7
4.10	WRY postage stamps: Greece	188
4.11	First day cover, USA stamp, with Fluegel cover	188
4.12	WRY postage stamps: Yemen and Jordan	189
4.13	WRY postage stamps: Israel	191–2
4.14	First day cover – Belgian stamps, with illustration by Jean Cocteau	193
4.15–	Series of drawings by Ronald Searle (drawings	
4.17	copyright Ronald Searle 1960. Reproduced by courtesy of the Sayle Literary Agency)	194–6

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgements

This book has been made possible by librarians and archivists in a number of countries. In the UK, I wish to thank staff at the National Archives, Kew; SOAS Library and Archives, University of London; the Labour History Archive and Study Centre (People's History Museum), Manchester; the Local Studies Unit, Central Reference Library, Manchester; the LSE Library and Archives; Bristol Record Office; West Sussex Record Office; the Women's Library, London Metropolitan University; the Society of Friends Library, London; the Bodleian Library (Special Collections), Oxford; and the British Library. Special mention should be made of the ever-helpful and efficient staff at the Document Supply Unit, University of Manchester. Dr Chris Joy, archivist at Manchester High School for Girls, found relevant information on my behalf, as did Mrs Rachel Roberts at Cheltenham Ladies' College and Mrs J. Murray at North London Collegiate School, who generously sent me a copy of the school magazine.

Beyond the UK, I was helped by staff of the William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Graham Langton, Archives New Zealand, answered my questions about the WRY campaign. In the United States I am grateful to staff at the Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene, Kansas, particularly Valoise Armstrong; Randy Sowell and colleagues at the Truman Presidential Library, Independence, Missouri, including Dennis Bilger who went through the surviving papers on my behalf; Daniel Necas at the Immigration History Research Center, Minnesota; Donald Davis, Archives Director, American Friends Service Committee; and Timothy J. Meagher, W. John Shepherd, Maria R. Mazzenga and Jane Stoeffler at the Catholic University of America History Research Center and University Archives, Washington DC. I also thank staff at the National Archives and Records Administration, Maryland. I owe a particular debt to William Lefevre, Reference Archivist, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, who generously copied a great deal of material on my behalf. At the Bundesarchiv, Koblenz, I was helped

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgements

xi

by Lars Amelung and his colleagues. In Geneva I am indebted to Lee McDonald (former Head of Division), Patricia Flückiger-Livingstone, Nazely Manoukian and other staff at UNHCR's Records and Archives Division, Geneva, as well as to the staff of the World Council of Churches Library and Archives. Above all, I wish to thank Bernhardine Pejovic and Jacques Oberon at the UNOG Library, Geneva, and the team at the Records and Archives Sub-Unit, in particular Sylvie Carlon-Riera and Maria Sanchez, who went out of their way to be helpful.

I would also like to thank the students who have taken my final-year course on 'Refugees in Modern World History', particularly Ya'el Azgad, Tom Russell, Bella Weston-Baker, Esther Wilkinson and Sam Williams. My former PhD students Lisa Matthews, Joanne Laycock and Jenny Carson located additional information. I had helpful research assistance from Adrienne Huijzer in Amsterdam; my thanks to Jelke Boesten for putting us in touch.

Colleagues at the University of Manchester provided a regular sounding board and supplied me with useful leads and other advice. I am grateful to Mike Addelman, Scott Anthony, Mona Baker, Hannah Barker, Stefan Berger, Joe Bergin, Rony Brauman, Dan Brockington, Laurence Brown, Ana Carden-Coyne, Jean-Marc Dreyfus, Paulo Drinot, Gillian Evans, Till Geiger, Anindita Ghosh, Nina Glick Schiller, Yoram Gorlizki, Jonathan Harwood, Max Jones, James Mansell, Frank Mort, Lorraine Pannett, Jen Peterson, Steven Pierce, Pedro Ramos Pinto, Marcia Pointon, Steve Reyna, Julie-Marie Strange, James Thompson, Galin Tihanov, Rebecca Whitehead, Janet Wolff and Yangwen Zheng. Bertrand Taithe and Penny Summerfield deserve especial thanks for giving large chunks of the manuscript a careful reading and helping me to clarify my ideas, although they are not responsible for any shortcomings in my work. Beyond my own institution I should like to thank Jennifer Amos, Pamela Ballinger, Nick Baron, Mathias Beer, Frank Caestecker, Jane Caplan, Susan Carruthers, Patricia Clavin, David Clayton, Daniel Cohen, Ann Curthoys, Richard Davies, Jérôme Elie, Ilana Feldman, Sheila Fitzpatrick, Rosaria Franco, Eleonory Gilburd, Valerie Grove, Odd Hatløy, Julie Hessler, Anna Holian, John Horne, Janet Howarth, Andy Janco, Tracey MacDonald, Nick Mansfield, Chi-Kwan Mark, Jan Montefiore, Klaus Neumann, David A. Nichols, Jochen Oltmer, Glen Peterson, Pavel Polian, Jessica Reinisch, Silvia Salvatici, Clare Saunders, Caroline Shaw, Ben Shephard, Martin Smok, Amy Staples, Johannes-Dieter Steinert, John Strachan, Mary Vincent, Lora Wildenthal and Hilary Young for helpful comments, information and useful advice about possible leads to pursue. I should like to add a special word of thanks to Stephen and Sandy Batalden who generously

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - *Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963*

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii Acknowledgements

came to the rescue when the disruption to international flights in April 2010 turned a thought-provoking conference on 'The refugee in the post-war world' into an extended stopover in Arizona. I apologise if I have inadvertently forgotten anyone.

Audiences at seminars or workshops at the University of London's Centre for Contemporary British History, Trinity College Dublin, the European Social Science History Conference, the Research Centre for Cosmopolitan Cultures at the University of Manchester, the European Studies Seminar at the University of Oxford and the annual conference of the American Historical Association engaged with issues that emerged from this study. Three anonymous referees provided helpful comments which forced me to think hard about the subject. At Cambridge University Press the staunch support of Michael Watson meant a great deal to me; I am also grateful to Chloe Howell, Assistant Editor (History), and to Matt Davies for their help in seeing the manuscript through the press. *Free World?* is one outgrowth of a major research project on population displacement in Russia and Eastern Europe, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The School of Arts, Histories and Cultures, University of Manchester provided me with additional research leave. I owe a particular debt to Sir Christopher Chataway, Sir Timothy Raison and Mr Raymond Lloyd for sharing their memories of World Refugee Year. James Brabazon responded to my enquiry about his play, 'People of Nowhere', and Ronald Searle kindly gave me permission to use some of the drawings he made in European camps during a visit he made with Kaye Webb in 1959.

As I finish this book I recall conversations with many friends who encouraged me along the way. They include Betty Croston, Heide Connell, Petra Dorman, David Denison and Elizabeth Price, Heide and Jon Harwood, Martha Katz, Julia and Nick Mansfield, and Anthea and Gordon Millar. Erika and David Drucker welcomed me in Geneva, and Peter and Zhenia Shoenberg offered hospitality and warm friendship in London and Cambridge. Jane Gatrell helped most of all by providing constant support, not least by reading a draft of the book. I thank her and our children Dave and Lizzy Gatrell. Their love and generosity of spirit are a source of lasting happiness.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Abbreviations

ACEN	Assembly of Captive European Nations
AFSC	American Friends Service Committee
BCAR	British Council for Aid to Refugees
BVFK	Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CIMADE	Comité Inter-Mouvement Auprès des Evacués
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DPs	Displaced Persons
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFHC	Freedom from Hunger Campaign
ICARS	Inter-Church Aid and Refugee Service
ICMC	International Catholic Migration Commission
ICEM	Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IRO	International Refugee Organisation
JAI	Jami'at al Islam
JDC	Joint Distribution Committee
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
LRCS	League of Red Cross Societies
NCCC	National Conference of Catholic Charities
NCWC	National Catholic Welfare Conference
SCF	Save the Children Fund
UN	United Nations
UNA	United Nations Association
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNKRA	United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency
UNREF	United Nations Refugee Fund
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-00240-1 - Free World?: The Campaign to Save the World's Refugees, 1956-1963

Peter Gatrell

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv List of abbreviations

USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USCR	United States Committee for Refugees
USEP	United States Escapee Program
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
WCC	World Council of Churches
WRY	World Refugee Year