Estamos Aquí, We Are Here: Latinx Struggles for Social Justice in the Greater Toronto Area

by

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Abstract
The Latin American or Latinx population is one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in Canada. Yet, there is a persistent lack of spaces and opportunities for Latinx people to gather, build community and mobilize politically in one of the most diverse urban centres in Canada, the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). At the same time, Latinx people have worked against this invisibility by carving out spaces in the city through the non-profit sector, where they have established numerous organizations, programs, networks and grassroots collectives. It is well documented how neoliberalization has negatively impacted the non-profit sector by coopting community agendas and suppressing social justice activism, and these effects have also been seen in the Latin American-serving non-profit sector. What is not well understood is how Latinx women and non-binary people negotiate and resist not only neoliberalization, but multiple forces of oppression, like heterosexism, racism and settler colonialism, that are interconnected and embedded within the non-profit sector and migrant political organizing. The objectives guiding dissertation aim to explore how Latinx women and non-binary people serving as community workers or (LCWs) contend with, and challenge these intersecting systems and geographies of domination, within and beyond the GTA’s non-profit sector. These
objectives are addressed using Chicana Latina Feminist Epistemologies, testimonio methodology, and multiple qualitative methods including 37 in-depth, semi-structured interviews, a workshop, participant observation and grey literature analysis. The findings reveal that LCWs, while constrained by white neoliberal and hetero-patriarchal non-profit structures and local political systems, they engage in innovative socio-spatial practices that transform urban space and advance social justice in the GTA. Furthermore, the findings of this dissertation underscore the spatiality of Latinx political life, and demonstrate how Latinx people dynamically create alternative geographies that are anchored in principles of reciprocity, relationality and a deep commitment to radical, decolonial and feminist politics.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Research Context

“Geography is not, however, secure and unwavering; we produce space, we produce its meanings, and we work very hard to make geography what it is” (McKittrick, 2006, p. xi).

“We are invisible, but free to write the stories, poetry, and plays that become Latina representation in Canada” (Pendleton-Jiménez, 2008, p.123).

Where are all the Latin American people in Toronto? Although the Latin American population in Canada is one of the fastest growing diasporas, there appears to be a persistent and troubling lack of visibility of Latin American people and spaces in a city that declares that diversity is its strength. This realization became even more apparent to me in the spring of 2015, while I was collaboratively teaching a course on women of colour feminisms for Poder (formerly known as MUJER)¹, a local, feminist Latin American non-profit organization. Upon joining the course, students would exclaim how they never encountered a space like it before – a space that reflected their many intersecting identities – Black, Latinx, queer, woman, Indigenous, Brown, non-binary, transgender, immigrant, refugee, bilingual, Spanish speaker, English speaker, working class, first generation, second generation and mother. Each class we explored cross-cutting themes of gender, race, class, sexuality, identity, colonialism and resistance by connecting our lived experiences to feminist literature and media. One evening, two students bravely shared their stories of violence and exclusion, expressing a kind of rage that resonated with everyone in the room. As people nodded, shed tears, held hands, embraced, another student quietly declared, “Estamos aquí.” We are here.

Indeed, estamos aquí. Latin American or Latinx people – people who identify across a spectrum of gender identities, including non-binary and transgender, and trace their roots to Central and South America, Mexico and the Caribbean – are here and have been living and working in Toronto for more than fifty years now. Yet, community members feel compelled to

¹ Poder translated from Spanish to English means “power” and is the new name for the Toronto-based, Latin American feminist organization formerly known as MUJER, meaning “woman” in Spanish.
articulate it. “Estamos aquí” has become a rallying call painted on banners, printed on posters and shared across social media by Latinx activists. In this way, “estamos aquí” affirms a Latinx presence in a city where they often go unrecognized by dominant white Canadian society and the state. However, “estamos aquí” desires something else that cannot be pacified with tokenistic inclusion. It demands visibility on another set of terms not offered by the white settler, hetero-patriarchal and neoliberal status quo. It aspires for an alternative social and geographic order grounded in relationality, interconnectedness, reciprocity and love. Ultimately, “estamos aquí” signals the persistence of Latinx life on an alternative spatial plane. In other words, “estamos aquí” articulates an alternative Latinx geography that is transformative and disrupts geographies of domination (geographies of white settler colonialism, heteropatriarchy and neoliberalism).

I begin with the story of “estamos aquí” to contextualize the inspiration and naming of this dissertation. In its broadest sense, this dissertation, entitled Estamos Aquí, We Are Here: Latinx Struggles for Social Justice in the Greater Toronto Area, is an interdisciplinary study of Latinx urban political life in a major Canadian urban centre – the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). It brings together Latinx Studies, critical geographies, feminist and anti-colonial literatures to understand how diasporic Latinx peoples alter dominant urban landscapes in their struggles for social justice. I focus on the geographies of Latinx women and non-binary people (their experiences, negotiations, spaces, and practices), who work across the non-profit sector to promote the social, economic and political wellbeing of diverse Latinx communities in the GTA. I do this because Latinx women and non-binary people are the backbone of Latinx community organizing, yet receive little to no recognition for their contributions to urban life from mainstream Latin American, Hispanic and white Canadian political actors, organizations and institutions.

These observations are not new. For example, Luisa Veronis’ (2006, 2007, 2010) research thoroughly documents the social, political and spatial marginalization Latin Americans experience in neoliberal Toronto. She demonstrates how Latin Americans resist this marginalization by collectively organizing across diverse nationalities and staking a claim to citizenship through participating in the non-profit sector as well as building ethnically distinct spaces in the city. Veronis’ (2006) work has been foundational to understanding the impacts of neoliberal restructuring on Latin American communities in Toronto, especially the movement from social justice advocacy to service provision in non-profit organizations.
Landolt, Goldring & Bernhard (2011), echo these findings and expose the gendered dynamics of this shift. During the late 1980s and 1990s, Latin American women’s organizations and collectives were out-competed for government funding by larger mainstream, male-dominated Latin American organizations, leaving many feminist activists unemployed and their work depoliticized (Landolt et al., 2011; Landolt & Goldring, 2009). It is important to note that this shift was part of a larger pattern of neoliberalization across the city that structurally disadvantaged women of colour through inequitable access to social resources like housing, legal aid, child care, and advocacy, and through employment precarity and discrimination (Khosla, 2003).

Yet, Latin American women still sought to create alternatives to the Latin American and white heteropatriarchy by fostering spaces of mutual support, feminist education and advocacy. This can be seen in the work of the Latin American Women’s Collective (LAWC 1983 -1990), the Latin American Coalition to End Violence (LACEV 1992-2000) and Poder (MUJER 2002-2015; Poder 2018-present) (Gajardo, 2009; Landolt & Goldring, 2009; San Martin, 1998). Despite their important interventions in challenging sexism and gender-based violence, Latin American women’s organizations have struggled internally with racism, homophobia and transphobia (Landolt & Goldring, 2009; Lobo-Molnar, 2012; San Martin, 1998). The voices and lives of queer Latinas, Afro-Latinas, trans-Latinas, Indigenous and Brown Latinas, as well as non-binary and transgender Latinx people have not been adequately foregrounded in both Latin American women’s organizations and mainstream Latin American non-profits (Landolt & Goldring, 2009; Lobo-Molnar, 2012). It is unclear how these critiques have been taken up by current Latinx non-profit actors, especially from the standpoint of people identifying with under-represented groups who negotiate different forms of oppression (i.e. racism, heterosexism) daily while working across a neoliberalized non-profit sector.

This dissertation aims to address this gap by engaging with the life stories or testimonios (Latina Feminist Group, 2001) of under-represented and structurally disadvantaged group members, especially queer, Black, Brown, and Indigenous Latinx women and non-binary Latinx people involved in community organizing in the GTA. By taking this approach, this dissertation works to gain insight into the everyday workings of Latinx non-profit workers and activists to understand how they strive for social justice, the challenges they face and the ways they negotiate and creatively transform these challenges. In this way, this dissertation is
concerned with fostering more equitable community organizing practices that reflect the aspirations of differently marginalized Latinx activists.

This dissertation also aims to contribute to critical scholarship on non-profit sector neoliberalization, migrant politics and citizenship by taking an intersectional and decolonial approach to exploring Latinx politics in the GTA. I elaborate on this theoretical framework and key literature informing this dissertation in the sub-section below. I refer to this theoretical framework and literature in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 to explicate my research findings. I present findings in this dissertation as three separate manuscripts that have been or will be submitted to peer-reviewed journals for publication. At the end of this chapter I provide an outline of my dissertation and describe in more detail where each paper has been submitted or where I am planning to submit it to.

Exploring Latinx Urban Politics Using an Intersectional Feminist and Decolonial Lens

Critical scholars, especially critical human geographers, have paid significant attention to neoliberalism – a multi-faceted process and ideology involving the deregulation of capitalist markets, privatization and devolution of social welfare (Brenner, Peck & Theodore, 2010; Jessop, 2002; Springer, 2010). The non-profit sector has been a key unit of analysis for geographers studying neoliberalism, as it is situated at the intersection of the state, private enterprise and local communities, making it an integral site of urban political life (Fyfe & Milligan, 2003; LeRoux, 2007). By taking this approach, scholars have shown that neoliberalization has reshaped the non-profit sector, and meanings of citizenship (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Jessop, 2002; Mitchell, 2001). Across the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, neoliberalization has led to non-profit, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) shifting their function from social justice advocacy to service provision and targeted programs to encourage individual self-sufficiency (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Mitchell, 2001; Trudeau, 2008; Veronis, 2010). Therefore, neoliberalization co-opts local community agendas and pushes NGOs to build good, self-reliant, responsible and entrepreneurial (read: neoliberal) citizens (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Trudeau, 2012).

At the same time, scholars have argued that neoliberalism works in complex, divergent ways, leaving room for non-profit actors to contest co-optation and other neoliberal effects (Darby,
These contradictions of non-profit sector neoliberalization have been explored in relation to migrant communities, whereby NGOs partially preserve their autonomy by not refusing services to non-status migrants who would be excluded under state regulation or by granting migrants a channel for political participation (Bhuyan, 2012; Trudeau, 2012). Despite the important attention scholars have given to neoliberalism and its impacts on migrant communities and politics, neoliberalism has mainly been understood as a singular capitalist process that impacts racialized groups, like “migrants.” Roberts and Mahtani (2010) argue that “it is essential to understand neoliberalism as a facet of racist society that works to both reinforce the racial structure of society, while also modifying the processes of racialization” (p.250). In other words, neoliberalism must be understood as mutually constituted with racism, not merely as a process that has racist effects (Davis, 2007; Roberts & Mahtani, 2010). Ultimately, Roberts and Mahtani (2010) call for more analyses that “race neoliberalism” in human geography (p.250).

I take up Roberts and Mahtani’s (2010) call in this dissertation by using an intersectional feminist and decolonial lens that anchors neoliberalism within multiple, mutually constituted forces of oppression, particularly racism, heterosexism, and settler colonialism. More specifically, I draw on Black, Chicana and Latina intersectional feminist and decolonial theory (Anzaldúa, 2007, 2015; Crenshaw, 1991; Hill Collins, 2015; Isoke, 2013; Latina Feminist Group, 2001) to deepen studies on non-profit sector neoliberalization and migrant politics. I understand intersectionality as an analytical frame rooted in Black women’s experiences that exposes and challenges how racism, sexism, classism and other systems of oppression are mutually reinforcing (Crenshaw, 1991; Hill Collins, 2015). I especially draw upon Isoke’s (2013) intersectional and spatial approach to understanding urban Black women’s feminist politics in my analysis of racialized Latinx women and non-binary people’s activism in the GTA.

Isoke’s (2013) in-depth study of Black women’s politics of resistance in Newark, New Jersey provides a much-needed alternative viewpoint on the workings of neoliberalism. She understands neoliberalism as mutually constituted and intersecting with multiple forces of oppression like white supremacy and heteropatriarchy, that together form structural intersectionality. She demonstrates how African American women and Afro-Latinas, as geographic, political subjects, negotiate structural intersectionality in their everyday lives and non-profit community work. Isoke argues that these women defy a white neoliberal hetero-
patriarchal social order by foregrounding the voices and experiences of low-income, queer Black youth and women in their community organizing practices. Through creative methods of storytelling, hip hop and public protest, urban Black women in Newark build alternative community spaces and supports as well as foster political consciousness and activism among structurally disadvantaged youth. Overall, Isoke (2013) enriches analyses on non-profit sector neoliberalization by showing how Black women transform urban spaces by mobilizing an intersectional, Black, feminist and queer politic that is connected to past and present Black struggles for liberation.

Isoke’s (2013) compelling intersectional and spatial approach to the city also opens conversations on the ways people of colour are implicated in landscapes of settler colonialism. Although this is not the focus of her work, Isoke’s tracing of racial violence from Newark’s beginnings rooted in Indigenous dispossession and trans-Atlantic slavery, to neoliberal times, underscores how the past is present, and shapes current experiences of Black people and non-Black people of colour. In this way, Isoke (2013) shows that Black people and non-Black people of colour, although differently racialized and oppressed, must contend with intersecting power systems, including settler colonialism, and can buy into or challenge the white dominant social order.


Bannerji (2000) and Thobani (2007) understand racialized migrants as systematically oppressed in relation to white citizens, but also as political subjects that negotiate interlocking power systems. They argue that although racialized migrants have engaged in anti-racist and anti-colonial political organizing that disrupts the status quo, pressures to gain membership
and recognition within Canadian white settler society have led them to reinforce exclusionary notions of citizenship that denigrate Indigenous peoples and depoliticize movements for social justice. While racialized migrant groups are not the same as earlier European settlers, at times they seek parity to them by presenting themselves as good, responsible and productive peoples who rightfully belong to Canada because of their contributions to building the nation (Phung, 2011). Although racialized migrants are complicit in the perpetuation of settler colonialism, more analyses are needed to understand how they can counter it and work towards decolonization and a decolonial future. This is precisely what this dissertation seeks to do, by exploring the unique and complex case of Latin American migrants who contend with, and are positioned differently in racial hierarchies across Latin America (Cahill, 1994; Graham, 1990; Quijano, 2007), but arrive to settler colonial contexts where they are a structurally disadvantaged minority (Pendleton-Jiménez, 2008).

While there is no singular definition for decolonization, Indigenous and anti-colonial scholars have offered compelling explanations (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Alfred, 2005, 2010; Hunt & Holmes, 2015) that I engage with in this dissertation. Tuck and Yang (2012) argue that decolonization must involve the repatriation of Indigenous land or else serves only as a metaphor that perpetuates settler colonialism. Alfred (2005, 2010) proposes that decolonization involves Indigenous and non-Indigenous people rejecting white settler ways of being and instead, engaging with Indigenous knowledge systems and building respectful relationships to each other, the land and all of Creation. Hunt and Holmes (2015) offer up a “both/and” approach that emphasizes the importance of non-Indigenous people supporting Indigenous people’s struggles for self-determination through overt acts like public demonstrations or blockades, to everyday actions in the intimate spaces they occupy. They argue for a decolonial queer politic, where race, sexuality, gender and settler colonialism are understood as mutually constituted. In this way, a decolonial queer politic goes beyond calls for inclusion to challenging settler colonial narratives in national holidays, education, media, popular culture and everyday conversations (Hunt & Holmes, 2015).

The sub-discipline of Black geographies has also provided insightful explorations into what a decolonial future could look like that I draw on in this dissertation. A Black geographies framework is grounded in Black worldviews that hold alternative notions of space, politics and humanity that make a decolonial future possible (Mikittrick, 2006, 2013; McKittrick & Woods, 2007). According to McKittrick (2006), spaces are socially produced and organized in ways
that reinforce the dominant social and geographic order, but that these arrangements are not “secure and unwavering” (p. xi). Indeed, Black and racialized people are spatial subjects that can create alternative geographies that exist alongside of, and disrupt, dominant geographies (McKittrick, 2006; McKittrick & Woods, 2007). For example, the Blues tradition – a Black knowledge system, epistemology, movement and geography, emanating from the American South - holds a desire for place rooted in reciprocity and social justice, not exploitation and commodification (McKittrick & Woods, 2007). Furthermore, McKittrick’s (2013) notion of plantation futures, a “conceptualization of time-space that tracks the plantation toward the prison and the impoverished and destroyed city sectors,” requires “decolonial thinking” so that geographies of racial violence are not replicated and instead makes Black life possible (p.2-3). Both McKittrick (2013) and Woods (2007) call for a relational understanding of humanity, which ultimately allows for marginalized communities to work across difference towards a decolonial future.

Although decolonial thinkers across Indigenous Studies and Black geographies (Alfred, 2005, 2010; Hunt & Holmes, 2015; McKittrick, 2006, 2013; McKittrick & Woods, 2007; Tuck & Yang, 2012) have provided critical starting points on what it means to build a decolonial future, this literature (to my knowledge) has not been used in conjunction with Latinx decolonial scholarship in the discipline of geography to explore how Latinx people work to actualize social change in Canada.

Specifically, the work of prolific Chicana scholar, Gloria Anzaldúa (2002a, 2002b, 2007, 2015), has not been seriously engaged with in geography, despite the intrinsically geographical nature of her borderlands theory and epistemology. Anzaldúa’s work has been foundational to Chicaxn2 and Latinx Studies, and provides a compelling framework for understanding Latinx people’s fraught relationships to place in the Americas. She does this by excavating how European colonization, imposed mestizaje (racial mixture) and U.S occupation in Aztlán (the Chicanx ancestral homeland) have led to the disruption of Chicanx and Latinx relationships to each other and the land. She also discusses the complexities of Latinx identities, such that Latinx people embody both colonizer and colonized, and can reinforce European colonial notions of race, gender and sexuality that oppress Indigenous, Black, Brown, queer Chicanas.

2 Chicanx is a gender-neutral term to refer to people of Mexican and Mexican American descent who identify across a spectrum of gender identities, including transgender and non-binary people. Chicanx is used to challenge the gender binary embedded in the conventional Chicana/o term.
and Latinas (Anzaldúa, 2002, 2007). Therefore, Anzaldúa historicizes the multifaceted and heterogeneous aspects of Latinidad (Latinx identity) that shape contemporary Latinx politics – a topic that has been taken up by scholars like Alcoff (2005), Oboler (1992), Pendleton-Jiménez (2008) and more recently Pulido (2017).

Yet, Anzaldúa’s (2007) borderlands theory and epistemology also points to the ways that Latinx people defy the dominant cartographic and social order, and create alternative, decolonial geographies. For example, Anzaldúa (2007) shows how people living in the borderlands – a physical, cultural and psychic space – make home and collectively organize to bring into being El Mundo Zurdo (the Left-Handed World) – a place for collaboration and solidarity that does not reinscribe colonial violence. Her concept – the Coyolxauhqui imperative – also provides a window into the ways that Latinx people can break from oppressive traditions and remake themselves and society through healing and social justice activism (Anzaldúa, 2015). Ultimately, Anzaldúa (2007, 2015) is instructive for understanding the tensions and potentialities of Latinx struggles for place and a decolonial future in colonized territory, which is precisely why I bring her work in conversation with critical literature in geography and other decolonial thinkers.

It is evident that there is a plethora of research on the impacts of neoliberalism on the non-profit sector and immigrant communities (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Mitchell, 2001; Trudeau, 2008, 2012; Veronis, 2006a, 2010), but less is known about how racialized migrants contend with other forces of oppression in tandem with neoliberalism, like heterosexism, racism and settler colonialism. Bannerji (2000), Thobani (2007) and Isoke (2013) draw attention to how people of colour are implicated within these interconnected power systems, but it is unclear how Latinx people, as a heterogeneous diaspora with its own history of European colonization, understand their role in settler colonialism and decolonization in Canada. Furthermore, despite the profound interventions of decolonial scholarship across critical race theory, Indigenous Studies and Black geographies, connections between these literatures and Latinx decolonial scholarship, specifically Anzaldúan theory, remain underdeveloped in geography. Therefore, more research is needed that connects Indigenous, Black and Latinx decolonial literatures, and human geography, as well as attends to the workings of multiple, intersecting power systems to better understand Latinx people’s experiences in Canada.
This dissertation aims to address this research gap by using an intersectional and decolonial approach to provide an in-depth analysis of Latinx urban politics and geographies. I focus on the experiences and perspectives of Latinx Community Workers (LCWs) – a network of racialized, Black, Brown, Indigenous, Latinx women, queer and non-binary people who work across the non-profit sector to promote the wellbeing of Latinx communities in the GTA. I do this because, as mentioned earlier, these groups of Latinx people are routinely made invisible and denied space by mainstream Latin American non-profit actors, and by white Canadian society. This reality has left researchers, non-profit actors (administrators, board members, funders), and municipal government actors (city staff, politicians) with an incomplete picture of Latinx people’s complex identities, socioeconomic needs, politics and social justice goals. Without a fuller picture of Latinx urban life, policies and practices aimed at “the Latin American community” in the GTA, will fail to advance the political power and wellbeing of LCWs and the communities they identify with, and advocate for. In response, this dissertation aims to provide insight into the vast diversity and contributions of the Latinx diaspora in the GTA to work towards developing scholarship and practice that aligns with the social justice ambitions of racialized Latinx women, queer and non-binary people. In the following sub-section, I outline in more detail key contributions my dissertation makes to three areas of scholarship and practice.

Contributions to Scholarship and Practice

This dissertation aims to contribute to the following areas of scholarship and practice:

1) **Neoliberalization, the non-profit sector and activism:** By engaging with intersectional feminist literature, especially the work of Isoke (2013), and connecting it to different strands of anti-colonial thought across critical race theory (Bannerji, 2000; Thobani, 2007), Black geographies (McKittrick & Woods, 2007), Indigenous Studies (Alfred, 2005, 2010; Hunt & Holmes, 2015; Tuck & Yang, 2012) and Latinx Studies (Anzaldúa, 2007, 2015), I craft an intersectional and decolonial lens to understand how neoliberalization has impacted the non-profit sector and activism in relation to Latinx communities in the GTA. This approach takes up and builds on Roberts and Mahtani’s (2010) call for more analyses that race neoliberalism, as I understand neoliberalization as a fundamentally raced process that is mutually reinforced by other systems of
oppression like heterosexism and settler colonialism. Previous studies mainly examined neoliberalization’s effects on the non-profit sector and activism, without accounting for how it operates jointly with racism and settler colonialism to reify white dominance. My study tackles this gap directly by demonstrating how neoliberalization works in tandem with racism, heterosexism and settler colonialism in complex ways to disenfranchise racialized Latinx people. I show how these forces work together to deny racialized Latinxs full citizenship, fracture their communities and depoliticize their activism. However, taking an intersectional and decolonial approach to this research also allows me to foreground the voices, knowledges and resistance practices of Black, Brown, and Indigenous Latinx women and non-binary community workers and activists. By looking to the lived and embodied experiences of LCWs for direction, this dissertation contributes to a more profound understanding of how neoliberalization and other oppressive systems can be disrupted and transformed. In this way, this research shares critical lessons on social justice organizing that are valuable to community workers, activists, researchers and educators within and outside the academy. Overall, using an intersectional and decolonial lens to understand the effects of neoliberalization on the non-profit sector and activism, provides a crucial intervention into debates on neoliberalism that have dominated critical social science scholarship, especially human geography.

2) Geography: This dissertation contributes to the discipline of Geography by bringing Latinx Studies into conversation with human geography to understand Latinx women and non-binary people as spatial and political subjects that actively negotiate and transform geographies of domination in their everyday lives in urban Canada. In this way, my project follows in the footsteps of renowned geographer Laura Pulido, whose work has been pivotal to connecting Ethnic Studies, especially Chicana/x Studies, to human geography in her research on Mexicans in the US (Pulido, 1996, 2006; Kun & Pulido, 2013). Despite the powerful contributions Pulido has made, and more recently Muñoz (2016), by engaging with the histories, experiences and politics of Latinx people using spatial and Latinx theory, there is more research needed that foregrounds Latinx people in the diaspora in Geography. Geography, with several important exceptions (Pulido, 1996, 2006, 2017; Muñoz, 2016; Cravey, 2003; Carter, 2014; Price, 2012; Veronis, 2006a, 2006b, 2007) has mainly considered “Latin Americans” in “Latin America.” This can especially be seen in its major subfield of Latin American(ist)
geography that overwhelmingly focuses on “Latin Americans” south of the US-Mexico border, not the diaspora outside of what is now known as Latin America. There are two major implications of this theorization of “Latin America” and “Latin Americans”: First, by primarily focusing on Latin Americans “over there,” but not “here,” suggests that Latin Americans in the US and Canada are absent and un-geographic, only holding a spatiality in their countries of origin. In this way, Latin American(ist) geography reifies the social and spatial marginalization of Latin American people who live in white settler societies. Second, by understanding Latin Americans north and south as separate, fixed groups fails to account for ongoing, complex, transnational historical, cultural, political and familial connections between Latin American communities across the hemisphere. This in turn, creates a troubling separation between Latin Americans and overlooks critical social, political and economic relationships connecting north and south. The “overwhelming whiteness of the discipline” and its continued lack of meaningful engagement with Latinx Studies and Chicanx Studies may be to blame for this oversight (Pulido, 2017, p.2). My dissertation seeks to make a critical intervention into Geography by connecting Latinx people’s experiences in Canada to histories of racial violence in Latin America and highlighting how they continue to haunt the diaspora. In this way, I understand Latinx people’s experiences and geographies as traversing and interlinked across a hemisphere, not separate, fixed, or contained by the US-Mexico border. I also contribute to Geography by taking up Pulido’s (2017) critique of the lack of study on relationships between “minoritized populations” in Geography (p.8). More specifically, she highlights how debates around settler colonialism in Geography have predominantly involved studying white-Indigenous relationships, not relationships between non-native people of colour and Indigenous people (Pulido, 2017). My dissertation directly tackles this gap in Geography by examining how Latinx people negotiate settler colonialism in their enactments of citizenship and struggles for social justice. Lastly, this study contributes to the emerging sub-discipline of Latinx Geographies, which foregrounds and connects the voices of Latinx people across the US, Canada and Latin America. I do this by engaging with Anzaldúan theory, which is geographical, but has not been seriously taken up in the discipline, and connecting it to Black, Indigenous and critical geographies to explain how Latinx women and non-binary people can create alternative, decolonial and feminist geographies in urban Canada.
3) *Latinx experiences in Canada and the United States*: Although this research takes place in Canada, I contribute to Latinx scholarship in Canada and the US by interrogating the historical and contemporary social, economic and political factors that underlie how Latinx people differentially form identities and enact citizenship. I do this by paying attention to how European colonial notions of race and gender continue to shape Latinx identities, and by exploring how Latinx identities are reformulated within white settler contexts for different political ends. Furthermore, I understand Latinx diasporic peoples as a structurally disadvantaged group, but with complex internal differences; and as complicit in settler colonialism, but with a significant stake in building a decolonial future. By taking this standpoint, this research adds nuance to current literature on Latinx experiences in Canada and the US, which has not comprehensively investigated the connections between Latinx identity formation, Latinx political practices, settler colonialism and decolonization. While there is a relatively small but growing literature on Latinx experiences in Canada, there is a significant body of literature on Latinx identities, politics and histories in the US. However, this US-based research does not engage directly with the politics of settler colonialism (Pulido, 2017). This project aims to address this gap and shed light on under-represented Latinx voices in Canada by engaging with the testimonios of Latinx women and non-binary community workers whose voices have not been sufficiently engaged with in academia, mainstream Latin American politics or broader Canadian politics despite their critical role in urban political life.

Overall, this dissertation provides a timely contribution to critical scholarship and social justice practice, especially in relation to geography, Latinx Studies and Latinx politics. In the last ten years, incredible efforts have been made by a new generation of Latinx thinkers, writers, artists and activists to advance radical politics and express the intricate fullness of Latinx life in Canada. As Pendleton-Jiménez (2008) powerfully reminds us, “We are invisible, but free to write the stories, poetry, and plays that become Latina representation in Canada” (p.123). While discounted and made invisible by mainstream Latin American organizations and Canadian society, Latinx women and non-binary people have been busy creating vibrant spaces for community organizing and the arts that foreground Black, Brown, Indigenous, queer and transgender Latinx voices, ultimately redefining Latinx identity and politics.
For example, Poder, a Latinx feminist organization in Toronto discussed earlier, has fostered spaces for community education, relationship-building and healing through its Decolonizing Latinx Feminisms course, meet-ups, support groups, discussion panels, dance parties, marches and direct actions. They along with other relatively new Latinx social justice-oriented organizations like the Latinx, Afro-Latin-America, Abya Yala Education Network (LAEN) and the Latin American Queer Education Project (LAQEP), have provided a necessary intervention into mainstream politics by amplifying under-represented voices at various levels of decision-making across non-profit organizations, municipal government and school boards.

Furthermore, artists like Fiya Bruxa (graffiti artist and playwright), Lido Pimienta (musician, illustrator and actor), Janet Romero-Leiva (visual artist and writer), Samay Arcentales Cajas (filmmaker and visual artist) and Victoria Mata (choreographer and dancer) have gained increasing prominence in Toronto showcasing their work that delves into issues of Latinx identity, gender, sexuality, indigeneity, Blackness, colonialism, environmental justice and liberation. Pimienta’s recent win of the prestigious Polaris Prize in 2017 is especially emblematic of this moment in radical Latinx politics in the GTA, as she is a Colombian-born, Afro-Latina, Indigenous and queer artist and community activist who avidly speaks out against sexism and white supremacy in Canada.

Although exploring each of these achievements is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I state them here to highlight how this dissertation was written within this rich context of Latinx women’s activism and art in the GTA. Together their efforts have shown alternative understandings of Latinx identity, life and politics that do not conform to the white settler, hetero-patriarchal and neoliberal status quo. In this dissertation, I only begin to share a part of this powerful story by engaging with the experiences of Latinx women and non-binary people in the GTA who are struggling for social justice through activism and non-profit sector work. Their stories and visions are instructive for researchers, community organizers, non-profit actors and municipal government actors to learn about effective ways to engage and support working class, racialized Latinx women and non-binary people in grassroots activism and local politics. It is my hope that this dissertation can be used to further Latinx people’s relentless pursuit for social justice and contribute to ongoing efforts to (re)create Latinx representation in Canada and beyond.
Research Question and Objectives

The overarching research question guiding this dissertation is: How do Latinx women and non-binary people enact political and spatial practices that resist interconnected systems and geographies of domination, particularly neoliberalism, heteropatriarchy and white settler colonialism, within and beyond the non-profit sector in the Greater Toronto Area?

The research objectives directing this study are as follows:

1) To examine how Latinx Community Workers (LCWs) negotiate intersecting systems and geographies of domination, as well as their own wellbeing, when working across non-profit organizations to advance social justice.

2) To investigate how Latinx Community Workers (LCWs), in relation to other Latin American and Hispanic non-profit actors, enact citizenship and identity in public space, and interrogate how these political and spatial practices reinforce or disrupt intersecting systems and geographies of domination.

3) To explore how LCWs' form Latinx decolonial feminist geographies through collective organizing practices and creative expressions, as well as to explore what lessons these alternative geographies hold for social justice transformation.

Together these objectives aim to enrich understandings of Latinx people’s contemporary urban politics and geographies in the Greater Toronto Area. I do this by not only paying attention to the ways power systems and geographies of domination shape Latinx people’s experiences in the city, but also the ways in which they negotiate and resist intersecting oppressions through their activism and community labour. It is also important to note that by no means do I seek to generalize or essentialize the experiences of all Latinx people, or Latinx women or Latinx non-binary people. Instead, my goal is to provide an alternative window into the everyday lives, politics and spaces of a diverse and specific network of people who identify as Latinx community workers (LCWs) that are each unique and connected in different ways (i.e. ethnicity, race, gender, friendship, politics, community organizing) across an urban space. By taking this approach, I hope to broaden notions of Latinx identity and write against the invisibility of the most structurally disadvantaged Latinx people by showing how they creatively
produce and transform urban space. To tackle the objectives outlined above, I used qualitative research methods and testimonio methodology, which is rooted in Chicana/Latina feminist epistemologies. In Chapter 2 I discuss my methodological approach in more detail.

**Dissertation Outline**

This first chapter has set the context for this dissertation that explores how Latinx people creatively resist intersecting forces of oppression as they navigate the non-profit sector and local politics in the GTA. I provided a brief review of relevant literature concerning non-profit sector neoliberalization, racialized migrant citizenship, decolonization and how they intersect. I also outlined my contribution to the literature and practice as well as my research question and objectives. In the next chapter, I discuss my methodology and share my rationale for grounding my study in Chicana Latina Feminist Epistemologies (CLFE) and testimonio. I also use testimonio to critically reflect on how my positionality has shaped the research process. Lastly, Chapter 2 describes the different methods I used for selecting and recruiting participants, collecting data and analyzing information in line with a CLFE approach.

Chapters 3 to 5 consist of three substantive articles that have been or will be submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals. Chapter 3 has been accepted in Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography that offers a Marxist/socialist/anarchist/anti-racist/feminist/queer/green analysis on geographical issues. Chapter 3 addresses the first objective of this dissertation: *To examine how Latinx Community Workers (LCWs) negotiate intersecting systems and geographies of domination, as well as their own wellbeing, when working across non-profit organizations to advance social justice.* In turn, this article provides an in-depth exploration of LCWs’ everyday embodied experiences of doing community work, from confronting the reproduction of oppression in non-profit organizations to negotiating the pernicious effects of precarious employment and finding creative ways to transform stifling dominant urban spaces. I generate a portrait of LCWs’ brilliance and the formation of a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis that LCWs’ draw on to collectively build spaces of mutual support and healing for youth and future generations of activists.

I shift my focus in Chapter 4 from the intimate spaces of LCWs to public spaces of Latin American and Hispanic community organizing. This chapter is in the process of being revised.
Chapter 4 tackles the second objective of this dissertation: To investigate how Latinx Community Workers (LCWs), in relation to other Latin American and Hispanic non-profit actors, enact citizenship and identity in public space, and interrogate how these political and spatial practices reinforce or disrupt intersecting systems and geographies of domination. In this article, I take the case of Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM) 2015 in Ontario to show that the ways citizenship and identity are understood and practiced by different groups of Latinx, Latin American and Hispanic people, can internalize, reproduce and contest white settler colonial social relations. I also highlight the vast heterogeneity of the broader Latin American diaspora and emphasize how Latinx people can enact decolonial, alternative ways of being in and through public space.

In Chapter 5, I expand on my findings in Chapter 3, by exploring how LCWs mobilize a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis on a broader scale in their collective organizing across the city. This chapter will be submitted to Gender, Place and Culture, the leading journal for feminist geography. More specifically, I examine how LCWs imagine, create and live Latinx decolonial feminist geographies by engaging with their calls to action, event organizing practices and experiences in spaces that foreground the voices and lives of Black/Afro-descendant, Indigenous and Brown Latinx women, queer and transgender people. In this way, Chapter 5 specifically addresses the third objective of this dissertation: To explore how LCWs’ form Latinx decolonial feminist geographies through collective organizing practices and creative expressions, as well as to explore what lessons these alternative geographies hold for social justice transformation. I weave together Black and Latinx decolonial and geographical scholarship to situate the voices of LCWs and consider how Latinx decolonial feminist geographies carry important lessons for activism within and beyond the academy.

The last chapter of this dissertation revisits the main findings discussed in each substantive article and shows how they collectively address the overarching research question. In Chapter 6, I discuss how Latinx women and non-binary people enact political and spatial practices that resist interconnected systems and geographies of domination – neoliberalism, heteropatriarchy and white settler colonialism – through their everyday community work in the Greater Toronto Area. I reflect on the implications of these findings on current understandings of non-profit sector neoliberalization, Latinx experiences and human geography. I also reflect
on how these findings contribute to ongoing Latinx struggles for social justice in the GTA. I end by offering different ways forward that can work towards uplifting Latinx women and non-binary activist voices and spaces.
CHAPTER 2

Methodology

Epistemological and Methodological Considerations

The goal of this study is to examine how Latinx people enact alternative politics and geographies in their struggles for social justice in the GTA. Therefore, it is necessary to directly engage with their perspectives and experiences by using qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods can be generally understood as processes of gathering information that do not involve numerical or statistical procedures, to create a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of a research problem (Creswell, 1998; Winchester, 2000). Qualitative approaches are especially useful to explore new areas of research, uncover complexity in people’s perceptions and feelings, as well as examine the workings of social structures – how they are formed, reinforced and reshaped (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Winchester, 2000).

In this dissertation, I draw on different qualitative methods including in-depth, semi-structured interviews and a workshop with Latinx women and non-binary community workers (LCWs), active participant observation of Latinx community organizing spaces and public events and analysis of grey literature (non-profit organizational websites, posters, blogs, reports, newsletters and Canadian legislation). Using multiple methods allows me to make different kinds of observations and enables me to make connections and distinctions between these observations. This kind of triangulation increases my ability to create rich and dynamic thematic categories and build theory, overall enhancing the rigour of my study (Baxter & Eyles, 1997). Ultimately, using multiple qualitative methods allows me to work towards my goal of creating a more comprehensive picture of Latinx urban political life.

While I do discuss my methods in each article of this dissertation, this chapter gives me the opportunity to discuss them in more detail. The most in-depth discussion of my methods is provided in Chapter 3, where I describe my use of testimonio methodology that is grounded in Chicana and Latina feminist epistemologies (CLFE) (Delgado Bernal, Burciaga & Flores Carmona, 2012). In this chapter, I elaborate on the complexities of using testimonio
methodology and CLFE during the different stages of my research process. Therefore, in this section I aim to provide a more in-depth discussion on my use of testimonio methodology and CLFE as well as critically reflect on my positionality. I begin by providing an overview of my methodological approach rooted in CLFE, explore my positionality using testimonio and then go on to describe the methods used in conducting this research project and the rationale for their use.

**Chicana Latina Feminist Epistemologies: An Overview**

I draw my understanding of Chicana Latina Feminist Epistemologies (CLFE) from Delgado Bernal’s (1998) theorization of Chicana Feminist Epistemology (CFE), which refers to a way of knowing that is rooted in the unique life experiences of Chicanas. Delgado Bernal (1998) articulates that a CFE holds Chicanas at the core of knowledge production, disrupts Eurocentric knowledge systems and uncovers social relations and experiences that would not be visible from a dominant standpoint. Furthermore, a CFE is “grounded in the rich historical legacy of Chicanas’ resistance and translates into a pursuit of social justice in both research and scholarship” (Delgado Bernal, 1998, p. 562). Although, Delgado Bernal (1998) writes specifically on Chicanas in this instance, she extends her framework to include Latinas when revisiting CFE over a decade later (Calderón, Delgado Bernal, Pérez Huber, Malagón & Vélez, 2012). I make this connection more explicit by stating Chicana Latina Feminist Epistemologies (CLFE) to underscore how I’m referring to ways of knowing rooted in the life experiences of both Chicanas and Latinas who do not identify as Chicanas, as well as pluralize epistemology to highlight how there are many Chicana and Latina feminist epistemologies.

Taking a CLFE approach involves understanding Chicanas and Latinas as knowledgeable, speaking and political subjects that can incite social transformation (Calderón et al., 2012). In this way, CLFE challenges epistemological racism embedded within Western, colonial knowledge systems that have objectified, exploited and subjugated Latinas and other racialized communities. Using CLFE also means going beyond describing the workings of oppression and creating new, alternative narratives, theories and political practices that work towards social justice and decolonization (Calderón et al., 2012). Furthermore, grappling with issues of migration, the lived realities of intersecting systems of race, gender and class, as well as Anzaldúaan concepts of mestiza consciousness, borderlands and spiritual activism, all
form part of CLFE (Delgado Bernal, 1998; Calderón et al., 2012). These characteristics of CLFE directly align with the goal of my dissertation – to explore how Latinx women and non-binary people, as political agents, transform urban spaces and create alternative ways of being in the world. Therefore, CLFE is an appropriate approach to take for this dissertation as it is culturally responsive to Latinx participants and pushes the boundaries of geographical knowledge production that is still predominantly white (Pulido, 2017).

A cornerstone of CLFE is the concept of cultural intuition (Delgado Bernal, 1998; Calderón et al., 2012). Delgado Bernal (1998) draws on Strauss and Corbin’s (1990) concept of theoretical sensitivity, which refers to the ability of a researcher to give meaning to data because of a personal attribute they hold. Theoretical sensitivity is part of Strauss and Corbin’s (1990) broader grounded theory methodology, and can come from (1) personal experience, (2) professional experience, (3) engagement with existing literature and (4) the data analysis process itself. Delgado Bernal (1998) proposes that these four sources shape cultural intuition, but expands the personal experience dimension to encompass collective experience and community memory. She does this to account for the ways personal experience in not only individual, but is tied to family, community and ancestors. Delgado Bernal (1998) writes:

Through the experiences of ancestors and elders, Chicanas and Chicanos carry knowledge of conquest, loss of land, school and social segregation, labor market stratification, assimilation, and resistance. Community knowledge is taught to youth through legends, corridos, storytelling, behaviour and most recently through the scholarship in the field of Chicana and Chicano Studies (p.564).

By broadening the personal experience dimension of traditional grounded theory, Delgado Bernal (1998) positions Chicana/o researchers as intricately connected and shaped by their family and community, which in turn influences their approach to research – from data analysis, methods chosen, and questions asked. Yet, she is careful to not assume that every Chicana/o person has the same experience personally or professionally, and grapples with internal differences, but ultimately believes that Chicana/o scholars have a kind of cultural intuition that is uniquely grounded in histories of struggle against colonial and racial oppression (Delgado Bernal, 1998). Chicana/o education researchers have added new layers to cultural intuition by highlighting how queer and Indigenous Latinx researchers experience the world in ways that overlap, but are distinct from heteronormative or mestiza Chicana/o experiences Delgado Bernal (1998) first described, and thus bring these unique perspectives to their research process (Calderón, 2014; Revilla, 2010).
Overall, cultural intuition is a dynamic concept that underscores how researchers with membership to a specific group or “insiders” can draw on their own experiences, as well as their group’s collective experiences and memories, to make sense of the world in ways that are distinctive and compelling. At the same time, it is important to not forget that this concept was intended to speak to the experiences of racialized Chicano and Latinx researchers who grapple with legacies of colonialism and resistance in their everyday life (Delgado Bernal, 1998; Calderón et al., 2012). As such, cultural intuition, as a cornerstone of CLFE, carries with it an impetus for disrupting the status quo that aligns with the social justice foundations of Chicana Studies literature and Latinx social movements. Therefore, cultural intuition as part of CLFE, profoundly shapes how research is conducted, and lends itself to methodologies and methods that are also rooted in social justice and decolonizing struggles. In the following sub-section I describe one such methodology—testimonio— which I use in this dissertation.

**Testimonio**

Testimonio methodology is intricately connected to CLFE (and in turn cultural intuition) because of its grounding in social justice and decolonizing efforts inside and outside the academy (Calderón et al., 2012). Testimonio has its roots in oral cultures and Latin American liberation struggles, but has been deployed by women of colour activists and scholars in texts like *This Bridge Called My Back* (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983) and *Telling to Live* (Latina Feminist Group, 2001). Testimonio can be understood as an oral or written account where one reflects on their lived experiences and events that they have witnessed in order to change the status quo (Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012). It is a decolonizing methodology that requires the teller or testimonialista to critically reflect on their experiences in relation to the social, political and economic contexts that shape their realities, as well as draw on their personal, family, community and ancestral histories as valuable sources of knowledge (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). The Latina Feminist Group (2001) describes testimonio as a tool for recovering papelitos guardados (saved pieces of paper) that women of colour use to write their experiences, memories and notions of self that have been silenced. By sharing papelitos guardados women can reclaim their voices and heal (Latina Feminist Group, 2001). In this way, testimonio disrupts Eurocentric academic ideals of what counts as knowledge and who can hold or produce knowledge. It also destabilizes the possibility of an objective or
neutral observer, and instead asserts that research is always political (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012).

Testimonio also distinguishes itself from other qualitative methods like autobiography (Moss, 2001), autoethnography (Butz & Besio, 2009), interviewing or narrative analysis. This is because its purpose is to use people’s stories to expose oppression, raise consciousness, build solidarity and call people to social justice-oriented action (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Reyes & Curry Rodriguez 2012). In other words, testimonio connects the “spoken word to social action,” which is distinct from other methods, which do not always aim to promote social justice transformation and instead serve to collect data without being connected to a political project (Benmayor, Torruellas & Juarbe, 1997, p. 153, as quoted in Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). Testimonio research is not only limited to Latinx scholars and can be conducted in various ways, like an “outsider” ally and activist gathering stories of a community to call for action on a social inequity. In other instances, the testimonialista is both participant and researcher who uses their own story to show how oppression manifests itself in everyday life and demand change. There has been a plethora of testimonio scholarship in Chicanx and Latinx Studies (see Reyes & Curry Rodríguez for detailed list) that has provided critical insight into utilizing research for supporting the social justice and decolonial struggles of marginalized communities. Although, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to provide an extensive review of testimonio research, it is clear testimonio methodology brings political urgency to addressing systemic oppression and works towards transformative ends.

Due to testimonio’s characteristics – that it is rooted in CLFE and Latin American liberation struggles, disrupts Eurocentric knowledge systems, and requires both participant and researcher to uncover and challenge oppression – it is an ideal, culturally responsive methodology for this dissertation exploring urban Latinx women and non-binary people’s politics. In the following section, I discuss how I implemented a CLFE approach, focusing on my use of cultural intuition and testimonio. I start with my own testimonio to critically reflect on my positionality – who I am, how I come to this research and how I negotiate the systems of power that I and my research are embedded in.

Madelaine’s Testimonio
I am the daughter of immigrants who came to Canada during the 1970s because of rampant poverty and political repression in their home countries. My mother is from Romania, a country once locked behind the Iron Curtain. My father is from Peru, a nation that was under the shadow of Operation Condor and embroiled in civil war for almost twenty years. They crossed an ocean to meet in the place where the trees stand in the water. Toronto, Canada’s largest city located on the traditional lands of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, the Anishnaabe, the Haudenosaunee, the Huron and the Wendat. A place I now call home.

I am the granddaughter and great-granddaughter of labourers and campesinos who were denied schooling. From a young age, my abuelita worked with her hands. Displaced from her traditional land in the Andean countryside, she weaved baskets that collected the mandarinas (mandarin oranges) for the once illustrious Hacienda Huando on the coast. She tended to the land, planted seeds, harvested crops, cooked, sorted medical instruments, raised eight children and me, her granddaughter, all the while never seeing the inside of a classroom.

I am a second-generation Latina with complicated raíces (roots). I, unlike my parents, abuelita and many members of my family, was born in Toronto and have been bestowed countless privileges because of it and their sacrifices, like my Canadian citizenship and largely middle-class upbringing. I am what was promised in exchange for my family’s migration, but face distinct challenges as a woman of colour pursuing a doctoral degree in a predominantly white discipline and institution. I cannot count how many times I have been presumed incompetent, made invisible, exoticified and denied my culture by a Eurocentric schooling system.

I begin by reflecting on my parents’ and abuelita’s lives to honour their struggles that have profoundly shaped my worldview and therefore, my approach to this research. Their stories of courage, perseverance and resourcefulness through times of dictatorship, economic crisis, poverty, displacement, family separation, migration and discrimination were part of our everyday dialogue in the home and served as foundational sources of knowledge to me growing up. I now consider these stories as testimonios that taught me what it meant for racialized migrants to not only survive, but make place, build community, preserve cultural traditions and use their agency to create a better world for future generations. My family’s testimonios and my witnessing of the social and economic inequities facing racialized people – from precarious employment, substandard housing to racism in schools – have motivated
my involvement in numerous social and research initiatives with Latin American communities across the GTA, including this dissertation.

Although I was first involved in a Latinx community youth group at twelve years old, I was not more formally involved as a researcher or leader until my second year of university at eighteen years old. Around this time reports were surfacing that 40% of Latinx youth did not complete high school and there was increasing gang-related violence impacting largely low-income, Black and Latinx communities in Toronto. I worked with a collective of Latinx university students to create a tutoring and mentoring program to support racialized youth, with a focus on Latinx youth. We aimed to create a welcoming space for young people that promoted social justice education and understood that issues of school “drop-out” and “gang violence” were structural and not because of any deficits within our communities. During this time, I also assisted on a research project examining the effects of bilingualism on language development in children. I worked predominantly with Spanish-speaking, immigrant children and observed how the schools they attended were severely under-resourced compared to schools in higher income neighbourhoods. Together these experiences deepened my understanding of how intersecting factors like race, class and immigration status shape young people’s everyday lives, but also how they continue to persist and follow their dreams. These experiences also strengthened my commitment to work for social justice with Latinx communities and led me to numerous community worker roles across different non-profit organizations from volunteer tutor and mentor, event organizer, program coordinator, workshop facilitator, grant writer, paid research consultant, board member and activist.

From the outset of doing community work, I knew that it would be difficult, but I didn’t realize that the difficulties would come from non-profit actors that reproduced the very oppression they sought to resist. Today this sounds naïve, but at the time I wrestled with feelings of betrayal, disappointment, sadness and anger each time I felt silenced, undermined and invisible in community organizing spaces. I have countless stories of machista or sexist behaviour in community organizations and activist collectives. I remember feeling nauseous as I entered meeting rooms, knowing that I would be ignored and talked down to by other men. I remember seeing women replicating the same oppressive behaviours and exploiting other women. I remember the stress of applying for grants and the overwhelming feeling of defeat when they were unsuccessful and people lost their jobs and youth lost their programs. I remember how young people were seen as suspect and even criminal and told to turn down
their music and wait outside. I remember underpaid women being expected to do more with no increase in compensation or regard for their wellbeing. I remember feeling like I was never doing enough and that I could never measure up to the outspoken male activists. I remember more meetings where people around the table refused to engage with the legacy of colonialism and persisting issues of anti-blackness, anti-indigeneity and white privilege. I remember the erasure of queer and transgender Latinx people.

However, I also remember the joy of building community with other racialized Latinx people. I remember seeing the faces of Latinx youth light up when they told stories, danced, painted, performed, and learned together. I remember the sounds of Spanglish, salsa, bachata and hip hop bouncing through the walls of rec centres and classrooms. I remember the dignity and pride Latinx community workers and youth displayed when they took over meetings and public events to voice their dissatisfaction with the status quo and demand change. I remember the trusting and supportive relationships we built. I remember feeling fulfilled and at peace, knowing that younger generations will continue the work until we are all free.

These experiences as a community worker sparked my interest in exploring how intersecting systems of oppression can be negotiated and resisted within and beyond the non-profit sector. I was and continue to be especially interested in identifying strategies that can disrupt the reproduction of oppression within community organizations and promote equity. My previous experiences also motivated me to seek out Latinx women and non-binary people to speak to in my research project as they hold vital knowledge, but are often unrecognized for their contributions. Overall, my experiences as a community worker have directly led me to, and shaped, this dissertation and therefore I claim no neutrality. At the same time, I must acknowledge that although I hope this research will work towards supporting Latinx women and non-binary community workers, it will undeniably benefit me in completing my degree and advancing my career prospects.

**Negotiating a Compañera Positional Space through Testimonio and Feminist Geography**

Conducting research with Latinx community workers (LCWs) was a complex process where different power relations had to be negotiated carefully. I looked to strategies in testimonio
methodology and feminist geography (Mullings, 1999; Nagar & Geiger, 2007; Rose, 1997) to understand and address these different power relations and ultimately create a compañera positional space to facilitate my research goals. First, I grappled with what Rose (1997) calls transparent reflexivity. She argues that researchers cannot fully see and know all the different ways they and their participants are situated in a landscape of power, and therefore fail in their attempts to fully account for power differences in their research. I too cannot entirely know how I and my participants are implicated within a landscape of power, and because of this my work can do harm, even in my attempts to write against oppression (Rose, 1997). At the same time, Rose (1997) does not suggest researchers should stop trying to do ethical research that is attentive to replicating power relations and marginalizing research subjects. She suggests that researchers should write in their failures, produce non-generalizing knowledges and work across differences while recognizing they are limited in what they can know and do (Rose, 1997).

Building on Rose’s (1997) argument, Nagar and Geiger (2007) propose an active approach to addressing power hierarchies embedded within the research process. They argue that feminist researchers need to move away from listing their identities to demonstrate authenticity and instead use reflexivity to explore how their identities are interconnected with the social, economic, and political contexts that shape their material realities. They also advocate for a situated solidarity approach which involves aligning one’s research to a transformative politics that will favour the struggles of structurally disadvantaged people (Nagar & Geiger, 2007). A situated solidarity approach strongly aligns with testimonio methodology, which aims to expose oppression, raise consciousness, build solidarity and call people to social justice-oriented action (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012). In a similar vein, Mullings (1999) offers the concept of positional spaces that can be used to understand how these kinds of politics can be practically enacted during participant interviews. Mullings (1999) defines positional spaces as transitory spaces where the situated knowledges of participant and researcher “engender a level of trust and cooperation” that go beyond “insider/outsider privilege based on visible attributes such as race, gender, ethnicity or class” (p. 340). I weave together these different approaches in my research, especially in the interview process, to create, what I call, a compañera positional space that helps me to negotiate different power structures in my research.
I define a compañera positional space as a form of positional space where trust and co-operation are fostered so that stories or testimonios can be told to change the status quo. I use the term compañera because it captures the nuanced relationships between myself and my participants – many of who had been my colleagues, collaborators and co-organizers. Compañera in Spanish means ‘partner,’ but has an affectionate undertone signalling friendship and comradery. It has also been taken up by leftist revolutionary movements in Latin America, which may render it subversive in some contexts.

In my research, a compañera positional space meant being explicit in my intentions with my research and where I was coming from. I was frustrated and disappointed with the ways the non-profit sector and activist world treated racialized Latinx women and non-binary people and wanted to change it. All participants agreed that there were distinct challenges facing them in community organizing spaces and were in favour of making their struggles and contributions visible to other community members and outsiders to inform any potential changes. However, I was also cautious to not make any false promises that this research would indefinitely lead to radical change, but instead framed this study as a step towards change by gathering information so what we already knew to be true about the oppression we faced and the value of our work, could not be denied any longer. In this way, a compañera positional space was facilitated through sharing our common experiences as community workers and our politics. It was also fostered through our prior relationships and ongoing collaborations, where we saw each other continue to show up to meetings and events, strategize and create alternatives.

While a compañera positional space involved engaging across our common experiences and politics, it also required engaging with our differences. I, like many of my participants, identified as a racialized Latina in her late twenties that had been extensively involved in community work, which could position me as an insider. We shared the contradictions we faced in community work, how we look for inspiration in our families, and our conflicted membership in Canadian society as racialized women. However, I did not share numerous other experiences with participants, like being an immigrant or refugee, or growing up in a low-income household. For example, when participants spoke about having to flee their homes because their lives were threatened, or use food banks and live in public housing, I understood myself as a privileged outsider. I also felt like a privileged outsider when listening to stories of
participants experiencing anti-black racism, homophobia and transphobia in community organizing spaces.

I share these reflections not to confess my guilt for having different forms of privilege, but to highlight how these differences between myself and my participants exist and matter. They matter because our differing positionalities shape how we see, experience and interpret the world around us, which means my interpretation can sharply contrast that of my participants even though we share some characteristics. For this reason, I had to be careful not to wholly cast my experience on LCWs’ stories and explicitly seek out and engage with differences during participant recruitment, interviews and analysis. For example, the workshop I used served as an important site for participants to share feedback and highlight their different interpretations and experiences I may not have captured during interviews (see following section for more details). I also sought to create an affirming, non-judgemental space during interviews, where participants could share stories and they would be believed and supported.

Overall, I believe a compañera space that facilitated a trusting and cooperative dynamic was negotiated between me and my participants. Through our shifting and shared identities, but more importantly our joint commitments and politics, I gained insight into the vastly complex lives of LCWs that extends far beyond my own experience. Participants were overwhelmingly supportive of my work, but they were also rigorous in their criticism of academia because of its Eurocentric and colonial underpinnings, which I sympathized with. I was also concerned that I could be appropriating and misrepresenting knowledge, but sought to challenge this academic tendency by checking my interpretations with participants and ensuring that they wanted their stories to be told. In this way, I and my participants jointly engaged in a process of knowledge production with similar hopes to expose oppression and make positive change. As one participant, Xiomara said in response to my question on what gives her hope:

"The fact that you are doing stuff like this to give some insight. The only way that things are going to change is if people address it. The way to keep things toxic is to keep them quiet."

Therefore, this dissertation project is an effort to break the silences around LCWs’ experiences and foreground their unique and alternative perspectives, knowledges and strategies for social change.
Methods

The purpose of this study was to explore how urban Latinx women and non-binary people struggle for social justice through and beyond the non-profit sector in the GTA. To tackle this goal a qualitative, Chicana Latina feminist and testimonio approach was implemented. The methods I used included in-depth, semi-structured interviews, a workshop, active participant observation and analysis of the grey literature. In this subsection, I will describe first the interviews (participants and process) and then go on to discuss the workshop, my use of participant observation and the grey literature.

Participant Selection and Recruitment

Thirty-seven interviews were conducted between November 2015 to August 2016 with Latinx community workers (LCWs) in the GTA. To take part in the study, participants had to meet the following inclusion criteria: 1) that they identified as being a cisgender or transgender woman and/or non-binary person, 2) that they identified as having Latin American, Latinx, Afro-Latinx and/or Indigenous roots, 3) that they were 18 years of age or older and 4) that they had at least one year of volunteer unpaid or paid experience working with Latin American communities in one or more non-profit, community-based organizations in the Greater Toronto Area within the last 10 years (since 2005). The kind of community work was not specified, but understood as improving the social, economic and political wellbeing of Latinx communities, which included providing services and supports, education, advocacy, community art, recreation, political mobilization and social justice activism. Furthermore, participants did not have to be engaged in an organization that was exclusively Latinx, but the organization had to serve Latinx populations directly in their services, programming and/or activism.

I chose to interview exclusively Latinx women and non-binary community workers because they are systemically unrecognized internally within Latin American non-profits and in dominant society. They also hold critical knowledge of the challenges and opportunities of navigating a non-profit sector to advance social justice. This is because their everyday work involves providing supports to the most structurally disadvantaged Latinx communities and they themselves experience multiple intersecting oppressions as racialized and gendered people. Most LCWs I was familiar with had been involved in community organizing for many
years, but I did not want to exclude newer voices in my research. I chose a minimum of one year of community work experience as a benchmark that would allow me to diversify the stories I gathered and would also enable me to make comparisons between newer and more experienced community workers. I also chose to narrow my focus to within the last ten years as there has already been significant research done on Latin American politics in Toronto focusing on time periods between the mid 1980s to early 2000s (see Landolt & Goldring, 2009; San Martin, 1998; Veronis, 2006a). Therefore, my study picks up where their investigations leave off and deepens analyses of neoliberalization and gender by exploring how a diverse network of racialized, Black, Brown, Indigenous, Latinx women, queer and non-binary people contend with multiple intersecting forces of oppression, including settler colonialism.

It is also important to note that I did not set out to investigate a certain Latinx non-profit organization. I did this for several reasons. First, if I narrowed in on the dynamics of a specific organization this may increase the likelihood of participants being identified, infringing upon confidentiality and potentially reducing the number of people willing to participate, and/or discouraging people to be as forthcoming in their stories. This is because there are only a few, exclusively Latin American non-profits in the GTA and they are not especially large. Also, the subject matter involves LCWs sharing personal stories of oppression in their work environment and other sensitive information that they could be reprimanded for sharing by their employer and/or other community members. Second, the reproduction of oppression occurs in non-profits and political organizing spaces across all communities regardless of race, class or gender. By focusing on one organization, I was concerned that this would locate the problem of oppression within an organization instead of viewing it as a systematic problem that occurs within and outside Latinx communities. Therefore, my research question was better addressed by casting a wider net to uncover how oppressive power hierarchies could be reinforced, navigated and disrupted in the current moment.

To best address my research question and objectives, I used a combination of purposeful/purposeful and theoretical sampling (Draucker, Martsolf, Ross & Rusk, 2007). This kind of non-probability sampling allowed me to narrow in on a specific population, while also allowing me to adjust my sample to better reflect the internal diversity of the population in terms of age, sexual orientation, race and length of involvement in community work. There is little demographic information available on the Latin American population in Canada (see Lindsay, 2001) and to my knowledge, no demographic data collected specifically on Latinx
non-profit workers in the GTA. For this reason, I had to rely on my previous experience doing community work with Latin American communities over the last ten years across the GTA to inform my recruitment strategy.

For example, although Lindsay (2001) states that Latin Americans are more likely to not finish high school and are less likely to have a university education, the LCWs I had connected with before almost all had some form of post-secondary education, ranging from college diplomas, Bachelor’s degrees to graduate studies. From my experience, most LCWs were mainly in their mid to late twenties and early to mid-thirties, spoke a combination of English and Spanish and balanced between paid and volunteer work. There was also a critical mass of queer Latinas and Afro-Latina community workers that were not highly visible in mainstream non-profit organizations. This prior knowledge helped me to gauge the extent to which my sample was aligning with the demographics I had seen before, and search for gaps where under-represented voices needed to be amplified.

I recruited LCWs through electronic flyers, emails and in-person conversations, explaining the purpose of the study, informed consent and privacy in both English and Spanish (see Appendices G, H, I, J, K, L, M, P and Q). More specifically, I shared project flyers with potential participants in-person at community meetings and events. I sent an email announcement with the flyer attached through my personal network of people who I had collaborated with before on different community initiatives. I also posted flyers on my personal Facebook page and other Latin American community-oriented Facebook groups and pages to reach a wider segment of LCWs and increase variation in my sample. During this initial recruitment phase, I emphasized that participation was completely voluntary and confidential, and invited people to contact me if they were interested in learning more. I was careful to not continuously email or post about my study so that people did not feel pressured. It also was not necessary for me to do so because I had an overwhelmingly positive response from LCWs and many were eager to participate at the start of my recruitment.

At the outset of my study I aimed to interview between thirty to forty LCWs. I chose this sample size because similar studies on non-profit workers and activists like Veronis (2006a) and Isoke (2013) have comparable numbers of participants. For example, Veronis (2006a) conducted sixty-five interviews with Latin American community leaders, activists, service providers, organizational representatives, public figures, volunteers and clients in her study on non-profit
sector neoliberalization and transnationalism in Toronto. On the other hand, Isoke (2013) interviewed twenty-nine activists in her exploration of Black women’s resistance politics in Newark. My sample size lies in between and is smaller than Veronis’ (2006a) most likely due to differences in our research objectives and the specificity of my sample – Latinx women and non-binary community workers and activists. Veronis (2006a) provides a broad picture of Latin American politics in Toronto and includes a wide range of people in her study, but I seek to engage specifically with the experiences of a largely unrecognized subset of Latinx people. Although I could have interviewed more LCWs, I reached saturation at thirty-seven participants and ended recruitment. In other words, I no longer saw any new significant themes emerging from the data and saw the same themes being reflected across many interviews (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

**Participant Profile**

As mentioned earlier, I conducted thirty-seven in-depth interviews with a diverse group of LCWs. In this sub-section I outline some of the key characteristics of this group in a way that would uphold confidentiality. For this reason, I do not use a chart showing different participants' characteristics (i.e. race, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, level of schooling, age, area of work and length of involvement). Even when using pseudonyms to keep people’s privacy, by aligning a pseudonym with a person’s race, country of origin, level of schooling etc., can reveal who they are since the LCW network is tightly knit and not especially large. For example, if I state that someone identifies as a queer, Afro-Latina from Brazil and is a university graduate who works with youth in community arts, but use a pseudonym, this specificity regardless would reveal who it is that I’m speaking about, especially when lined up with a specific story in the articles. Therefore, I summarize characteristics below on gender, race, sexual orientation, country of origin, level of schooling, age, area of work and length of involvement in community work.

The majority of participants identified as cisgender Latina or Latin American women. One participant identified as a transwoman and non-binary and another identified as non-binary only. All participants identified as racialized people of colour and most also identified as having Indigenous and African roots. A fifth of participants identified explicitly as Afro-Latina or Afro-Latinx, Indigenous or both. There was almost an even split between first and second generation Latinx participants. Slightly more participants had been born in Latin America, but
many of these participants came to Canada as a child or youth. There were also a few participants who migrated through different countries in Europe and the United States before settling in Canada. Also, most participants identified as growing up in poor or working class families.

It is also important to note that participants trace their origins to over twelve different countries in Latin America, including Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Bolivia and the Dominican Republic. Each country was evenly represented except there were slightly more participants with El Salvador as a country of origin and less participants from the Dominican Republic and Bolivia. This distribution of participants reflects the main national groups in the GTA, as there are large Salvadorian, Chilean and more recently Colombian and Mexican diasporas.

As I had anticipated, almost all participants had completed university level, post-secondary education. This meant that they not only had higher levels of schooling in comparison to the general Latin American population (Lindsay, 2001), but also the general Canadian population between the ages of 25 to 64 (25.9%) (Ferguson 2013). Most participants were between the ages of 25 to 34 and they predominantly worked with racialized migrant youth and women as part-time or casual staff and as unpaid volunteers and activists. Therefore, they shifted between paid contract work and unpaid volunteering across organizations, while also taking part in community activism. Participants described the entirety of their work (both paid employment and unpaid volunteering and activism) as community work, which is why I use this term to refer to their labour and role. Lastly, most participants had been involved in community work in various capacities for the last ten years and this indicates that they were an extremely committed and embedded group.

In-Depth, Semi-Structured Interviews

All thirty-seven interviews were conducted between November 2015 to August 2016. Two of these interviews were with two LCWs who had a more public leadership role in Latinx communities and I called these public figure interviews, and the others, community member interviews. Both sets of participants were asked to choose a time and location that was most convenient for them to do the interview. In most cases, interviews were conducted inside participants’ homes, but interviews were also done in coffee shops, empty classrooms on the
University of Toronto, St. George campus, at the participant’s work office and in my campus office and home. Three interviews were also conducted over Skype. Before interviews (generally between seven to two days) I would share the letter of information with participants over email to give them a chance to review the document and ask questions (see Appendix D). At the outset of interviews, I would review the letter of information, highlighting sections on privacy and confidentiality and give participants another chance to ask questions. I also emphasized that they could withdraw at any point during the interview or the study, and that they did not have to answer any question they did not feel comfortable with. I also asked participants if they would allow me to audio-record the interviews and all agreed. Participants were also given the option to provide written or verbal consent. Interviews were also conducted in English and Spanish depending on the participant’s preference.

For the two public figure participants, I used a letter of information and consent (see Appendix E) that clearly states that they will be identified. This is because there are only a small number of public figures in the “Latinx community” and it would be difficult to guarantee confidentiality. For the thirty-five community member interviews, I focused on explaining privacy and confidentiality given the subject matter of my study. From my previous experience, I knew that many LCWs would feel hesitant and even fearful to go on record because of the social ramifications of publicly critiquing community organizations and leaders for exclusionary practices. While there were some LCWs that were quite vocal in their criticisms, others were not for various practical reasons, like they were employed by or volunteering with the organization they were scrutinizing and feared backlash. In some cases, women had already been bullied and threatened with legal action for speaking out and did not want to go through these experiences again. For these reasons, I took precautions to guard confidentiality and privacy by using pseudonyms, altering identifying information, making clear that sometimes the stories we tell can identify us regardless and asked participants to review quotes I used that may be identifying. I also took extra care to watch out for signs of discomfort or worry when speaking with participants, paused audio-recording and talked through concerns during interviews and afterwards.

When I first met with participants at the interview, we usually spent the first twenty minutes to up to an hour having conversations about a range of topics from work, family, friends, relationships, love, fashion, makeup, school, health, conflicts and community life. Since many of the people I interviewed I had known previously through community work, I found that we
took the time before interviews to catch-up and discuss topics that we were not able to before because we were so focused on completing tasks and organizing. Some participants and I laughingly called this our *chisme time* (gossip time). Yet, in line with a CLFE approach my participants and I reclaimed the word, *chisme*, which has been used to cast women’s voices as frivolous and unimportant, to refer to a crucial way that women share stories, collectively heal and exchange life-saving information. I found that these conversations allowed participants to *desahogar* (vent) and release their concerns and stress in a supportive, confidential and affirming space. *Chisme time* did not count as part of the actual interview and data was not extracted from these conversations. However, they helped put participants at ease and set the tone for the interview. I also revisited what the goals of my study were and discussed with participants if this aligned with their goals as discussed in my previous testimonio section (see compañera positional space).

I used an interview schedule (see Appendices A and B) as a guide when conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews to better ensure that key questions were asked, and to facilitate drawing comparisons across participant responses. Using an in-depth, semi-structured format allowed me to be flexible and shift the order of questions to align with the flow of the conversation, and probe more deeply into topics that were unexpected and relevant to the study. The interview guide consisted of six sections of questions. The first section asked about the kind(s) of organization(s) the participant was a part of, how they got involved in community work and what their role was in the organization(s). These questions were asked to be able to draw connections between organizational structure and mandate, the nature of community work undertaken, and statements participants made about their experiences in these organizations. The second section asked participants to describe their identity, which was left open to their interpretation and what they wished to reveal about themselves. This was done to explore the extent to which participants identified as Latina/x or Latin American and why, as well as to get an idea of who they were broadly. The third section consisted of several interconnected questions that asked participants to reflect on what equity, the environment, participation and activism meant to them and the extent to which they saw these values reflected in the organizations they were a part of. The fourth section delved deeper into the challenges organizations faced in promoting equity and activism among structurally marginalized groups, and asked participants to reflect on their own experiences doing community work. This part of the interview was the lengthiest as participants had many stories and reflections to share.
This part of the interview is also where a CLFE and testimonio approach was critical. Participants discussed the challenges they had witnessed and experienced personally while working across the non-profit sector, from poor funding, precarious work, and silencing. They situated these challenges within larger systems of neoliberal capitalism, racism, heterosexism, as well as community trauma stemming from colonization, displacement, war, migration, that structurally disadvantaged them and broader Latinx communities. There seemed to be a general feeling of betrayal, anger, hurt and disappointment in the sense that LCWs had joined organizations to work for social justice, but were exploited and unrecognized in these same organizations. During this section I would take extra care to be careful with my questioning and reiterate that they did not need to answer any question they did not feel comfortable, and offered to take breaks. Generally, participants were very forthcoming about their stories, vocalizing their rage and in some cases pushing through tears to talk about their experiences because they did not want to be silenced anymore. However, there were several instances when participants asked to go “off record” to tell a story about a toxic work environment or person, as they were worried that the story could identify them, but wanted to share it with me as Madelaine their compañera (colleague/friend), not the researcher. I did not use these stories in the writing of this dissertation, but they alerted me to the insidiousness of lateral violence across Latinx communities, especially against racialized young women.

The fifth set of questions that followed focused on asking LCWs to share the lessons they have learned and their “recommendations” on what needs to change to better work towards equity and support racialized Latinx women and trans people in organizing. Through the interview process this set of questions was modified based on feedback from a participant who said that using the term “recommendation” was not forceful enough and that “call to action” would better reflect my goals. She was right and this suggestion also more accurately reinforces a testimonio methodology that aims to incite social change. As conversations around the toll toxic work environments took on one’s mental and physical health were brought up earlier in the fourth section, I thought it would be important to end interviews by asking participants what they did for self-care and self-preservation. I did this to shift us from the heavy conversations earlier and give us a chance to share self-care practices that we thought were silly, but fun and could be useful after the interview. I also provided participants with a resource sheet at the end of interviews with culturally appropriate social and mental health
supports available in case they wished to speak to someone about their wellbeing and/or join in different community building efforts (see Appendix R).

At the end of the interview, I also asked participants what gave them hope for the future. I did this to ground us and remind us why and for who we do this work – future generations of Black, Brown, Indigenous Latinx racialized youth community workers and activists. Together these questions were meant to highlight the strength, resiliency and brilliance of LCWs – that they still shine in the murkiest of circumstances and pass on critical knowledge that will allow future generations to thrive. I also ended interviews with a debriefing question, where many participants laughed since it felt like we had covered so much, but still just skimmed the surface as these conversations on community work and politics could be endless. Sometimes participants would ask me to talk further about what I hope to get out of my study and thanked me for doing this work. For example, Carmen said:

“I think it’s really neat you’re doing this because I’m sure like my experience isn’t the only one, right? Like I’m sure everyone else has had really shitty experiences in the community and it’s divisive, right? ... So it’s nice that you are doing it because even though we’re physically not together you’re putting all of our experiences together. And that really brings it to light like what has gone wrong.”

Overall, interviews were used as a space to engage in a process of critical reflection that gave voice to LCWs’ experiences to uncover, as Carmen says, “what has gone wrong.” By reading these interviews as testimonios, they can be used as blueprints or strategies to better support racialized Latinx women and non-binary people in community work and activism, which I elaborate on in my Analysis section. From start to finish the entire interview process lasted between two to five hours in most cases.

Engaging in Testimonio Together: Workshop Description

In line with a CLFE and testimonio approach, I wanted to involve participants in data analysis and get their feedback on my findings. I used a popular education workshop format (see Appendix C) to do this because it encourages an open exchange of ideas and allows participants to build knowledge together through conversation and reflection. In this way, a popular education workshop destabilizes researcher-teacher/participant-student binaries and strives towards social justice driven theory building and action.
Participants that had taken part in interviews were invited to participate in the workshop and in total nine people attended the workshop on June 20th, 2016 from 7 to 9pm at the University of Toronto, St. George campus, where I had booked a classroom (see Appendices N and O). I began by explaining confidentiality and informed consent, as well as established ground rules with participants on how we could create a safer space for people to share their thoughts and stories (see Appendix F). I also asked participants to respect each other's confidentiality and privacy and not share each other's identities or information. I then proceeded to facilitate an icebreaker so that participants could get to know one another and feel more comfortable speaking in the group. Many LCWs were familiar with each other, but some were not, and there was a sense of curiosity and excitement around who participated and meeting new LCWs.

For the icebreaker, I asked people to share their name and where it comes from. This was done also in the spirit of CLFE and testimonio that calls on people to ground themselves in their family’s and community’s legacies of resistance. For example, one person said they were named after a guerillera because her parents were leftist political activists and another said they were named after a family member who had been tortured. Several discussed how their parents wanted them to have “Anglo” sounding names so that they would be able to “pass” more easily in Canadian society. Others said their parents sought to do the opposite and make their names more distinct to honour their ancestors and reassert their Indigenous identity. I could see around the room that people were developing trusting and meaningful connections, especially as stories shared became more personal, and as people laughed and nodded in response to each other’s stories.

After, I gave a brief ten-minute presentation on my research project, focusing on the key findings I had come up with based on the twenty-three interviews I had conducted at the time. I wanted to generate feedback and delve deeper into themes I had found around what were the main challenges facing LCWs. To do this, I laid out nine envelopes, each for one of the main challenges I had identified: Ageism, Homophobia, Racism, Sexism, Violence, Internal Political Tensions, Undervalued Labour, Institutional Barriers and Health Issues. I asked participants to pick one envelope and explore the contents inside, which included one or two statements LCWs had shared that best reflected that theme. We then came together in a circle and participants read out the stories in their envelopes and shared their perspectives.
The wider group of participants were then asked to reflect on what resonated with them, whether they agreed or disagreed and to add anything they thought was missing, by writing down their thoughts on a piece of paper and adding it to the envelope. I thought that by using this reflection and writing technique, participants may feel more comfortable sharing their story than if I asked them to say it in the group.

I followed this same approach in the second part of the workshop where I focused on the main calls to action I had gleaned from the data: Accessibility and Openness, Accountability, Anti-Racist Approach, Decolonial Approach, Changing Funding Structure, Community Education, Community Healing, Building Equitable Relationships, Women of Colour in Leadership Roles, Healthy Working Conditions, Youth Power and Unity.

There was an important conversation that occurred around the theme “Unity.” One participant said that unity at times is used by mainstream organizations and leaders to silence marginalized groups. She said this happens when women, Afro-Latinx and queer Latinx people are told they are being divisive when they critique or expose community problems and that instead “the community” should “be united.” She called this “abuser language and logic.” Another participant said that they understood the call for unity differently and that it was about how marginalized Latinx people, particularly queer Latinx folks need to be united. She pointed to the recent Orlando shooting and the need to create more spaces for queer and trans Latinx folks because “we’re all we got.” This conversation led to participants suggesting that there should be more trans Latinx folks in the study, especially trans Latinas. I agreed, but expressed concern about my ability to accurately represent trans Latinx stories as a cisgender woman. After more discussion with participants I decided that I would directly recruit trans Latinx participants, but also be careful to not use their stories to generalize across trans Latinx people.

The workshop served to meaningfully involve participants in the data analysis process which is in line with a CLFE approach to research. The workshop activities also aligned with a testimonio approach. The Latina Feminist Group (2001) discuss testimonio as a way for marginalized communities to recover *papelitos guardados* (saved pieces of paper). Papelitos guardados are the experiences, memories and notions of self that women of colour write in the moments that they steal away for themselves. By sharing papelitos guardados women can recover parts of themselves that have been silenced. In a similar way, the pieces of paper
that participants wrote their stories and perspectives, served as papelitos guardados that helped us all come to better understandings, build community and work towards healing.

**Supplemental Data Collection: Participant Observation and Grey Literature**

In addition to in-depth, semi-structured interviews and a workshop, I also used participant observation and drew on grey literature in my project. I will first discuss how I used participant observation and then describe the kinds of grey literature I analyzed in my project.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I drew directly from data collected from participant observation. By participant observation I mean that I was not a passive observer, but was active in terms of participating (i.e. speaking, listening, supporting others) within the space and in many cases, was a key organizer of the space. For example, at the HCHC meeting to discuss the naming of Hispanic Heritage Month I openly questioned the naming with the other group of LCWs present. Also, I was a core member of the LAHC collective that organized the October 12th Día de la Verdad rally. I also was a Poder ³(formerly known as MUJER) board member and main organizer for their Annual General Meeting which I observed in Chapter 5. I emphasize my active participant observation method because it aligns with my CLFE and testimonio methodology, as I openly aligned myself with LCWs striving to disrupt the status quo during my research and therefore do not claim any neutrality. During active participant observation, I would also be listening, taking notes and paying attention to who was invited to speak, what they said, what languages were used, core messages, visual representations and attendee participation.

The grey literature I examined included organizational websites, documents, newsletters, annual reports, promotional material, videos, photos and Canadian legislation. The sources of information I used were publicly available online and so I could access them easily. I examined how the kinds of narratives mobilized across the different sources reflected values of equity, social justice, anti-racism, feminism, decolonization, neoliberalism and settler colonialism. I drew on grey literature in Chapters 4 and 5. Specifically, in Chapter 4 I look to

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³ Poder translated from Spanish to English means “power” and is the new name for the Toronto-based, Latin American feminist organization formerly known as MUJER, meaning “woman” in Spanish.
the organizational documents of the Hispanic Canadian Heritage Council and the Latin-America History Collective. Here I also closely examine Bill 28: the Hispanic Heritage Month Act in Ontario and the second and third readings of the Bill. In Chapter 5 I draw on the organizational documents of Poder, particularly focusing on how their promotional flyer foregrounded Black and Indigenous Latinx voices.

Analysis

For my analysis, I relied upon a CLFE approach, especially Delgado Bernal's (1998) cultural intuition concept to guide me. Cultural intuition refers to how researchers with membership to a specific group or “insiders” can draw on their own experiences, as well as their group's collective experiences and memories to make sense of the world in ways that are distinctive and compelling. Cultural intuition, a concept rooted in CLFE, serves as a tool for recognizing the unique experiences of Latinx researchers who grapple with legacies of colonialism and different forms of oppression in their everyday life, but also look to their family, community and ancestors for knowledge and guidance. Therefore, using one’s cultural intuition in research entails disrupting dominant power structures and following in the social justice traditions of CLFE, Chicano Studies, Latinx Studies and Latinx social movements.

My analysis also involved using NVivo 11 to organize data collected from multiple sources: interviews, participant observation, grey literature and the workshop. By pairing a CLFE approach with NVivo 11, I began my analysis by understanding interviews as testimonios of creative resistance to interlocking systems of oppression. Using my cultural intuition, I knew that it would be important to develop a coding tree or list of significant thematic categories that reflected my participants’ voices – particularly their perspectives on injustice, power, equity and social change. Some of the open coding categories I used to segment my data include: motivations for community work, identity, challenging experiences in community work, positive experiences in community work and calls to action.

I used line by line analysis to get a more in-depth picture of the different properties in a specific coding category and develop axial and analytic codes (Creswell, 1998). For example, when participants discussed “challenging experiences,” I explored the words participants used to describe a “challenging experience” and the meanings behind these words. I also narrowed
in on what kinds of contexts were connected to a challenging experience – was it an organizational structure or practice? Line by line analysis also allowed me to use in vivo coding, where I directly used participants’ own words to develop themes and codes. For example, “toxic” was used by numerous participants to describe a challenging work environment, which I then used as an in vivo code and axial code under the broader challenging experiences node.

I also used constant comparative analysis, which involves making connections and distinctions between cases, particularly older against incoming cases to interpret data and create more accurate thematic categories (Creswell, 1998). Drawing on my cultural intuition, I thought it would be important to compare cases coded for “challenging experiences” and tease out the kinds of organizational environments (i.e. structure, practices, leadership) that were observed, along with the use of the term “toxic”. My cultural intuition also helped me to understand participants from a strengths-based perspective, and continuously look for ways they negotiated and resisted oppression. For example, from my combined experiences as a racialized Latina, community worker, and my knowledge of the collective experiences of Latinx people in the GTA – I know Latinx people would be offended by interpretations of them as victims needing saving, especially given all their efforts to politically mobilize. This led me to further refine my analysis from an open category like “challenging experiences” to analytic codes like “white neoliberal non-profit structure” and “cis-hetero-patriarchal leadership” and “decolonial feminist praxis.” I was also able to run special analyses (i.e. queries) on NVivo 11 to verify the overlaps I saw between themes and across analytic codes in different sources like interviews, workshop, participant observation notes and grey literature.

Overall, using my cultural intuition together with NVivo 11 allowed me to engage in a dynamic and flexible process of theory building that foregrounds racialized and gendered Latinx voices. This can be seen across the subsequent chapters where I discuss the formation of a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis (Chapter 3), white settler-aspiring Hispanic subjects and decolonial Latinx politics (Chapter 4) and Latinx decolonial feminist geographies (Chapter 5). I use quotations of interview participants’ words and messages shared by community members and leaders at public events, where possible to illustrate these different concepts. The quotes I present in this dissertation I believe most accurately reflect participants’ experiences, perspectives, values and motivations voiced during interviews.
When the Field is Home: Lessons on Building a Latina Feminist Research Praxis through Chicana Latina Feminist Epistemologies and Testimonio

As a Latina deeply embedded in Latinx communities across the GTA, I was confronted with a series of ethical and political questions that came with doing research “at home.” What kinds of theoretical frameworks and methodologies could I use to make sense of Latinx people’s experiences, perspectives, and politics? What research approaches would be most culturally responsive to Latinx people and reflect my distinct voice as a Latina researcher? How could I use my research to support the political struggles of Latinx people in the GTA? I reconciled these questions by turning to Chicana Latina Feminist Epistemologies (CLFE) and testimonio methodology, which served as foundations to the Latina feminist research praxis I developed during this project and continue to develop today.

CLFE can be understood as a way of knowing rooted in the unique life experiences of Chicanas and Latinas (Calderón et al., 2012; Delgado Bernal, 1998). CLFE involves a commitment to destabilizing Western knowledge systems while also creating alternative paradigms that work towards social justice and decolonization (Calderón et al., 2012). Cultural intuition is a concept coined by Delgado Bernal (1998) that is a cornerstone of CLFE. Cultural intuition recognizes how Latinx researchers grapple with legacies of colonialism and different forms of oppression in their everyday life, which shape their approach to research. Cultural intuition also acknowledges how Latinx researchers are influenced by, and draw on, the collective experiences and memories of their families, communities, and ancestors, who pass down critical knowledge on how to resist, survive, and thrive in difficult circumstances. Therefore, cultural intuition, as a pillar of CLFE, engenders an approach to research that strives for social transformation and lends itself to methodologies and methods that are based in social justice and decolonizing struggles.

Such a methodology is testimonio, which I use in this dissertation. Testimonio can be understood as an oral or written account where the teller critically reflects on their experience in relation to the social, political, and economic context that shapes their reality in order to change the status quo (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012). In other words, testimonio’s purpose is to tell a story for inciting social justice transformation. Testimonio can be used by a researcher gathering stories of a person or community, or using
their own story to uncover and challenge oppression (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012). Due to testimonio’s characteristics – that it aligns with CLFE and requires both participant and researcher to jointly call out oppression and work towards social justice – I found that it was an ideal, culturally responsive methodology for this dissertation.

I used testimonio to shape my research project in various ways. Specifically, I understood the in-depth interviews I conducted with participants as testimonios because of how I framed my intentions for the research, created my questions and negotiated power dynamics. In line with testimonio, I was explicit in my intentions with my research – that I was doing this project because of my prior experiences in and commitment to community work, my witnessing of injustices committed against Latinx women and non-binary people and my desire to honour their vital contributions to urban life. The questions I used to prompt participants, asked them to reflect on their experiences in relation to larger systems of oppression that are embedded within the non-profit sector, which again is in line with testimonio. Through sharing stories, engaging across our common experiences, but also differences, participants and I formed a compañera positional space where we could make sense of our experiences and develop new understandings together. I also involved participants in data analysis through a workshop where we collectively unpacked testimonios, and developed and prioritized themes. These efforts are again in line with a testimonio approach as they work to disrupt the researcher-participant asymmetrical relationship because participants are understood as co-creating knowledge with me, the researcher. At the same time, testimonio allows for grappling with, and addressing limitations as this study does not entirely overcome power relationships embedded within research that feminist geographers have thoroughly discussed (Mullings; 1999; Nagar & Geiger, 2007; Rose, 1997).

Overall, using CLFE and testimonio in this study allowed me to form my own distinct research praxis that recognized my unique experiences as a Latina feminist doing research “at home,” and that was responsive to the distinct experiences and politics of Latinx participants. This Latina feminist research praxis I formed (and continue building), is firmly grounded in an understanding of Latinx people as knowledgeable, agential and political subjects who dynamically create strategies for social transformation. This allowed me to ask questions in ways that were relevant to participants and resonated with their own political goals. As such, the design of this project aimed to be accountable to participants, while also disrupting dominant knowledge systems that prevail in academia. Therefore, CLFE and testimonio were
ideal approaches in this study as I could apply them to my unique “home” context, and form my own Latina feminist research praxis that strives for social transformation in line with Latinx participants’ struggles.
CHAPTER 3

Burned, Broke and Brilliant: Latinx Community Workers’ Experiences Across the Greater Toronto Area’s Non-Profit Sector

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Abstract

This paper explores how women and non-binary Latinx Community Workers (LCWs), in the Greater Toronto Area, navigate multiple interlocking forces of oppression like racialization, heterosexism and neoliberalism, when advancing social justice across the non-profit sector. Using an intersectionality framework in tandem with testimonio methodology, including 37 testimonios, a workshop and participant observation, I show how LCWs are constrained by, but also contest, a white neoliberal non-profit funding structure and patriarchal political system. I also explore how community work has contradictory effects on the mental, physical and economic wellbeing of LCWs. Lastly, I demonstrate how LCWs persist by weaving together their family and community histories, personal experiences and women of colour feminisms to enact a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis. I consider what lessons a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis can bring to bear on debates in human geography around neoliberalism, the non-profit sector and social justice transformation.

Introduction

Since the rise of neoliberalism there has been increasing debate over the extent to which non-profit, non-governmental organizations (NGOs)\(^4\) can meaningfully address the inequities faced by marginalized populations, particularly low-income and racialized migrant communities (Bannerji, 2000; Fyfe, 2005; Trudeau, 2012). There is a robust body of critical and geographical literature that has traced the impacts of neoliberal state restructuring on civil

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\(^4\) Following Trudeau and Veronis (2009), I use the term NGOs to refer to a wide-ranging group of independent, non-governmental, non-profit organizations that include registered charities, incorporated non-profits, non-incorporated community-based organizations, voluntary associations and grassroots activist collectives.
society, showing how the devolution of social welfare to NGOs resulted in the cooptation of organizational mandates and diminished advocacy capacity (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Landolt, Goldring & Bernhard, 2011; Mitchell, 2001). Scholars and activists have argued that such changes have arisen as NGOs have become more dependent on state funding and thus open to state control, which thwarts possibilities for social justice oriented transformation (Bannerji, 2000; INCITE, 2007). However, studies have also shown how NGO staff and volunteers attempt to mitigate the effects of government control in strategic ways that protect marginalized groups and maintain organizational autonomy (Darby, 2016; Kyle, Kearns & Milligan, 2015; Trudeau, 2008).

In this paper, I contribute to these debates by using Black, Chicana, and Latina intersectional feminist approaches (Anzaldúa, 2015; Crenshaw, 1991; Hill Collins, 2015; Isoke, 2013; Latina Feminist Group, 2001) to better understand the experiences of NGO staff, volunteers and community activists who identify with a racialized, ethnic group in a major urban centre. Specifically, I draw on Crenshaw’s (1991), Hill Collins’ (2015) and Isoke’s (2013) theories of intersectionality – an analytical frame rooted in Black women’s experiences that uncovers how racism, sexism, and other systems of oppression are mutually reinforcing and works as a political response to social inequities. I also look to Anzaldúa’s (2015) Coyolxauhqui imperative – a decolonial politic that calls for social transformation by healing oneself and community from violent, intricately connected power hierarchies. I implement this intersectional approach by exploring how racialized and gendered NGO political actors navigate and resist not only neoliberalism, but multiple intersecting forces of oppression like heterosexism and racism, in their everyday practices working across NGOs. In this way, this paper responds to calls for more nuanced, processual investigations of the non-profit sector (Darby, 2016; Trudeau & Veronis, 2009; Wagner, 2012) and analyses that “race neoliberalism” (Roberts & Mahtani, 2010, p. 250).

I ground my analysis in the context of Latin American communities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Ontario, Canada. Over the last forty years a resilient network of social services and supports by and for Latin American people have been created through various Latin
American-serving NGOs\(^5\) across the GTA. Latin American or Latinx\(^6\) Community Workers (LCWs) have played an integral role in sustaining Latin American-serving NGOs through their paid and unpaid labour during neoliberal restructuring across the GTA. I use the term LCWs to refer to Latinx women and non-binary people who are NGO staff, volunteers and community activists that seek to promote the social, economic and political wellbeing of Latin American communities through service provision, advocacy, community mobilization and the arts. As such, their perspectives are vital to understanding how multiple interlocking forces of oppression can be navigated and disrupted across NGOs to advance social justice.

Drawing from thirty-seven LCW interviews, one workshop and participant observation for two years, I demonstrate three key findings. First, LCWs are constrained by - but also contest - a white neoliberal non-profit funding structure and patriarchal political system that *burns* or marginalizes LCWs and other Latinx people. Second, community work has complex effects on the mental, physical and economic wellbeing of LCWs, where many report experiencing joy, but also feeling *broke*(n) through financial hardship and illness. Third, LCWs continue to persist and even thrive when navigating inequities, which demonstrates their *brilliance* – their creativity and ability to shine in the murkiest of circumstances. I show that this brilliance indicates the formation of a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis that LCWs’ draw on to collectively create spaces of (un)learning, mutual support and healing that make an alternative future possible. I conclude by considering what lessons such a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis can bring to bear on debates in human geography around neoliberalism, the non-profit sector and social justice transformation.

**Understanding the Contradictions of the Non-Profit Sector: Advancing White Neoliberal Citizenship or Building a Politics of Social Justice Resistance?**

The non-profit sector plays a crucial role in urban political life as it is situated at the nexus of the state, private enterprise and local communities (Fyfe & Milligan, 2003; LeRoux, 2007). The rise of neoliberalism, involving the deregulation of capitalist markets, privatization and devolution of social welfare policies and services, has significantly reshaped the purpose and

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\(^5\) I use Latin American-serving NGOs to refer to NGOs that are explicitly ethno-specifically Latin American, Hispanic or Spanish-speaking, as well as NGOs that are not ethno-specific, but serve migrant communities and target Latin Americans in their programming.

\(^6\) Latinx is a gender-neutral term to refer to people of Latin American descent who identify across a spectrum of gender identities, including transgender and non-binary people.
function of the non-profit sector (Bhuyan, 2012; Jessop, 2002). Across the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada, it appears that neoliberalization has pressured NGOs to compensate for receding public services and promote the incorporation of low-income, marginalized peoples into the wider economy through targeted programs instead of prioritizing social justice efforts that seek to dismantle capitalism (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Jessop, 2002; Mitchell, 2001). In this way, NGOs and other non-profit actors (i.e. staff, volunteers) have been critiqued as agents of neoliberalism that advance the formation of responsible and self-sufficient neoliberal citizens, in other words, they reinforce neoliberal citizenship (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; INCITE, 2007).

However, scholars argue that neoliberalism is not a totalizing, monolithic force, but a complex set of variegated processes that are “locally specific, contested and unstable” (Brenner, Peck & Theodore, 2010, p. 184; Springer, 2010). Through this lens, possibilities exist for NGOs and non-profit actors to mitigate and contest neoliberalism in their everyday practices, despite being significantly constrained (Darby, 2016; Kyle et al., 2015; Trudeau, 2008). At the same time, it is important to consider how neoliberalism is fundamentally raced in its underlying logic by producing racialized bodies and reinforcing a dominant white power structure (Davis, 2007; Roberts & Mahtani, 2010). Therefore, NGOs and non-profit actors are embedded in, and must contend with mutually constituted forces of oppression, including neoliberalization, racism and heterosexism, in their daily practices, and can reproduce oppressive power dynamics even in their efforts to achieve social justice.

In the Canadian context, the mutually constituted nature of neoliberalization and racialization can be observed through the nation’s policy of multiculturalism and its impacts on the non-profit sector (Bannerji, 2000). Multiculturalism is rooted in liberal thought and was instituted to promote cultural diversity, but has been heavily critiqued for disregarding power differences between white and non-white Canadians and for failing to address the material disadvantages racialized people face (Bannerji, 2000; Simpson et al., 2011). A key facet of the 1988 Multicultural Act mandated civil society to promote multiculturalism (Mahtani, 2002). Since the 1960s, the government had been providing NGOs with positive funding conditions, allowing the sector to grow by threefold, but by the mid to late 1980s there were distinct shifts (Miller, 1998; Trudeau & Veronis, 2009). Core funding that allowed NGOs to run steadily was scaled back, while a contract funding model was instituted and the 1985 Canadian Income Tax Act only allowed 10% of a charitable organization’s activities to be geared towards advocacy (Ilcan
& Basok, 2004). Ethno-specific NGOs were particularly affected by these changes, as they were forced to compete for contract or project funding grants against each other and larger, better resourced mainstream NGOs (Landolt et al., 2011; Trudeau & Veronis, 2009).

To appear more favourable to government funders, Bannerji (2000) argues that racialized migrant communities turned away from anti-racist and anti-capitalist political organizing and sought to officialise themselves through the non-profit sector by engaging in responsibilization initiatives (i.e. employment training and volunteerism) characteristic of neoliberalism. For example, studies by Ilcan and Basok (2004), Landolt et al. (2011) and Mitchell (2001), demonstrate this dynamic, whereby different migrant groups were compelled to shift their organizational agendas and practices from social justice activism and advocacy to service delivery and self-reliance, volunteerism, entrepreneurialism and employment programs to be considered worthy of state funding. Overall, neoliberalization, as a racialized process, prompted migrants and migrant serving NGOs to aspire towards neoliberal (read: white) citizenship to gain recognition from the Canadian state and society as legitimate and responsible neoliberal citizens.

Yet, scholars have also argued that NGOs can negotiate agendas and resist neoliberalizing state policies (Bhuyan, 2012; Darby, 2016; Trudeau, 2008, 2012; Veronis, 2012). For example, Trudeau (2008) and Bhuyan (2012) demonstrate that in certain cases government funded NGOs do preserve their autonomy by not refusing services to anyone, including migrants that would be considered ineligible for services under state regulation. By closely analyzing three NGOs in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, Trudeau (2012) argues that the non-profit sector is not merely a site of state control, but that NGOs can enhance the participation of migrants in local governance to advance their interests. Veronis (2013) echoes these findings by examining how one ethno-specific NGO uses collaborations and partnerships with other civil society groups to strengthen their capacity to advocate and influence local decision-making processes. Darby (2016) uses a framework of dynamic resistance to show how one NGO refuses hierarchical management models imposed through the state, and fosters a climate of collaboration, reflexivity and mutual support.

The NGOs examined by the above authors focus their efforts on activities ranging from citizenship examination preparation and employment training (Trudeau, 2012), community service provision (Darby, 2016; Trudeau, 2008), cultural preservation to advocating for greater
participation of visible minorities in social planning and local governance (Trudeau, 2012; Veronis, 2013). It is difficult to place these activities as either reinforcing white neoliberal citizenship or building a politics of social justice resistance. On the one hand, employment training activities and gaining recognition through official state channels can be understood as conforming to the status quo. On the other hand, Trudeau (2012), Veronis (2013) and Darby (2016) draw attention to how people are trying to use the spaces of NGOs to subvert oppression, build community and lobby local government to generate more resources for marginalized communities. Therefore, scholars have called for more studies examining everyday processes by NGO actors to better understand the challenges and opportunities of using a neoliberalized non-profit sector to advance social justice (Darby, 2016; Wagner, 2012).

Zenzele Isole’s (2013) study of urban Black women’s politics of resistance in Newark, New Jersey provides an alternative standpoint to debates on neoliberalization and the non-profit sector. Isole (2013) traces the colonial underpinnings of gendered racialization in the city and looks to the life stories of Black women, including African American women and Afro-Latinas, engaged in various forms of grassroots activism and NGO work to understand how multiple intersecting power structures can be transformed. By spatializing a Black feminist intersectional analysis (Crenshaw, 1991), she makes visible Black women’s, especially Black queer women’s contributions to the city as they envision an alternative form of citizenship and politics that does not align with a white neoliberal hetero-patriarchal order or Black heteropatriarchy. In other words, urban Black women engage in a form of resistance politics that looks beyond the state for recognition and seeks to expose the failures of the current social, economic and political system, as well as build the political consciousness of structurally disadvantaged youth. Isole (2013) shows how urban Black women create intentional spaces for community building and healing, bringing together lessons from past and present Black struggles for liberation. In this way, Isole (2013) deepens understandings of social justice resistance to neoliberalization in the non-profit sector and city, by foregrounding Black women’s lived experiences and geographies.

In a similar vein, prolific Chicana scholar and activist, Gloria Anzaldúa (2015), calls on people who are committed to social justice to engage in an alternative, decolonial politic in the face of structural violence, which she calls the Coyolxauhqui imperative. The Coyolxauhqui imperative is derived from a story in Aztec mythology where Coyolxauhqui, the daughter of
Coatlicue (Earth Mother), attempts to kill her mother once she finds out that she is pregnant with her brother, Huitzilopochtli (The God of War) to prevent the eruption of violence in the world. However, Huitzilopochtli thwarts her plan and emerges from his mother, Coatlicue, with a sword in hand, decapitating and dismembering Coyolxauhqui’s body, leaving her scattered in a thousand pieces. Anzaldúa and other Latina scholars take up this story to explain the emergence of a patriarchal social order rooted in colonialism that harms women and fragments communities, but that can be resisted (Anzaldúa, 2015; Gaspar de Alba, 2014). Anzaldúa (2015) defines the Coyolxauhqui imperative as “a struggle to reconstruct oneself and heal the sustos (frights) resulting from woundings, traumas, racism and other acts of violation que hechan pedazos nuestras almas (that make pieces out of our souls)” (p. 1-2). She adds that the Coyolxauhqui imperative is not only an internal process of healing by putting the fragments of oneself together, but also gathering the pieces of communities and nations, and remaking them into new arrangements that break away from harmful past traditions. Therefore, following the Coyolxauhqui imperative involves channeling pain and anger from the injustices one has experienced into self and community healing and social justice activism.

It is important to note that Anzaldúa’s Coyolxauhqui imperative is a concept she long worked on, but fleshed out most comprehensively in her later writings like, Light in the dark/Luz en lo oscuro: Rewriting identity, spirituality, reality, published in 2015 after her premature death in 2004. Here, Anzaldúa (2015) invokes Coyolxauhqui in several ways, like a healing image she turns to for guidance, to a state of fragmentation and even likens herself and her readers to Coyolxauhqui:

As a modern-day Coyolxauhqui, you search for an account that encapsulates your life, and finding no ready-made story…you bring forth…a new personal myth” (p. 139).

What is clear about Anzaldúa’s (2015) use of Coyolxauhqui and the Coyolxauhqui imperative, is that it stems from an embodied experience of confronting oppression as a queer Chicana, and her struggle with her health. Overall, the Coyolxauhqui imperative is a key component of Anzaldúa’s (2015) vast onto-epistemological and spiritual project that according to AnaLouise Keating, “queers conventional ways of knowing” and decolonizes reality (p. xxvii).

Anzaldúa’s Coyolxauhqui imperative parallels a queer decolonial politic proposed by Hunt and Holmes (2015) and a decolonial feminism articulated by Lugones (2010) in several ways. For
example, Hunt and Holmes (2015) argue that non-Indigenous people can work towards decolonization, not only by participating in public protests in solidarity with Indigenous people, but also by changing their everyday actions in the intimate spaces they occupy. This involves building relationships with Indigenous people, challenging colonial narratives and disrupting the hetero-cis-normative gender binary that is rooted in colonialism (Hunt & Holmes, 2015). Similarly, Lugones (2010) understands gender as an imposed colonial construct and argues for a decolonial feminism that affirms “life over profit” and “beings in relation rather than dichotomously split over and over in hierarchically and violently ordered fragments” (p. 754).

To date, there has been limited to no engagement with Zenzele Isoke’s (2013) study of Black women’s politics of resistance and Gloria Anzaldúa’s (2015) Coyolxauhqui imperative concept in human geography and literature on neoliberalization, the non-profit sector and urban politics. Yet, both theorists provide compelling frameworks for understanding women of colour, queer and gender non-binary people as political actors navigating mutually constituted forces of oppression in their attempts to advance social justice. Furthermore, Isoke (2013) and Anzaldúa (2015) advocate for an alternative, embodied politics rooted in Black, Chicana and Latina experiences that disrupt colonial and Eurocentric ways of being in the world. Therefore, calls for more in-depth, processual explorations of non-profit actors negotiating neoliberalization (Darby, 2016; Wagner, 2012) and analyses that “race neoliberalism” (Roberts & Mahtani, 2010, p. 250), could be effectively addressed by employing the works of Isoke (2013) and Anzaldúa (2015) to understand the everyday experiences of racialized Latinx women and non-binary NGO staff, volunteers and community activists in the city.

The remainder of this paper contributes to these discussions by offering an in-depth exploration of how LCWs experience, navigate and resist intertwined processes of neoliberalization, heterosexism and racism, as they work across a diverse array of NGOs in the GTA. I seek to enrich discussions of non-profit sector neoliberalization by drawing on Black, Latina and Chicana intersectional feminist thought (Anzaldúa, 2015; Crenshaw, 1991; Hill Collins, 2015; Isoke, 2013), as well as testimonio (Latina Feminist Group, 2001), a methodology that is prevalent in Latinx and Chicanx Studies, but underutilized in geography (Cahuas & Levkoe, 2017). By using this interdisciplinary approach, I can make visible Latinx women’s and non-binary people’s stories, labour and contributions to urban life that largely go unseen in dominant society, and allows for a deeper understanding of how social justice resistance can be advanced within and beyond the non-profit sector.
Latin American Politics in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)

The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) is made up of Toronto, the largest city in Canada, with a population of 2.79 million, and the municipalities of Durham, Halton, Peel, and York, bringing the total GTA population to 6.4 million (City of Toronto, 2016). For the purposes of this study, the GTA also includes the City of Hamilton with a population of over half a million, which lies to the southwest of Toronto (City of Toronto, 2016). Toronto has long served as a major arrival hub for migrants, where half of the population was born outside of Canada and 49% identify as a visible minority (City of Toronto, 2013). However, the city is becoming increasingly inequitable, with racialized, low-income communities being pushed to the outskirts of the city with less access to social services, transit and employment opportunities (Hulchanski, 2007).

The Latin American population in Canada numbers 544,380 and the majority live in Ontario, where over 185,000 have made Toronto home (Statistics Canada, 2011). Although Latin Americans report being actively involved in various social organizations, they face discrimination, over-representation in low-wage jobs and higher rates of youth not completing high school (Lindsay & Statistics Canada, 2007). Despite these challenges, and being a relatively new migrant group in the history of Canadian settlement and immigration, Latin Americans have a long history of collective organizing and activism since they began arriving to Canada in the late 1960s.

It is important to note that Latin American communities, especially in the GTA, are incredibly diverse in terms of nationality, culture, race, socioeconomic status and political affiliation as they are composed of people tracing their origins to Central and South America, Mexico and the Caribbean. Members of Latin American communities claim a range of identities like Latinx, Indigenous, Black, Afro-Latinx, Asian, and Hispanic. Adding to their complexity, Latin Americans differ in reasons for migration and times of arrival to Canada. According to Mata (1985) the first Latin Americans to arrive were largely from Andean countries in the late 1960s and early 1970s moving due to political and economic instability. In the 1970s, Chileans, Argentinians, and Uruguayans fleeing right-wing dictatorships followed. During the 1980s, Central Americans largely from El Salvador and Guatemala arrived as refugees escaping violence and civil war (Mata, 1985). In the 1990s, changes to Canadian immigration policy, like the “skilled worker” category have allowed for largely university educated professionals
from across Latin America to immigrate (Mitchell, 2001; Veronis, 2010). The diversity of Latin American communities is why I refer to multiple communities instead of one homogenous Latin American community.

During the 1970s, numerous Latin American community-based collectives and organizations formed engaging in transnational solidarity, feminist and arts-based political organizing, cultural celebration and mutual support (Landolt et al., 2011; Veronis, 2010). However, since the roll-out of multiculturalism and neoliberalization policies, many of these organizations sought to formalize themselves as incorporated and charitable NGOs. This not only led to shifts in organizational agenda-setting, from social justice activism to service provision, but also created a climate of intra-community competition for grant funding (Landolt et al., 2011). Latin American women’s organizations were not able to compete for funding with larger mainstream and increasingly male-dominated Latin American-serving NGOs, like the Centre for Spanish-Speaking People, leaving many feminist activists unemployed or underemployed and shut out from community spaces (Landolt et al., 2011; Landolt & Goldring, 2009).

Yet, Latin American women still sought to counter the depoliticization of their work and create alternatives to the Latin American heteropatriarchy and the white feminist movement through the formation of the Latin American Women’s Collective (LAWC 1983-1990), the Latin American Coalition to End Violence (LACEV 1992-2000) and Poder⁷ (MUJER 2002-2017; Poder 2018-present) (Landolt & Goldring, 2009; San Martin, 1998). For example, the LAWC, which was composed of mainly first generation Chilean refugee women, served as a space for fostering friendships, mutual support and transnational feminism that stood in solidarity with the Chilean revolutionary movement (San Martin, 1998). However, despite their successes, Latin American women’s organizations struggled with internal differences and have been critiqued for a lack of representation and inclusion of Brown, Indigenous, Black and queer Latinx women (Landolt & Goldring, 2009; Lobo-Molnar, 2012; San Martin, 1998). Therefore, it would be important to examine how Latinx women who identify with these under-represented groups are grappling with the consequences of a neoliberalized non-profit sector in the current moment

⁷ Poder translated from Spanish to English means “power” and is the new name for the Toronto-based, Latin American feminist organization formerly known as MUJER, meaning “woman” in Spanish.
My study responds to this gap and builds on this literature of Latin American urban political life in Canada by exploring the stories, experiences and practices of a diverse group of Latinx women and non-binary people working across many different Latin American-serving NGOs, using an intersectional feminist lens. My study does not explicitly focus on one or several specific NGOs, but casts a wider net to not single out any organization, but uncover how oppressive power hierarchies can be reproduced, negotiated and contested today.

**Methodology: Testimonio**

This paper shares findings gathered through testimonio methodology (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012), which is grounded in Chicana and Latina feminist thought and epistemology (Anzaldúa, 2007, 2015; Calderón et al., 2012; Latina Feminist Group, 2001). Testimonio has deep roots in oral cultures and liberation struggles in Latin America and can be understood as a “first person oral or written account, drawing on experiential, self-conscious, narrative practice” (Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012, p. 525). Testimonio requires the teller or research participant to critically examine their experiences in relation to the social forces that shape their life and draw on their personal, family and community histories as valuable sources of knowledge (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). In this way, testimonio serves to expose injustice, raise consciousness and call people to action (Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012). For these reasons, testimonio is an ideal methodological tool to explore in a culturally responsive way how LCWs in the GTA navigate and disrupt oppressive power hierarchies as they work towards social justice.

I recruited LCWs through electronic flyers, emails and in-person conversations, explaining the purpose of the study, informed consent and privacy. Due to my experience in community organizing with Latin American communities over the last ten years as a Latina from Toronto, most participants were familiar with me as a friend or peer before the study, which facilitated recruitment and data collection. I conducted in-depth interviews with thirty-seven LCWs between November 2015 to August 2016, where I gathered their testimonios. Before interviews, I discussed with participants my motivations in pursuing this study, which stemmed from wanting to honour the contributions of Latinx women and non-binary people to urban political life that I had seen go unrecognized. All participants were responsive to this motivation and shared their own reflections and desires to see change. However, I was cautious to not make any false promises that this research would indefinitely lead to social transformation.
and instead would be a means to document our stories that could inform future changes. Through this dialogical process, a testimonio methodology was mobilized as both the testimonialista (teller or participant) and listener (researcher) do not claim neutrality, but seek to expose and disrupt oppression (Calderón et al., 2012; Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012). Their testimonios recounted their experiences of and reflections on providing supports to, and engaging in advocacy and activism with, Latin American community members. In total, conversations before, during and debriefing after interviews lasted from 2 hours to up to 5 hours.

Most participants identified as cisgender Latina women, over a quarter identified as queer or lesbian and one participant identified as a transwoman and non-binary and another as non-binary. Almost all identified as racialized people of colour, with Indigenous and African roots, and a fifth identified explicitly as either Afro-Latinx or Indigenous or both. Just over half of participants were born in Latin America and the rest were second generation, born in Canada, the United States or Europe. Almost all participants had completed university level, post-secondary education. The largest portion of participants were between the ages of 25 to 34, but ages ranged from 22 to 59. Most participants worked with first and second generation migrant youth, women and in community arts as part-time or casual staff and unpaid volunteers and activists. Therefore, they balanced between paid contract work and unpaid volunteering across organizations, while also taking part in community activism. Participants described the entirety of their work (both paid employment and unpaid volunteering and activism) as community work, which is why I use this term to refer to their labour and role.

I analyzed testimonios using NVivo 11 to assist with coding for key themes and I shared my initial findings with nine participants in a workshop to elicit their feedback. Participants reaffirmed my findings and pointed to gaps that informed subsequent interview questions and promoted the recruitment of under-represented voices. I triangulated my analysis of testimonios with new information gathered through the workshop and my own observation of community events and activities over two years. Due to the sensitive nature of the testimonios collected, I used pseudonyms and removed identifying information to protect participants’ identities. The section below summarizes these findings, presenting information in LCWs’ own words where possible.
Findings

Burned: LCWs are Constrained by and Contest a White Neoliberal Non-Profit Funding Structure and Patriarchal Political System

LCWs’ testimonios reveal the power hierarchies, particularly neoliberalization, racism and heterosexism, embedded in working across the non-profit sector to advance social justice. LCWs lament what they understood as an increasing dependency on short-term, project-based grant funding to sustain the operations of NGOs, which often limited their work to securing grants, instead of building trusting relationships with community members and supporting them in advocacy initiatives. LCWs also described tensions within NGOs wanting to expand their services through grant funding, but soon finding that their program’s goals and timelines were now being determined by the funder and not community members.

The prioritization of obtaining funding not only impacted the daily work of LCWs, but also heightened intra-community competition for resources. Since Latin American-serving NGOs are compelled to seek out short-term grants that are scarce to provide services to a specific ethnic population, there arises a need to compete among organizations for funding. This reality can be seen in Eva’s testimonio when she says:

I’ve been doing work with a lot of organizations here but to be honest there is such a competition around organizations like it’s competing like who gets more grants, who delivers more programs and not much about this is our community...And that’s the thing about the community and non-profits, people don’t share information...because they don’t want other organizations to take youth [because they are scared] they will lose the funding and another one will get it because they’ll get more youth.

Eva’s statement is telling because it uncovers how neoliberalization has not only reshaped the non-profit sector with increased pressure to obtain funding, but also how it has effectively restructured community relationships. Instead of openly sharing information and dialoguing on how to address community challenges, access to data and ideas are restricted out of fear they will be appropriated for a grant at another organization. There is also worry that sharing information will cause community members to seek out different organizations for services, in turn diminishing client numbers, making it more difficult to establish a case for grant funding. Therefore, how the current grant system is structured compels organizations to prioritize...
funding instead of collaboratively working across organizations to fulfil their mandates of improving the social, economic and political status of Latin American communities.

LCWs’ testimonios also revealed how there is an intricate relationship between the grant funding system and the patriarchal leadership within and outside Latin American communities. As other studies have showed, Latin American-serving NGOs have become increasingly male-dominated in terms of their leadership (i.e. Board of Directors, Executive Board Members, Executive Directors, management, full-time paid staff) since the 1980s, despite their feminist origins (Landolt et al., 2011; Landolt & Goldring, 2009). What is important to note is that in conjunction with this shift, Latino and Hispanic middle-aged and older, cisgender, heterosexual men have garnered favour with city staff and politicians at local, provincial and federal levels. Participants say that these men claim to represent the “Latin American” or “Spanish-speaking” community in Toronto and are regarded as legitimate leaders by these white political actors, who are also predominantly other men. LCWs explain that this relationship has advantaged male-dominated Latin American-serving NGOs as they are invited to policy making spaces to speak on behalf of “the community” and given more access to funding opportunities. Non-Latin American political actors benefit from this relationship by fulfilling their mandate of multiculturalism and gaining access to Latin American community spaces for campaigning purposes. Participants vehemently expressed their dissatisfaction with this dynamic and how it continued to materially disadvantage racialized, low-income Latinx women, youth, queer and transgender people. As Delia says,

They [cis-hetero-male leadership] say they represent us [Latin American communities] but they don’t. They took a lot of funding, those were big numbers man, that money like could have been used to support [summer camps] for young teenagers it could have helped broaden [feminist education programs] ....It frustrates me that this is where our money and resources should be going. But we have folks in the higher up who are so far removed from us and just want to eat culture and not engage in actual political, socio-economic realities of what’s happening with the people.

Delia voices the consequences of the stark misalignment between the diversity of Latin American communities and the cis-hetero-male Latino and Hispanic leadership. She voices how funding has been diverted from community building initiatives engaging racialized, low-income, queer, Latinx women, youth and transgender people, further marginalizing these groups. Instead, funding is being funneled into cultural events showcasing Hispanic and Latin American food, music and dance in line with multiculturalism, which LCWs like Delia say do
not serve to address the root causes of the socioeconomic challenges community members face.

Despite these realities, LCWs contest the reproduction of neoliberalization in conjunction with heterosexism and racism in various ways. In their daily work, participants strived to amplify the voices of under-represented groups in spaces of decision-making and action by directly pointing out who is missing in conversations at internal community gatherings and public meetings with outsiders. LCWs tirelessly outreached to Brown and Black Latinx youth, recruiting and mentoring them as community organizers and bringing them to meetings and events. LCWs also lobbied city staff and politicians to go beyond the few self-designated male representatives when creating policy or funding opportunities impacting Latin Americans in the city. Overall, LCWs sought to hold Latin American-serving NGOs and other political actors accountable to the needs and desires of marginalized and under-represented Latinx groups.

For example, in an organizational meeting, one community worker, Gioconda, asked for a Latin American NGO’s support of a letter denouncing the Toronto police’s practices in racialized communities. Although her proposal was denied - the organization expressed concern over its public image, stakeholder relationships and consequent negative repercussions - Gioconda went on to share this letter through wider Latinx networks and received overwhelming support from community members. In another case, during a city-run community consultation to discuss how funds for a sporting event would be dispersed, Lupe asked city staff how the influx of funds would address rising homelessness. Lupe was reprimanded by other members of the organization she was representing when she was told, “You shouldn’t have brought it up. We were invited there to be like the ethnic opinion, the Latino opinion.” Her response was “I’m sorry, but the Latino opinion cares about the homeless population.”

Gioconda and Lupe’s stories show how Latin American-serving NGOs face pressure to conform to the status quo and remain silent on any issues that seem controversial to appear palatable to potential funders, particularly government entities. These NGOs are pushed to play the role of token minority, called to comment only on issues that appear stereotypically as “Latino” in terms of culture, but not to denounce racial, neoliberal and heterosexist oppression enacted through the policing and precarious housing of racialized, low-income and gendered communities. This skewed notion of what counts as “Latino” held by dominant
society erases the complexities of Latin American communities in terms of their heterogeneity and multifaceted struggles for equity in Canada. Still, LCWs like Gioconda and Lupe urge organizations to be accountable to marginalized communities even when funding is at stake. However, they face negative repercussions, like being silenced by and pushed out of organizations. In other words, LCWs are burned by the very spaces that they sought out for a sense of belonging and motivation for social justice.

The examples above show that neither NGOs nor ethnic communities, are cohesive structures, but rather multi-faceted entities wherein different actors can mobilize in contradictory ways to reinforce or disrupt the status quo. On the one hand, this finding resonates with previous analyses on multiculturalism and non-profit sector neoliberalization that show how migrant communities turn away from social justice activism and aspire towards white neoliberal citizenship (Bannerji, 2000; Landolt et al., 2011; Mitchell, 2001). Yet, since LCWs are not confined to one organization but scattered across a diverse array of Latin American-serving NGOs, they show how NGO actors can refuse total cooptation as seen in studies by Trudeau (2008), Bhuyan (2012) and Darby (2016). Furthermore, by showing how neoliberalization works in conjunction with racialization and heterosexism through an inequitable granting system and patriarchal political structure to burn or disempower Latinx people, this finding complicates these past studies on non-profit sector neoliberalization. Resembling urban Black women in Newark in Isoke’s (2013) study, LCWs struggle against Latin American heteropatriarchy and dominant society to support structurally disadvantaged women, youth, and transgender people. As such, LCWs have an especially arduous role in navigating and contesting oppression within Latin American-serving NGOs, which impacts their economic, mental and physical wellbeing, discussed in the following section.

**Broke: Community Work has Complex Effects on the Wellbeing of LCWs**

LCWs’ testimonios reveal how engaging in community work has complex and even contradictory impacts on their economic, mental and physical wellbeing. On the one hand, many LCWs believed that their labour was undervalued because they were predominantly racialized, young women. Stories of feeling broke financially, but also physically and mentally abounded. For example, LCWs shared accounts of not being paid fairly, job insecurity, being passed over for employment or promotion, work-life imbalance, as well as being discounted in decision-making processes. For many LCWs these events led to experiences of self-doubt,
breakdown, burnout and illness. At the same time, LCWs express feeling a strong sense of joy and fulfillment in their work engaging and supporting women and youth, with one community worker, Cherrie, saying, “When I do community work is the only time I really feel happy…when I do community work that’s when I feel complete.” These conflicting experiences makes it difficult for LCWs to disengage from community work and leaves many unsure of their future:

Like how do you work in this area and pay your bills? It’s so hard. It’s like worrying because I don’t know how anyone is doing it? Like I’m just thinking like how are people just living like not from month-to-month but can they have consistently the next five months even? … Like what if you’ve got kids…I feel like very confused lately about what to do…

Flora’s statement above encompasses the sentiments of many LCWs that are dependent on short-term contracts (1 month to 1 year) awarded through grant funding. Others who are volunteers or activists but work in jobs outside the non-profit sector to sustain their community work also feel a strain balancing multiple priorities. However, what LCWs in this study reported to be most challenging about their work was the imbalance created by a “toxic” work environment where they did not feel their contributions were appreciated and where they felt silenced when speaking out against the replication of oppression in community spaces by other staff, management and executive members. For example, Tanya says:

I have noticed a huge deterioration in my health since becoming more proactive, more engaged in pushing forward, in doing call outs... Every month I'm at the doctor's. I'm getting sick minimum once a month when I wouldn't even get sick once a year. I haven't had asthma since being like very young and I've started getting asthma... and that I noticed it was when it was more stressful in these unsafe spaces...

The stress involved in confronting oppression and demanding safer work and community spaces, deeply affected LCWs. Others spoke about experiencing impacts on their mental health like anxiety attacks and depression during or after periods of high stress in their work. Eventually, many LCWs reached a point of breakdown or burnout where they were compelled to move away from community work for a few weeks, months and even years. However, the majority returned to community work but in different ways taking the lessons they learned from previous experiences and applying them to new contexts. Some of these lessons include upholding boundaries, prioritizing one’s wellbeing, carefully investing energy into initiatives and organizations that operate in more equitable ways and building supportive peer networks.
Overall, engaging in community work has complex and paradoxical impacts on the economic, mental and physical wellbeing of LCWs. This finding adds to the literature on non-profit sector neoliberalization by understanding community workers as community members who directly encounter oppression as racialized women and non-binary people within their own communities and dominant society. Like Coyolxauhqui, LCWs are the rebellious daughters who experience “acts of violation” that leave them feeling broken and fragmented as they challenge the reproduction of oppression within and beyond NGOs (Anzaldúa, 2015, p. 139). Yet, they continue to persist.

**Brilliant: Building a Latinx Decolonial Feminist Praxis**

When asked what motivated them to engage in community work despite reoccurring challenges, LCWs described a deeply personal duty to continue to build on their families’, communities’ and ancestors’ legacy of resistance in the contemporary contexts they now found themselves. Almost all LCWs shared memories of witnessing at a young age, members of their family and community endure some form of injustice. Many LCWs spoke about their family members’ involvement in social justice movements in Latin America, from supporting Allende’s leftist government in Chile to upholding Indigenous rights in Guatemala, to being revolutionary guerilla fighters in El Salvador, while facing political persecution and death. They also told stories of watching their family struggle to build a new life in Canada and their own experiences facing racism and poverty. Although it is impossible to capture the profundity of Latinx people’s histories and experiences in this paper, I briefly highlight them here as they are the foundation of what I call a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis.

A Latinx decolonial feminist praxis is a complex process of weaving together one’s family and community histories, personal experiences, identity and intersectional women of colour feminist theories to create spaces that actively disrupt the hetero-cis-normative, patriarchal, neoliberal, racist and settler colonial status quo. It also involves healing community trauma and cultivating the next generation of community workers and activists. A Latinx decolonial feminist praxis can be seen in Lupe’s testimonio that echoes many threads of other LCWs’ testimonios. Throughout her testimonio, Lupe recalls the memory of her abuela (grandmother) and her stories of trying to keep a family alive in the middle of a brutal civil war, surviving an abusive marriage, secretly using birth control, hiding and saving money and raising her sons.
to sew, cook and clean. The trauma of losing her son (Lupe’s uncle) in the war had reverberating effects on Lupe and her family. Lupe says,

He was a guerrillero. So, for our family, there were many people that either died or went missing and they all fought for the same thing which was equality in El Salvador. And all of that was kind of put into our lives.

By “put into our lives,” Lupe refers to the fortifying of her and her family’s commitment to social justice. Upon arriving to Canada as a refugee, Lupe’s grandmother was “always opening her doors to people,” particularly other refugee families, offering them food, shelter and friendship. Through intergenerational storytelling and example, Lupe’s grandmother passed down key feminist lessons to her granddaughter on what it means to struggle for equity within patriarchal and oppressive contexts. Lupe incorporates and builds on her grandmother’s feminism in her own reflexive practice and her community work with youth. Through self-reflection, reading women of colour feminist writing and dialoguing with community members, she works through a process of unlearning colonial and Eurocentric ways of thinking and being in the world.

In her workshops, she guides youth in understanding and challenging how imposed Spanish colonial notions of race and gender persist among Latin Americans in Canada through internalized racism and machismo. She encourages youth to speak from their own life experiences, on how race and other facets of their identity have shaped their lives. Lupe discusses with youth, Indigenous and Black histories and current social movements in Latin America and North America that go largely erased in local schools. She says, “As Latino people…we often dismiss the voice of Indigenous people [in Canada] and I think it’s extremely important to honour where we are and who they are.” Lupe goes on to describe her community work as “infiltrating” organizations and institutions that would otherwise uphold the status quo, providing services without any form of critical education. Instead, Lupe seeks to create spaces where Latinx youth can unapologetically “love themselves” and each other as she tells them, “you’re brilliant and you can do this,” despite living in a society that denies their potential.

As Lupe tells youth that they are brilliant, I would argue that her actions display brilliance characteristic of a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis that goes beyond mainstream inclusion politics and armchair intellectualism. Lupe takes up space within mainstream organizations and institutions that reproduce the status quo to momentarily create an alternative space with Latinx youth so that they may go on to amplify lessons learned. In this way, Lupe envisions
social justice resistance as a long-term process that requires multiple generations continuing the circle. Many LCWs also held this kind of understanding of social justice resistance which is why they primarily worked with youth and sought to create spaces of non-hierarchical, mutual support, affirmation and healing, grounded in love. As Tanya says,

…I always call it a labour of love. We do this work for love, for love of our community, for love of us as if we were those little girls and needing someone’s help. If there’s any Latinx youth they should be provided a space or resources that we were never provided…We should be what we needed to our young populations, if not then what’s the point of all this?

There are numerous examples of LCWs creating spaces that fostered non-hierarchical relationships among Latinx racialized women, youth and queer and non-binary people. Through art projects, educational workshops, writing and poetry groups, concerts, dance parties, community collectives and gatherings, LCWs fostered positive relationships among Latinx people with multiple identities that are not represented within patriarchal Latin American-serving organizations or dominant society. LCWs believed their task was not only to deliver programs or services, but to create spaces for community building across internal differences and work against the isolation of Latinx people in the city. LCWs consider such spaces as crucial to creating sustainable social change. As Frida says,

…Just being in the space and like empowering each other…and it just becomes this energy that's really important and…women give so much, and care so much, and do so much, and we're so tired all the time, and just to be in that space it's like really positive and affirming…that is where the change is happening…

…I think the other day being in an apartment full of Latinx people of different gender identities and sexualities and in an open queer space where we’re eating together, where we’re sharing drinks, where we’re dancing, that’s a healing space that’s an organizing space it’s a creative space and it’s a space that helps us reimagine how we could possibly live.

By mobilizing a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis, LCWs create alternative, healing organizing spaces grounded in a deep love for community that are fundamental to weathering long-term social justice resistance and are a form of resistance themselves. The connections and friendships formed through these spaces extend past any individual NGO and are carried by people in their everyday lives across the city and amplified in new relationships made. Furthermore, these spaces act as starting points for organizing collective actions like
demonstrations, letter writing, petitions, political educational events and advocacy initiatives that work towards alternative futures.

This formation of a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis parallels Isoke’s (2013) theorization of urban Black women’s resistance politics and Anzaldúa’s (2015) Coyolxauhqui imperative. As Black women in Newark draw on lessons learned from Black liberation struggles to address ongoing anti-black racist, sexist and homophobic violence, LCWs look to their families’ and ancestors’ legacy of resistance for guidance. Both Black women in Newark and LCWs enact a politics of social justice resistance by building the political consciousness of low-income, racialized youth to cultivate the next generation of community workers and activists. LCWs and Black women activists in Newark refuse to engage in politics that align with the white neoliberal and heteropatriarchal order, and instead opt to expose injustice and build non-hierarchical and mutually supportive community relationships. Following the Coyolxauhqui imperative, LCWs channel their personal as well as their families’ and communities’ pain and anger into creating spaces that affirm, uplift and heal Latinx people of diverse racial, gender, age, class and sexual identities. Furthermore, LCWs like Lupe call attention to Latinx complicity in settler colonialism and challenge imposed colonial notions of race, gender and sexuality as Hunt and Holmes (2015) and Lugones (2010) call for. LCWs heed the Coyolxauhqui imperative and act as “modern-day” Coyolxauhquis, as described by Anzaldúa (2015), by carving out new, decolonial ways of being in the world when “finding no ready-made story” (p. 139). Like Coyolxauhqui, LCWs light up the darkness by mobilizing a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis. This kind of praxis ultimately presents an alternative, decolonial roadmap to advancing social justice resistance in and beyond the non-profit sector.

Conclusions: Learning from a Latinx Decolonial Feminist Praxis

This paper has explored the complexities of advancing social justice in the context of a neoliberalized non-profit sector. LCW testimonios show that they not only contend with the ramifications of neoliberalism, but also heterosexism and racism that are reinforced through a grant funding system and political landscape that privileges cis-hetero-men in Latin American communities and dominant society. It is also clear that negotiating multiple interlocking forces of oppression has complex effects on LCWs’ economic, mental and physical wellbeing. Although community work can and does have positive effects on LCWs, many report experiences of feeling broke – financial precarity and illness. Yet, in the face of
these challenges, LCWs demonstrate brilliance through the formation of a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis that makes possible spaces where non-hierarchical, mutually supportive relationships are nurtured so that communities can sustain social justice resistance.

Together the findings presented in this paper contribute to the literature on neoliberalization and the non-profit sector by providing an alternate view of urban politics from a Black, Latina and Chicana feminist standpoint. First, this paper complicates previous studies (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Mitchell, 2001; Veronis & Trudeau, 2009) on state restructuring by using an intersectionality framework (Anzaldúa, 2015; Crenshaw, 1991; Hill Collins, 2015; Isoke, 2013), which uncovers how neoliberalization works in conjunction with racialization and heterosexism across NGOs even as they strive to support marginalized populations. Second, using testimonio methodology (Latina Feminist Group, 2001) underscores the importance of engaging with the everyday experiences, stories and practices of racialized women and non-binary people to better understand how interlocking forces of oppression are negotiated and disrupted across NGOs. This approach responds to calls for more nuanced, processual analyses of non-profit sector neoliberalization (Darby, 2016; Wagner, 2012) and studies that conceptualize neoliberalism as a racialized process (Roberts & Mahtani, 2010). Third, by foregrounding the voices of Latinx women and non-binary people working across an array of Latin American-serving NGOs, this paper makes visible their wide-ranging contributions to urban politics that often go unrecognized in dominant society. This work also builds on the relatively small, but growing literature on Latin Americans in Canada (Landolt et al., 2011; Lobo-Molnar, 2012; San Martin, 1998; Veronis, 2010) and urges a rethinking of what social justice resistance in the city can look like from Black, Latina and Chicana feminist perspectives.

Examining the workings of a neoliberalized non-profit sector using Black, Latina and Chicana intersectional feminist approaches goes beyond solely describing how oppression happens, and instead seeks to envision alternatives and incite social transformation. This can be seen in Isoke’s (2013) Black women’s politics of resistance, Anzaldúa’s (2015) Coyolxauhqui imperative and the Latinx decolonial feminist praxis presented here that connects to these works. Specifically, a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis carries lessons for social justice organizing, including drawing inspiration from legacies of resistance across the Americas and one’s own embodied experiences of oppression, to grappling with one’s complicity in settler colonialism, to foregrounding Black, Brown and Indigenous Latinx women and youth voices,
to prioritizing building mutually supportive, non-hierarchical relationships. In other words, a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis undermines the dominant social order and actively creates spaces that cultivate alternative ways of being that as Lugones (2010) articulates, privilege “life over profit” (p. 754). By listening to the testimonios and stories of racialized women and non-binary people, this paper echoes what Black and women of colour feminists have called for over the last three decades (Anzaldúa, 2015; Crenshaw, 1991; Isoke, 2013) – the need to engage intersectional perspectives to more equitably work towards social change. This account of a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis contributes to these efforts and can serve as a framework for better understanding how interlocking power hierarchies can be disrupted and how social justice can be advanced across a neoliberalized non-profit sector.
CHAPTER 4

Latin Americans Enacting Citizenship: The Struggle and (Im)possibilities of Decolonizing Hispanic Heritage Month in Toronto

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Abstract

This paper explores how citizenship is understood and enacted by racialized migrants within the context of the Canadian white settler state. I focus on the experiences of Latin Americans in Toronto and the politics surrounding a cultural celebration – Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM). While some Latin Americans sought to use this event to gain recognition and assert their belonging to Canadian society, others opposed its naming, objectives and organization, and opted to create an alternative celebration. I demonstrate that the narratives and practices mobilized around HHM reveal how forms of migrant political organizing can internalize, reproduce and contest white settler colonial social relations. Overall, this paper aims to contribute to and complicate debates on the fraught nature of racialized migrants’ citizenship and identity formation in Canada, by emphasizing the vast heterogeneity of Latin American communities and decolonizing possibilities.

Introduction

What’s in a name? During my research on Latin American politics in Toronto, Ontario, a major discussion among community members unfolded about the naming of a yearly cultural celebration – Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM). This was not a new conversation, as dissent around using the term “Hispanic” to refer to people of Latin America has been longstanding. However, in 2015 it became a more public site of conflict. Community elites (i.e. elected officials, non-profit board members and executive directors) were in favour of the Hispanic label, but youth and community workers opposed it due to its centering of European Spanish identity and erasing of Black, Indigenous and Brown identities. They proposed using more progressive alternatives like “Latin American” or “Latinx” that are inclusive of various racial and gender identities. On the surface, this point of contention can appear as merely a struggle over a name that to most community outsiders appears interchangeable and thus trivial.
However, names are political. They wield power and are steeped in white supremacy. This can especially be seen in recent struggles to rename buildings and remove monuments named after Confederate leaders and Christopher Columbus in the United States. Upon closer examination of HHM, the Hispanic vs. Latin American/Latinx debate is not solely about a name, but about the power hierarchies underpinning the name. It is about how an ethnic, diasporic community sought to represent itself and claim space within the Canadian white settler state, while struggling with its own legacies of colonialism. What’s in a name, in this case, is over five hundred years of colonial violence and decolonial resistance that plays out in a racialized migrant group’s struggle for recognition and belonging.

In this paper, I demonstrate that the narratives and actions mobilized around HHM reveal how different forms of migrant political organizing, or citizenship practices, can internalize, reproduce and contest white settler colonial social relations. Although there is a rich literature on migrants’ citizenship formation (Ehrkamp & Leitner, 2003, 2006; Stasilius & Bakan, 2005; Varsanyi, 2005) and neoliberal citizenship (Ican & Basok, 2004; Mitchell, 2001; Trudeau, 2008; Veronis, 2006b, 2010) less is known about the ways racialized migrants or non-native people of colour negotiate their identities, politics and citizenship practices in relation to settler colonialism (Dhamoon, 2013; Morgensen, 2014; Pulido, 2017; Saranillio, 2013). I address this gap by taking direction from Sunera Thobani (2007) and understanding citizenship in Canada as firmly rooted in settler colonialism and by exploring how Latin Americans in Toronto collectively organize around a cultural celebration to engage in, or oppose white settler citizenship, and thus settler colonialism. I use the terms “white settler” and “white settler citizenship” in line with Morgensen’s (2014) impetus to underscore the interconnected racial and colonial power relationships embedded within these terms. Furthermore, I draw attention to the decolonial possibilities Latin Americans create in public space and thus contribute to literature on citizenship formation, race and public space as well as Latin American identities in Canada.

After reviewing the literature examining how migrant political organizing can reaffirm or contest white settler citizenship in Canada, I describe the importance of public space as a contested site for marginalized groups to enact citizenship. I follow this with a description of the Latin American diaspora in Toronto and share an in-depth exploration of the politics surrounding HHM, paying special attention to enactments of alternative citizenship practices in public
space that seek decolonization like the formation of the Latin-America History Collective (LAHC) and their Día de la Verdad/Day of Truth Rally.

**Unpacking Tensions in Migrant Political Organizing: Seeking White Settler Citizenship or Working Towards Decolonization?**

Migrant political organizing, particularly through non-profit, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), has been understood as a significant way for migrant groups to consolidate power, gain recognition, access resources and integrate within host societies like Canada (Schrover & Vermeulen, 2005; Trudeau, 2012; Veronis, 2010, 2013). In this way, NGOs have acted as key sites for migrants to participate politically and thus enact citizenship even without formal citizenship – being legally recognized as citizens (Ehrkamp & Leitner, 2003, 2006; Veronis, 2010; Trudeau, 2012). In other words, NGOs are sites where migrants can exercise substantive citizenship – complex practices of political expression and negotiation over “rights, access and belonging that shape the flow of resources to persons and social groups” (Basok, 2004, p. 50; Staeheli, 2010). For the purposes of this paper, I am interested in substantive citizenship because this is what is being enacted by Latin American migrants in their support and contestation of a cultural celebration in Toronto – HHM.

Despite the social and political opportunities NGOs create for migrant communities, the rise of neoliberalism – a process of deregulation, privatization and devolution of social welfare policies and services – has effectively reshaped the non-profit sector since the 1980s (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Jessop, 2002; Mitchell, 2001; Trudeau, 2012). Specifically, neoliberalism has prompted NGOs to shift their mandates from social justice advocacy to service provision and self-help programs that aim to make migrants self-sufficient, responsible and good neoliberal citizens (Landolt, Goldring & Bernhard, 2011; Mitchell, 2001; Trudeau, 2012). In this way, NGOs can be coopted into sites of neoliberal citizenship formation where migrants are called on to display their economic and social worth through volunteering, finding employment, entrepreneurialism and sharing their culture, which does not address the root causes of inequity. There is a rich literature exposing the contradictions migrants negotiate when politically organizing in neoliberal host societies and the complexities of neoliberal citizenship (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Landolt et al., 2011; Mitchell, 2001; Staeheli, 2010; Trudeau, 2008, 2012; Veronis, 2006b, 2010). However, there is a need for more in-depth analyses that anchor citizenship within ongoing processes of settler colonialism and that explore how racialized
migrants negotiate the racial-colonial underpinnings of citizenship within their political organizing efforts in Canada (Bannerji, 2000; Snelgrove, Dhamoon & Corntassel, 2014; Thobani, 2007). This is precisely what this paper aims to do by exploring how Latin Americans’ political organizing in Toronto reinforces or challenges white settler citizenship in Canada.

According to Patrick Wolfe (2006), settler colonialism is an ongoing violent process based in a logic of elimination where settlers seek to occupy, dominate and replace the Indigenous population. In this way, settlers “become the law,” superseding Indigenous laws, knowledges and ways of life (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 6). One critical way settlers become the law, Thobani (2007) demonstrates, is through the institution of Canadian citizenship, which is integral to the advancement of settler colonialism. European settlers drew and enforced the boundaries of legal and substantive citizenship (i.e. who could enter, stay, own land, be recognized, participate, have rights and access resources) and elevated whiteness as the embodiment of “legitimate and responsible citizenship” (p. 75). In this way, white settlers made themselves lawful citizens and worthy inheritors of Indigenous land, underscoring their industriousness and ingenuity for economic development (Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007). Therefore, citizenship in Canada is rooted in white supremacy and colonial violence, as it was instituted in a triangulated form, granting rights, recognition and opportunities to white settlers, while disposessing Indigenous people and excluding non-native people of colour:

…the Aboriginal, marked for physical and cultural extinction, deserving of citizenship only upon abdication of indigeneity; the ‘preferred race’ settler and future national, exalted as worthy of citizenship and membership in the nation; and the ‘non-preferred race’ immigrant, marked as stranger and sojourner, an unwelcome intruder whose lack of Christian faith, inherent deviant tendencies and unchecked fecundity all threatened the nation’s survival (p 75).

Overall, Thobani (2007) insightfully reveals how white settlers created an intrinsically exclusionary form of citizenship, or white settler citizenship, that is based on their exaltation and legitimizes ongoing settlement. White settler citizenship allows white settlers to be recognized as rightful, responsible and deserving members of the nation, while casting Indigenous people as disappeared and racialized migrants as deviant and not belonging (even if they have legal status). However, Thobani (2007) goes on to argue that while white settler citizenship marginalizes racialized migrants, it can also offer some of its privileges if they buy into it via Canada’s national policy of multiculturalism and align themselves with the dominant social order.
Canadian multiculturalism claims to respect and promote cultural diversity, and offers racialized migrants the promise of recognition and inclusion, but has been heavily critiqued for ultimately failing to address power inequities between white settlers, Indigenous people and people of colour (Bannerji, 2000; Simpson, James & Mack, 2011; Thobani, 2007). Bannerji (2000), argues that Canadian multiculturalism works as an ideological state apparatus to depoliticize racialized migrants’ anti-colonial, anti-racist and anti-capitalist political organizing, and formalizes these struggles into NGOs that seek state funding to provide services to different cultural groups and hold cultural celebrations. For example, the 1988 Multicultural Act mandated civil society organizations to advance multiculturalism in their goals and initiatives (Mahtani, 2002). What this meant for racialized migrant groups was that they were pushed to perform “culturalist tropes” and reflect an image of an apolitical, homogenous, distinct cultural community, to be recognized as worthy of state funding (Bannerji, 2000; Thobani, 2007, p. 162). In other words, Canadian multiculturalism, as a mechanism of settler colonialism, pushed migrants and their NGOs to strive for white settler citizenship to gain recognition and access to resources.

By appealing to Canadian multiculturalism in their political organizing, racialized migrants do not necessarily challenge the institution of Canadian citizenship that continues to deny Indigenous sovereignty, and still marginalizes people of colour (Bannerji, 2000; Dhamoon, 2013; Thobani, 2007). This is because racialized migrants seek parity with white settlers by presenting themselves through NGOs as exemplary, productive peoples who rightfully belong in Canada because of their contributions to building the nation (Bannerji, 2000; Dhamoon, 2013; Thobani, 2007). In this way, racialized migrants reinforce white settler citizenship in their claims of worthy membership in a way that parallels justifications used by European settlers who cast Indigenous people as “lazy, uncivilized, nomadic” since they did not use land for profit (Phung, 2011, p. 294). Saranillio (2013) shows how racialized migrant groups like Asian Americans can participate in settler colonialism by using similar disparaging narratives in Hawaiian local politics. Although racialized migrants cannot be equivocated with earlier European settlers, how they politically organize can uphold white settler citizenship and thus, make them complicit in the perpetuation of settler colonialism (Phung, 2011; Saranillio, 2013; Stanley et al., 2014).
If complicit, how can racialized migrants enact an alternative kind of politics or citizenship practices that refuses white settler citizenship in Canada? And in what ways can racialized migrants work towards decolonization? Although there are no simple answers to these questions, scholars like Tuck and Yang (2012), Alfred (2005, 2010) and Hunt and Holmes (2015) share compelling starting points for non-Indigenous people to consider. According to Tuck and Yang (2012), decolonization within the context of settler colonialism must go beyond symbolic gestures and requires the repatriation of land. For Alfred (2005), decolonization involves Indigenous and non-Indigenous people turning away from white settler ways of being and towards an Onkwehonwe belief system grounded in principles of “interdependency, cycles of change, balance, struggle and rootedness” (p. 250; Snelgrove et al., 2014). Alfred (2010) also illustrates the possibilities of a radical imagination that can allow people to re-envision how they are situated in settler colonialism, not as citizens (read: white settler citizens), but human beings engaging in “equal and respectful” relations to land, nature and other human beings (p. 6).

Together, Tuck and Yang (2012), Alfred (2005, 2010) and Hunt and Holmes (2015) emphasize the importance of non-Indigenous people building relationships with, and supporting the struggles of Indigenous people. While public demonstrations, from protests to blockades, are important enactments of solidarity and resistance, Hunt and Holmes (2015) argue for a “both/and” approach that considers people’s everyday actions within the intimate spaces they inhabit as vital to decolonization (p. 159). They demonstrate how a decolonial queer politic, which goes beyond inclusion and addresses the mutually constituted nature of race, sexuality and gender, will allow for meaningful cross-cultural relationship building, self-reflection and self-education. Furthermore, a decolonial queer politic requires exposing and challenging Canada’s violent past and present:

It necessarily involves having ongoing conversations that challenge the pervasive colonial narratives about “thanksgiving,” “Canada Day,” and “explorers,” bringing a critical and decolonial lens to examining news media, books, toys, music, films and...the connections between colonialism and the enforcement of a hetero/cisnormative gender binary… (Hunt & Holmes, 2015, p. 164).

Although scholars and activists have provided insightful and provocative blueprints to imagining and enacting decolonization, it is unclear how racialized migrants negotiate their membership and identities between decolonial and white settler projects. In this paper, I
connect and build on discussions on citizenship, settler colonialism and decolonization in Canada by exploring the case of Latin Americans’ political organizing in Toronto through cultural celebrations like HHM and LAHC’s rally. This case is especially unique as it shows how racialized migrants understand and use cultural celebrations towards different political ends that can reinforce or challenge settler colonialism. In the following section, I provide a brief review of the literature on citizenship formation in public space and attend to the implications surrounding people of colour’s cultural productions in public space.

Public space, race and culture

There are resurging debates on the significance of public space as a site of enacting citizenship and politics (Mitchell, 1995, 2017; Vigneswaran, Iveson & Low, 2017). Don Mitchell (2017) argues that “public space is struggle”; people not only stake their political claims through public space, but also negotiate and contest how public space is used, designed and controlled (p. 503). Since the 1990s a significant body of literature has proliferated illustrating how interlinked processes of neoliberalization, privatization and securitization have transformed public squares, streets and parks once used for social gathering and civic engagement to exclusionary zones, restricting protests and evicting low-income and homeless populations (Miller, 2007; Mitchell, 2017; Németh, 2009; Staeheli & Mitchell, 2008). Critical scholars of race, gender and sexuality have contributed important interventions to this literature, foregrounding how public space is constituted by, produces and sustains social difference. More specifically, Razack (2002) and Teelucksingh (2006) both trouble assumptions on who is perceived as belonging or not in public space, highlighting how Indigenous and racialized populations are excluded and relegated to spaces constructed as degenerate or criminal.

Teelucksingh (2006) offers up the notion of “claiming space,” whereby racialized people create alternative identities and representations of themselves through space that counter dominant narratives and spatial practices. Similarly, Zenzele Isole (2013) demonstrates how Black women in Newark, New Jersey carve out Black, radical, feminist and queer political spaces that challenge the white neoliberal establishment. In the Toronto context, Rahder and McLean (2013) uncover the different ways racialized migrant women come to know their place in Canadian society as a subjugated one, but resist through building supportive community networks and place-making.
Cultural productions in public space, like festivals, parades and artistic events, have long been held as vehicles through which marginalized groups create community, visibilize their stories and pass on traditional knowledges and practices. For example, the Blues emerged in the American South providing an alternative social justice vision to the terror of white authoritarianism and continues to be reasserted through the Mardi Gras carnival and other cultural events (Dinerstein, 2009; Woods, 2009). However, Porter (2009) cautions that such cultural celebrations can be coopted to reproduce a racialized neoliberal agenda as seen in the ways Jazz Fest was mobilized to rebuild New Orleans post-Katrina while excluding low-income, Black former residents.

In Toronto, Veronis (2006b) discusses how the Canadian Hispanic Day Parade serves as an example of immigrant communities seeking political recognition through cultural performance but at the same time reifies neoliberal citizenship under a banner of multiculturalism. Parade organizers aimed to display a united, responsible and professional image of Latin Americans to outsiders in the hopes of gaining access to social and economic opportunities from state actors, but ultimately left root causes of inequities, like neoliberal restructuring, unaddressed (Veronis, 2006b). Both Porter (2009) and Veronis (2006b) demonstrate the contradictions embedded in people of colour’s use of cultural productions in public space, which can serve to internalize and reinforce dominant power hierarchies even when they attempt to do the opposite.

This paper draws on Veronis’ (2006b) analysis of neoliberal citizenship practices among Latin Americans in Toronto, but distinguishes itself by examining how Latin Americans buy into, or challenge white settler citizenship through the ways they form identities and politically organize around cultural celebrations. In the following section, I share a brief and historicized portrait of the Latin American diaspora in Toronto, highlighting how colonial legacies stemming from Latin America inform contemporary identities and politics in Canada.

Historicizing Latin American Politics and Identity in Toronto, Canada
In this paper, I use the term “Latin American”\(^8\) to refer to people who trace their familial and personal histories, identities and culture to the geographical region that is now known as Latin America, which encompasses Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean. In Canada, the Latin American population numbers 544,380 and the majority reside in Toronto, Ontario where over 185,000 have made home (Statistics Canada, 2011). Despite their active involvement in community organizations, Latin Americans face numerous socioeconomic challenges in Canadian society including discrimination, over-representation in low-wage jobs and higher rates of youth not completing high school (Lindsay & Statistics Canada, 2007). The Latin American population in Toronto is also highly diverse in terms of nationality, race, class, political affiliations, arrival times and reasons for migration. According to Mata (1985) in the late 1960s and early 1970s migrants from Andean countries moved due to political and economic instability. Chileans, Argentinians, and Uruguayans fleeing right-wing dictatorships followed in the 1970s. During the 1980s, Central Americans largely from El Salvador and Guatemala arrived as refugees escaping violence and civil war (Mata, 1985). In the 1990s, changes to Canadian immigration policy, like the “skilled worker” category have allowed for mainly university educated, Latin American professionals to immigrate (Veronis, 2010).

As such, there is not one Latin American nationality that is significantly over-represented than others. Furthermore, while Latin Americans are one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in Canada, it only accounts for almost 3% of the population in Toronto, making it a much smaller population in comparison to South Asian (12.3%) and Chinese (10.8%) populations in the city (City of Toronto, 2013). Therefore, the context for Latin Americans in Toronto is drastically different than Latin Americans in major cities across the U.S., since in the U.S., Latin Americans are the largest ethnic group after the white majority and represent 18% of the population, numbering 58 million in 2016 (Flores, 2017).

Differences in nationality and context of migration intersect with differences across race, class, and political affiliations that amplify the heterogeneity of the Latin American population in Toronto. These axes of difference can be connected to legacies of colonialism in Latin America. Although each nation in Latin America underwent European colonization in distinct

\(^8\) I also use the term Latin American because this was the term most used by community members to identify themselves at the time this research was conducted. I do interchange the term Latinx with Latin American, but Latinx is a newer term that was developed to be inclusive of genders that transcend the gender binary in Latina/o and at the time was only starting to be used.
ways, colonizing processes were rooted in notions of white superiority that subjugated Indigenous and Black populations through land dispossession, enslavement, cultural repression and other forms of violence (Graham, 1990; Quijano, 2007). Prevalent across Latin America was the ideology and practice of mestizaje (miscegenation or racial mixture), that was imposed by Spanish and Portuguese colonizers through the social categorization of people according to race (Cahill, 1994; Schwartz, 1995). Over time, mestizaje enabled the formation of a racial hierarchy that privileges whiteness, whereby mestizos are heralded as a new and improved race due to mixing with white Europeans, while indigeneity and Blackness are disparaged and erased in national discourses (Graham, 1990). Mestizaje continues to be a dominating logic in Latin America that materially and discursively privileges light-skin mestizos and white individuals who identify with Spanish ancestry, while disadvantaging darker-skin mestizos, Indigenous and Black people in different ways (Urrieta, 2012).

Due to this history and present of mestizaje, Latin Americans arriving to Toronto cannot be understood as a homogenous ethno-racial community, as they each occupy different positions of power and privilege in their nations of origin. They also claim a range of identities like Latinx, Indigenous, Black, Afro-Latinx, Asian, Hispanic and European. As, Pendleton-Jimenéz (2008) writes, “Latinas converge upon the Toronto landscape as descendants of both colonizers and Indigenous peoples, holding conflicted membership in the Americas” (p. 120). Upon arriving to Canada, Latin Americans all enter into a settler colonial context with a persistent racial hierarchy that elevates whiteness as the embodiment of citizenship (Thobani, 2007). So how do Latin American migrants and their descendants reconcile notions of race and identity they’ve inherited from Latin America’s colonial past and haunted present, within settler colonial Canada? In other words, how do Latin Americans make sense of their role and membership in the Canadian polity?

In the United States, struggles over identity labels, particularly the terms Hispanic and Latino, have been a major facet of Latin American politics (Alcoff, 2005; Oboler, 1992; Padilla, 1985). Although the term Hispanic connotes ties to Spain and Spanish colonialism, it is a newer development that was imposed by the U.S. government in 1978, “at the suggestion of the king of Spain for all those “whose culture or origin” is Spanish, “regardless of race”” (Toro, 1998, p. 53, as quoted in Alcoff, 2005, p. 403). The term Hispanic has been critiqued for re-casting Latin Americans as Spanish subjects, ignoring internal differences across race, class, nationality and migration experiences, and ultimately disempowering Latin Americans to
define themselves (Alcoff, 2005; Oboler, 1995; Sandoval & Ortiz, 2009). Yet, historically Latin American political elites and middle-class professionals have aligned themselves more strongly with the Hispanic label to appear more amenable to the white majority, and gain social mobility (Alcoff, 2005; Calderón, 1992; Gomez, 1992).

On the other hand, “Latino” has been mobilized by grassroots activist groups since the 1970s as an alternative pan-ethnic identity label that is based on a shared experience of racial discrimination and poverty in the U.S., but also on a shared impetus for social action (Padilla, 1985). However, Sandoval and Ortiz’s (2009) framework of Latino identity cautions that possibilities for solidarity among Latinos may be thwarted due to their different experiences of race and class in the United States. They state, “there will be stronger social bonds between disenfranchised and exploited Latinos than between disenfranchised and Americanized Latinos” (Sandoval & Ortiz, 2009, p. 83). Furthermore, the terms “Latino” and Latin American have been critiqued for centering brownness, while invisibilizing indigeneity and Blackness (Milian, 2013). More recently, Latino has been critiqued for adhering to the gender binary embedded in Latino/a. In response, the gender-neutral term Latinx has been created by transgender and queer people of Latin American descent to be more inclusive of people whose identities transgress the gender binary (Ramirez & Blay, 2017).

It is clear identity labels continue to shift among Latin Americans in the United States, but less is known about the unique experiences of Latin Americans in Canada. This paper aims to fill this gap by examining how Latin Americans form identities and exercise citizenship within the Canadian state.

The findings shared below were collected as a part of a larger qualitative study carried out between 2015-2017, involving 37 in-depth interviews with community members and participant observation in key Latin American organizing spaces and at public cultural events, as well as analysis of organizational documents. For the purposes of this paper, I focus on participant observation data and my analysis of the Hispanic Heritage Month Bill 28 proceedings and secondary sources, including the Hispanic Canadian Heritage Council (http://hispaniccanadianheritage.ca/) and Latin-America History Collective (https://latinamericahistorycollective.wordpress.com/) websites.
Deconstructing the Hispanic Heritage Month Act in Ontario and Uncovering “Good Settler Hispanic Subjects”

Bill 28, an Act to proclaim the month of October as Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM) in the province of Ontario, received Royal Assent on May 5, 2015. Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP), Mrs. Cristina Martins, introduced this bill with the support of leaders from various self-identified Hispanic and Spanish-speaking NGOs in Toronto. This move was the continuation of a longer effort at the city level by many of these leaders and Hispanic City Councilor, Cesar Palacio, to establish October as HHM in Toronto. Although proponents of HHM sought to use this event to promote Hispanic culture and gain political recognition from Canadian society, closer examination of Bill 28 shows how HHM internalizes and reproduces white settler colonial social relations. More specifically, the narratives mobilized by MPPs in Bill 28 reveal how state actors impose a framework of “good settler Hispanic” subjects, onto Latin American populations, which erases internal differences, reifies white settler citizenship and forecloses opportunities for decolonization.

In the second and third readings of Bill 28 (2015), MPP Martins explicitly draws the boundaries around the category Hispanic. She traces the origins of the Hispanic community in Canada to migrants arriving from Spain in 1914 and then refers to people from “Spanish-speaking countries” as Hispanics. Throughout Bill 28 there was little usage of the terms Latin America or Latin American and the term Latino was not used. However, there was some reference to the term Latin, which was interchanged with Hispanic. By using the identity marker Hispanic, MPPs grouped Latin Americans and Spaniards under the same category, which ignores critical differences in experiences of colonization and homogenizes Latin Americans as all identifying with Spanish ancestry. Therefore, the usage of the term Hispanic in this context renders Latin American migrants legible only as Spanish descendants and unable to define themselves in relation to their Black and Indigenous identities, which echoes scholars’ critiques of the label Hispanic (Alcoff, 2005; Oboler, 1995).

MPP narratives construct a portrait of good settler Hispanic subjects who are not on equal footing or the same as white Canadians, but still deserving of some of the privileges of white settler citizenship because of their contributions to building the nation. For example, MPP Sergio characterizes Hispanics as “extremely hard-working people…very law-abiding citizens, very lovingly attached to their families and to their culture” (Bill 28, 2nd reading, p. 877). MPP
Baker lauds Hispanics for helping to make Canada “a paradise” (Bill 28, 3rd reading, p. 3947). Like other MPPs, MPP Martow describes Hispanic Canadians who are successful entrepreneurs. She expresses deep admiration for the Gutfranjds, her Mexican neighbours who “quickly got themselves established. Their kids, that very first year, put on skates and learned how to skate…the kids are so well adapted” (Bill 28, 3rd reading, p. 3949). She also comments on how “blessed” Canada is to partake in “the rich culture of Hispanic people” referencing “the sensual sounds of bachata, merengue and reggaeton, as well as the sizzling scent of churros” that will “dazzle visitors and tourists alike” (Bill 28, 3rd reading, p. 3948).

Although MPPs most likely thought they were speaking positively about Hispanic people, the narratives above serve to relegate Hispanics to the position of good settler subjects and reifies white settler citizenship. First, by referencing the hard work ethic, law-abiding nature, entrepreneurialism and adaptability of Hispanics, MPPs designate these characteristics as what qualifies one for membership in the Canadian polity. These characteristics are integral to white settler citizenship and perpetuates the notion that people of colour must strive for parity with white Canadians to obtain legitimacy (Bannerji, 2000; Phung, 2011; Thobani, 2007). In other words, good settler Hispanic subjects must display a set of skills that are deemed acceptable to the nation – owning businesses, encouraging the assimilation of their children and expressing their culture only if it does not threaten the status quo. At the same time, Hispanic culture is understood in stereotypical ways, exotified and commodified, which reinforces white Anglo-Saxon dominance, and is exemplary of the failure of Canadian multiculturalism in addressing the root causes of inequities (Bannerji, 2000; Thobani, 2007). The statements above reinforce the mythology of Canada as an innocent nation, leaving unquestioned who Canada is a paradise for and at whose expense. Realities of stolen and occupied Indigenous land, residential schools, anti-black racism and migrant worker exploitation are made invisible.

Overall, the discussions of Bill 28 demonstrate how state actors impose a framework of good settler Hispanic subjects onto Latin American populations. In the following section, I detail a community conversation where Latin Americans exchange differing views in relation to their identity and politics, where some oppose and others aspire to fit into the framework of good settler Hispanic subjects, and thus aspire to achieve white settler citizenship.
A community discussion on the naming and politics of HHM

On July 27th, 2015, the Hispanic Canadian Heritage Council (HCHC) called a meeting to discuss the naming of HHM. HCHC describes itself as a non-profit organization that aims to increase the visibility and representation of Hispanics in Canada. It is structured with an Executive Director who is responsive to a board of directors, each of who are a representative of a Hispanic, Spanish-speaking, or Latin American-serving NGO. Approximately twenty-five people were in attendance, including HCHC board members and affiliated people, community workers representing other Latin American-serving non-profit organizations and unaffiliated community members. There was a mix of ages, nationalities, genders and generations present, but HCHC board members and affiliates appeared to be middle-aged to older, first generation, professionals and community workers from other organizations tended to be second generation, young adults.

After a round of introductions, HCHC leaders opened the discussion by stating that the purpose of this gathering was to discuss how the HHM name could be altered, but that the term Hispanic would remain. This led to confusion among non-HCHC member attendees since they thought this would be a conversation on the importance of changing the name to be inclusive to Latin American community members, not only people that identify with Hispanic heritage. A community worker expressed that it would be important to propose alternatives to the name since people “are not wanting to be difficult,” but that these are “serious issues rooted in colonization” that resonate strongly with many. Proposals were put forward including Latin American History Month and Latinx History Month, but they were largely met with frustration and opposition from HCHC leadership and affiliated members.

Several reasons were provided by HCHC board members and affiliates on why the Hispanic label could not be changed. First, an Executive member stated that the name could not be changed to Latin American because that would include Brazil and Haiti and that they are “different from us.” Second, HCHC members said that dropping the Hispanic label would be excluding people from Spain. Third, an HCHC affiliate justified the use of the term Hispanic by saying that “because the Spanish mixed in with the Indigenous population in Latin America it was not as violent or like here in Canada where the Indigenous people no longer exist.” Fourth, a member stated that the gender-neutral term Latinx could not be used since “no one would understand it” and that there are “so few of them [transgender and non-binary people]
in the community anyway it wouldn’t make a difference.” Lastly, an HCHC Executive member stated that a lot of work had already gone into getting the attention of politicians under the Hispanic label and that it was simply too late to change it and would make them look disorganized. It was also mentioned that HCHC was awaiting funding from the city to make HHM possible, and that a core component of the funding would go towards developing an app for promoting Hispanic restaurants and did not want to compromise it with a name change. When non-HCHC affiliated community members tried to question, and contest these reasons, they were interrupted, silenced and even told “to go back to school to learn more about history.”

Non-HCHC affiliated community members also expressed concern over the tokenization of Latin Americans by the city through cultural celebrations like HHM and the lack of community consultations by HCHC. Specifically, non-HCHC attendees felt that the city and HCHC should have done broader, meaningful consultations before HHM was made into policy, since a Hispanic restaurant app did not seem as high of a priority in comparison to better supports for youth. By the end of the meeting no consensus was reached on a different name and HCHC and other organizations decided to do their own events under the labels of their choosing. HHM remained the official name, although in some promotional material it was changed to Hispanic-Latino Heritage Month.

The reasons provided for keeping the Hispanic label reveal the underlying politics of HHM that reproduce interlocking oppressions like anti-black racism, settler colonialism and transphobia. HCHC’s attempt to draw concrete boundaries around the Hispanic label and distance themselves from predominantly Black countries (Brazil and Haiti), but align themselves with Spain is a form of anti-black racism rooted in mestizaje’s legacy (Milian, 2013; Urrieta, 2012). Although the HCHC affiliate acknowledged that colonization happened in Canada, she reifies the notion that Indigenous peoples no longer exist, which is not only factually incorrect, but frames settler colonialism as a finished project and invalidates contemporary Indigenous struggles. Also, the refusal to recognize transgender and non-binary Latin American people is fundamentally transphobic. Lastly, concerns over the tokenization of Latin Americans by the city through cultural celebrations like HHM without meaningful consultation and allocation of resources to structurally disadvantaged youth, were left unaddressed.
The lack of willingness to consider alternatives to the Hispanic label, but also the underlying politics of the label and event, shows how members of HCHC are aspiring towards white settler citizenship. This is because HCHC members sought to fulfil the image of good settler Hispanic subjects laid out in Bill 28, for the sake of appealing to the white political establishment and its policy of multiculturalism for funding and recognition. They did this at the expense of addressing interlocking oppressions and the institution of Canadian citizenship, which reflects analyses by Bannerji (2000), Thobani (2007) and Dhamoon (2013) that demonstrate how racialized migrants can reproduce settler colonial relations within their political and cultural initiatives. This can clearly be seen in the prioritization of advertising space for Hispanic restaurants instead of resources for youth, which falls neatly into the logic of Canadian multiculturalism that fails to materially benefit marginalized people of colour (Bannerji, 2000; Thobani, 2007). However, there was strong opposition to the naming and politics of HHM, and shortly after the meeting, a group of Latin American community members organized to create an alternative celebration that refused playing the part of good settler Hispanic subjects and sought to undermine white settler citizenship.

The formation of the Latin-America History Collective (LAHC)

In early September 2015, Andrea Vasquez Jimenez, an Afro-Latina community activist in Toronto, started a change.org petition addressed to city, provincial and federal politicians to change the name of HHM. The petition advocated for the use of Latin-America History Month to be “inclusive of the multiple communities that make up Latin-America including but not limited to Indigenous people, Afro-Latinxs, gender non-conforming people...” (Vasquez-Jimenez, 2015). Overall, this petition received 250 signatures, over 40 comments in support of the name change, and was a strong impetus in the formation of the Latin-America History Collective (LAHC).

The LAHC formed in mid-September 2015 by community leaders of the Latinx, Afro-Latin-America, Abya Yala Education Network⁹ (LAEN), Poder¹⁰ (Latin American feminist

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⁹ Formerly known as the Latin American Education Network (LAEN)
¹⁰ Poder translated from Spanish to English means “power” and is the new name for the Toronto-based, Latin American feminist organization formerly known as MUJER, meaning “woman” in Spanish.
organization) and the Latin American and Caribbean Solidarity Network (LACSN), as well as non-affiliated community members and activists. In the months following, five other community organizations became supporters. LAHC members were committed to working in the form of a non-hierarchical collective to challenge the politics of HHM as seen in their list of demands: Changing the name of HHM to Latin-America History Month; Grounding the cultural celebration in principles of “social justice, indigenous resistance and decolonization”; Establishing processes for HCHC and municipal, provincial and federal levels of government to improve community engagement, accountability and transparency; And lastly “to support Indigenous sovereignty here” and end all forms of colonialism (LAHC, 2015).

LAHC’s demands (2015) show how some Latin Americans are politically organizing in a way that refuses the role of good settler Hispanic subject and does not aspire to white settler citizenship. LAHC calls on state actors and self-proclaimed leaders of Hispanic, Spanish-speaking, and Latin American-serving NGOs to engage in broader, more inclusive consultation of marginalized community members when developing policy. Although LAHC seeks to make changes through the state, it also calls on the wider Latin American diaspora to commit to a politics of social justice and decolonization when celebrating their culture. In these ways, LAHC attempts to challenge the neoliberal cooptation that other cultural events have undergone as highlighted by Veronis (2006b) and Porter (2009), and goes further to challenge the reinforcement of white settler colonial citizenship in migrant political organizing underscored by Bannerji (2000), Dhamoon (2013) and Thobani (2007).

LAHC voiced their demands through their October 12th Día de la Verdad/Day of Truth Rally, a public demonstration I attended as an organizer and participant observer, which I explore in the following section. I show how this rally provides a compelling example of how racialized migrant communities can enact alternative forms of politics and citizenship in public space that aspire to decolonization. I highlight some of the statements made during the rally using people’s own words where possible and use pseudonyms to protect identities although this was a public event and identities could be known by attendees.

October 12th Día de la Verdad/Day of Truth Rally: Latin Americans Enacting Alternative Politics and Citizenship in Public Space
On October 12, 2015, nearly fifty people gathered in front of the Ontario Legislative Building at Queen’s Park in Toronto. They sought to publicly challenge the colonial underpinnings of HHM, Columbus Day and Thanksgiving, but also celebrate Indigenous, Black and Latinx histories and presents in Canada and Latin America. Queen’s Park was a strategic site for the demonstration because the contested Bill 28 is under the province of Ontario’s jurisdiction and because its name honours British monarchy – a clear indicator of Canada’s settler colonial past and present.

As community members approached the park they were met with a group of police officers asking what they were doing. After some conversation and organizers reassuring the police that they were non-violent, the event was allowed to proceed. This moment reflected Mitchell’s (2017: 503) assertion that “public space is struggle,” and involves continuous negotiation between processes of neoliberalization, privatization and securitization. This instance also points to the ways in which racialized bodies are perceived as not belonging in public space and assumed to be criminal (Razack, 2002; Teelucksingh, 2006). Latin American community members were stopped, questioned and compelled to perform in non-threatening ways. However, like other racialized political actors (Isoke, 2013; Rahder and McLean, 2013), they also claimed the space to carve out their own identities, represent themselves and foster a nurturing community environment in the middle of a downtown Toronto park named after the queen.

Organizers passed out free food to share and asked everyone to sit in a large circle. A Mayan elder opened the event with a ceremony and land recognition, as well as a call to build relationships with “our Turtle Island brothers and sisters.” Afterwards, one organizer announced that Indigenous community members were no longer able to attend because of their own demonstration at Dundas Square happening concurrently and they send their regrets. Attendees were then invited to share their stories and poetry to a diverse group of youth and adults.

Throughout the event, people spoke of their experiences and identities as Indigenous, Afro-Latinx, migrant and racialized first and second-generation Latinx peoples. The insidiousness of internalized racism and historical amnesia within Latin American communities was a central issue discussed. For example, an Afro-Latina activist spoke of her experiences of anti-black racism and misidentification within Latin American communities as well as in Canadian
society. She pointed out how when the term Latin American is used, Black and Indigenous peoples are not seen under this label because of the misconception that they have all mixed with Spanish people. She said, “when people start to say Latin American they don’t think of the Caribbean Latin American or the Garifuna or an Indigenous person” (Rally Speaker #3, translated from Spanish). Through storytelling, she and other Afro-Latina community organizers advocated for a rethinking of who a Latin American is perceived to be and called on everyone to address racism and colonial thinking within their families, schools and communities.

Heterosexism and homophobia within Latin American communities were connected to processes of colonization, as one speaker stated:

When you hear things like she’s a lesbian or a little butch or bisexual she doesn’t know what to do or this person is trans (negative emphasis), think colonization. This is the legacy of colonialism that the Europeans imposed with their laws and doctrines and we need to see the connections between racism and homophobia (Rally Speaker #7, translated from Spanish).

The contradictions of living in Canada as a racialized migrant while Canadian policies continue to destroy the livelihoods of people in Latin America and Indigenous people in Canada, were poignantly expressed by another speaker:

I passed out this pamphlet about how Canadian foreign policy is based in the destruction of many communities across the world, the stealing, the dispossession of land of the original peoples, the over-consumption of water to clean gold and it is the water that our communities consume. It is the water that my family, my friends, my brothers consume across all Latin America. But it’s not just Latin America that we need to defend…we need to ally ourselves with the struggles of Indigenous peoples of this territory that we step on. The Indigenous peoples here suffer. How is it possible that in a first world country there is no clean water for thousands of Indigenous families, how is that possible? I just wanted to bring up this topic so that we can strive to forward struggles of justice, for the reunification of Latin America, the Indigenous communities including ones here and have solidarity with other communities across the world, wherever possible. We are in a country that has opened its doors to us and we have come to work, to study, to open up opportunities, but injustice is everywhere and where we find injustice we need to confront it (Rally Speaker #5, translated from Spanish).

Each of the above statements call out various forms of oppression, connect them to colonialism and urge people to engage in decolonization in different ways. Rally Speakers 3 and 7 trace contemporary challenges around anti-black racism, heterosexism and
homophobia to the legacy of European colonialism that still shapes current relationships among Latin Americans in Canada. They also implicitly point to how Canadian society is structured by racial, gender and sexual power hierarchies rooted in its history of settler colonialism that particularly disadvantage Afro-Latinx and LGBTQ Latinx people. Both Rally Speakers 3 and 7 urge attendees to shift their thinking, identify and root out colonial perspectives in their everyday lives, as a starting point to working towards decolonization.

Rally Speaker 5 builds on these statements by connecting the deleterious effects of Canadian policy at home and abroad, as well as emphasizing the need to build relationships of solidarity with Indigenous and other oppressed people. Although it is noted that Latin American migrants come to Canada in search of a better life, this does not excuse them from being complicit in the injustices committed by the state. Therefore, Latin Americans are called on to refuse legitimizing the Canadian state and its institution of white settler citizenship, and instead look towards Indigenous people’s struggles, north and south, for decolonization to achieve justice in Canada and Latin America.

Overall, the narratives and practices mobilized throughout the rally push against enactments of good settler Hispanic subject-hood that aspire to white settler citizenship. Instead, a group of Latin Americans took over a public space commonly associated with Canada’s settler colonial past to expose how this past is present in celebrations like Thanksgiving and HHM that occur in October. In this way, they begin from a premise that settler colonialism in Canada has not ended. They also acknowledge the continuing presence of Indigenous peoples in Canada and started to open lines of communication that is key to building relationships over time. This approach aligns with the kinds of alternative politics Alfred (2010) and Hunt and Holmes (2015) propose. Latin Americans are speaking against colonial narratives, drawing connections between hetero/cisnormativity and colonialism, and reimagining their everyday actions in line with decolonization, which parallels the decolonial queer politic Hunt and Holmes (2015) advocate. In this case, a group of Latin Americans do not seek to elevate themselves above Indigenous peoples through playing the role of good settler Hispanic subjects as constructed in Bill 28. They do not aspire to white settler citizenship in their political organizing as their other Latin American and Hispanic counterparts have done, or as other racialized migrants have done (Bannerji, 2000; Dhamoon, 2013; Phung, 2011; Thobani, 2007). Instead, this group of Latin Americans understand themselves as accountable to Indigenous people in Canada and communities in Latin America, not the Canadian state.
However, it is important to also remember Tuck and Yang’s (2012) call to go beyond thinking of decolonization as a metaphor. During the rally, there was no explicit discussion on how to support Indigenous sovereignty and the repatriation of land. This could be interpreted as Latin Americans conceptualizing decolonization as a metaphor or solely an internal struggle. It could also be asked, how did this rally work to benefit Indigenous people in Canada? Latin Americans were not participating in a blockade or joining an Indigenous-led protest, but holding a demonstration at the same time Indigenous people were protesting at a different location in the city.

Despite these criticisms, I argue that the narratives and practices enacted at the rally align more closely with a “both/and approach” outlined by Hunt and Holmes (2015). This is because people were called on to identify the harm done by colonialism, reconfigure relationships within Latin American communities, grapple with their complicity and build relationships of solidarity with Indigenous peoples. Although relationship building between Latin Americans and Indigenous people in Canada is still an ongoing project with no clear roadmap, LAHC’s rally serves as a compelling starting point. LAHC’s rally demonstrated how everyday racialized migrants and people of colour can enact alternative forms of citizenship and politics that could potentially work towards the repatriation of land that Tuck and Yang (2012) call for and actualize decolonization.

Conclusions

This paper sought to explore how racialized migrants’ enact citizenship through political organizing and how their efforts reaffirm or oppose settler colonialism in Canada. By focusing on the experiences of Latin Americans in Toronto and the politics surrounding HHM, including the formation and rally of LAHC, I aimed to demonstrate the vast complexities of this diaspora and how this may shape their struggles for recognition and decolonization. The findings indicate a persistent tension between how Latin Americans are framed by state actors as good settler Hispanic subjects in Bill 28, and how some Latin Americans seek to fulfil that representation while others out rightly reject it. These results suggest that aspirations for white settler citizenship cannot be assumed to be held by all members of an ethnic group. Instead, looking to the disparate ways racialized migrants express their culture and politically organize
is crucial to better understanding how white settler colonial social relations can be internalized, reproduced and contested. This study builds on previous explorations of citizenship formation that focus on the expressive ways migrants enact citizenship (Ehrkamp and Leitner, 2003; Veronis, 2006b) by also considering how racialized migrants contend with settler colonialism and intra-group differences. As such, this study elaborates on the work by Thobani (2007), Dhamoon (2013) and Saranillio (2013), and echoes Pulido’s (2017) argument on the importance of examining relationships between non-white, marginalized populations to address settler colonialism.

In this case, a group of Latin Americans, through the Latin-America History Collective (LAHC), drew connections between European colonization in Latin America and settler colonialism in Canada. They identified these connections and opposed their internalization and reproduction within HHM and sought to create an alternative cultural celebration that aspires to decolonization. Decolonization was understood as a process requiring the dismantling of anti-Black, anti-Indigenous and hetero-cis-normative oppressions among Latin Americans, as well as working against complicity and supporting Indigenous struggles for decolonization in Canada and Latin America. Although Latin Americans were limited in the extent to which they helped to actualize the repatriation of land, they began to shift their everyday actions by turning away from white institutions and opening communication with Indigenous communities, which is a starting point to meaningful relationship building that could eventually lead to the kind of decolonization Tuck and Yang (2012) call for (Alfred, 2005; 2010; Hunt & Holmes, 2015).

This study contributes to debates on Latin American identity formation that have been largely US-centered by exploring how Latin Americans in Canada mobilize labels like Latina/o/x and Hispanic. Like research in the US, many Latin Americans in Toronto understand the Hispanic label as exclusionary to people who do not identify with Spanish heritage, and opt for the labels Latin American or Latinx as more progressive options (Alcoff, 2005; Oboler, 1995). At the same time, findings show, as Calderón (1992) and Gomez (1992) demonstrate, that middle-class professionals and political leaders see Hispanic as a term that is more respectable to dominant society and adopt it to gain recognition, access resources and attain social mobility. Future research incorporating interviews with Latin American people in Toronto asking explicitly about how they understand their identities, could provide further
insight on how community members perceive, experience and mobilize terms like Latina/o/x and Hispanic.

Latin Americans’ use of public space to represent themselves and voice demands echoes Mitchell’s (2017) argument that “public space is struggle” (p. 503). During the October 12th Rally, Latin American participants were identified as out of place, racialized and questioned by police, which resonates with numerous studies exploring racialized people’s experiences navigating public space (Isoke, 2013; Rahder & McLean, 2013; Teelucksingh, 2006). However, as Teelucksingh (2006) argues, racialized people can claim space, which is precisely what Latin Americans did at the rally. By using cultural practices, like the Mayan elder’s ceremony and storytelling, Latin Americans transformed a public park into a space for fostering mutually supportive relationships, learning about Black and Indigenous pasts and presents, and imagining what decolonization could look like. In this way, they rejected the use of their culture as a resource to be commodified or leveraged for settler colonial and multicultural ends as they believed HHM was doing and that has been observed in previous studies by Porter (2009) and Veronis (2006b).

The heterogeneity and multi-faceted nature of Latin American identities and politics in Toronto could be a challenge to improving the social, economic and political wellbeing of Latin Americans in Canada. However, this diversity brought about by social differences rooted in European colonization of Latin America and now unfolding in the Canadian white settler context, can present compelling opportunities for decolonization. Not all Latin Americans long for white settler citizenship, and instead seek belonging through working against their complicity in settler colonialism. How Latin Americans enact citizenship through political organizing is contextual and shaped by the histories and geographies they carry across an entire hemisphere. This paper suggests an alternative path for migrant political organizing that is grounded in a decolonial politic that disrupts European colonial legacies North and South. This decolonial politic may lead to more liberating ends than the false promise of white settler citizenship offered by Canada.
CHAPTER 5

Towards El Mundo Zurdo: Imagining-Creating-Living Latinx Decolonial Feminist Geographies

To be submitted to Gender, Place and Culture

Abstract

This paper explores how a diverse collective of Black/Afro-Latinx, Indigenous and Brown Latinx Community Workers (LCWs) in the Greater Toronto Area, engage in socio-spatial practices that strive for social justice and decolonization. By weaving together threads of Black, Indigenous and Latinx geographical thought and the experiences of LCWs through testimonio, a participatory workshop and participant observation, I demonstrate how LCWs form Latinx decolonial feminist geographies in their imaginations and urban public spaces that undermine the white settler, hetero-patriarchal and neoliberal social and spatial order. I also explore how Latinx decolonial feminist geographies are materially experienced in uniquely joyous, healing and enriching ways that are positively tied to LCWs’ wellbeing. Together the findings of this paper show that LCWs imagine, create and live Latinx decolonial feminist geographies in ways that parallel Gloria Anzaldúa’s El Mundo Zurdo. I conclude by considering how Latinx decolonial feminist geographies and El Mundo Zurdo can inform current understandings of social transformation and decolonization in human geography.

Introduction

I think in organizing we don't talk enough about imagination, love. Like, how do we create? Creation, like it's not this static thing, but it's part of the human process. – Rosa, Latinx Community Worker, Toronto, 2015

Taking direction from Rosa and many of the Latinx11 Community Workers (LCWs)12 I spoke to during my research on Latin American politics in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), this paper explores how Black/Afro-Latinx, Indigenous and Brown Latinx women and non-binary people brilliantly imagine, create and live alternative geographies (politics, spaces, experiences, knowledges, actions, relationships). More specifically, I examine how LCWs engage in socio-

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11 Latinx is a gender-neutral term that refers to people of Latin American descent who identify across a spectrum of gender identities, including transgender and non-binary people.

12 I use the term Latinx Community Workers (LCWs) to refer to Latinx identified people who participate within Latin-American serving, community-based, non-profit, non-governmental or grassroots collectives as staff, volunteers and/or activists that seek to promote the social, economic and political wellbeing of Latin American communities.
spatial practices that strive for social justice and decolonization, and form alternative, Latinx decolonial feminist geographies that actively disrupt the white settler, hetero-patriarchal and neoliberal social and spatial order. I argue that Latinx decolonial feminist geographies enact what prolific Chicana scholar, Gloria Anzaldúa calls El Mundo Zurdo (The Left-Handed World). El Mundo Zurdo is a vision, process and place that is grounded in relationality and calls people to work across differences for a more socially just world (Anzaldúa, 2002a, 2002b, 2007; Henderson-Espinoza, 2013). Although Anzaldúa’s scholarship has been foundational to Latinx Studies, her work has not been widely taken up in the discipline of Geography, despite its geographical dimensions. Therefore, this paper also seeks to address this gap by engaging with Anzaldúa’s theory of El Mundo Zurdo as it provides a critical geographical framework for understanding and creating social change, especially from the perspective of Latinx women and non-binary people, that could enrich ongoing discussions around radical social transformation within the discipline.

While Geography has its origins in colonialism and white supremacy, critical race, anti-colonial and feminist geographers have illuminated important ways forward to fundamentally change the discipline in terms of research, teaching and institutional practices (Holmes, Hunt & Piedalue, 2015; Mahtani, 2014; Nagar, 2014; Peake & Kobayashi, 2002; Pulido, 2002; 2006; Woods, 2017). More recently, the emergence of Black geographies as a subfield, has offered a powerful intervention into the discipline of Geography by reconfiguring dominant notions of space, humanity and politics, and offering new paradigms to understand relationships between people and place (Bledsoe, Eaves & Williams, 2017; Eaves, 2017; Isole, 2013; McKittrick, 2006; 2013; McKittrick & Woods, 2007; Woods, 2017). Indigenous geographies have also destabilized the reproduction of Western, colonial knowledge in the discipline by foregrounding Indigenous epistemologies, relationships to land and anti-colonial struggles (Daigle, 2016; Hunt, 2014; Hunt & Holmes, 2015). Together, Black and Indigenous geographical thought have provided crucial insights on how an alternative future based in principles of social justice and decolonization, can be forged in research and practice. Yet, it remains unclear how Latinx geographical thought connects to these literatures and can enrich current understandings of social transformation in Geography.

I aim to tackle this gap by engaging with Anzaldúa’s El Mundo Zurdo (2002a; 2002b; 2007) and the embodied, lived experiences of LCWs as forms of Latinx geographical thought, and by drawing connections between them and different threads of Black and Indigenous

Drawing upon my immersive fieldwork with Latinx communities in the GTA, including thirty-seven LCW in-depth, semi-structured interviews, a workshop, and over two years of participant observation, I articulate three key findings. First, LCWs imagine Latinx decolonial feminist geographies by proposing an explicitly intersectional and decolonial politic in their community organizing practices that addresses historical and ongoing colonial-racial violence across the Americas. Second, LCWs create Latinx decolonial feminist geographies through public events that foreground the voices and lives of Black/Afro-Latinx, Indigenous and Brown Latinx women, queer and transgender people. Third, LCWs experience or live Latinx decolonial feminist geographies in uniquely joyous, healing and enriching ways that are positively tied to their wellbeing. I illustrate these findings by heavily drawing on the spoken words LCWs shared in their interviews that I understand as testimonios (Latina Feminist Group, 2001) and in my observations of community events so that they can be seen and engaged with on their own terms as much as possible. Together, these findings show how LCWs work towards El Mundo Zurdo and offer important lessons on enacting social transformation that echo, and build on the critical insights provided by Black and Indigenous geographies.

In the following section, I describe specific Black, Indigenous and Latinx geographical frameworks and show how they are connected in terms of their attention to relationality and working across difference. I then describe the research context surrounding Latinx politics in the GTA. Next, I turn to the voices of LCWs, showing how they imagine, create and live Latinx decolonial feminist geographies in ways that underscore and animate Black, Indigenous and Latinx geographical thought. I end by considering what lessons Latinx geographical thought can bring to bear on current understandings of social transformation and decolonization in human geography.
Uncovering Relationality and Working Across Difference in Black, Indigenous and Latinx Geographical Thought

In their ground-breaking edited collection, *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*, Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods (2007), articulate how a Black geographies framework is rooted in a different desire for place that allows for an alternative kind of politics to be imagined and cultivated. They foreground how Black people’s socio-spatial practices can trouble logics of dominance that seek to conquer, exploit, border, or commodify land. Instead, a Black worldview approaches “place as the location of co-operation, stewardship and social justice” (McKittrick & Woods, 2007, p. 6). An example of this is the Blues tradition:

a knowledge system indigenous to the United States that is expressed through an ever-expanding variety of cultural, economic, political and social traditions. Embedded within the blues tradition are highly developed and institutionalized forms of philosophy, political economy, social theory and practice, and geographic knowledge that are dedicated to the realization of global social justice (Woods, 2007, p. 49).

Therefore, the Blues is a dynamic knowledge system, epistemology, political movement and geography emerging from the American South that holds lessons for social transformation. Woods (2007, 2009, 2017) methodically traces how the Blues served as an alternative social justice vision to the terror of Bourbonism and the white supremacist Mississippi Delta plantation regime from the 1830s onwards. He asserts that the Blues continues to work as a “permanent countermobilization” against the “plantation blocs of the world” and is rearticulated in the present through hip hop music and other forms of Black creative resistance (Woods, 2007, p. 58). Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to describe the exceptionally rich dimensions of Wood’s (2007, 2009, 2017) analysis of the Blues in its entirety, what is especially powerful about the Blues tradition is that it calls on people to work across difference for social justice ends:

…the core of this tradition [Blues] revolves around proceeding from a particular social position. Therefore, those who are marginalized based on their culture, ethnic, race, class, gender and regional position find this epistemology and its analogic reasoning empowering. It enables them to reach inward to explore new depths while simultaneously allowing them to reach beyond enforced boundaries in order to unite with other demonized communities – the ‘wretched of the earth’ (Woods, 2007, p. 74).
The Blues calls on oppressed people to enact a politics that emerge from their subaltern experiences and knowledge systems, that is also grounded in relationality. In other words, oppressed communities are called on to understand themselves in relation to one another, and engage with each other’s different experiences, knowledges and political struggles to create a more socially just world. This kind of reasoning the Blues puts forward is significant because it goes beyond liberal notions of “putting differences aside” or “letting go of the past” and “working together.” Instead, the Blues demands a deep and meaningful engagement with legacies of colonial-racial violence and subaltern resistance that continue to shape contemporary realities. The Blues asserts that by looking to and connecting the different ways racialized, gendered and working class communities understand their experiences and wage political struggles, new paradigms, knowledges, geographies and politics can be created that will achieve global social justice. Therefore, the Blues provides a dynamic blueprint for “demonized communities” to create coalitions and enact relationships rooted in values of social justice, reciprocity, cooperation and mutual support that are transformative.

In a similar vein, Zenzele Isole (2013) offers an in-depth analysis of urban Black women’s politics of resistance that is intersectional, relational, emanates from their lived experiences and insists on dismantling multiple oppressions, while also simultaneously imagining and creating alternative politics and spaces. As Isole (2013) explains:

Black women’s resistance politics involves psychically undoing the harsh material conditions of existence and envisioning and creating a new terrain of politics that extends from the self outward (p. 4-5).

In this way, enacting a politics of resistance requires challenging white supremacy, heteropatriarchy and capitalism, while also fostering spaces that affirm the many interconnected identities of Black women and youth in the city. This can be seen in the ways Black women in Newark, New Jersey, refuse cooptation by the white neoliberal state and Black heteropatriarchy, and demand resources for low-income, gender non-conforming, queer Black women and youth. Isole (2013) also shows how working across difference within Black communities, and between Black communities and other racialized groups, is also integral to a politics of resistance. For example, events like the National Hip Hop Political Convention worked to build solidarity among and between African Americans, Latinxs, Asians and other racialized communities. Also, queer Black women enacted a politics of resistance by creating
strategic political alliances across LGBTQ, Black and women’s organizations after the murder of Sakia Gunn, a queer, Black, gender non-conforming young woman. Black queer women activists refused any explanation or course of action that did not account for how Sakia’s murder was a result of structural intersectionality, not solely her gender, race, sexual orientation or class (Isoke, 2013).

In this way, urban Black women in Newark, reveal how a politics of resistance calls for understanding the multiplicity of Black life and collectively organizing across social difference within and between racialized groups for social justice. This is a critical insight as it reveals how racialized communities are vastly heterogeneous, and grapple with internal differences, like gender, sexuality and class, which in turn shape their political struggles. In the case of a politics of resistance, differences are understood as intersectional, mutually constituted and relational (Isoke, 2013). This understanding makes possible political struggles where the voices of the most structurally disadvantaged people are heard and foregrounded. In other words, when people living at the intersections of multiple differences, like poor, working class, Black queer women and Black trans women, have their material and political needs addressed, this would mean that the power systems creating the conditions for their oppression would be dismantled and in turn, liberate everyone.

Indigenous geographer Sarah Hunt and non-Indigenous health researcher Cindy Holmes (2015) provide a compelling account of relationality and working across difference that parallel Black geographical frameworks proposed by Woods (2007) and Isoke (2013). Hunt and Holmes (2015) propose a decolonial queer politic that calls people to understand race, sexuality and gender as mutually constituted, and address power hierarchies like settler colonialism and hetero-cis-patriarchy, in everyday relationships and larger social movements. A decolonial queer politic also underscores the importance of relationship building across cultural differences, especially with Indigenous people; engaging with their worldviews and political struggles. To illustrate a decolonial queer politic, Hunt uses the example of her non-Indigenous, white mother, building relationships with Indigenous communities through intimate and respectful everyday actions like “baking brownies for loonie-toonie fundraisers, bringing food to families in mourning when a loved one is lost, attending cultural events and visiting regularly with her neighbours…” (p. 163). Hunt’s mother’s relationship building with Indigenous people is reciprocal as Indigenous people also take care of her. It is also shaped by her own ongoing self-education about settler colonialism and Indigenous resurgence.
Furthermore, a decolonial queer politic requires challenging the mythologies of the white settler state wherever possible, like interrogating the legitimacy of Thanksgiving or Canada Day or disrupting colonial narratives in popular media to having conversations with friends, family and children around the connections between colonialism, homophobia, transphobia and sexism (Hunt & Holmes, 2015).

Overall, a decolonial queer politic provides a critical framework for understanding and enacting social transformation on multiple scales. It urges people to shift away from white Eurocentric knowledge systems and ways of being to Indigenous worldviews and systems based in principles of respect, reciprocity, interconnectedness and relationality (Hunt & Holmes, 2015). This shift requires relationship building with Indigenous people and ongoing daily action that undermines settler colonialism, which in turn is self-transformative. At the same time, a decolonial queer politic also involves non-Indigenous people showing up for Indigenous people in their political actions from protests, petitions, marches and blockades, which could lead to transformation on a broader scale (Hunt & Holmes, 2015). Ultimately, a decolonial queer politic goes beyond mainstream liberal politics where “everyone is included” or “everyone’s opinion matters” without actively addressing how some people (read: Black, Indigenous, people of colour) are structurally left out. As such, a decolonial queer politic provides a powerful intervention and opens possibilities for recognizing difference and addressing the power structures that continue to oppress people based on these differences.

Anzaldúa’s El Mundo Zurdo, is a critical Latinx geographical framework that greatly aligns with Black and Indigenous geographical frameworks discussed above. While El Mundo Zurdo has not been taken up in depth in Geography, it can enrich current understandings of social transformation in the discipline. El Mundo Zurdo can be understood as a vision, process and place that is grounded in relationality, working across difference and requires a continuous remaking of self and society (Anzaldúa, 2002a, 2002b, 2007; Henderson-Espinoza, 2013). Anzaldúa (2002b) explains:

The pull between what is and what should be. I believe that by changing ourselves we change the world, that traveling El Mundo Zurdo path is the path of a two-way movement – a going deep into the self and an expanding out into the world, a simultaneous recreation of the self and reconstruction of society. And yet, I am confused as to how to accomplish this (p. 208).
Anzaldúa’s description of El Mundo Zurdo is instructive, but not prescriptive, leaving open many different paths to social justice and decolonization. She asserts that people must psychically transform themselves, while also simultaneously enacting social change materially. This psychic-material transformation requires an uprooting of white, Eurocentric logics that have been internalized over time among colonized populations. For Latinx people, this means they must confront the reproduction of anti-blackness, anti-indigeneity and hetero-patriarchy in their communities. This would involve addressing how legacies of colonial-racial violence impact relationships between Latinx people, breaking ties with oppressive traditions, learning histories and presents of Black and Indigenous resistance, and creating new practices that uplift Black/Afro-Latinx, Indigenous and Brown Latinx women, queer and trans lives. At the same time, El Mundo Zurdo calls on Latinx and other oppressed groups to look outward and work across their differences, learn about each other’s political struggles and form relationships based in collaboration and solidarity. In this way, El Mundo Zurdo is not only a vision or process, but a material place that forms when oppressed groups come together in order to envision and create alternatives to the status quo. Furthermore, Anzaldúa (2007) describes El Mundo Zurdo as a liberating home for:

Third World women, lesbians, feminists and feminist-oriented men of all colors…the queer groups, the people that don’t belong anywhere, not in the dominant world nor completely within our own respective cultures (p. 209).

Thus, in El Mundo Zurdo, social differences are not intrinsically oppressive, but relational, and require engagement in order to challenge colonial legacies and power systems that disadvantage people based on these social differences. Anzaldúa (2007) is also careful not to overstate commonalities across groups and recognizes that people hold different paths to liberation whose autonomy must be supported:

For separatism by race, nation or gender will not do the trick of revolution. Autonomy, however, is not separatism. We recognize the right and necessity of colonized peoples throughout the world, including Third World women in the U.S., forming independent movements toward self-government. But ultimately, we must struggle together. Together we form a vision which spans from the self-love of our colored skins, to the respect of our foremothers who kept the embers of revolution burning, to our reverence for the trees – the final reminder of our rightful place on this planet (Anzaldúa, 2002a, p. 196).

Overall, Anzaldúa’s (2002a, 2002b, 2007) theorization of El Mundo Zurdo provides a radical vision and politic for social change that is expansive, rooted in relationality and aspires
towards social justice. It involves uprooting internalized racism and oppression in one’s own psyche and communities in order to achieve societal transformation. This is a two-way relationship, as engaging in political struggles for social justice and working across difference also works to change people’s relationship to themselves, each other and the environment. El Mundo Zurdo affirms how people are always in relationship to each other and the earth, and that by transforming these relationships we transform the world. Ultimately, there is no clear formula for enacting El Mundo Zurdo, which is where its power lies. Anzaldúa (2002a, 2002b, 2007) affirms that only through creative exchanges across oppressed communities, and building new kinds of relationships based in mutuality, reciprocity and justice, new geographies and worlds can be created that hold possibilities for liberation for all people.

Together, the Blues tradition, Black women’s politics of resistance, a decolonial queer politic and El Mundo Zurdo, underscore the significance of working across difference and relationality to achieve social transformation. Woods (2007) emphasizes the importance of engaging with Black and other subaltern groups, their knowledge systems and political struggles to gain a more expansive understanding of how to build a more socially just world. Isoke (2013) echoes this in her politics of resistance framework that is grounded in Black women’s intersectional experiences, embodied knowledges and political practices that bridge differences internally within Black communities and between Black and other racialized communities. Hunt and Holmes (2015) demonstrate how a decolonial queer politic calls people to turn away from white supremacist and colonial systems, and instead look to the possibilities offered by Indigenous knowledges and struggles, as well as forge relationships grounded in reciprocity. Anzaldúa’s El Mundo Zurdo, similarly, calls for self and social transformation by working across differences within Latinx communities and between different oppressed groups.

As such these frameworks, read together, call for serious consideration of Black, Indigenous and Latinx knowledges, epistemologies, ways of being and politics as viable alternatives to the status quo. They also are rooted in an understanding of mutuality, relationality and reciprocity that refuse the compartmentalization of individuals, groups and political struggles. Instead, these frameworks urge people to recognize social differences as mutually constituted, relational and important to forging necessary alliances for social justice and decolonization. Lastly, these frameworks underscore that working towards social justice and decolonization involves not only dismantling oppressive systems, but imagining and creating
alternative politics and geographies. Yet, it is unclear how these frameworks can be operationalized in current community organizing practices. This paper seeks to address this gap by exploring how a unique and diverse collective of Latinx women and non-binary people are presently imagining, creating and living Black, Indigenous and Latinx geographical thought and more specifically, enacting El Mundo Zurdo.

In the following section, I provide a brief background on the Latin American diaspora in the GTA. I highlight its distinct tradition of political activism and contextualize LCWs’ socio-spatial practices as a resurgence of Latinx radical politics that provide a compelling case study to understand social transformation in the city. Then I turn to the voices of LCWs that provide important, practical lessons on how to work towards social justice and decolonization.

**Latin American Politics in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)**

The Latin American diaspora in Canada numbers 544,380 and the majority live in Ontario, where over 185,000 have made Toronto home (Statistics Canada, 2011). Toronto is the largest city in Canada and forms a major part of the GTA, which also includes the municipalities of Durham, Halton, Peel, and York. It is important to emphasize that in the GTA, Latin Americans form a highly heterogeneous diaspora, where people trace their origins to Central and South America, Mexico and the Caribbean and identify with a range of identities from Latinx, Indigenous, Black, Afro-Latinx, Asian, and Hispanic.

In Canada, Latin Americans experience numerous socio-economic challenges from over-representation in low-wage jobs to higher rates of youth not completing high school and discrimination since they began arriving to Canada in the 1960s (Lindsay & Statistics Canada, 2007). In response, Latin Americans have mobilized in different ways, bringing their traditions of political activism from movements in Latin America. For example, during the 1970s in Toronto, there was a rise of Latin American radical politics based in transnational solidarity with leftist and social justice movements in Chile and Argentina, which continued in the 1980s with Central American communities (Landolt, Goldring & Bernhard, 2011; Veronis, 2010). Latin American women were at the core of these movements, yet faced sexism within organizing spaces and exclusion from the mainstream feminist movement (Landolt & Goldring, 2009; San Martin, 1998). Latin American women resisted by creating their own
collectives that would serve as spaces of friendship, mutual support and transnational feminist and working-class politics (Landolt & Goldring, 2009; San Martin, 1998). However, during the 1990s Latin American women activists were facing the challenges of a neoliberalizing non-profit sector that was increasingly male-dominated and pressuring social justice collectives to formalize themselves. This left many activist women in precarious positions and shut out from organizing spaces (Landolt & Goldring, 2009). Furthermore, Latin American women’s organizations struggled with addressing the unique experiences of oppression facing Black, Brown, Indigenous and queer Latinx women (Landolt & Goldring, 2009; Lobo-Molnar, 2012; San Martin, 1998).

In recent years, there has been a turn in Latin American feminist political organizing that pays attention to intersectionality and decolonization as defined by Black, Indigenous and Latinx women of colour (Crenshaw, 1991; Hill Collins, 2015; Isoke, 2013; Anzaldúa, 2007, 2015; Hunt & Holmes, 2015; Tuck & Yang, 2012). The LCWs in this study demonstrate this shift by engaging in community organizing practices that challenge white settler colonialism and heteropatriarchy, while foregrounding the experiences of Black/Afro-descendant, Indigenous and Brown Latinx women, queer and transgender people. By taking this approach, LCWs attempt to address the limitations and mistakes of past generations and represent a resurgence in radical, social justice Latinx politics that began in the 1970s. This can be seen when LCWs hold events that call out anti-black racism, homophobia and transphobia, while fostering non-hierarchical relationships of mutual support among Latinx and other oppressed people.

In the following section, I elaborate on these socio-spatial practices LCWs enact in their political organizing and show how they are imagining, creating and living alternative, Latinx decolonial feminist geographies. I then demonstrate how these Latinx decolonial feminist geographies reflect Black, Indigenous and Latinx geographical thought, and work towards Anzaldúa’s El Mundo Zurdo.

**Findings**

*Imagining Latinx Decolonial Feminist Geographies: LCWs propose an intersectional feminist decolonial politic*
Gloria Anzaldúa (2007) says “nothing happens in the “real” world unless it first happens in the images in our heads” (p. 109). During in-depth interviews, when I asked LCWs how they envisioned Latin American and local political organizing to better advance social justice, they shared numerous calls to action. A cross-cutting theme that emerged was the need to understand Black/Afro-Latinx, Indigenous, Brown Latinx women, queer and transgender people as political actors with critical knowledge on how to create social change. By starting from this premise, LCWs propose an intersectional feminist decolonial politic that addresses multiple intersecting forces of oppression – racism, heterosexism, classism, ableism and colonialism – simultaneously. They emphasize the importance of recognizing differences and intentionally creating spaces for groups underrepresented in mainstream Latin American organizations and Canadian society. Furthermore, LCWs call for establishing non-hierarchical and mutually supportive relationships in community organizing. Lastly, LCWs underscore the importance of addressing historical and ongoing colonial violence by rooting out anti-Black and anti-Indigenous sentiment in Latin American community organizations and supporting Black and Indigenous social movements in Canada and Latin America.

Below I list some key LCW visions for social change that they shared with me during in-depth interviews that I interpreted as testimonios. These quotations strongly reflect the many overlapping ideas put forward by the thirty-seven LCWs I spoke to, and were reaffirmed during a workshop with LCWs, as well as by my observations as a participant observer in various community organizing meetings and events over two years. I list the quotations to allow for LCWs’ spoken words to be seen and engaged with on their own terms as much as possible. They said:

Maria Elena: …When I imagine it [Latin American political organizing] …I always think about our differences being celebrated so always sort of amplifying the more marginalized voices within even our own communities. So again, like queer voices, Indigenous voices, Afro-descendant voices. And also in terms of looking at like different classes as well, right, different educations, different backgrounds. Not everybody has to be educated to be able to participate, right, it’s community-based, different ages, so inter-generational. So, we have elders, we have young people, we have people in between, right. We have people from all over the age range. And different abilities… So really just being able to come together as a group and being able to figure out what our purpose is and how to just make our own communities better.
Xochitl: Some people are like “para las mujeres [for the women]” but can we at least put the identities that are left out more to the forefront. Let’s be courageous, be bold and ask why don’t we have Afro-Latinos in our administration? …Like we know about it, but we aren’t saying what we actually mean and that’s part of why racism still lives. Just say it.

Carolina: I get very excited when I hear very young queers talk about gender as a spectrum, talk about the binary being an illusion…So I look forward to the day when these young queers will have done away with gender completely. Maybe that’s what will bring us all towards equality.

Cherrie: There is no form of equity or anti-oppression if it doesn’t recognize Indigenous sovereignty and Indigenous land rights…I would like to see more exchanges more participation and more invitations for people to participate from here and solidarity any time there is an issue. Like the strawberry ceremony¹³, [we] should be there, we have to be invested in those things, in all of those struggles not as extensions of our struggles, but Indigenous issues are their own, they have their own understanding of it and their own solutions so we should support them in that.

Inés: I think that the violence that Black men or Black women are experiencing is as important as what’s going on with Aboriginal women, right? So, I think [Latinx community organizing] it’s more around thinking of different issues and how it is impacting all of these different communities in very similar, but different ways…like how do we engage Black Lives Matter…how do we start discussing the Aboriginal experience here?

Taken together, these quotes illustrate how LCWs’ visions for social change are grounded in an intersectional feminist decolonial politic, and reveal how Latinx decolonial feminist geographies can be imagined. Maria Elena shares a vision of Latinx political organizing that understands racialized, queer, disabled and other marginalized people as knowledgeable political actors, whose unique perspectives are necessary to creating social justice transformation. She advocates for celebrating and working across differences internally so that all people can find a place within the “Latinx community.” Xochitl elaborates on Maria Elena’s vision by underscoring the importance of tackling internalized racism, particularly anti-black racism within Latin American organizing spaces evidenced by the lack of representation of Black/Afro-Latinxs in leadership positions. She says that by simply targeting “women” in community organizing is not enough and instead there needs to be explicit efforts made to engage Black/Afro-Latinx people. However, Xochitl’s vision refuses any tokenistic gesture and

¹³ An annual ceremony that commemorates and calls for justice for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people. It takes place at Toronto Police Head Quarters on February 14th and is held by Indigenous organizations and family members of victims.
demands that non-Black Latinxs recognize their anti-black racism and the ways colonialism has impacted them, while also working to undo racial hierarchies that deny Black/Afro-Latinxs space within community organizations and Canadian society.

In line with visions grounded in working across difference and engaging under-represented groups, Carolina imagines a gender non-binary future where people will not be forcibly categorized as either “man” or “woman,” and perhaps where those categories do not exist as we know them today. Although Carolina does not describe all the contours of this non-binary future, she offers the possibility of a world where gender will not be used to oppress people. Instead, in this world all people can fully be their multi-dimensional selves without a constant threat of violence. Cherrie builds on Carolina and other LCWs’ visions by her call to decolonize with Indigenous people in Canada. Cherrie asserts that if Latinx people want to achieve any form of social justice they must build relationships with Indigenous people and support their political struggles. She specifically points out how Latinx feminists should work in solidarity with movements that are seeking justice for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people, like the Strawberry Ceremony. Furthermore, she asserts that Latinx people must not try and subsume Indigenous issues into their own struggles, but engage with them on their own terms, and support the autonomy of Indigenous movements as they are integral to achieving social justice and decolonization in Canada and globally. Many LCWs expressed these perspectives and emphasized the importance of also building relationships with Black Lives Matter in the city, as Inés articulates. Inés proposes that Latinx people must understand Indigenous and Black struggles in their own right, while also making connections between them. In this way, LCWs explicate an intersectional feminist and decolonial politic that addresses white supremacy, settler colonialism and hetero-patriarchy within and outside perceived Latinx community organizing spaces.

The imagined Latinx decolonial feminist geographies described here resonate with different threads of Black, Indigenous and Latinx geographical thought in various ways. First, the intersectional feminist and decolonial politic LCWs invoke echoes (but is not the same as) Woods’ (2007, 2009) description of the Blues tradition, as it also emerges from a certain social position and emphasizes the importance of engaging multiple subaltern knowledge systems and epistemologies. Second, like the Blues tradition and Isoke’s (2013) politics of resistance, the politic LCWs envision requires addressing how legacies of colonialism and white supremacy, continue to oppress Black people in their communities. Furthermore, the
intersectional feminist decolonial politic LCWs share is like a politics of resistance as they both demand working across difference internally within a racialized community, and between racialized communities. Aspects of Hunt and Holmes’ (2015) decolonial queer politic can also be observed in LCWs calls to consider their role in challenging settler colonialism, building relationships with Indigenous people and working towards decolonization in solidarity with Indigenous struggles. In addition, LCWs rethink the confines of the gender-binary that Hunt and Holmes (2015) articulate is an imposed colonial construct.

How LCWs imagine Latinx decolonial feminist geographies mirrors Anzaldúa’s theory of El Mundo Zurdo. LCWs seek to build a community that can serve as a home for all that are routinely erased in mainstream Latin American organizations and Canadian society. There is also a persistent call to uproot oppressive traditions of anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, hetero-patriarchal and transphobic sentiment inherited through legacies of European colonialism within Latinx community organizing spaces and beyond. In other words, LCWs echo the two-way movement proposed in El Mundo Zurdo that requires an ongoing transformation of self and society. Furthermore, LCWs’ calls for building alliances between Latinx, Indigenous and Black social movements clearly reflect the kind of relationship building necessary to enact El Mundo Zurdo. The following section describes in more detail how LCWs put into practice their imaginings of Latinx decolonial feminist geographies, and work towards El Mundo Zurdo.

Creating Latinx Decolonial Feminist Geographies: LCWs organize spaces foregrounding Black/Afro-Latinx, Indigenous and Brown Latinx women, queer and transgender people

During the fall of 2015, Poder (formerly known as MUJER) – a Toronto-based, Latin American feminist non-profit organization – sought to create a space where community members who are routinely made invisible in mainstream local politics could be recognized and supported. It was especially important to the Poder Board of Directors to have this event considering the controversy surrounding Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM) at the time, which many racialized Latinx community members critiqued for its exclusionary naming and reinforcement of white settler colonial power relations. Poder was one of the key organizations that not only outwardly challenged mainstream Latin American organizations and politicians spearheading HHM, but also created alternative spaces, which makes their efforts a noteworthy example of how Latinx decolonial feminist geographies can be created materially in the city.
Poder decided to hold a panel discussion along with their Annual General Meeting (AGM) that explicitly foregrounded Black, Indigenous, Brown and queer Latinx voices. This was particularly salient from the promotional flyer that stated, “We are many! Amplifying Black & Indigenous Voices of the Latinx Diaspora” and listed panelists who were all local activists, educators and artists identifying as either Black/Afro-Latina, Indigenous and queer Latinx women. The event took place on October 23, 2015 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Approximately 80 people attended and code-switching between English, Spanish and Spanglish was used throughout. Although continuously translating between English and Spanish took extra time, it was important that people who were not bilingual could understand what was being said and engage in the conversations happening in the space. It was also important that people felt free to speak in the ways they felt most comfortable that did not conform to formal English or Spanish, which is why Spanglish – a mixing of colloquial Spanish and English – was used as well.

The event began with a land acknowledgement and a recognition of the connections between legacies of colonialism across Turtle Island and Abya Yala (what we now know as North America and Latin America), but also a unified call of “estamos aquí/we are here.” Attendees joined hands and repeated loudly together “estamos aquí/we are here” as a testament to the strength and traditions of resistance their families, communities and ancestors had taught them that allowed them to be present in that space at that very moment. After the approval of the agenda the AGM began where updates from Board Members were shared and a new Board was ratified. For the first time in the organization’s history, the board included non-binary people and the majority identified as queer people of colour.

After the AGM was adjourned, panelists were invited to begin the discussion. They spoke about their everyday experiences confronting racism, sexism and homophobia in their personal lives and at work. They also connected these experiences to legacies of European colonialism in Latin America and Canada. For example, Maria Olaya from the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/Multicultural Women Against Rape shared her experiences navigating a Eurocentric schooling system in Colombia that erased Indigenous and Black cultures and urged for alternative educational spaces that can begin to heal divisions within Latin American communities in Canada:
Education is the key to addressing many of the systemic barriers that continue to keep marginalized communities struggling every day. I'm not talking only about institutionalized education, there is a need for spaces where lived experiences and oral tradition has a voice and respect. Spaces where we are taught by our elders. Places where we can share moments of learning in a loving compassionate way...We need to stop replicating the divide and conquer strategy that the systems of oppression uses to control and dominate us.

Lido Pimienta, Toronto-based, Afro-Indigenous, Colombian musician and visual artist, echoed Olaya’s message and spoke of the power of music to share stories and transform society. She began by singing a verse off her album, La Papessa called Al Unisono:

Todo lo que quieras te lo doy, todo lo que quieras te lo doy, como tu lo quieras, como tu lo quieras, cuando tu lo quieras te lo doy. De América se vino tu mamá, de América se vino tu papá, esclavos en el agua, de la tierra indígena, indígena, o indígena.../ Everything you want I will give you, everything you want I will give you, however you like it, however you want it, whenever you want it I will give it to you. From America came your mother, from America came your father. Slaves in the water, from Indigenous land, Indigenous, oh Indigenous.

Lido Pimienta goes on to explain:

...the song is the narrative of, or the shared narrative of North and South America and how colonization was disguised as Christopher Columbus discovering America. When I say “todo lo que quieras te lo doy,” which means whatever you want I'm giving to you, however you want it I'll give it to you. Picture an Indigenous woman, an Amazonian perfection woman, just handing in the gold, just giving away their resources, however you want it, whenever you want it. Because when I was my son's age now, that's how it was taught to me. I went to a school called Lyndon B. Johnson school, and if you spoke Spanish you were a Spanish user and get your marked lowered. You had to have a lot of money to be in this school. My mom, single mother of three hustled so that her children could have higher education. So of course, everyone else was lighter skinned Colombian, blonde, blue-eyed, and what was I? Are you Black? Are you an Indian? And I would say yes to both because my mother Wayuu from the north coast of Colombia and my father was a Black man so...como hago yo para comunicar estas cosas? (What do I do to communicate these things) Es con la musica, y contar las historias de manera humorus (It’s with music and telling stories in a humorous way) so that this painful narrative that we all carry somehow gets shared.

Both Maria Olaya and Lido Pimienta retell stories that have been made invisible through Eurocentric schooling systems in their nations of origin imposed first by the Spanish and more recently by ongoing US intervention and occupation. In this way, they transform painful experiences into acts of resistance. Pimienta uses playful lyrics and uplifting melodies to
articulate colonial violence and poke fun at the myth of Columbus discovering America while recasting Black and Indigenous women as active subjects. She unveils the absurdity of Black and Indigenous women freely giving away resources, underscoring their integral role in protecting the wellbeing of communities and pointing to her own mother as an example of this in her efforts to provide for her children.

As Olaya, Pimienta and other panelists laid out the different strategies they used to disrupt multiple intersecting oppressions, they created a space for attendees to share their own ideas and practices in making social change. Attendees were predominantly young adult, queer, Black, Indigenous and Brown Latinx people, and many commented on how this was the first time they felt reflected in a community organizing space and thanked the panelists for their stories. However, one main critique that arose from this event was the need to engage more trans women and trans Latinx people. Organizers agreed that more work needed to be done to go beyond tokenistic gestures to the trans Latinx community and meaningful relationships needed to be fostered with trans-Latinas who were especially marginalized within community organizing spaces. During follow-up Poder Board meetings it was decided that across programming there would be an emphasis on outreaching to trans Latinas and trans-Latinxs, as well as efforts made to financially support their initiatives, as this was often a barrier to participation.

A year later Women Rock Fest (WRF) – a volunteer-run community event founded by Carolina Brown, a trans-Latina, non-binary musician – hosted a fundraiser for Poder to support the creation of more queer and trans spaces within Latinx communities. WRF’s Poder fundraiser was held on October 8, 2016 during HHM and served as an alternative celebration for racialized, queer and transgender Latinx community members. WRF organizers intentionally sought out people of colour and women of colour, trans and queer artists to perform to address their exclusion in mainstream musical festivals throughout the city. Efforts were also made to attract attendees from marginalized communities, particularly low-income trans people of colour who would not be turned away for lack of funds. It was also important to organizers to acknowledge that they were holding the event on Indigenous land and so they connected with an Indigenous elder that opened the event. Furthermore, Carolina Brown aimed to use the event to amplify community organizing spaces by and for Latinx people and allies. She says:
I think it would be important for us as a community, as a Latinx community, to take a more active role in which we would be creating the space, where we would be showcasing our own talents and where we would be celebrating our own intersections. And that would make it easier for other people that identify with us to come out and want to do the same in the future. Maybe they could create their own spaces or they want to join our space... It’s a moment to demonstrate that we can also lead and we don’t have to lead only our own, we can lead everyone. Everyone can be a part of this space as long as they acknowledge that this space is Latinx, it’s a women space, it’s a queer space, it’s a POC [people of colour] space.

Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to describe the WRF fundraiser in detail (i.e. aesthetics, music, bands, speeches) it created a momentary space within an urban centre where Latinx queer and trans people could feel in place. Like the Poder event, the WRF event also demonstrates how LCWs transform urban space and materially create Latinx decolonial feminist geographies that parallel Black, Indigenous and Latinx geographical thought and work towards Anzaldúa’s El Mundo Zurdo. Together the Poder and WRF events show that when LCWs organize public events they seek to foreground the knowledges and experiences of the most structurally disadvantaged people of the Latinx diaspora: Black, Indigenous, Brown, queer women and trans people. By doing this they aim to build relationships among people embodying these multiple intersections, who are often overlooked and made invisible in mainstream local organizations and politics. The relationships forged through these spaces are based in mutual respect, reciprocity and a desire for social justice transformation. At the same time, LCWs understand the importance of working across differences among Latinx people and other racialized, queer and trans communities to actualize social change which echo Black women’s politics of resistance (Isoke, 2013) and a decolonial queer politic (Hunt & Holmes, 2015). Ultimately, LCWs work towards El Mundo Zurdo by creating a space for oppressed groups to feel at home, where they can foster relationships, collectively organize, transform themselves psychically, and build alternative practices that make possible new ways of being and knowing that disrupt the status quo. In the following section I explain how these kinds of spaces are experienced by LCWs, and why they are critical to social justice transformation in the city.

*Living Latinx Decolonial Feminist Geographies: LCWs experience joy, hope, care and love*
When I asked LCWs what it felt like for them to engage in spaces like Poder and WRF events, they expressed feelings of joy, hope, care and love. Many LCWs felt that these spaces serve as a crucial reminder that they are not alone, but a part of a community that recognizes their complexities and appreciates their perspectives and contributions. LCWs also said that participating in these spaces was like a form of self-care and had a positive impact on their wellbeing. Since so much of their labour involves caring for others and navigating the adversity that comes with living in a white hetero-patriarchal neoliberal and settler society, these spaces provide respite for LCWs to emotionally recharge together. Below I share some key LCW testimonios of what it felt like to be in spaces like the Poder and WRF events. They shared these testimonios with me during in-depth interviews and the quotations presented most strongly reflect the many overlapping sentiments put forward by the LCWs I spoke to. I again list the quotations to allow for LCWs’ spoken words to be seen and engaged with on their own terms as much as possible:

Luz: I was so happy when I came out of there [event]… I came out of there feeling empowered again. I missed this. You know what I mean. I needed that … I felt so good!

Delia: [Being in these spaces] it’s fun! …cuz we deal with a lot of tensions I find it’s a way of self-care you can sit down and talk shit. I mean even if we have issues … like girl this is fucked up you’re not including queer voices or Afro-Latinx voices are not being included that’s fucked. I can say that in these spaces, but I’m hoping we eventually get to a point where we can create a bigger version of that where we can call each other out on that stuff and the idea is to be able to create something and create great things and not regress.

Maria Elena: We’ve created a lot of spaces in which we’re able to debrief, in which we’re able to hold each other accountable, but also be able to hold each other and speak our truths and hold space with each other. And I think for me that’s been a saving grace. To be able to find people, like I wasn’t alone, right…it gives me hope that we’re able to create spaces or foster spaces for people to be able to have similar experiences as us or if not similar, to be able to find their own voices and create spaces elsewhere.

Tanya: …It made me feel more self-assured in affirming my own identity and reflecting back on how these Eurocentric images and these representations of whiteness all around me had actually affected me and that I had internalized hate and racism to myself…Look at these women that are having the same experiences, we just fed off of each other’s power. We just grew and those experiences…they will be with me for the rest of my life.

Maggy: I think what gives me hope is like finding [these] spaces…Yes, because I’m like okay, here are some like kick-ass women who are doing some work and here we are getting together, getting – you know, connecting with each other,
and I think that’s just going to make us stronger, and it’s going to facilitate the work to happen, because now we know oh, there’s people here who also want to do this work and you know, together we can make it happen, right.

LCW testimonios show how events like Poder’s AGM and WRF’s fundraiser serve to create Latinx decolonial feminist geographies that are experienced in uplifting and enriching ways. Although LCWs liken participating in these spaces as a form of self-care, they could also be understood as a form of community care. While attempting to care for themselves, LCWs do this collectively in a space where others can support them in their healing journeys. In this way, care is not something that is simply provided to someone. Instead, reciprocal relationships of care and love are created that implicate everyone. This can be seen when Tanya talks about “feeding off of each other’s power” or when Maggy says that “connecting with each other…that’s just going to make us stronger.” By enacting relationships of care this way, these spaces nourish the very people who are striving for social justice, and promote sustainability in activist movements. At the same time, LCWs do not pretend that these spaces are without rigorous attention to difference and the replication of oppressive power systems. Delia and Maria Elena underscore how in these spaces people can be held accountable and supported in a process of self-love and self-transformation, while also working with others to create material change. Together, the LCWs’ testimonios show how spaces foregrounding structurally disadvantaged people work as Latinx decolonial feminist geographies that can be experienced as empowering, enriching, joyful, caring and loving. In turn, LCWs provide a critical glimpse into how El Mundo Zurdo could be experienced.

Conclusions: Lessons from Latinx Decolonial Feminist Geographies and El Mundo Zurdo

This paper has explored how a diverse network of LCWs in the GTA form Latinx decolonial feminist geographies in their imaginations and materially in urban space that undermine the white settler, hetero-patriarchal and neoliberal status quo. LCWs’ testimonios show that they imagine Latinx decolonial feminist geographies by advocating for an explicitly intersectional feminist decolonial politic in community organizing that addresses legacies of colonialism across Latin America and Canada. It is also clear that LCWs put into action these imaginings by mobilizing an intersectional feminist decolonial politic in the events they organize that foreground Black/Afro-Latinx, Indigenous and Brown Latinx women, queer and transgender
people. In this way, they create Latinx decolonial feminist geographies that make possible new relationships between community members based in mutual respect, reciprocity and social justice. These geographies are experienced in uniquely enriching ways that promote community care and sustainability in these activist communities, and thus are necessary to the long-term work of social justice transformation. Ultimately, when imagining, creating and living Latinx decolonial feminist geographies, LCWs are working towards what renowned Chicana scholar, Gloria Anzaldúa calls El Mundo Zurdo.

El Mundo Zurdo is a vision of the world grounded in relationality that requires simultaneous self- and societal transformation, and not only calls people to work across differences for a more socially just world, but comes into being as people do this work (Anzaldúa, 2002a, 2002b, 2007; Henderson-Espinoza, 2013). Despite its explicit geographical dimensions, El Mundo Zurdo has not been taken up in Geography. This paper has addressed this gap by understanding El Mundo Zurdo as a form of Latinx geographical thought that has parallels to Black and Indigenous geographies. More specifically, across Anzaldúa’s El Mundo Zurdo, Woods’ (2007, 2009, 2017) Blues tradition, Isole’s (2013) politics of resistance and Hunt and Holmes’ (2015) decolonial queer politic, there is an underlying recognition that people are always in relationship to each other, and thus differences are relational and people must work across these differences in order to effectively incite social justice transformation and decolonization. El Mundo Zurdo distinguishes itself by emanating from an embodied queer Chicana experience in the US-Mexico borderlands, which provides a powerful lens for understanding Latinx people’s experiences. However, it also provides a framework for people to enact social change that goes beyond any single community. Together these frameworks provide a comprehensive blueprint for social change that emerges from the embodied knowledges and epistemologies of oppressed people, especially Black working class people, Black women, Indigenous people, Latinx people and queer people of colour. In this way, these frameworks would enrich predominant understandings of social transformation in Geography, and urge scholars and practitioners to turn away from white dominant knowledge systems, epistemologies and liberal politics.

Instead, researchers, practitioners and activists could turn towards Latinx decolonial feminist geographies. Latinx decolonial feminist geographies emphasize an intersectional feminist decolonial politic that understands Black/Afro-Latinx, Indigenous, Brown, Latinx women and trans people as knowledgeable, political and spatial actors who are vital to creating meaningful
social change. Latinx decolonial feminist geographies also underscore the importance of working across differences internally within a particular racialized community and across different marginalized communities. In this way, Latinx decolonial feminist geographies show how racialized communities are vastly heterogeneous and contend with legacies of colonialism that shape their politics and how people relate to one another. Latinx decolonial feminist geographies also call for the creation of something new. New relationships, spaces and places that are grounded in principles of reciprocity, mutual respect, support and love. By keenly attending to how alternative ways of being can be created, Latinx decolonial feminist geographies powerfully echo what Black and Indigenous geographies have demonstrated – new relationships, politics and socio-spatial arrangements can be created that are not predicated on the replication of colonial-racial violence (Bledsoe et al., 2017; Daigle, 2016; Hunt, 2014; Hunt & Holmes, 2015; Isoke, 2013; McKittrick, 2006, 2013; McKittrick & Woods, 2007; Woods, 2017).
CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

Introduction

In its broadest sense, this dissertation has provided an in-depth study of Latinx urban political life and Latinx people’s geographies (their experiences, knowledges, negotiations, spaces, politics and practices) in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). More specifically, I have explored the intimate and public sites of Latinx urban politics, from embodied everyday praxis, to public protest and cultural events, and shown that Latinx people are a vastly heterogeneous diaspora that struggle internally with notions of identity, citizenship and belonging in their collective organizing across the non-profit sector. This dissertation has also largely focused on the lives, experiences and perspectives of Latinx women and non-binary community workers and activists (LCWs). I have demonstrated that they brilliantly enact a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis to disrupt the status quo and that they collectively engage in an intersectional feminist decolonial politic to create alternative spaces, practices and relationships that strive towards social justice and decolonization. In other words, I have shown how they foster Latinx decolonial feminist geographies that transform geographies of domination in the GTA. I have uncovered these findings by using an intersectional feminist and decolonial framework (Anzaldúa, 2007, 2015; Bannerji, 2000; Crenshaw, 1991; Hill Collins, 2015; Hunt & Holmes, 2015; Isoke, 2013; McKittrick & Woods, 2007), along with Chicana Latina Feminist Epistemologies (CLFE) (Delgado Bernal, 1998; Calderón et al., 2012) and testimonio methodology (Latina Feminist Group, 2001; Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012). This epistemological and methodological approach (described in more detail in Chapter 2) allowed for a nuanced, culturally responsive analysis that accounted for the unique ways of knowing of both the Latinx researcher and participants, which is novel in human geography research.

This dissertation has also worked to bridge Latinx Studies, critical race and anti-colonial scholarship with human geography. By taking such an interdisciplinary approach this dissertation serves to contribute to current understandings of non-profit sector neoliberalization, diasporic Latinx experiences and human geography. This is because analyses of neoliberalism that have dominated critical social science scholarship, especially geography, have not accounted for how neoliberalism is undergirded by race and intersects
with multiple forces of oppression like racism and heterosexism (Roberts & Mahtani, 2010). Furthermore, while geographers have uncovered the negative impacts of neoliberalism on migrant communities' political activism and access to services (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Kyle et al., 2015; Mitchell, 2001; Trudeau, 2008, 2012; Veronis, 2010), there is still a lack of understanding around how racialized migrants are affected by, and negotiate settler colonialism in their everyday politics. This dissertation addresses this gap by examining how intersecting processes of neoliberalism, hetero-patriarchy and white settler colonialism operate through the non-profit sector in the GTA, and how they are resisted by Latinx activists. Furthermore, this dissertation adds nuance to literature on Latinx experiences in Canada and the United States by grappling with internal differences within the diaspora, especially race. This is done by connecting contemporary notions of race and identity within the diaspora to histories of colonialism in Latin America and white settler colonialism in Canada. Lastly, by foregrounding the voices of Black, Brown, Indigenous Latinx women and non-binary people, this dissertation brings to light how structurally disadvantaged Latinx people create space and are integral to not only the geography of Toronto, but also the discipline of Geography. While routinely made invisible in the GTA and largely denied a place in human and Latin American(ist) geography, this dissertation shows that Latinx people create alternative geographies anchored in non-hierarchical relationships of mutual support, love, reciprocity and a deep commitment to radical, decolonial and feminist politics. In other words, Latinx people create decolonial feminist Latinx geographies that demand a present and future free of colonial-racial violence and intersecting systems of oppression.

This concluding chapter revisits these key findings outlined in the substantive papers forming this dissertation, and connects them to the overarching research question and objectives directing this study outlined below:

- **Research Question:** How do Latinx women and non-binary people enact political and spatial practices that resist interconnected systems and geographies of domination, particularly neoliberalism, heteropatriarchy and white settler colonialism, within and beyond the non-profit sector in the Greater Toronto Area?

- **Objective 1:** To examine how Latinx Community Workers (LCWs) negotiate intersecting systems and geographies of domination, as well as their own wellbeing, when working across non-profit organizations to advance social justice.
• Objective 2: To investigate how Latinx Community Workers (LCWs), in relation to other Latin American and Hispanic non-profit actors, enact citizenship and identity in public space, and interrogate how these political and spatial practices reinforce or disrupt intersecting systems and geographies of domination.

• Objective 3: To explore how LCWs’ form Latinx decolonial feminist geographies through collective organizing practices and creative expressions, as well as to explore what lessons these alternative geographies hold for social justice transformation.

In the first part of this chapter, the methods and three stand-alone papers with key findings are summarized. How key findings address the objectives guiding this dissertation and the overarching research question is also explained. This section also discusses how findings relate to, and provide a contribution to theoretical frameworks used in this study. The second part of this chapter discusses the limitations of this research and its implications for Latinx urban politics and geographies in Canada and beyond.

Summary of Chapters, Key Findings and Contributions

Chapter Two provided an overview of the epistemological orientation and methodological approach of this dissertation, as well as described the methods used in this research (in-depth semi-structured interviews, a workshop, participant observation and grey literature analysis). Chicana Latina Feminist Epistemologies (CLFE) was used in this study and refers to ways of knowing that are rooted in the unique life experiences of Chicanas and Latinas, and involves a deep commitment to disrupting Western knowledge systems and advancing social justice. As such, CLFE engenders an approach to research that aims for social transformation, like testimonio methodology. Testimonio is an oral or written account where the teller critically reflects on their experiences and shares their story in order to uncover and challenge oppression (Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2012; Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). Testimonio shaped this project in various ways. For example, the in-depth interviews conducted with 37 participants were understood as testimonios because of the way intentions for research were communicated, how questions were formulated and asked, as well as how power dynamics were negotiated. During interviews, participants reflected on their experiences in relation to
larger systems of oppression and told their stories to expose injustice and propose alternatives to Latin American political organizing for social justice. Furthermore, a compañera positional space was developed where participants and researcher could collectively make sense of their experiences together while forming new understandings.

A compañera positional space is a new concept offered in Chapter 2 that borrows from Mullings (1999) theory of positional space – transitory spaces where the situated knowledges of participant and researcher “engender a level of trust and co-operation” that go beyond “insider/outsider privilege based on visible attributes such as race, gender, ethnicity or class” (p. 340). A compañera positional space refers to the positional space developed between LCWs (including the researcher as LCW) that facilitated trust and co-operation so that testimonios could be told to change the status quo. Overall, using CLFE and testimonio facilitated the development of a distinct Latina feminist research praxis that was culturally responsive to both researcher and participants. This approach to research is novel in human geography and builds on the work of feminist geographers Mullings (1999), Nagar and Geiger (2007) and Rose (1997) by foregrounding a distinct Latina feminist perspective. What this means is that this dissertation is not simply discussing an alternative viewpoint or approach, but theorizing and working within this very approach. The Latina feminist research praxis presented in this dissertation provides a new framework for Latinx and other racialized researchers to use, adapt and build on when doing research with their own respective communities.

Chapter Three was the first substantive article in this dissertation and provided an in-depth picture of LCWs’ daily experiences working across the GTA’s non-profit sector. Data for this paper was gathered using thirty-seven in-depth, semi-structured interviews that were read as testimonios, a workshop, and participant observation. An intersectional feminist and decolonial lens, particularly Anzaldúa (2015) and Isoke (2013), was used to analyze data, and three key findings were observed. First, LCWs were constrained by, but also challenged a white neoliberal non-profit funding structure and patriarchal political system. Second, LCWs experienced contradictory impacts on their wellbeing when engaging in community work. Third, LCWs enacted a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis as they worked towards different social justice goals.
Together the findings presented in Chapter Three, address **Objective 1: To examine how LCWs negotiate intersecting systems and geographies of domination, as well as their own wellbeing, when working across non-profit organizations to advance social justice.** This can be seen in the ways that LCWs negotiated intersecting systems and geographies of neoliberalism, heterosexism, and racism embedded within the non-profit sector. For example, LCWs negotiated the neoliberalization of non-profit work by striving to build relationships and foster activism within communities, even when constrained by the main duties of their employment, which was to write grants, seek out funding sources and run programs without any form of critical education. Furthermore, LCWs as racialized women and non-binary people, negotiated the largely heterosexist terrain of Latin American-serving NGOs and the predominantly white local political landscape (politicians, city staff, granting agencies) by demanding that NGOs and different levels of government provide resources and opportunities for participation for racialized, low-income, queer, Latinx women, youth and transgender people who were routinely left out of decision-making and action.

Yet, making these negotiations left LCWs feeling “burned” and “broke” by the very people and community organizing spaces they sought out for a sense of belonging and desire to make a change. In other words, LCWs negotiated their own physical, mental and economic wellbeing when engaging in community work by at times compromising it for the sake of advancing social justice transformation. LCWs expressed feeling unwell because of being precariously employed, or underpaid in the non-profit sector, or balancing jobs outside the sector and activism, which left them strained in terms of time and financial resources. What most LCWs said led to them feeling unwell was the stress created by a toxic work environment where they were continuously unrecognized and discounted by their supervisors and peers. Yet, at the same time, LCWs expressed that doing community work was what made them feel most fulfilled and happy. Ultimately, LCWs negotiated negative and positive impacts of community work on their wellbeing by upholding boundaries, establishing supportive peer networks and investing their energy into initiatives and organizations that operated in more equitable ways.

Lastly, another profound way LCWs negotiated intersecting systems and geographies of domination was through enacting a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis. A Latinx decolonial feminist praxis is a complex process of weaving together one’s family and community histories, personal experiences, identity and women of colour feminisms to create spaces that actively disrupt the status quo. It also involves healing community trauma, creating non-
hierarchical relationships and fostering the next generation of community workers and activists. This kind of praxis can be seen when LCWs discuss how they draw inspiration from their family and community members’ struggles, and rework past lessons within contemporary contexts, like teaching and mentoring youth around issues of race and gender equity or settler colonialism. Lastly, in mobilizing a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis, LCWs created alternative spaces where structurally disadvantaged Latinx people and their experiences could be affirmed and uplifted. In this way, when LCWs enact a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis they are resisting intersecting systems of heterosexism, neoliberalism, racism and settler colonialism.

The findings presented in Chapter 3 provided a crucial intervention into debates on neoliberalism that have dominated critical social science scholarship, especially human geography. More specifically, an in-depth account of urban politics from a racialized and gendered Latinx perspective was uncovered by using an intersectional and decolonial lens, particularly Anzaldúa (2015) and Isoke (2013). This builds on previous studies (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Mitchell, 2001; Veronis & Trudeau, 2009) by showing how neoliberalization works in conjunction with racialization and heterosexism across NGOs even as they strive to support marginalized groups, and by demonstrating how racialized social actors negotiate these systems of oppression simultaneously in their everyday actions. As such, these findings responded to calls for “racing neoliberalism” and exploring the intricate, everyday processes of non-profit sector work to better understand how people confront the reproduction of oppression in activist spaces (Darby, 2016; Roberts & Mahtani, 2010). Furthermore, the Latinx decolonial feminist praxis described in this chapter provides a new, culturally grounded framework for better understanding how Latinx people work towards social justice in intimate settings across an urban centre that parallels Isoke’s (2013) Black women’s politics of resistance and Anzaldúa’s Coyolxauhqui imperative. Lastly, by underscoring Latinx women and non-binary people’s unique contributions to urban political life in the GTA, this paper also contributes to a growing body of literature on Latin Americans in Canada (Landolt et al., 2011; Lobo-Molnar, 2012; San Martin, 1998; Veronis, 2010).

After exploring how LCWs navigated the fraught terrain of the GTA’s non-profit sector and the intimate spaces of community organizing they made possible through a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis, Chapter Four examined the broader field of Latinx urban politics. Chapter Four explored how LCWs in relation to other Latin American and Hispanic non-profit actors in
the GTA enacted identity and citizenship around a cultural celebration – Hispanic Heritage Month (HHM) – and how these enactments worked to undermine or reinforce settler colonialism. As such, it brought into focus the ways Latinx, Latin American and Hispanic people can internalize, reproduce and contest white settler colonial social relations in the ways they represent themselves in public space. The data for this paper was mainly collected through participant observation and discourse analysis of legislation and organizational grey literature. Critical race and decolonial theoretical frameworks (Bannerji, 2000; Hunt & Holmes, 2015; Thobani, 2007; Tuck & Yang, 2012) were used in this paper to deconstruct the meanings of citizenship within white settler Canada, and to situate Latinx, Latin American and Hispanic people’s political practices within this context.

Collectively, the findings presented in Chapter Four work to address **Objective 2: To investigate how Latinx Community Workers (LCWs), in relation to other Latin American and Hispanic non-profit actors, enact citizenship and identity in public space, and interrogate how these political and spatial practices reinforce or disrupt intersecting systems and geographies of domination.** First, LCWs, Latin American and Hispanic non-profit actors enacted citizenship and identity in drastically different ways. LCWs and a group of Latin Americans rejected the Hispanic label and HHM because it erased Black, Indigenous and other people that did not identify with Spanish ancestry. Instead, they proposed labels like Latin America and Latinx that were more inclusive, as well as formed the Latin-America History Collective (LAHC) and October 12th Día de la Verdad/Day of Truth Rally that sought to honour the diverse Black and Indigenous histories and presents of Latin America and Canada. LAHC also sought to make government and mainstream Latin American and Hispanic non-profit organizations accountable to structurally disadvantaged Latinx and Indigenous people in Canada by proposing meaningful processes of collective decision-making and denouncing all forms of colonization. In this way, they challenged systems of domination, including European colonization that continues to perpetuate anti-Black and anti-Indigenous sentiment across the Americas. However, other Latin American and Hispanic non-profit actors believed the Hispanic label was a legitimate way for them to be recognized within the Canadian polity despite its exclusionary underpinnings. Furthermore, they were in support of HHM even though it did not meaningfully address the material concerns of racialized, low-income Latinx youth and women, or Indigenous people in Canada. Instead, they acted as “good settler Hispanic subjects” outlined in Bill 28, an Act to proclaim the month of October as HHM. By taking this approach they sought parity with white settlers, without considering the
erasure of Indigenous people and thus, aspired towards white settler citizenship and reified settler colonialism.

Ultimately, LCWs, Latin American and Hispanic non-profit actors enacted identity and citizenship in different ways that contradicted and opposed each other as they sought drastically different political goals. LCWs and Latin Americans forming the LAHC transformed an urban park to hold a cultural event where people could imagine what decolonization could look like instead of seeking inclusion in Canadian multiculturalism and settler colonialism. This is significant because it shatters the myth of a homogenous and cohesive Latin American diaspora, and demonstrates that racialized migrants do indeed seek alternative routes to belonging and place that reject the status quo. This finding contributes to literature on Latinx identity (Alcoff, 2005; Oboler, 1995), by providing a window into the social and political diversity of the Latin American diaspora in Canada, which intervenes in prevailing US literature on Latin Americans. More specifically, how Latin Americans claim identities and citizenship is contextual and shaped by the histories and geographies they carry across an entire hemisphere. The findings in Chapter Three also contributed to current understandings of migrant citizenship formation in white settler society (Bannerji, 2000; Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007; Veronis, 2006b) by going beyond demonstrating the ways racialized migrants reproduce exclusionary and neoliberal notions of citizenship, and highlighting how they grapple with their role in settler colonialism and decolonization.

Upon demonstrating how LCWs and some Latin American non-profit actors enacted an alternative politic in and through public space, Chapter Five built on and connected findings in Chapter Three and Chapter Four, by exploring how LCWs imagined, created and lived alternative, Latinx decolonial feminist geographies. More specifically, LCWs engaged in socio-spatial practices in their collective organizing that strived for social justice and decolonization, and in turn formed alternative geographies that actively disrupted the white settler, hetero-patriarchal and neoliberal social and spatial order. These Latinx decolonial feminist geographies enacted what Gloria Anzaldúa (2002a, 2002b) calls El Mundo Zurdo (the Left-Handed World). El Mundo Zurdo is a vision, process and place grounded in relationality that calls for people to work across their differences for social justice (Anzaldúa, 2002a, 2002b). Data for this paper was collected using 37 in-depth interviews read as testimonios, a workshop, participant observation and discourse analysis of organizational grey literature. Decolonial theoretical frameworks across Black geographies (Isoke, 2013; Woods, 2007),
Indigenous geographies (Hunt & Holmes, 2015) and Latinx Studies (Anzaldúa, 2002a, 2002b) were brought together in this paper to understand the perspectives and actions of LCWs.

Chapter Five offered two main findings that served to address **Objective 3: To explore how LCWs’ form Latinx decolonial feminist geographies through collective organizing practices and creative expressions, as well as to explore what lessons these alternative geographies hold for social justice transformation**. First, when asked how they envisioned Latin American and local political organizing to better advance social justice, LCWs described an explicitly intersectional feminist decolonial politic that addressed historical and ongoing colonial and racial violence throughout the Americas. By describing this politic, LCWs formed Latinx decolonial feminist geographies in their imaginations. These imagined Latinx decolonial feminist geographies included spaces for under-represented groups, especially Black Latinas, queer and trans-Latinas. They also involved building relationships with, and supporting Black and Indigenous struggles in Canada.

Second, LCWs formed Latinx decolonial feminist geographies by putting into practice the intersectional feminist decolonial politic they described. They did this by collectively organizing public events like Poder’s Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Women Rock Fest’s (WRF) fundraiser that foregrounded the voices and creative expressions of Black, Indigenous and Brown Latinx women, queer and transgender people. For example, at Poder’s AGM, Lido Pimienta used her music and storytelling to articulate the insidiousness of anti-blackness and anti-indigeneity within Latin American communities, but also Afro-Indigenous women’s resistance. WRF’s event was a space intended to showcase the artistic talents of trans women of colour and promote relationship building across differences. In turn, Poder’s AGM and WRF’s fundraiser were material Latinx decolonial feminist geographies that were formed by LCWs’ using an intersectional decolonial feminist politic in their collective organizing practices and by the creative expressions of participants.

The Latinx decolonial feminist geographies LCWs’ formed, hold numerous lessons for advancing social justice transformation. One, these geographies are underpinned by an intersectional feminist decolonial politic that understands Black, Indigenous and Brown Latinx women and trans people as knowledgeable, political and spatial actors who are integral to social justice movements. Two, Latinx decolonial feminist geographies emphasize the importance of working across differences internally within Latinx communities and externally.
across other marginalized groups. Three, Latinx decolonial feminist geographies call for the creation of new relationships and spaces that are grounded in reciprocity, mutual respect, support and love. This was seen especially in the ways that LCWs described their experiences of Latinx decolonial feminist geographies as joyous, healing and enriching, which was the third key finding of Chapter Five. As such, these geographies like Poder's AGM and WRF's event, serve as important hubs of community building, friendship and respite that give LCWs the support they need to continue their work, and thus are vital to sustaining long-term struggles for social transformation.

Overall, the Latinx decolonial feminist geographies LCWs’ formed, enact what Anzaldúa calls El Mundo Zurdo – a meeting place for working across difference to build a more socially just present and future. This connects to foundational scholarship in Black and Indigenous geographies, specifically, Hunt and Holmes (2015), Isoko (2013), Woods (2007) and Woods and McKittrick (2007), that call for engaging with alternative knowledges, epistemologies and politics that do not reproduce racial violence. Furthermore, this paper showed how people are not only challenging power hierarchies, but building alternative structures and relationships. This is an important contribution to both geographical literature and community practice as more work is needed to understand how people can go beyond examining and challenging injustice to creating and enacting another way of being. The Latinx decolonial feminist geographies presented here are instructive for better understanding how alternative spaces can be imagined and brought to life by everyday community workers and activists in the city.

As discussed above, the findings shared across Chapters Three to Five worked to address the three objectives directing this dissertation and the overarching research question. This dissertation asked, how do Latinx women and non-binary people enact political and spatial practices that resist interconnected systems and geographies of domination, within and beyond the non-profit sector in the Greater Toronto Area? The findings presented in this dissertation showed that Latinx women and non-binary people engage in several political and spatial practices that resist interconnected systems and geographies of domination. One, they enacted a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis, an embodied, political and spatial practice that involves weaving together one’s family and community histories, personal experiences, identity and intersectional women of colour feminisms to create spaces that disrupt the status quo. This kind of praxis served to disrupt white neoliberal and patriarchal granting systems
and local politics, while also fostering spaces for community building across internal differences.

Two, Latinx women and non-binary people proposed and mobilized an intersectional feminist decolonial politic in their community organizing practices. This can be seen in their efforts to subvert white settler citizenship and pursue alternative paths to belonging and expressing their culture. This can also be seen in their visions for Latin American political organizing in the city, as well as their material contributions to creating public events that foreground Black/Afro-Latinx, Indigenous, Brown, queer and transgender Latinx people.

Three, Latinx women and non-binary people create their own geographies – Latinx decolonial feminist geographies – that resist interconnected systems and geographies of domination. Latinx decolonial feminist geographies refer broadly to Latinx women’s and non-binary people’s politics, spaces, experiences, knowledges, actions and relationships. These alternative geographies can be observed in the spaces Latinx women and non-binary people create that foster mutually supportive relationships across differences.

Latinx decolonial feminist geographies can also be understood as the collective manifestations of a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis and intersectional feminist decolonial politic in action. In other words, while these three concepts are interconnected and overlapping, a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis refers more to the embodied and reflexive work Latinx women and non-binary people do in their everyday life. While a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis involves creating spaces that disrupt the status quo, its focus is on the intimate spaces of community organizing, while an intersectional feminist decolonial politic occurs in a more public forum between community workers. In other words, Latinx women and non-binary people engage in a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis, and carry this praxis with them in their day to day community organizing, which is dynamic and shifting as they nurture this praxis through their engagement in community organizing with other people, through which they collectively form a broader intersectional feminist decolonial politic. Latinx decolonial feminist geographies encompass both intimate and public dimensions, as well as captures the multifaceted relationships between these two concepts. Latinx decolonial feminist geographies also underscore the spatiality of Latinx people’s lives and their efforts to build a present and future that is not predicated on racial violence.
Overall, by uncovering and exploring a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis, an intersectional feminist decolonial politic and Latinx decolonial feminist geographies, this dissertation has provided new concepts and frameworks for understanding social justice resistance in the city. In this way, this dissertation contributes to three main areas of scholarship and practice: 1) Neoliberalization, the non-profit sector and activism; 2) Geography and 3) Latinx experiences in Canada and the United States. A Latinx decolonial feminist praxis, an intersectional feminist decolonial politic and Latinx decolonial feminist geographies each account for how neoliberalization operates jointly with different systems of oppression across the non-profit sector to constrain social justice transformation, but also how Latinx people can resist this reproduction of oppression. As such these concepts and frameworks go beyond studies that trace the impacts of neoliberalization on racialized migrant communities (Ilcan & Basok, 2004; Mitchell, 2001; Trudeau, 2008; Veronis, 2010) and respond to calls for more analyses on how racialized and gendered subjects attempt to negotiate and dismantle intersecting systems of oppression (Isoke, 2013). These concepts and frameworks also contribute to the discipline of Geography that has mainly focused on “Latin Americans” in “Latin America,” not the diaspora, with several important exceptions (Pulido, 1996, 2006, 2017; Muñoz, 2016; Cravey, 2003; Carter, 2014; Price, 2012; Veronis, 2006a, 2006b, 2007). As such, these concepts and frameworks offered in this dissertation can serve as tools for understanding how Latinx diasporic people as spatial actors, can create alternative spaces, places and geographies. Furthermore, they can also be understood as critical tools for bridging human geography and Latinx Studies scholarship, especially Anzaldúa theory (2002a, 2002b, 2007, 2015) which has been underexplored in Geography. A Latinx decolonial feminist praxis, an intersectional feminist decolonial politic and Latinx decolonial feminist geographies also enrich current understandings of Latinx experiences by underscoring how Latinx people’s geographies are interlinked and span across an entire hemisphere, are constantly shifting and are shaped by, but not absolutely defined by intersecting systems of oppression like settler colonialism, which has not been engaged directly in Latinx Studies or Geography (Pulido, 2017). Lastly, a Latinx decolonial feminist praxis, an intersectional feminist decolonial politic and Latinx decolonial feminist geographies, are concepts and frameworks that emanate from the lived realities of Latinx people striving for social change. Thus, they hold possibilities for social justice transformation and decolonization that would be important for scholars and activists to consider as they attempt to conduct research in ways that are responsive to the political goals of oppressed communities.
Limitations of Dissertation

While the research findings presented above make significant contributions to current understandings on non-profit sector neoliberalization, Latinx identities and experiences, as well as geographical thought, this dissertation also faced a series of limitations. The first limitation is related to the qualitative methods used for data collection – in-depth interviews read as testimonios, active participant observation, a workshop and discourse analysis of grey literature. As discussed in Chapter Two, these kinds of methods are subjective and thus, the stories heard and events witnessed could be interpreted differently by participants or another researcher. Nevertheless, efforts were made to mitigate this limitation by checking with participants, both individually and through the workshop, whether research findings resonated with their experiences and ideas. Triangulation (Baxter & Eyles, 1997) between multiple sources was also used, along with direct quotations from participants to demonstrate the occurrence and relevance of a theme and honour participants’ words.

Second, as in-depth interviews relied on participants to divulge personal stories and remember events taking place many years ago, there is potential for recall bias and for participants not being entirely forthcoming. This limitation was navigated by allowing participants to take part in the study confidentially, using pseudonyms in place of participant names, changing any information that could reveal participants’ identities, and reassuring participants that all possible efforts would be taken to protect their identities. However, because of the kinds of topics covered in interviews around confronting different forms of oppression (i.e. racism, sexism, homophobia) and the interconnectedness of Latinx community organizers, concerns around being identified could still have prevented participants from fully disclosing their stories. Furthermore, general discomfort with being interviewed or because of interviewer-researcher power dynamics could have also caused participants to not be as forthcoming. At the same time, for the purposes of this study it was not necessary to obtain such fine-grain details and efforts were taken to ensure participants felt as comfortable as possible with what they did decide to share by checking in, taking pauses, letting participants know they did not have answer questions and debriefing after interviews.
Third, while this study sought to incorporate Latinx women’s and non-binary voices, the overwhelming majority of participants were cisgender, Latinx women. Trans Latina and non-binary Latinx participants were still the minority. While efforts were taken to recruit trans-Latina and non-binary Latinx people, because of limited time and resources, more significant relationship building with the trans-Latinx community could not be established, which may have contributed to fewer numbers of trans Latinx people participating in the study. The researcher’s own personal identity as a cisgender woman may have also caused potential participants to be hesitant and wary of the researcher’s motives. At the same time, trans Latinx people who are community workers affiliated with a Latin American-serving, non-profit organization, are a very specific and small population in the city. This may be because of the transphobia that runs rampant across these organizations which prevents trans Latinx people from joining and becoming leaders in these spaces. Instead, trans Latinx people created their own spaces that did not necessarily fit under an exclusively Latin American organizational umbrella. To mitigate this limitation, this study worked to foreground the ideas for social change offered by trans Latinx participants and used direct quotations where possible to draw attention to their perspectives. While, it was beyond the scope of this study to fully explore the unique experiences of trans Latinx people in community organizing, it would be extremely useful for future research to do this as it would greatly enrich current understandings of Latinx urban life and politics.

Lastly, it’s important to reiterate that this dissertation is based on thirty-seven interviews, a workshop, and active participant observation for over two years. While rich data has been derived from these sources, it is still only a partial glimpse into Latinx urban life in the GTA. This research study does not aim to be representative of the entire Latinx diaspora in the GTA, and instead seeks to provide a snapshot of the politics being mobilized at this specific point in time. Much more work is needed to further unpack the complexities of the Latinx diaspora over the long-term using a variety of innovative methods.

**Implications for Future Research and Policy**

This dissertation provided an in-depth analysis of Latinx urban politics and geographies in the GTA, with implications for both research and practice. In terms of practice, this research calls on a number of policy directions within non-profit community organizations and at different
levels of government. First, the findings of this dissertation urgently call for a comprehensive and radical transformation of mainstream Latin American-serving non-profit organizations in the GTA in terms of their structure, politics and culture. There appears to be a troubling contradiction facing these organizations as they purport to support equity, yet marginalize Latinx women, queer and trans people, youth, Afro-Latinx and Indigenous Latinx people in decision-making and action. This could be addressed by ensuring greater representation of these groups in the leadership and paid staff of non-profit organizations (i.e. Board, Executive Director, Managers). By-laws could be introduced to ensure that fifty percent of these positions are for women or trans people, especially racialized, Black and Indigenous people. By-laws could also be introduced to foreground equitable practices within the organization, which could include explicit equity mandates or anti-oppression guidelines, as well as an effective complaint and restorative justice system.

Furthermore, establishing norms of equitable compensation and a culture of self and community-care would greatly benefit all community workers. In this way, community workers would be recognized as workers with a right to a healthy work environment and would be encouraged, not penalized for taking time to care for themselves and their colleagues in a sustainable way. The board structure could also be reconsidered and a culture of non-hierarchical collective organizing could be established that also recognizes the efforts of structurally disadvantaged Latinx people, and enables them to produce policy directives, make decisions and take on leadership positions. Paid mentorship opportunities for Black, Indigenous and racialized Latinx women and youth would also be an important avenue for organizations to consider, helping foster future generations of community workers, leaders and activists. Organizational agendas and programming could be better aligned to the needs and aspirations of the broader community. Channels for meaningful community engagement and participation would need to be created for this to occur and could take various shapes from reoccuring needs assessments to ongoing information sharing and relationship building at regular community gatherings. This would also work to increase transparency around organizational decision-making and strengthen accountability to marginalized community members.

Lastly, the testimonios LCWs shared pointed to a serious need to prioritize community healing and collectively grapple with the legacies of colonialism that manifest themselves in community dynamics from sexism, anti-black racism, anti-indigeneity, homophobia and
transphobia. LCWs called for community healing spaces where people could learn about the effects of colonialism, how to disrupt them in everyday dynamics and across generations. These spaces would also allow people to grapple with their own identities, learn about their histories and get a deeper awareness of themselves spiritually and emotionally. In addition, community healing spaces could incite the development of new, non-hierarchical ways of relating to each other, based in cooperation, reciprocity, and love, not competition, or exploitation. These spaces would address the culture of fear and toxicity within community organizing spaces that has been brought to light by LCWs, and ultimately work towards building a more socially just future.

While non-profit community organizations can take multiple courses of action to be more equitable spaces, it is important to note that they are constrained by funding agencies, especially at local and provincial levels of government. As such, it is important that these different levels of government also change their policies around how funding is allocated and who is considered fundable or representative of a community. This would entail the development of more meaningful community engagement processes where city staff could meet with a wider range of community members, not just self-designated leaders of established mainstream organizations, to understand what the most pressing issues are for under-represented Latinx people. This would mean out rightly recognizing that the Latin American diaspora is highly diverse and cannot be simply represented by the few cis-hetero-men that are the heads of established organizations. It could also entail creating funding opportunities for initiatives that foreground, engage and employ structurally disadvantaged Latinx people. Grant applications could also be changed to make it more accessible for people to apply, especially non-English speaking people or people who are not formally employed within the sector and therefore not familiar with sector language. In a similar vein, funding for non-mainstream or formally established community organizations would also help marginalized community members access resources since they are still not well represented in formal Latin American-serving organizations. Ultimately, if local and provincial governments are serious about creating a more equitable city, then the ways in which they outreach to, fund and understand racialized communities must change to prioritize the most structurally marginalized people. Lastly, this dissertation urges government actors in conjunction with mainstream non-profit actors to recognize the valuable knowledge held by racialized Latinx women and trans people, and give them the spaces and resources to shape their own initiatives and lead communities.
At the same time, it is important to recognize that even if non-profit organizations, funding agencies and government actors implemented these various recommendations, this would not necessarily mean that the power systems undergirding them would be transformed. Indeed, neoliberal capitalism, hetero-patriarchy, white supremacy and settler colonialism are broad, complex processes and structures, that require ongoing resistance through activism and social movement. As INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence remind us, “the revolution will not be funded.” Through reforms, these systems of power shift and take on new shapes that continue to disadvantage and harm Black, Indigenous and communities of colour (INCITE, 2007). At the same time, this does not mean community organizations and the state should not make changes to better address the needs of marginalized populations. This study shows that non-profit, community organizations and workers, can create openings for working towards social justice transformation, but that these openings need to be nurtured and sustained over the long-term. More longitudinal research needs to be done to document and analyze the various ways Latinx communities are striving for social change (i.e. through state reforms, non-profit sector and grassroots activism), and delineate the impacts of these different approaches. How power structures shift in tandem with these different mobilizations over time would also be important to study. This kind of research would allow for sharper analyses on how different strategies can lead to more promising, liberating results or reproduce the very systems activists wish to challenge. Landolt & Goldring (2009) and Veronis (2006a, 2010), have provided extremely useful analyses on the rise and influence of neoliberalism on the non-profit sector in Toronto, Ontario. Considering the Conservative party’s recent win in the 2018 Ontario elections, and consequent prospects of further social welfare devolution, research tracing the interplay of such political turns with Latinx and migrant non-profit politics and activism, would be crucial to building a more comprehensive knowledge base on the limits and possibilities of the non-profit sector in the current moment and into the future.

The findings of this dissertation point to numerous innovative avenues for future research. First, by using an intersectional and decolonial lens to explore non-profit sector neoliberalization, this dissertation carved out a new way to examine processes of neoliberalization in the city that account for complexity. Future research that grapples with the raced and gendered nature of neoliberalization and how racialized women and trans people negotiate these intersections would be critical to further developing current understandings of
non-profit sector neoliberalization and social justice resistance. Second, this dissertation grapples with internal differences within the Latin American diaspora and connects these differences to legacies of European colonialism and ongoing settler colonialism in Canada. Future studies could further dissect these connections within specific national or regional diasporas, or by engaging with underrepresented groups like Black, Indigenous and trans Latinx people. In other words, more research on how Afro-Latinx, Indigenous and trans Latinx people understand themselves and form identities in place would be helpful to developing a richer picture of Latinx urban life and politics. Furthermore, this would set a precedent for future studies to more closely examine the internal diversity and complexities of diaspora and not view racialized or migrant groups as static, homogenous categories.

While this dissertation provided important information on Latinx urban life and politics in contemporary Toronto, more historical and archival work is needed that documents Latinx struggles over time. This would allow for a public record to be consolidated that would be more widely accessible to researchers and community members, facilitating more research on Latinx issues in Canada. For the purposes of this study and protecting privacy, the testimonios LCWs shared are not part of a public record. Yet, LCWs’ life stories as told by them directly, orally or in writing, would be invaluable educational tools for people to learn about Latinx experiences, identities and political organizing. Quantitative survey research could also be helpful for establishing a case for the presence of Latinx community members and their different needs.

Another critical direction for future studies to take is to more deeply explore the artistic productions and creative expressions of Latinx community members. Many LCWs interviewed were artists and used their art to engage youth and mobilize communities. Asking why they are drawn to art, how they use it, its impact on community members, as well as the challenges that arise when incorporating art into activism would be important questions to explore. Lido Pimienta’s recent win of the prestigious music award, the Polaris Prize, as an Afro-Indigenous Latinx artist who is outspoken around social justice issues, described in the introduction of this thesis, is especially telling of the power of music to create alternative narratives. Her newly released music video with A Tribe Called Red featuring Fiya Bruxa, a prominent Latinx graffiti artist in Toronto, displays the stark racialized class divisions in Latin America, and draws parallels between colonial histories and presents between Canada and Latin America. It is cultural and artistic productions like these that would be important to unpack, and investigate,
adding another important dimension to current understandings of Latinx experiences and geographies.

Lastly, this dissertation is an effort to subvert Western colonial knowledge production by using a distinct Latina feminist research praxis. Chapter Two of this dissertation discussed how Chicana Latina Feminist Epistemologies (CLFE) and testimonio methodology were used throughout this project and served as the basis for this praxis. As such, this praxis is grounded in an understanding of Latinx people as political, knowledgeable, spatial actors, the researcher’s embodied experiences as a Latina, as well as the collective experience and memory of her communities, and a motivation for social justice transformation. While this dissertation alone does not or cannot incite radical change, or completely overcome complex power relationships between researcher and participants, it is an attempt to challenge asymmetrical power hierarchies embedded within academic knowledge production. This contributes to efforts by feminist geographers like Rose (1997), Nagar and Geiger (2007) and Mullings (1999), who grapple with power inequities and align their research to support structurally marginalized people. However, there is a need for more research in human geography that continues these efforts, especially research that engages with Chicana and Latina onto-epistemologies. Therefore, research that foregrounds Chicana and Latina ways of knowing and knowledge systems (both Chicana and Latina scholarship and everyday voices) in human geography research would greatly enrich the discipline.

**Concluding Statement**

This dissertation began with a story about how Latinx women and non-binary people are erased and made invisible in the GTA. They declared, “estamos aquí” and demanded recognition on another set of terms not offered by the white neoliberal and hetero-patriarchal settler state. This assertion is a geographical one. It signals the persistence of Latinx life, politics and space that does not conform to the status quo. In other words, it brings into focus a Latinx geography that is transformative, rooted in social justice and committed to a decolonial future and present. At the same time, it is important to recognize how Latinx geographies are still entangled and interconnected with geographies of domination. Exploring the intersections that make up Latinx geographies and what kinds of politics they make possible would be crucial to better work towards transforming the discipline of geography and
everyday lived geographies. Theorizing across Black, Indigenous and Latinx scholarship, geographies and social movements would be critical to pursuing this research agenda. It is time that Latinx people and their geographies are meaningfully engaged with in the discipline of Geography, and understood as integral to larger efforts to transform the world as we know it.
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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Guide – Community Members

Organization Structure and Role

1. How long have you been involved in organizations/collectives serving Latin American communities? (Are you currently involved now?)
3. Please tell me about the kinds of organizations/collectives you are and/or were a part of? (Mandate? Size? Internal Structure? Membership? Outreach?)
4. Please tell me about your role within the organization(s)/collective(s)? (Title? Key initiatives and/or tasks?)

Identity

5. Please tell me a bit about yourself. How would you describe your identity (Ethnicity, culture, race, gender, age, nationality, activist, university student, parent etc.)?

Perspectives on Equity, Women’s Activism and the Environment

6. How do you define “equity” and the “environment”? What are some important equity and environmental issues to you? (Do equity and the environment connect? What about feminism or other social movements?)
7. How did the organization(s)/collective(s) understand and address “equity” and “environmental” issues? (What was prioritized? Poverty, immigration rights, women’s rights, solidarity with indigenous peoples etc.?)
8. How would you compare the ways equity and environmental issues are talked about and addressed in Latin American communities compared to the dominant Canadian society and/or other marginalized communities? (Differences and similarities?)
9. What does Latin American women’s community participation and activism mean to you? What does it look like? (Who is involved? What issues are covered? How? Feminism?)
10. How have the organization(s)/collective(s) you’ve been a part of, connected with, or supported Latin American women’s participation and activism? (E.g. women’s leadership programs, policy, targeted outreach, feminist approach etc.)

Experiences in the Non-profit Sector and Activism: Challenges and Successes
11. Could you please describe your experience in the organization(s)/collective(s)? What did you enjoy? What do you feel were some of your main successes? (E.g. personal, organizational, community level successes) What makes them successes to you?

12. Did you face any challenges? If so, what were they and how did you navigate them? (E.g. organizational funding, internal politics, managing school or family related responsibilities, financial compensation etc.)

13. What do you think are some of the key challenges organizations and/or collectives serving Latin American communities face in promoting equity and women’s participation/activism?

14. How may these challenges be overcome?

15. What do you think are some of the key strengths organizations and/or collectives serving Latin American communities have for promoting equity and women’s participation/activism? (Examples? What’s happening now that’s addressing equity)

Lessons Learned, Recommendations, Imagining Futures

16. Overall, what impact have these experiences had on your life? (Career, cultural identity, wellbeing?)

17. What are some of the key lessons you have learned? (What advice would you give to Latin American women wanting to engage in non-profit organizations and collectives?)

18. What are your recommendations for how organizations/collectives could improve on promoting equity and Latin American women’s participation?

19. What would have to change internally and externally to implement these recommendations (e.g. internal policies, external funding, broader power issues)

20. What gives you hope for the future?

Debrief

21. Is there anything I haven’t asked or that we haven’t covered that you would like to share? Do you have any questions for me?
Appendix B: Interview Guide – Public Figures

Organization Structure and Role

1. Please tell me about the organization you represent. (Mandate? Size? Internal Structure? Decision-making? Population served? Membership? Outreach practices? When was it established?)
2. Please describe to me how the organization works to make the places where Latin Americans live, work, play and learn healthier? (Programs, campaigns, initiatives? Goals and content? How are they delivered? Who takes part?)
3. Please tell me about your role within the organization(s)/collective(s)? (Title? Key initiatives and/or tasks? How long have you been involved? How did you become involved?)

Identity

4. Please tell me a bit about yourself. How would you describe your identity (Ethnicity, culture, race, gender, age, nationality, activist, university student, parent etc.)?

Perspectives on Equity, the Environment and Women’s Activism

5. How does your organization understand and address “equity” (What is prioritized? Poverty, immigration rights, youth leadership etc.?)
6. How does your organization understand and address “environmental” issues? Is health an important aspect of this? How?
7. How would you compare the ways equity and environmental issues are talked about and addressed in Latin American communities compared to the dominant Canadian society and/or other marginalized communities? (Differences and similarities?)
8. What does Latin American women’s community participation and activism mean to you? What does it look like? (Who is involved? What issues are covered? How?)
9. How has your organization connected with, or supported Latin American women’s participation and activism? (E.g. women’s leadership programs, policy, targeted outreach etc.)
10. Would you consider your organization a Latin American organization or an organization that serves Latin Americans? Is there a difference?

Barriers and Facilitators to Promoting Equity, Environmental Engagement and Women’s Participation

11. What do you think are some of the key challenges your organization faces in promoting equity and women’s participation in the community and internally within the organization? (E.g. Time, accessibility for community members; lack of resources for organizations)
12. How has your organization attempted to navigate these challenges?
13. What do you think are some of the key strengths your organization and/or the larger community have for promoting equity and women’s participation/activism? (Examples? What’s happening now that’s addressing equity etc.?)

14. What do you think are some of the key challenges your organization faces in promoting community engagement on environmental issues? (E.g. Time, accessibility for community members; lack of resources for organizations)
15. How has your organization attempted to navigate these challenges?
16. What key strengths does your organization and/or Latin@ communities have for promoting equity and women’s participation/activism? (Examples? What’s happening now that’s addressing equity etc.?)

Creating Alternatives, Partnerships and Networks

17. Which other organizations, funding agencies or government bodies do you partner with or collaborate with?
18. Do you think these agencies or governmental bodies understand the concerns and needs of Latin American communities as related to issues of equity, the environment and women’s participation? What about mainstream non-profit organizations?
19. What are your recommendations for how funding agencies and government bodies could respond to the community better? What about mainstream non-profit organizations? (E.g. issue framing, outreach, funding structures)
20. What alternatives have your organization or other community groups created to continue doing work that promotes equity, environmental engagement and women’s participation?
21. Overall, what are some of the most promising or inspiring activities happening now that are working to strengthen equity, environmental engagement and women’s participation for Latin@ communities?

Debrief

22. Is there anything I haven’t asked or that we haven’t covered that you would like to share? Do you have any questions for me?
Appendix C: Focus Group Guide

Welcome, Creating a Safer Space and Workshop Introduction (20min)

1. Welcome participants and ask them to fill out name tags if they wish
2. Explain concept of safer space and confidentiality
I will highlight here some ground rules for participation like respect, active listening, not judging others and being mindful of your privileges and how much space you are taking up. I will ask for the participants to come up with other ground rules they wish to have in place so everyone can fully participate.

I will also go over the Letter of Information and Consent form (Appendix F) highlighting that they are being asked to keep the information they hear in the focus group and participants' identities private and confidential. I will also highlight that the focus group is being audio-recorded, notes are being taken and that they are free to withdraw at any time for any reason. I will encourage everyone to ask questions about what this all means and address their questions.

3. Icebreaker
4. Introduce goals and objectives of workshop
5. Review agenda and guidelines

Generating Feedback for Key Findings on Perspectives of Equity, Environment and Women’s Participation (10min)

6. Short overview of project to date and presentation of key findings on perspectives of equity, environment and women’s participation. This will then be followed by questions and answers. The key findings on these topics will be printed in large type font and posted on the wall for participants to observe and comment on in the next activity.
7. Group Activity I – Each participant is given Post-it Notes and pens to share their thoughts on each area of the key findings. Some questions to get them started would include the following: 1) Is there anything missing that you would like to add? 2) Is there anything that really resonates with you? 3) Does anything concern you? 4) Please share your questions, comments and feedback.

Generating Feedback for Key Findings on Experiences in the Non-profit Sector and Activism (20 min)

8. Presentation of key findings, followed by questions and answers. The key findings will be organized according to the following categories: 1) Successes, 2) Challenges Experienced, 3) Organizational Challenges and 4) Strengths
9. Group Activity II - Each participant is given Post-it Notes and pens to share their thoughts on each area of the key findings. Some questions to get them started would include the following: 1) Is there anything missing that you
would like to add? 2) Is there anything that really resonates with you? 3) Does anything concern you? 4) Please share your questions, comments and feedback.

10. Group Activity III: The larger group is split into smaller groups of 3-4 and given 2 pieces of chart paper. They will be asked to as a group identify what they would consider the 4 most pressing challenges facing Latin American communities to promote equity and women’s participation/activism? Next they will be asked to identify the 4 most important strengths and/or opportunities Latin American communities hold for promoting equity and women’s participation/activism? Each group will be asked to share their top 4 challenges and strengths in the larger group.

BREAK (10min)

Creating Action Plans and Reflection (30min)

11. Presentation of key recommendations participants shared on how Latin American serving organizations/collectives could improve equity and Latin American women’s participation/activism.

12. Group Activity IV: Group will be split according to the number of key recommendations presented (approx. 4 – 6). Each small group will be given chart paper and markers and will be asked to identify what the main challenges and facilitators may be to implementing this recommendation. They will then be asked to propose a concrete strategy or plan to implement this recommendation. We will then convene as a larger group and one person from each small group will share what their group discussed.

13. Group Reflection and Evaluation: We will take time to invite anyone that hasn’t spoken to share feedback and then invite everyone to share their reflections of the focus group. We will then invite participants to fill out an anonymous evaluation form and thank them for their participation. We will also remind participants that they can be in touch with the investigator to ask any questions or share any comments/feedback, directing them to contact information (business cards and letter of information sheet – Appendix F).
Appendix D: Letter of Information/Consent Form for Community Members

[DATE],

Project Title: Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente!: Understanding Latin American Women’s Community Participation and Activism in Toronto

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What am I trying to learn? You are invited to take part in a project that I am doing as a part of my doctorate degree at the University of Toronto. I hope to learn how Latin American communities are working towards equitable social change through participation and activism in non-profit community organizations and collectives across Toronto. I am especially interested in the stories, everyday experiences and contributions of Latin American women participating in community organizations and collectives. The aim of this project is to better understand the challenges Latin American communities face, their successes and what alternatives could be created to support the efforts of women engaged in community-based organizations and collectives.

What will happen during the study? I am planning to speak with 30 to 40 adult (aged 18+) women (cis + trans) and gender nonconforming people with Latin American, Afro-Latin@, Indigenous-Latin@ and Latin@/Latinx roots that have at least one year of volunteer or paid experience working with Latin American communities in Toronto within the last 10 years (since 2005). This includes people that have participated in non-profit, community-based organizations and/or collectives providing supports to Latin American communities for a year or more.

Participation is completely voluntary and would consist of a one-to-one interview that would last about 1 to 1.5 hours. With your permission I would like to audio-tape record the interview. I will also take some notes during the interview to help me better understand what you are saying. The interview would be held at a time and place that is convenient for you.

Some examples of questions I will ask you include:

- What does Latin American women’s community participation and activism mean to you?
• Could you please describe your experience participating in community organizations/collectives?
• What do you think are some of the biggest challenges and strengths Latin American organizations and communities have for promoting equity and women’s participation?

I will also ask you about demographic information like your age and ethnic identity. Any information collected from you will remain confidential.

You will also be invited to take part in a focus group that will be scheduled in July – September 2016. This focus group will take 1.5 hours where approximately 5-10 participants will come together to hear what the preliminary findings of the study are and share their feedback. To make sure participants’ ideas and suggestions are captured properly, the focus group will be audio-recorded and notes will be taken during the session. All efforts will be made for the focus group to be held at a time and place that is accessible for you and the other participants. Participants will be asked to respect privacy and confidentiality and not share the personal identities of other participants or personal information shared. The information collected in the focus group will remain private and confidential. Another Letter of Information and Consent will be provided to you before the focus group for you to review and choose whether or not to provide your consent.

Are there any risks to doing this study? The risks involved in participating in this study are few. You may find it stressful remembering and sharing negative experiences. If you feel uncomfortable or upset with answering any question you can choose not to answer or to stop the interview. You are also free to withdraw from the study after providing consent at any time up until I publish the results of my study in any of the following formats: 1) academic publications, 2) community reports or 3) submit my project to the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Toronto.

In the case that you withdraw, any information you have provided will be destroyed unless you tell me I can use what you have told me. You will not suffer any consequences for choosing not to answer a question, stop the interview or withdraw from the study. You also do not have to provide a reason for withdrawal. After the interview you will receive a resource sheet with a list of places you can call if you are upset or need support, which I will offer to explain.

Who will know what I said or did in the study?
• You are participating in this study confidentially. I will not use your name or any information that would allow you to be identified. I will use pseudonyms for your name and the names of other people, organizations and collectives you share. No one but my faculty supervisor and I will know whether you participated unless you choose to tell them. Staff that will assist me in typing your interview responses or taking notes during the focus group have sworn to keep your information private by signing an oath of confidentiality. The information that you provide will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and password protected computer where only my faculty supervisor and I have access to it.
• Although all efforts will be taken to protect your identity, sometimes the stories we tell can reveal our identities. Please be aware of this as you participate in this study.
• Once the study is finished, information you provided that does not identify you will be stored on an encrypted disk that will be kept in a locked filing cabinet indefinitely for future research possibilities. Project documents with information that identifies you (ex. Consent form) will be kept in a locked filing cabinet for five years and then destroyed.

Are there any benefits to doing this study? Although the results of this study may not benefit you directly, by taking part in this project you will be contributing to a better understanding of how Latin American communities, particularly Latin American women, participate in community organizations, engage in activism, as well as the successes and challenges they face when working towards equitable social change. This may help to increase supports for marginalized community members, create better organizational practices that promote everyone’s participation as well as call attention to the need for improved resources for Latin American communities.

How do I find out what was learned in this study? Where will the results be published? I expect to have this study finished by around December 2016. I will make available what I learned in this study by sending you a 2-3 page summary report. Please let me know where you would like the summary results sent to you on the consent form.

I am very interested in making my study useful to community organizations and will consult people that took part in the study on the most relevant and useful ways to share what was learned with the rest of the community. This could take many forms like a workshop, a community gathering, informational graphic and/or a manual and workshop guide. For example, I am planning to create an anti-oppression and equity training manual and workshop guide to help foster discussions and support work being done in the community. I can provide this document and offer to run workshops for your organization free of cost. Please let me know on the consent form if you would like to be contacted to discuss how to share results.

It is also important to note that the information collected from this study will be aggregated and analyzed to see what common themes emerge. This information would then appear in my thesis as well as other academic and community oriented publications and presentations.

Questions about the Study? If you have questions or require more information about the study, please contact Madelaine C. Cahuas, the Student Investigator at [ ] or at this local number [ ].

This study has been reviewed by the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, please contact:
STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Madelaine C. Cahuas of the University of Toronto. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested. I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw from the study at any time up until results are published. I understand I can withdraw without having to provide a reason or suffer any consequences. I understand that notes will be taken during the interview.

I have been given a copy of this form. By signing I agree to participate in the study.

A) I agree to the audio recording of the interview YES or NO

Name of Participant (printed):

Signature: ___________________________ Date: __________________________

PLEASE CIRCLE YES OR NO:

A. Would you like to be contacted to take part in a 1.5-hour focus group session to discuss preliminary findings and share your feedback? Please note that if you say YES now, but change your mind later you are absolutely free to withdraw from this part of the study.

YES I would like to take part in the focus group. Please contact me at this number ________________ and/or email address ____________________.

NO I do not want to take part in a focus group.

B. YES I would like to receive a 2-3 page summary of the study’s results. Please send it to this email address ___________________________ or to this mailing address ____________________________.

NO I do not want to receive a summary of the study’s results.

C. Can I contact you at a later date to follow-up with you and get feedback on other ways the study’s finding could be shared and/or if I need clarification on any information? YES or NO
Appendix E: Letter of Information/Consent Form – Public Representatives

[DATE],

Project Title: Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente!: Understanding Latin American Women’s Community Participation and Activism in Toronto

___________________________________________________________________

Student Investigator: [ ]
Email: [ ]
Tel: [ ]

Faculty Supervisor: [ ]
Email: [ ]
Tel: [ ]

What am I trying to learn? You are invited to take part in a project that I am doing as a part of my doctorate degree at the University of Toronto. I hope to learn how Latin American communities are working towards equitable social change through participation and activism in non-profit community organizations and collectives across Toronto. I am especially interested in the experiences of Latin American women participating in community organizations and collectives. The aim of this project is to better understand the challenges Latin American communities face, their successes and what alternatives could be created to support the efforts of women engaged in community-based organizations and collectives.

What will happen during the study? I am planning to speak to 5-10 Latin American public representatives and leaders, including Executive Directors, Program Managers and/or Board Members in addition to 30-40 community members. Participation is completely voluntary and would consist of a one-to-one interview that would last about 1 to 1.5 hours. With your permission I would like to audio-tape record the interview. I will also take some notes during the interview to help me better understand what you are saying. The interview would be held at a time and place that is convenient for you.

Some examples of questions I will ask you include:

• The types of information and programs your organization offers to try and make places where Latin Americans live, work, play and learn healthier
• Your views on needs, challenges and strengths of Latin American communities related to women’s participation and community environmental engagement
• How the City or other government agencies could be more responsive to Latin American communities

In this study all public figure interviews will be public, where your name will be identified. This is because there are only a small number of public figures in the
Latin American community and it would be difficult to guarantee confidentiality
and I believe it’s important to highlight your contributions. However, if there are
any moments during the interview where you wish to go off-record that will be
accommodated for and anything said off-record will not be made public.

Are there any risks to doing this study? The risks involved in participating in this study
are few. You may find it uncomfortable discussing any negative events. If you feel
uncomfortable or upset with answering any question you can choose not to answer or
to stop the interview. You are also free to withdraw from the study after providing
consent at any time up until I publish the results of my study in any of the following
formats: 1) academic publications, 2) community reports or 3) submit my project to the
School of Graduate Studies at the University of Toronto. In the case that you withdraw,
any information you have provided will be destroyed unless you tell me I can use what
you have told me. You also do not have to provide a reason for withdrawal. You will
not suffer any consequences for choosing not to answer a question, stop the interview
or withdraw from the study.

Who will know what I said or did in the study?
• You are participating in this study publicly, not confidentially, and I will
use your name that would allow you to be identified. The information that
you provide will still be protected in a locked filing cabinet and password
protected computer where only my faculty supervisor, myself and other
project staff would have access to it.
• Since the interview will not be confidential, it’s important for you to
consider that the stories we tell can have ramifications on our personal
and public lives. Please be aware of this as you participate in the
interview.
• Once the study is finished, information you provided that does identify you will
be stored on an encrypted disk that will be kept in a locked filing cabinet
indefinitely for future research possibilities. Project documents with information
that identifies you (ex. Consent form) will be kept in a locked filing cabinet for
five years and then destroyed.

Are there any benefits to doing this study? Although the results of this study may not
benefit you directly, by taking part in this project you will be contributing to a better
understanding of how Latin American communities participate in community
organizations, engage in activism, as well as the successes and challenges they face
when working towards equitable social change. This may help to increase supports
for marginalized community members, create better organizational practices that
promote everyone’s participation as well as call attention to the need for improved
resources for Latin American communities.

How do I find out what was learned in this study? Where will the results be published?

I am very interested in making my study useful to community organizations and will
consult people that took part in the study on the most relevant and useful ways to
share what was learned with the rest of the community. This could take many forms like a workshop, a community gathering and/or informational graphic.

I plan to create an anti-oppression and equity training manual and workshop guide to help foster discussions and support work being done in the community. I can provide this document and offer to run workshops for your organization free of cost, but I'm also open to other suggestions. Please let me know on the consent form if you would like to be contacted to discuss this.

It is also important to note that the information collected from this study will be aggregated and analyzed to see what common themes emerge. This information would then appear in my thesis as well as other academic and community oriented publications and presentations.

I expect to have this study finished by around December 2016. I will also make available what I learned in this study by sending you a 2-3 page summary report. Please let me know where you would like the summary results sent to you on the consent form.

Questions about the Study? If you have questions or require more information about the study, please contact Madelaine C. Cahuas, the Student Investigator at [ ] or at this local number [ ].

This study has been reviewed by the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, please contact:

University of Toronto Research Ethics Board
Telephone: [ ]
E-mail: [ ]
STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Madelaine C. Cahua of the University of Toronto. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested. I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw from the study at any time up until results are published. I understand I can withdraw without having to provide a reason or suffer any consequences. I understand that notes will be taken during the interview.

I have been given a copy of this form. By signing I agree to participate in the study.

A) I agree to the audio recording of the interview   YES or NO

B) I agree to the audio recording of the interview to be made publicly available online for community members to engage with

   YES or NO

C) I agree to the video recording of the interview to be made publicly available online for community members to engage with

   YES or NO

Name of Participant (printed):
______________________________________________

Signature: __________________ Date: ________________________

PLEASE CIRCLE YES OR NO:

D. YES I would like to receive a 2-3 page summary of the study’s results. Please send it to this email address __________________________ or to this mailing address

_________________________________________________________________

NO I do not want to receive a summary of the study’s results.

E. Can I contact you at a later date to follow-up with you and get feedback on other ways the study’s finding could be shared and/or if I need clarification on any information?   YES or NO
Appendix F: Letter of Information/Consent Form – Focus Group

[DATE],

Project Title: Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente!: Understanding Latin American Women’s Community Participation and Activism in Toronto

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Investigator:</th>
<th>Faculty Supervisor:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email: [ ]</td>
<td>Email: [ ]</td>
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<td>Tel: [ ]</td>
<td>Tel: [ ]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What am I trying to learn? You are invited to take part in a project that I am doing as a part of my doctorate degree at the University of Toronto. I hope to learn how Latin American communities are working towards equitable social change through participation and activism in non-profit community organizations and collectives across Toronto. I am especially interested in the stories, everyday experiences and contributions of Latin American women participating in community organizations and collectives. The aim of this project is to better understand the challenges Latin American communities face, their successes and what alternatives could be created to support the efforts of women engaged in community-based organizations and collectives.

What will happen during the study? I am planning to speak with 30 to 40 adult (aged 18+) women (cis + trans) and gender nonconforming people with Latin American, Afro-Latin@, Indigenous-Latin@ and Latin@/Latinx roots that have at least one year of volunteer or paid experience working with Latin American communities in Toronto within the last 10 years (since 2005). This includes people that have participated in non-profit, community-based organizations and/or collectives providing supports to Latin American communities for a year or more.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and would consist of a one-to-one interview that would last about 1 to 1.5 hours. You will also be invited to take part in a focus group that will take 1.5 hours where approximately 5-10 participants will come together to hear what the preliminary findings of the study are and share their feedback.

To make sure participants’ ideas and suggestions are captured properly, the focus group will be audio-recorded and notes will be taken during the session. All efforts will be made for the focus group to be held at a time and place that is accessible for you and the other participants. Participants will be asked to respect privacy and
confidentiality and not share the personal identities of other participants or personal information shared. The information collected in the focus group will remain private and confidential.

Some examples of questions I will ask the focus group include:

- What findings resonate with you and is there anything missing?
- What are the most pressing challenges and strengths facing Latin American communities in promoting equity and women’s participation/activism?
- How would you implement a recommendation on improving equity and Latin American women’s participation/activism?

Are there any risks to doing this study? The risks involved in participating in this study are few. You may find it stressful remembering and sharing negative experiences. If you feel uncomfortable or upset with answering any question you can choose not to answer or to stop the interview. You are also free to withdraw from the study after signing the consent form at any time up until I publish the results of my study in any of the following formats: 1) academic publications, 2) community reports or 3) submit my project to the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Toronto. In the case that you withdraw, any information you have provided will be destroyed unless you tell me I can use what you have told me. You also do not need to provide a reason for withdrawal. You will not suffer any consequences for choosing not to answer a question, stop the interview or withdraw from the study. After the focus group you will receive a resource sheet with a list of places you can call if you are upset or need support, which I will offer to explain.

Who will know what I said or did in the study?

- You are participating in this study confidentially. I will not use your name or any information that would allow you to be identified. I will use pseudonyms for your name and the names of other people, organizations and collectives you share. No one but my faculty supervisor and I will know whether you participated unless you choose to tell them. Staff that will assist me in typing your interview responses or taking notes during the focus group have sworn to keep your information private by signing an oath of confidentiality. The information that you provide will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and password protected computer where only my faculty supervisor and I have access to it.
- Although all efforts will be taken to protect your identity, sometimes the stories we tell can reveal our identities. Please be aware of this as you participate in the focus group.
- You and everyone else in the focus group will be asked to respect confidentiality and privacy. This means you and other participants will be asked not to share the identities of participants or the information they shared.
- Once the study is finished, information you provided that does not identify you will be stored on an encrypted disk that will be kept in a locked filing cabinet indefinitely for future research possibilities. Project documents with information that identifies you (ex. Consent form) will be kept in a locked filing cabinet for five years and then destroyed.
PLEASE NOTE: There are limits to confidentiality. Although everyone in the focus group is being asked to respect privacy and confidentiality and not share the identities of participants or the information they shared, there is no legal recourse if anyone fails to meet this agreement.

Are there any benefits to doing this study? Although the results of this study may not benefit you directly, by taking part in this project you will be contributing to a better understanding of how Latin American communities, particularly Latin American women, participate in community organizations, engage in activism, as well as the successes and challenges they face when working towards equitable social change. This may help to increase supports for marginalized community members, create better organizational practices that promote everyone’s participation as well as call attention to the need for improved resources for Latin American communities.

How do I find out what was learned in this study? Where will the results be published? I am very interested in making my study useful to community organizations and will consult people that took part in the study on the most relevant and useful ways to share what was learned with the rest of the community. This could take many forms like a workshop, a community gathering and/or informational graphic. I plan to create an anti-oppression and equity training manual and workshop guide to help foster discussions and support work being done in the community. I can provide this document and offer to run workshops for your organization free of cost, but I’m also open to other suggestions. Please let me know on the consent form if you would like to be contacted to discuss this.

It is also important to note that the information collected from this study will be aggregated and analyzed to see what common themes emerge. This information would then appear in my thesis as well as other academic and community oriented publications and presentations.

I expect to have this study finished by around December 2016. I will also make available what I learned in this study by sending you a 2-3 page summary report. Please let me know where you would like the summary results sent to you on the consent form. Questions about the Study? If you have questions or require more information about the study, please contact Madelaine C. Cahuas, the Student Investigator at [ ] or at this local number [ ].

This study has been reviewed by the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, please contact:

University of Toronto Research Ethics Board
Telephone: [ ]
E-mail: [ ]
STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Madelaine C. Cahuas of the University of Toronto. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested. I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, I may withdraw from the study at any time up until results are published. I understand I can withdraw without having to provide a reason or suffer any consequences. I understand that notes will be taken during the focus group and that the focus group will be audio-recorded. I also understand that I will not share the identities of other participants or the information they shared in the focus group.

I have been given a copy of this form. By signing I agree to participate in the study.

Name of Participant (printed):
______________________________________________

Signature: _________________________ Date: _________________________

PLEASE CIRCLE YES OR NO:

F. YES I would like to receive a 2-3 page summary of the study’s results. Please send it to this email address ___________________________ or to this mailing address ___________________________.

NO I do not want to receive a summary of the study’s results.

G. Can I contact you at a later date to follow-up with you and get feedback on other ways the study’s finding could be shared and/or if I need clarification on any information?

YES or NO
PROYECTO MUJERES PRESENTE

WHAT?
I am doing a research project that focuses on community participation and activism in Toronto's Latin American diaspora. I am especially interested in the stories, experiences and contributions of Latin American women. A major goal of this project is to call attention to how we can better support Latin American women striving for equity, justice and the wellbeing of their communities.

WHO?
I am looking to speak to people who:
• Self-identify with Latin American, Latinx, Afro-Latinx and Indigenous roots
• Currently or formerly identify as woman or girl, trans or gender queer + non-conforming
• Are ages 18 and over
• Have at least 1 year of volunteer or paid experience working with Latin American communities in Toronto since 2005. This includes community-based non-profit organizations, student and activist collectives.

GET INVOLVED!
If you choose to take part in this study you will be invited to a one-on-one interview to talk about your experiences engaging in community-based initiatives. The interview would involve one session lasting about 1 to 1.5 hours. To thank you for your time you will receive $20.00 in cash. Taking part in this study is completely confidential.

To learn more about Proyecto Mujeres Presente or to take part please contact: Madelaine Cabuas at madelaine.cabuas@gmail.com or e-mail: u.library@utoronto.ca
Appendix H: E-mail Reply-Back Script

E-mail Subject line: Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente!

Dear [name of participant],

Thank you for your interest in this study. My name is Madelaine C. Cahuas and I am a student in the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto. As part of completing my thesis for my doctoral degree, I am speaking with community members to learn about their experiences participating in non-profit organization and collectives providing supports to Latin@ communities.

This study welcomes cis + trans women and gender nonconforming people with Latin American, Afro-Latin@, Indigenous-Latin@ and Latin@/Latinx roots. To be eligible to participate in this study you need to be 18 years old or older. You also need to have at least 1 year of volunteer or paid experience working with Latin@ communities in Toronto during the last 10 years. This means being involved in a community-based non-profit organization and/or collective for at least 1 year during since 2005.

If you meet the eligibility requirements you are invited to take part in a conversation that will last about one to one and a half hours. In the interview we will talk about your experiences in, and views of, community organizing for equitable social change. You will also be invited to take part in a 1.5-hour focus group that will be scheduled between November – December 2015. In this focus group participants will have the opportunity to speak more in-depth and provide feedback on preliminary findings.

Participating in this study is completely voluntary and there are no serious risks to taking part. You will also receive $20 in cash after the interview as a thank you for your time. You are also free to withdraw from the study after signing the consent form at any time up until I publish the results of my study. I have attached a copy of the letter of information about the research project that provides full details and a copy of the questions I am planning to ask you during our conversation. This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board.

If you are interested in participating, please let me know at what phone number I can reach you at in the next 2-3 days to set-up an interview. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [ ] or at (local number). Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Best wishes,

Madelaine C. Cahuas, MA
[ ]
Appendix I: Telephone Script

P = Potential Participant; I = Interviewer

P - Hello, I saw your flyer and I have some questions (and/or) I am interested in participating?

I – Hello. Thank you for your interest in the study. Who may I ask is calling?

P – Name of potential participant

I – (for potential participants calling with questions first): Hi (name of potential participant). My name is Madelaine Cahuas and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Geography & Planning at the University of Toronto. I would be more than happy to answer any questions you have. But first, I would like to tell you about my study in order to maybe answer some of your questions. If I haven’t answered your questions please let me know and I will answer them.

P – Okay.

I – Go to study overview

I – (for potential participants calling without questions): Hi (name of potential participant). My name is Madelaine Cahuas and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto. (Continue to study overview)

I – (for potential participants replying to email wanting to be called): Hi (name of potential participant). This is Madelaine Cahuas calling from the University of Toronto about Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente! Thank you so much for your interest in this study. I would be happy to answer any questions you have and explain more about my study. But first, I would like to tell you about my study in order to maybe answer some of your questions. If I haven’t answered your questions please let me know and I will answer them. (Continue to study overview)

I – (study overview) As part of completing my thesis for my doctorate degree, I am speaking with community members to learn about their experiences participating in non-profit organization and collectives providing supports to Latin@ communities. Before you agree to participate, I would like to give you some more information. This study is open to cis + trans women and gender nonconforming people with Latin American, Afro-Latin@, Indigenous-Latin@ and Latin@/Latinx roots. To be eligible to participate in this study you need to be 18 years old or older. You also need to have at least 1 year of volunteer or paid experience working with Latin@ communities in Toronto during the last 10 years. This means being involved in a community-based non-profit organization and/or collective for at least 1 year since 2005.

If you are eligible you are invited to take part in a conversation that will last about one to one and a half hours. In the interview we will talk about your experiences in, and views of, community organizing for equitable social change. You will also be invited to take part in a 1.5-hour focus group that will be scheduled between November – December 2015. In this
focus group participants will have the opportunity to speak more in-depth and provide feedback on preliminary findings.

Participating in this study is completely voluntary and there are no serious, anticipated risks to taking part in this study. However, you may become upset or uncomfortable with remembering and sharing negative experiences. It is important that you know that you can refuse to answer any question you do not wish to answer, skip questions and that you can stop the interview at any time without suffering any consequences. You are also free to withdraw at any point up until I publish my findings.

I will be taking notes during the interview and with your permission I will also audio-record the interview. I will do this to accurately capture and better understand what you are saying. All the information you give me will be kept confidential.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Toronto Ethics Board. If you have any comments or concerns because of your participation in this study, please contact the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board at [ ].

With your permission, I would like to email/mail you an information letter that has all of these details along with more information to help you make a decision about taking part in this study. Along with this information letter, I would also like to send you the questions I am planning to ask you during the interview.

P - No thank you. OR

P - Sure (get contact information from potential participant i.e., mailing address/phone number/email address).

I - Thank you very much for your time. Do have any questions for me?

P – Yes/No

I – (If yes): Answer questions (then go to next line)

I – (If no): May I call you in 2 to 3 days to see if you are interested in being interviewed or would you like to set-up an appointment now?

P – Yes call me later/No let’s schedule an appointment now

I – (If yes): (get phone number P can be reached at)
I – (If no): (get availability of P to set-up meeting time)

Once again, if you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at this number or email [ ].

P - Good-bye.
I – Have a great day. Good-bye
Appendix J: E-mail Announcement – Community Members

E-mail Subject line: Announcement: Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente!

Dear [name of potential participant],

I am writing to let you know about a research study that I am conducting about Latin American women’s community participation and activism around social and environmental issues in Toronto. I am doing this study as part of my doctoral program at the University of Toronto. Although Latin American communities are one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in Toronto, we still face serious social and economic barriers that negatively impact women in our communities. Yet, Latin American women have a long history of community organizing and are actively working to improve the wellbeing of our communities. As such, it is important to understand their experiences to see what opportunities for participation exist in the non-profit sector and what more could be done to support Latin American women’s struggles for equity and justice. My study aims to do this and engage with the voices of Latin American women themselves.

Your contributions have been so important to Latin American communities in Toronto and it would be greatly appreciated if you were interested in sharing your stories and perspectives in this study. I am planning to speak to 30-40 Latin American women and gender non-conforming people about their experiences being involved in community-based non-profits and/or collectives providing supports to Latin American communities.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and would consist of a one-on-one interview lasting about 1 to 1.5 hours at a time and place that is convenient for you. To thank you for your time you will receive $20.00 in cash. You will also be invited to participate in a 1.5 hour focus group to provide feedback on preliminary findings. Taking part in this study is confidential and I will remove anything that may identify you in the information I collect. You are also free to withdraw at any point up until I publish my findings in research papers, community reports or thesis.

If you are interested in learning more I can send you a copy of the letter of information about the study that provides full details and a copy of the questions I am planning to ask you during the interview. This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board.

If you are interested in participating, please let me know at what phone number I can reach you at in the next 2-3 days to talk more about the study and answer any of your questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [ ] or at (local number). If you are not interested in taking part in this study and do not wish to receive any more emails about this study please reply to this email by simply writing ‘No Thanks.’ Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Best wishes,

Madelaine C. Cahuas, MA
[ ]
Appendix K: Reminder E-mail Invitation – Community Members

E-mail Subject line: Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente!

Dear [name of potential participant],

I wanted to share with you again that I am conducting a research study about Latin American women’s community participation and activism in case you had not received my last message. I am doing this study as part of my doctoral program at the University of Toronto.

Your contributions have been so important to Latin American communities in Toronto and it would be greatly appreciated if you were interested in sharing your stories and perspectives in this study. I am planning to speak to 30-40 Latin American women and gender non-conforming people about their experiences being involved in community-based non-profits and/or collectives providing supports to Latin American communities.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and would consist of a one-on-one interview lasting about 1 to 1.5 hours at a time and place that is convenient for you. To thank you for your time you will receive $20.00 in cash. You will also be invited to participate in a 1.5 hour focus group to provide feedback on preliminary findings. Taking part in this study is confidential and I will remove anything that may identify you in the information I collect. You are also free to withdraw at any point up until I publish my findings in research papers, community reports or thesis.

If you are interested in learning more I can send you a copy of the letter of information about the study that provides full details and a copy of the questions I am planning to ask you during the interview. This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board.

If you are interested in participating, please let me know at what phone number I can reach you at in the next 2-3 days to talk more about the study and answer any of your questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [ ] or at (local number). If you are not interested in taking part in this study and do not wish to receive any more emails about this study please reply to this email by simply writing ‘No Thanks.’ Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Best wishes,

Madelaine C. Cahuas, MA
[ ]
Appendix L: Final Reminder E-mail Invitation – Community Members

E-mail Subject line: Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente!

Dear [name of potential participant],

I hope this email finds you well. I wanted to share with you one last time that I am doing a research study about Latin American women’s community participation and activism in Toronto. I am doing this study as part of my doctoral program at the University of Toronto.

Your contributions have been so important to Latin American communities in Toronto and it would be greatly appreciated if you were interested in sharing your stories and perspectives in this study. I am planning to speak to 30-40 Latin American women and gender non-conforming people about their experiences being involved in community-based non-profits and/or collectives providing supports to Latin American communities.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and would consist of a one-on-one interview lasting about 1 to 1.5 hours at a time and place that is convenient for you. To thank you for your time you will receive $20.00 in cash. You will also be invited to participate in a 1.5 hour focus group to provide feedback on preliminary findings. Taking part in this study is confidential and I will remove anything that may identify you in the information I collect. You are also free to withdraw at any point up until I publish my findings in research papers, community reports or thesis.

If you are interested in learning more I can send you a copy of the letter of information about the study that provides full details and a copy of the questions I am planning to ask you during the interview. This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board.

If you are interested in participating, please let me know at what phone number I can reach you at in the next 2-3 days to talk more about the study and answer any of your questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [ ] or at (local number). Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Best wishes,

Madelaine C. Cahuas, MA
[ ]
Appendix M: Social Media Announcements

First Facebook Post to Relevant Community Groups in Toronto:

Hi everyone!

My name is Madelaine Cahuas and I am looking for volunteers for a research study I'm doing about Latin American women's community participation and activism in Toronto. I am aiming to speak to 30 to 40 women and gender nonconforming people with Afro-Latin@, Indigenous-Latin@, Latin@/Latinx/Latin American roots that have been involved in community organizations or collectives providing supports to Latin American communities for at least one year in the past 10 years. Participation involves a one-on-one interview that will take about 1 to 1.5 hours where you will receive $20 in cash to thank you for your time. You will also be invited to a focus group to provide feedback on preliminary findings. Taking part is completely confidential and I am doing this study as part of my doctoral program at the University of Toronto. For more information call me at (xxx-xxx-xxxx) or email me at [___]. Thank you so much!

Second Facebook Post to Relevant Community Groups in Toronto:

Hi everyone!

My name is Madelaine Cahuas and I am looking for volunteers for a research study I'm doing about Latin American women's community participation and activism in Toronto. I am aiming to speak to 30 to 40 women and gender nonconforming people with Afro-Latin@, Indigenous-Latin@, Latin@/Latinx/Latin American roots that have been involved in community organizations or collectives providing supports to Latin American communities for at least one year in the past 10 years. Participation involves a one-on-one interview that will take about 1 to 1.5 hours where you will receive $20 in cash to thank you for your time. You will also be invited to a focus group to provide feedback on preliminary findings. Taking part is completely confidential and I am doing this study as part of my doctoral program at the University of Toronto. For more information call me at (xxx-xxx-xxxx) or email me at [___]. Thank you so much!

Subsequent Facebook Post to Relevant Community Groups in Toronto:

Hi everyone!

I am still looking for volunteers for a research study I'm doing about Latin American women's community participation and activism in Toronto. I am aiming to speak to 30 to 40 women and gender nonconforming people with Afro-Latin@, Indigenous-Latin@, Latin@/Latinx/Latin American roots that have been involved in community organizations or collectives providing supports to Latin American communities for at least one year in the past 10 years. Participation involves a one-on-one interview that will take about 1 to 1.5 hours where you will receive $20 in cash to thank you for your time. You will also be invited to a focus group to provide feedback on preliminary findings. Taking part is completely confidential and I am doing this study as part of my doctoral program at the University of Toronto. For more information call me at (xxx-xxx-xxxx) or email me at [___]. Thank you so much!
Appendix N: Focus Group E-mail Recruitment Script

Dear [participant name],

I hope this email finds you well! I am writing to thank you for taking part in Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente! and doing an interview with me a few months ago. I also wanted to ask if you would be interested in finding out about some of the preliminary results and providing feedback through a focus group with 10-15 other participants.

Before you agree to participate, I would like to give you some more information. Focus groups are only open to people that have already completed an interview with me. So people in the focus groups will be other Latin American identified women and gender non-conforming people with experience working with Latin American communities. They will also last about 1.5 hours. During the focus group I will be presenting some preliminary results and themes I’m seeing in the information I collected and will give everyone an opportunity to share their feedback through individual and group discussions.

Participating in the focus group is completely voluntary and there are no serious, anticipated risks to taking part. However, you may become upset or uncomfortable with remembering and sharing negative experiences. It is important that you know that you can refuse to answer any question you do not wish to answer, skip questions and that you can leave the focus group at any time without suffering any consequences. You are also free to withdraw at any point up until I publish my findings in research papers, community reports or thesis.

I and possibly another assistant will be taking notes during the focus group and will audio-record the focus group. I will do this to accurately capture and better understand what you and others are saying. All the information you give me will be kept confidential and anonymous. Everyone in the room will be asked to keep confidentiality and not share what was said or the identities of participants in the focus group.

I will also be providing snacks, refreshments and subway tokens to help make the focus group more accessible for everyone. Also the focus groups will be done in both Spanish and English depending on what the group prefers. If you are interested I can email you an information letter that has all of these details along with more information to help you make a decision about taking part in the focus group.

To schedule a time that works for most people I am going to send an anonymous doodle poll over email in the next week to schedule a time for the focus group. But, I was wondering if you have any preferences in terms of weekdays, weekends, evening or daytime hours or location? Also would you prefer Spanish or English in the focus group? Please let me know what works best for you if you are interested in taking part. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at (xxx-xxx-xxxx) or email [ ].

Best wishes,

Madelaine C. Cahuas, MA
Appendix O: Focus Group Phone Recruitment Script

P = Potential Participant;  I = Interviewer

I – Hello. My name is Madelaine Cahuas a student from the University of Toronto. May I please speak to [name of potential participant].

I am calling to thank you for taking part in Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente! and doing an interview with me a few months ago. I also wanted to ask if you would be interested in finding out about some of the preliminary results and providing feedback through a focus group with 10-15 other participants.

Before you agree to participate, I would like to give you some more information. Focus groups are only open to people that have already completed an interview with me. So people in the focus groups will be other Latin American identified women and gender non-conforming people with experience working with Latin American communities.

During the focus group I will be presenting some preliminary results and themes I’m seeing in the information I collected and will give everyone an opportunity to share their feedback through individual and group discussions.

Participating in the focus group is completely voluntary and there are no serious, anticipated risks to taking part. However, you may become upset or uncomfortable with remembering and sharing negative experiences. It is important that you know that you can refuse to answer any question you do not wish to answer, skip questions and that you can leave the focus group at any time without suffering any consequences. You are also free to withdraw at any point up until I publish my findings in research papers, community reports or thesis.

I and possibly another assistant will be taking notes during the focus group and will audio-record the focus group. I will do this to accurately capture and better understand what you and others are saying. All the information you give me will be kept confidential and anonymous. Everyone in the room will be asked to keep confidentiality and not share what was said or the identities of participants in the focus group.

I will also be providing snacks, refreshments and subway tokens to help make the focus group more accessible for everyone. Also the focus groups will be done in both Spanish and English depending on what the group prefers.

With your permission, I would like to email/mail you an information letter that has all of these details along with more information to help you make a decision about taking part in the focus group.

P - No thank you.

OR

P - Sure
I – Great thank you. I am going to send an anonymous doodle poll over email in the next week to schedule a time for the focus group that works for most people. Do you have any preferences in terms of weekdays, weekends, evening or daytime hours or location? Also would you prefer Spanish or English in the focus group?

P – Answers questions

I – Records availability information, location and language preference. Do you have any questions or concerns?

P – Yes/No

I – Answer questions or concerns

I – If anything else comes up please do not hesitate to contact me at this number or email [ ].

P - Good-bye.

I – Have a great day. Good-bye.
Appendix P: E-mail Recruitment Script – Public Representatives

E-mail Subject line: Proyecto ¡Mujeres Presente!

Dear [name of potential participant],

I am writing to invite you to participate in a research study that I am conducting as part of my Doctoral program at the University of Toronto. This study will examine Latin American women’s community participation and activism around social and environmental issues in Toronto. Although Latin American communities are one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in Toronto, we still face serious social and economic barriers that negatively impact women in our communities. Yet, Latin American women have a long history of community organizing and are actively working to support the wellbeing of our communities. As such, it is important to understand what opportunities for participation exist in the non-profit sector and what more could be done to support Latin American women’s struggles for social and environmental justice. My study aims to do this by engaging with the stories of Latin American women and exploring the perspectives of community organizations themselves.

I am hoping that you can participate in this study as your contributions have been so important to Latin American communities in Toronto and your perspectives would be incredibly appreciated. For this study, I am planning to speak to 5-10 Latin American public representatives and leaders, including Executive Directors, Program Managers and/or Board Members/Executives in addition to 30-40 community members. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and would consist of a one-on-one interview lasting about 1 to 1.5 hours at a time and place that is convenient for you. I will be taking notes during the interview and with your permission I will also audio-record the interview. I would like to ask you about things like:

- The types of information and programs your organization offers to try and make places where Latin Americans live, work, play and learn healthier
- Your views on needs, challenges and strengths of Latin American communities related to women’s participation and community environmental engagement
- How the City or other government agencies could be more responsive to Latin American communities

Taking part in this study is public and not confidential. This is because given the relatively small size of the community it would be difficult to guarantee you confidentiality and I believe it’s important to highlight your contributions. Therefore, your name will be identified in the information I collect. However, if there are any moments during the interview where you wish to go off-record that will be accommodated for and anything said off-record will not be made public.

You are also free to withdraw at any point up until I publish my findings in research papers, community reports or thesis.

You will receive a summary report of this research when completed and you are welcome to request additional copies of the report. I am very interested in making my study useful to community organizations and welcome feedback on how to disseminate my findings. I plan to create an anti-oppression and equity training manual and workshop guide to help foster discussions and support work being done in the community. I can provide this document and offer to run workshops for your organization free of cost, but I’m also open to other suggestions.

Although the results of this study may not benefit you directly, by participating in this project you will be contributing to a better understanding of perceptions and experiences of community participation among marginalized communities and the role of community-based organizations in facilitating
engagement. This understanding has the potential to help in advocating for more equitable policies and programs that promote participation and wellbeing for all.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I will contact you by phone within the next week to follow-up and answer any questions you may have. Please contact me at any point by phone at (xxx-xxx-xxxx), or by email at [ ] with any questions or concerns, or if you wish to schedule an interview. This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board.

Best wishes,

Madelaine C. Cahuas, MA
[ ]
Appendix Q: Telephone Recruitment Script – Public Representatives

P = Potential Participant; I = Interviewer

P - Hello, I saw your email and I have some questions (and/or) I am interested in participating?

I – Hello. Thank you for your interest in the study. Who may I ask is calling?

P – Name of potential participant

I – (for potential participants calling after receiving email): Hi (name of potential participant). My name is Madelaine Cahuas and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Geography & Planning at the University of Toronto. I would be more than happy to answer any questions you have. But first, I would like to tell you about my study in order to maybe answer some of your questions. If I haven’t answered your questions please let me know and I will answer them.

P – Okay.

I – Go to study overview

I – (for follow-up up with potential participants that haven’t replied back to email): Hi (name of potential participant). My name is Madelaine C. Cahuas and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto. (Continue to study overview)

I – (study overview) As part of completing my thesis for my doctorate degree, I am speaking with Latin American community representatives to learn about their experiences in non-profit organizations and collectives providing supports to Latin@ communities. I am also interested in learning about how community organizations are creating opportunities for Latin American women’s participation around social and environmental issues.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and would consist of a one-on-one interview lasting about 1 to 1.5 hours at a time and place that is convenient for you. I would like to ask you about things like the kinds of programs your organization offers, your views on the successes and challenges of engaging Latin American women around environmental and social issues.

Taking part in this study is public and not confidential. This is because given the relatively small size of the community it would be difficult to guarantee you confidentiality and I believe it’s important to highlight your contributions. Therefore, your name will be identified in the information I collect. I will be taking notes during the interview and with your permission I will also audio-record the interview. I will do this to accurately capture and better understand what you are saying.

If there are any moments during the interview where you wish to go off-record that will be accommodated for and anything said off-record will not be made public.
You are also free to withdraw at any point up until I publish my findings in research papers, community reports or thesis.

You will receive a summary report of this research when completed and you are welcome to request additional copies of the report. I am very interested in making my study useful to community organizations and welcome feedback on how to disseminate my findings. I plan to create an anti-oppression and equity training manual and workshop guide to help foster discussions and support work being done in the community. I can provide this document and offer to run workshops for your organization free of cost, but I’m also open to other suggestions.

I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the University of Toronto Ethics Board. If you have any comments or concerns because of your participation in this study, please contact the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board at [ ].

With your permission, I would like to email/mail you an information letter that has all of these details along with more information to help you make a decision about taking part in this study.

P - No thank you.

OR

P - Sure (get contact information from potential participant i.e., mailing address/phone number/email address).

I - Thank you very much for your time. Do have any questions for me?

P – Yes/No

I – (If yes): Answer questions (then go to next line)

I – (If no): May I call you in 2 to 3 days to see if you are interested in being interviewed or would you like to schedule an appointment now?

P – Yes call me in 2 to 3 days/No, it’s not necessary let’s schedule an appointment now

I – (If yes): (verify best phone number to reach participant at and/or schedule a meeting time)
Once again, if you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at this number or email [].

P - Good-bye.

I – Have a great day. Good-bye.
### Resource Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Services Information Ontario</td>
<td>They give free information about mental health services and supports 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in over 140 languages.</td>
<td>1-866-531-2600</td>
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<tr>
<td>211 Toronto</td>
<td>Helps you find any kind of social service in Toronto</td>
<td>416-397-4636</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tele-health Ontario</td>
<td>Provides free health information and advice from a registered nurse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week</td>
<td>1-866-797-0000 TTY: 1-866-797-0007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Women Centre</td>
<td>Offers supports like counselling and women's programs in Spanish and Portuguese. Also, puts you in touch with other helpful services.</td>
<td>416-532-2824 533A Gladstone Ave. (Bloor &amp; Dufferin area)</td>
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<td>Unison Health &amp; Community Services</td>
<td>Provides a wide range of social and health services in a variety of languages, including Spanish in the northwest Toronto area. They also run neighbourhood action groups if you want to get active in your community.</td>
<td>Keele-Rogers site: 416-653-5400 Lawrence Heights site: 416-787-1661</td>
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<td>COSTI Immigrant Services</td>
<td>Offers a variety of social and health services for immigrants and newcomers. Spanish-speaking counsellors are available.</td>
<td>416-658-1600 Family and Mental Health Services: 416-244-7714 Sheridan Mall, 1700 Wilson Ave., Suite 105</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mennonite New Life Centre</td>
<td>Provides a wide range of services and programs including counselling support in Spanish and community development initiatives.</td>
<td>647-776-2057 2737 Keele St. (corner of Keele &amp; Wilson)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casa Maiz</td>
<td>They provide a number of community-building recreational programs from painting classes to poetry, dance and music.</td>
<td>(647) 777-0177 1280 Finch Ave. W. Unit #204</td>
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***Please keep in mind that this is not a complete list of all the services that may be available to you. It is only a list of some resources in the Navigating Mental Health Services in Toronto: A Guide for Newcomer Communities available at: [http://www.crct.org/lanresources/index.cfm?lan=11](http://www.crct.org/lanresources/index.cfm?lan=11) If you feel upset and you do not want to talk to someone in one of these places, I suggest that you talk to a trusted family member or friend who you would regularly go to, to talk over things.
Appendix S: Verbal Consent Log

Verbal Consent Log for Community Member Interviews

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<th>Participant Pseudonym</th>
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Verbal Consent Log for Public Representative Interviews

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## Verbal Consent Log for Focus Group Participants

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Appendix T: Oath of Confidentiality

Oath of Confidentiality

I understand that as an interpreter / transcriber / audio/ video assistant/ or research assistant (*circle one*) for a study being conducted by Madelaine C. Cahuas of the Department of Geography & Planning, University of Toronto under the supervision of Professor Sarah Wakefield, confidential information will be made known to me.

I agree to keep all information collected during this study confidential and will not reveal by speaking, communicating or transmitting this information in written, electronic (disks, audio files, transcripts, email) or any other way to anyone outside the research team.

Name: __________________________ Signature: __________________________

(Print)

Date: __________________________ Witness Signature: __________________________
Copyright Acknowledgements

Thank you to Antipode for granting me permission to use my article, Burned, Broke and Brilliant: Latinx Community Workers’ Experiences Across the Greater Toronto Area’s Non Profit Sector as my dissertation’s Chapter 3. Full bibliographic details are provided below:


doi:10.1111/anti.12411