

North American Diasporic Experiences

Contested Entry: The first wave of Chilean exiles in Canada, 1973-1975

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For this conference, I propose to present on the arrival of the first wave of Chilean refugees in Canada following the coup d'état of September 11, 1973, as well as the treatment of this event in the Canadian English, French and Spanish language press. An examination of print media reports on both the coup and the admission of a few hundred refugees in January, 1974, reveals the controversy that surrounded these events. In the context of the Cold War, the admission of perceived leftist exiles provoked a debate about the suitability of letting in refugees who might be subversive. At the same time, there are many notable examples of members of the general public banding together to advocate for the admission of people fleeing the military crackdown that followed the overthrow of Salvador Allende's government. A comparison of the two sides of this debate reveals a great deal about the divided nature of Canadian public opinion at the time.

In addition, I will provide some opinions regarding the impact and importance of the admission of Chilean refugees. I believe an argument can be made that the polemical reception of the Chileans was a major catalyst in spurring the federal government to formalize the admission of refugees through legislation passed in 1976. In terms of public impact, I believe the Chilean refugees were instrumental in establishing organizations that later became the infrastructure to help in the resettlement of other Latin American exiles and immigrants. The presentation will conclude on this note.

Latino/a Artist-Educators and their Role in Creating Authentic Democratic Spheres

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As a graduate student in the interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in U.S. Latino Cultural Studies at the University at Albany's Department of Latin American, Caribbean, and U.S. Latino Studies, I am eager to present the initial findings of my doctoral dissertation research. Participant observation and semi-structured interviews are the primary methods of data collection in this qualitative study. An initial exploratory project, the investigator is building a profile of "Latino Artist Educators" in South Florida (Miami) to identify commonalities and key divergences.

The presentation will consist of four principal sections: 1) theoretical framework which has shaped the conceptualization of this research; 2) research objectives and design/methodology; 3) data analysis and outcomes; and 4) solicited feedback from participants/audience members. The foundational pillars are found in Sonia Nieto's work on what motivates teachers, along with bell hooks' seminal work, *Teaching to Transgress*, the work of critical educational theorists such as Henry Giroux, Paolo

Friere and Donaldo Macedo, and the cultural cross-connections espoused in Gloria Anzaldúa's groundbreaking *Borderlands/La Frontera*. Significantly, the researcher's own experience as an artist-educator brings a feminist research perspective; through a direct familiarity with both the artistic milieu and educational backdrop of Miami, the tacit epistemologies are made transparent. The investigator hypothesizes that the unique perspective of being Latino/a—along with being both artists and educators—is significant, resulting in numerous positive outcomes. In these "border crossers," we find cultural advocates, community mentors, dynamic motivators, and progressive leaders, now needed more than ever to transform our schools and public community spaces into truly democratic spheres.

"Mon identité c'est pas une identité Haïtienne en totale": Gender, Race and Haitian Transnational Activism in Montreal, Canada, 1960-2002

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This paper is concerned with Haitian transnational identities in relation to gender, race, and nation after 1960 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti and Montreal, Quebec, Canada. I use the oral histories and personal archives of women activists in Port-au-Prince and Montreal to guide a preliminary investigation into the historical meaning of Haitian transnational identities. That is, what did it mean to be a Haitian living "between" Haiti and Canada from 1960 to 2002? How did the "local" experiences—the day-to-day negotiations of race, gender, class and nation—in post-1960 Montreal inform Haitian women's activism, and in turn influence the development of collective Haitian transnational identities? And in what ways may this narrative further inform our understanding of transnationalism between Haiti and North America?

Between 1957 and 1986, state sanctioned violence against women in Haiti was a catalyst for Haitian women's migration. As immigration increased to Montreal in the 1960s, Haitian women faced racial discrimination as the dominant black ethnic group in the nation. To defend their rights in both Haiti and Canada, Haitian women used activism to reconcile their compromised citizenship as a black woman.

By looking at the way these women organize around issues ranging from racial profiling and fair immigration policies, to feminist practice and affordable childcare, we see how narratives of activism also reflect historical understandings of "blackness," "feminism" and "nation," all of which inform Haitian transnational identities. Additionally, I maintain that the "local" experiences of these women as activists force them to construct multiple and alternative meanings within a shared experience of the Haitian diaspora between 1960 and 2002 in Haiti and Canada.