Who We Are/ Quienes Somos

By Emma Brito

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Who We Are/Quienes Somos
Emma Brito
Master of Design
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OCAD University

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores how distinct cultures shift into Latin American Canadian identities beyond the first generation through one-on-one interviews. It seeks to uncover what the central characteristics of Latin American Canadian identities are, what is gained and lost of the foundational national identities through the shift into these broader panethnicities, and how they are shaped by the small yet diverse Toronto population in which the research is conducted. This thesis then employs concepts and cultural studies methods used throughout the research to create a multimedia storytelling interface which is methodologically and conceptually aligned in medium and experience.

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INTRODUCTION

Latin American Canadian identities are young and fraught with intersections and tensions. They are born outside of a region which they reference and exist in a country of immigration, a continent away from the 'homeland.' The term 'Latin-American Canadian' is often believed by other Canadians to refer to a homogenous group defined by underlying similarities, language, and origins within a geographical region,[1] while in truth it refers to a group with many different intersections and experiences of these identities. By understanding the complexities of these broad ways of identification we are better able to understand the way in which they manifest in the daily lives of those who possess them and what they refer too. This in turn allows Latin American Canadian identities to be discussed and represented with more nuance and complexity.

This thesis exists in two important parts. The first explores how these distinct cultures shift into Latin American Canadian identities beyond the first generation through one-on-one interviews. It is unclear what the central characteristics of Latin American Canadian identities are, what is gained and lost of the foundational national identities through the shift into these broader panethnicities, and how they are shaped

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[1] Cristina Mora and Dina Okamoto, "Panethnicity," *Annual Review of Sociology* 40 (2014): 219–39.

by the small yet diverse Toronto population in which I conduct my research.[2] I seek to

understand how these identities, which at surface value are very reliant on the cultures

of their parents, reconcile their existence in Toronto. The second part of this thesis

then employs the concepts and cultural studies methods used throughout the research

to explore a way in which to create a multimedia storytelling interface which is

methodologically and conceptually aligned in medium and experience. This is done to

create a space which facilitates nuanced dialogues surrounding Latin American

Canadian identities and takes them beyond the assumption of a homogenous

experience.

Throughout this thesis I will employ the generally followed geo-political

understanding of the term 'Latin American' as people with origins in countries in South

and Central America, Mexico, and Spanish speaking Caribbean countries. The

remaining Caribbean countries do not fall under this term because they are

considered to be a distinct group due to their colonization by Northern European

countries and their strong West African and West Indian influences.[3] I acknowledge

the imperfectness of this definition as it overlooks these same influences in what we

consider to be Latin American countries.

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[2] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, 1246.
[3] Fernando G. Mata, "Latin American Immigration to Canada: Some Reflections on the Immigration Statistics," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Latino-Américaines et Caraïbes* 10, no. 20 (1985): 27–42.

CONTEXT REVIEW

Throughout the *Context Review* I outline the migration histories which shape the Latin American populations within Toronto to better understand the ways in which these factors have created a foundation for Latin American Canadian identities in this city today and in the lives of the interview subjects. Latin American populations do not have a long history within Toronto due to geographical and political obstacles which have historically limited their movements to Canada as a whole. Canada's changes in immigration policies during the mid 20th century, along with political turmoil in Latin American countries facilitated the arrival of Latin American immigration in five distinct migration waves.[4] The results are of a young Latin American Canadian population with diverse national origins, socio-economic backgrounds, political turmoil, and modes of entry to the country.[5] In order to understand why Latin American Canadian identities exist as they do, their histories and the landscape in which they take form must be taken into consideration.

Immigration policies in Canada dictate how the Latin American population was first introduced to the country and who was granted entry. The life experiences, politics, and worldviews they carried with them, are central to how these identities and

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[4] Mata.

[5] Mata.

corresponding communities formed. Prior to the 1950's Canada saw very little

migration from Latin American countries because during this time immigration policies

gave preference to European immigrants, while limiting those from Asian, African, and

Latin American countries.[6] These policies not only resulted in a minimal presence of

Latin Americans in Canada for much of its history,[7] but it also suggests there was little

community foundation and networks for those who would arrive in the following

decades.

Latin American immigration first began with more significant numbers in 1952

when a new Immigration Act made it possible for educated middle-class and elite

'urban intelligentsia' to come to Canada. This act still maintained class biases and

favoured those of Europeans backgrounds, such as German-Argentinians, Portuguese-

Brazilians, and Dutch-Mexicans.[8] While they came from Latin American countries,

these groups perhaps sought out others from their European heritages rather than

their Latin American nations, with large numbers of German-Argentinians settling in

Kitchener-Waterloo because of the German population present.[9] Latin American

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[6] Alan B. Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System," *International Journal* 48, no. 2 (1993): 282–309.
[7] Mata, "Latin American Immigration to Canada: Some Reflections on the Immigration Statistics."
[8] Mata, "Latin American Immigration to Canada," 29.
[9] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

Canadian identities were still early in the early stages of establishing themselves during this time.

These populations and identities shifted and diversified in 1966 thanks to major revisions to Canadian immigration policy in *The White Paper*. Skilled workers were increasingly in demand due to growing industrial production and the resulting need for labourers.[10] The points system was introduced which selected immigrants who best met 'adaptability criteria' defined by their proficiency in French or English, job skills, age, and schooling.[11] These changes enabled the Andean wave to occur, with migrants from the countries of Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru, who were experiencing instability and lowering standards of living in their countries of origin to arrive in Canada.[12] This wave was defined by both their countries of origin and skilled labour.[13] The Andean wave was critical to the growth of Latin American Canadian populations as they represented very different experiences and ways of being Latin American than their predecessors.

The momentum of Latin American populations in Canada once again shifted and intensified in the 1970s, with the 1973 Amnesty Act which allowed visitors to

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[10] Erica Gagnon et al., "White Paper on Immigration, 1966," *Canadian Museum of Immigration*, n.d., https://pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/white-paper-on-immigration-1966.

[11] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

[12] Simmons.

[13] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto."

apply for status after arrival.[14] This Act affected all visitors entering Canada before

November 30, 1972 and by October 1984 and it's estimated that 49 924 individuals

were able to regularize their status in Canada.[15] The *Immigration Act* of 1976 held yet

another major change in the course of Latin American migration by introducing the

category of 'refugee' into the classification of immigrants and clarified Canadian

obligations with respect to them.[16] This follows the United Nations' 1951 Convention

Relating to the Status of Refugees.[17] It defines refugees as people with a 'well-founded

fear' of being persecuted, is outside their country, and due to this fear is unable to

return to that country.[18] This allowed people who would not have previously been

granted entry to Canada to now find refuge. Without the addition of this status both

the Coup and Central American waves, two of the largest Latin American Waves to

Canada, would not have occurred in the numbers that they did. During the 1970s and

'80s in both instances the countries of origin were experiencing extreme violence and

oppression from their governments, and in the case of the Central American Wave,

civil war.[19] Finally, the Fifth Wave, beginning in the mid-1990s, and is the result of

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[14] Mata, 29.

[15] Mata, 30.

[16] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

[17] Erica Gagnon et al., "Immigration Act, 1976," *Canadian Museum of Immigration*, n.d., https://pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/immigration-act-1976.

[18] "Conventionand Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees" (UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency, n.d.), https://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.

[19] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto."

these changes to immigration policies, as well as growing networks between the Canada and countries of origins. Unlike its predecessors, it is characterized by a range of national origins and modes of entry to the country.[20]

Overall, Latin American migration to Canada has a complex history with many moving parts. Everything from changes in Canadian policies which made it a viable migration option, to the political turmoil and violence within these Latin American countries that pushed citizens to leave their homes, created the landscape in which these identities now exist. The geographical distance between Latin America and Canada, and the economical barriers which result from that distance, have also allowed Canada to exercise significant control and ability to select the Latin American immigrants allowed entry to.[21] The early limitations around the development of a population, in turn led to weaker transnational networks to facilitate and encourage the arrival of more Latin American peoples in Canada.[22]

The largest migration amounts have also not been continuous; they have occurred in waves rather than constant flows.[23] They were in response to a political event in the country of origin, meaning that these networks often lack large numbers of new arrivals to 're-calibrate' the national cultures within Toronto in significant ways.

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[20] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring.

[21] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

[22] Simmons.

[23] Alan B. Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System," *International Journal* 48, no. 2 (1993): 282–309.

These historical happenstances have led to a young, small but growing Latin American

Canadian population characterized by a wide range of national origins.[24] This diversity

of national origins is better demonstrated when juxtaposed with the United States,

which has a substantial Latin American population that appears to be dominated by

three countries: Mexico, Cuba and the Dominican Republic."[25] Canada on the other

hand, while significantly lesser in numbers, is more diverse than it's American

gateway[26] city counterparts.[27] The combination of fewer Latin Americans within the

Canadian population and a higher level of diversity among the community creates a

situation which poses its own set of challenges for the group.[28] The way in which the

unique Canadian history of Latin American migration has affected the cultures and

identities beyond the first generation will be examined further through the identities

within Toronto; the Greater Toronto Area houses the largest numbers of the

population, with nearly a third of Latin American immigrants in Canada.[29]

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[24] Simmons.

[25] Simmons.

[26] Cities in which many new immigrants first settle within a new country. New York and Los Angeles are significant American gateway cities.

[27] Fernando G. Mata, "Latin American Immigration to Canada: Some Reflections on the Immigration Statistics," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Latino-Américaines et Caraïbes* 10, no. 20 (1985): 27–42.

[28] Much of the information about the Latin American Canadian population is based on official statistics and does not include undocumented migrants, of whom there is little data. Observation suggests that there has been an increase of undocumented migrants who do not plan to claim asylum because their claims do not meet the necessary criteria in cities like Toronto. These people may come from violent situations but these situations are not armed conflicts in the way that the Salvadoran civil war was. Many of this groups arrived on Visitor's Visas but overstayed the time period.

[29] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto."

LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout the *Literature Review* I will examine key concepts to create a lens through which the following interviews can be examined. Theories on factors that create identification with another individual or group, the role of Latin American panethnicities, and shifting identities will be evaluated. Together they will provide insight into how to approach and analyze responses given from interview subjects.

Identification through Otherness

Humans' ability to relate and identify with one another lies at the heart of all identities and communities. This ability of identification allows us to feel connection to strangers who share our nationalities in foreign lands and even dictates our social circles. Identities emerge from these groups which in turn allow us to identify and 'mark' ourselves to others, both within and outside of that group. How and why identification occurs is central to understanding how groups are created. Rather than being rooted in an inherent 'sameness' or an innate shared characteristic with another person,[30] they are created through difference and emerge from power structures.[31] Through this perspective, identification is more the product of the difference or

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[30] Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage Publications, 1996).
[31] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity, 4*.

exclusion from the dominant group, than they are of intrinsic unity.[32] This view of

identification parallels that of panethnicities and should be utilized to understand how

they are created; not through sameness, rather through a discourse of otherness from

a mainstream or larger, more dominant society. This otherness forms ways of

identification and those who do not fit into the dominant culture begin to identify as

such.[33]

   This idea is echoed when looking at Latin American Canadian identities,[34] a

term which wears its discourse of migration and colonization through each word.[35]

These transnational and panethnic identities look beyond political borders and

differing heritages to identify through experiences outside of the dominant culture,

and are then seen as 'the same.'[36] While viewing these discourses as 'the same' is a

simplistic approach, they are nonetheless invoked as commonalities, allowing people

to feel affinity with one another instead of seeing the otherness from the dominant

culture and differences amongst themselves;[37] No longer is the male refugee from

Chile completely separate from the female banker from Argentina, they both become

Latin Americans immigrants in Canada with mother tongues that are not widely

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[32] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity, 3.*
[33] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity, 4*.
[34] Hall and du Gay, 4.
[35] Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage Publications, 1996).
[36] Peggy Levit and Nina Glick Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultuneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society," *The International Migration Review* 38, no. 4 (Fall 2004): 1002–39.
[37] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity*.

spoken in the country they now live. This process creates new identities through which

individuals can identify. 'Latin American Canadian' is a perfect example; as already has

been outlined, the population has had very different experiences in their journey of

migration, and yet there is an assumption of underlying affinity.

Latin American Panethnicities

Latin American panethnicities always exist with the tension between defense

and erasure. The role that they play in these processes have been the subject of

debate.[38] On the surface it is the amalgamation of many distinct groups with roots

from the geo-political region, all cooperating, organizing, and building identities

across these boundaries to pursue common goals and create a defense from a

domineering world.[39] They are a nation which exists without a place, rather than one

from 'authoritarian enforcement'[40] to protect their language and mutual interests.

Latin American panethnicities are imagined communities in the way that Benedict

Anderson describes; 'nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-

consciousness, it invents nations where they do not exist.'[41] These panethnicities have

not always existed, rather their connections are constructed through discourse and

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[38] Cristina Mora, "How Distinct Ethnic Groups Became 'Hispanics'" (October 18, 2017),
https://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/how-distinct-ethnic-groups-became-hispanics.
[39] Cristina Mora and Dina Okamoto, "Panethnicity," *Annual Review of Sociology,* no. 40 (2014): 219-239.
[40] Coco Fusco, "Passionate Irreverence: The Cultural Politics of Identity," in *English Is Broken Here: Notes on Cultural Fusion in the Americas* (New York: The New Press, 1995).
[41] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities.* (London: Verso Books, 1983).

necessity. This is true of Latin American communities within countries of immigration

and the way in which the identities shift in the new context, as well as Latin America

itself as a concept.[42] While there are no borders tying these panethnicities together,

they exhibit a comradery which runs through these communities regardless of ethnic

origins or borders.[43]

   While unity is an admirable sentiment, the criticism around panethnicities lie in

their contribution of the erasure of the more distinct identities of which they are

comprised, simplifying them, with a multitude of sins glazed over in the process.[44] For

instance, othered groups which experience oppression in their countries of origin are

placed alongside their oppressors in countries like Canada, and perceived as the same

with their histories and traumas erased. Similarly, while inherently diverse,

panethnicities create the illusion of shared experiences where they do not exist. These

terms include a mixture of subgroups like 'Afro-Latin American' and 'White Hispanic,'

which experience very different ways of existing in the world, making it a mistake to

speak about singular experiences in the way that panethnicities often encourage.[45]

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[42] The Latin American idea predates its use in a North American context, with the dream of a united continent having existed since the time of Simon Bolivar and colonial empires which attempted to develop a regional unity in 'Latin America.' In *The Situation of Transnational Studies* Nina Glick Schiller speculates that Latin American identities in host countries are the remnants of these efforts.

[43] Anderson, *Imagined Communities.*

[44] Mora and Okamoto, "Panethnicity," 221.

[45] Laurie Kay Sommers, ""Inventing Latinismo: The Creation of 'Hispanic' Panethnicity in the United States," *The Journal of American Folklore* 104, no. 441 (1991): 32–53.

They put forth the idea of a 'Latin American experience' without acknowledging that these differ.

In regards to national identities, there have been many criticisms of inclusion in broader panethnicities, mainly due to loss of important cultural practices or festivals.[46] Preservation of cultural traditions and ways of life is of course an issue for many in a globalized world, but this places the notion of 'cultural purity' itself into question[47] while making the inaccurate assumption that culture is static and never-changing. This view also raises the issue of who dictates what is important to these identities and what is worth preserving, a questions there are no absolute answers for.

Regardless of the perspectives in favour or in opposition to panethnicities, research shows that they are inevitable amongst the children of immigration. They are more likely to identify with them than the first generation,[48] so they are an ever-present and ever-growing reality. This method of identification allows this group to merge the cultures of their parents with the society in which they live.[49] This process forms hybrid, and a multiplicity of identities were they once did not exist; acknowledging multiple influences to form a more fully realized understanding of self.[50] It is necessary to move past the assumption that identities must be innately

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[46] Mora and Okamoto, "Panethnicity."

[47] Fusco, "Passionate Irreverence: The Cultural Politics of Identity."

[48] Mora and Okamoto, "Panethnicity."

[49] Levit and Glick Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultuneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society."

[50] Steven Vertovec, "Transnationalism and Identity," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27, no. 4 (2010): 573.

localized, instead that they can move across borders and remain valid and central

components to identity. Panethnic people and communities exist beyond states, with

multiple identities, combining old and new ones in their own inventory of

associations.[51]

Borderlands

Throughout these readings of transnationalism, the concept of borders has

been a recurrent theme; their crossings and the way in which they define us. While

they are cultural and political constructions, they are still supported by laws,

economics, political power, and institutions.[52] That being said, borders are imagined

barriers and 'what they come to mean and how they are experienced, crossed, or

imagined are products of particular histories, times, and place.'[53] Borders can make us

question who we are and how we identify as a result of these discourses, because

ultimately moving across a border does not change who we are, rather it alters the

way in which we experience ourselves. For instance, a border can be the difference

between a Salvadoran citizen who rarely thinks of their nationality and a Salvadoran

refugee who must rebuild a life in a foreign land where they are often defined by this

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[51] Roger Rouse, "Questions of Identity: Personhood and Collectivity in Transnational Migration to the United States," *Critique of Anthropology* 15, no. 4 (1995): 354.

[52] Nina Glick Schiller, "The Situation of Transnational Studies," *Identities* 4, no. 2 (1997): 162.

[53] Glick Schiller, "The Situation of Transnational Studies," 162.

label. The 'imagined' nature of borders is further highlighted in communities which

result from migration as they straddle the political borders between where they now

reside and where they came from. Nationality, culture, language, and even religion

might be separated by this border and yet merged within the individual.

In her memoir *Borderlands/La Frontera,* Chicana writer Gloria Andulza wrote of

spaces she called 'borderlands.' Her borderlands are not physical places, rather

resistive, transnational spaces which defy political boundaries. They exist wherever

'two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the

same territory…' and are productive and creative spaces.[54] It is in these spaces, living

on borders and in margins, in which she navigates her life as a 'border woman' who

grew up existing between two cultures in an effort to keep her shifting and multiple

identities intact.[55] Nina Glick Schiller supports this notion in her work, writing that

'borderlands can be places where multiplicities of identities are constantly enacted in

specific situations.'[56] Borderlands are spaces of ambiguity which possess a complete

disregard for the borders imposed on them by historical happenstance. They honour a

unique history of intersections for each individual and are a resistive space which

avoids definition from nation-states. It deals with those who exist outside of the region

from which they claim an identity and refuse to allow governments or political barriers

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[54] Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands, La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: aunt lute books, 1987).
[55] Anzaldua, *Borderlands, La Frontera*.
[56] Glick Schiller, "The Situation of Transnational Studies," 162.

dictate how they identify. Latin American Canadian identities are an instance of transcended borders by their very creation, and these same constructions must once again be forgotten when examining them, and instead allow multiple identities to co-exist without lessening each other's value.

MY ANALYTIC LENS

Anzaldua's notion of borderland identities, Hall's theories of identification as a creation of discourse, and the tension which exists within panethnicities will be utilized to analyze and reflect upon the interviews conducted. Throughout the interview analysis Latin American Canadian identities are approached as fluid entities which inhabit spaces that straddle multiple cultures[57] and countries, entwining themselves with one another to create ever-evolving and shifting ways of being. After all, they are ways of identification which at once refer to restrictive and defined borders (ie. Canadian) and then cross and resist them within the term.[58] Each borderland space resists the dominant society through its own unique intersections[59] and therefore each way of being Latin American Canadian is valid and unique to each individual. However, while valid, these Latin American Canadian identities are not treated as natural

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[57] Anzaldua, *Borderlands, La Frontera: The New Mestiza*.
[58] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity*.
[59] Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands, La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: aunt lute books, 1987).

formations. They are panethnicities[60] and methods of identification which are created

in the face of a dominant society.[61] They are formed on the back of perceived similarity

which could be as simple as being 'other' within Toronto. As a result, each theme and

pattern must be considered in relation to the history of migration as well as

contextualized within the Toronto situation to find a deeper understanding. It is with

this understanding and analytic lens through which the interview process will be

examined. Why interview subjects identify as they do, who with, why this is the case,

and how it manifests in their life will be looked at as a result of this lens. Yet this will be

done while understanding them to be simply a small part of a larger story and that

their own unique intersections are shaped by their surroundings.

WORKS REVIEW

This research project is was first envisioned as an interactive web documentary

and as a result, many web documentaries informed the structure of the final work. Due

to this process this *Works Review* focuses on four web documentaries which I drew

inspiration from. In this section I will look at *One Millionth Tower* and *Universe Within*

from the *Highrise* series, and *The World in 10 Blocks* and *Welcome to Pine Point.* I

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[60] Mora and Okamoto, "Panethnicity."
[61] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity*.

have elected to organize this section around two key ideas I utilized in *Who We Are/Quienes Somos.*

Choice & Navigation

Web documentaries inherently offer more choice for the viewer than traditional film documentaries;[62] there are a number of different approaches which can be taken in their navigation. For instance, many of the *Highrise* documentaries have complex navigations, with seemingly endless viewer paths and user experiences.

2015's *Universe Within* in particular offers the viewer significant autonomy throughout the experience. It begins with the option of three 'guides.' The viewer selects one of the virtual guides and listens to their introduction. They are then given four story options to hear on three different occasions. They are not again given the opportunity to listen to the stories they passed over. This follows a 'choose your own adventure' storybook structure. Each story is singular and complete, only tied together by the narrator residing in a high rise building. Context and reflections are provided by the guide as they draw connections between these otherwise fragmented stories to help viewers draw meaningful conclusions between stories. This lends freedom to the viewer to explore as much or as little as they desire; not everything must be heard for a complete and meaningful experience of the project. After all, what is chosen is

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[62] Stefano Odorico, "Between Interactivity, Reality and Participation : The Interactive Documentary Form," n.d.

important, but what is overlooked is equally as important; what was decided against stays with the viewer as much as what was selected. The choice and autonomy of the viewer is vital to the overall experience of the web documentary, as it allows them to determine their path. This is also an interesting strategy for

The World in 10 Blocks offers a more linear navigation structure. Rather than forging their own path throughout the web documentary, the viewer instead has the power to opt out of listening to the stories of the documentary subjects. They are taken around the ten blocks, stopping at certain buildings along the path to hear stories of immigration and homelands. The viewer continues on their path by scrolling with their mouse or touchpad. The scrolling takes on the role of a 'stroll' around these blocks. It is the main interaction. While a simple interaction, it is significant because it requires the participation and engagement of the viewer in order to continue. The choice here lies in the viewer's decision of continued effort. The scrolling and what is seen between the videos is just as important as the subjects themselves. It is during the scrolling that the viewer witnesses the lively streets and blocks in which these stories exist and that the title refers to. After all, these block provide the setting for the subjects' stories and is the location which ties them together into a complete concept.

The World in 10 Blocks and *Universe Within* use very different navigational approaches and force the viewers to make different kinds of choices. These elements

arguably shape the experience of the final products more than the content and are

equally a part of these documentaries as the subjects they explore. As a result, it is

crucial to consider the structure each project takes and how it can contribute to the

goals of the documentary and add another layer to the storytelling.

Multimedia & Meaning

Throughout many of the web documentaries examined, multimedia created

layers of experiences for the user and added depth to the narratives. It allowed

viewers to take active roles within their experiences compared to that of typical video

documentaries. They are able to discover some content while also are able to overlook

or disregard other content. Nevertheless, the placement of the media is intentional

with each piece affecting others which it lies close to. While separately each piece of

media is simply a fragment of a larger story, when compiled they come together to

flesh out the worlds which the documentaries examine. The multimedia are also used

to build larger ideas and concepts through their placement, more than any singular

fragment can point to on their own.

In *One Millionth Tower* the viewer has the option to watch the documentary or

to explore the highrise space. The latter is a 360 degree virtual landscape in which

two-dimensional images of high rises around Toronto are placed in a circular

formation. Audio begins to play by clicking on an image while animations are layered

over top, creating accompanying visuals of the voice overs. While the stories and images themselves are potent enough to immerse viewers into the world, three-dimensional icons hover for additional information surrounding the stories. For instance, one of these icons connects to a Wikipedia article entitled "*Effects of the Automobile on Society*," and it is placed in close proximity to a story of a woman who lives in a Highrise which overlooks a highway. This adjacent media provides seemingly unnecessary, but relevant, context. This is done perhaps in an effort to connect these stories to the greater experiences of urbanization, human connection, and high rise living across the globe; the key themes explored throughout the *Highrise* project. Without the supplementary articles tying these building to more global phenomena, the viewer would remain situated within Toronto and would not as easily see these as more widespread experiences. The use of images of Torontonian buildings, as well as the current weather around these buildings, within an abstracted virtual landscape echo this effort of bringing local to global experiences and issues. The building in the images are very much tied to their physical location, but are abstracted to make them more easily transplanted into other areas. When the viewer looks beyond the images of the Toronto buildings, they see renderings of bare bone high rises which could exist anywhere. The stories and conflicts become more universal in this process.

   Welcome to Pine Point utilizes multimedia with a different purpose. Rather than using it to connect a local stories to greater narratives, *Pine Point* is more interested in

fleshing out one locality and how it shaped the lives of its former inhabitants.

Memories and artefacts of those who once lived in Pine Point are used to bring this

once lively town back to life through the web documentary. Everything from archival

photographs, testimonies of former residents, home videos, music, and voice overs

are used throughout the process and the results take on the appearance of a yearbook

or scrapbook. This form acknowledges that these are memories and that the stories

are very much in the past. *Pine Point* also embraces the fragmented nature of

memories by using multimedia to piece together what life was actually like in this

town. Each page focuses on a different aspect of the town, like the high school or

local industry, and the more media there is in each section, the richer the portrait if

that particular section. Each piece of the media offers valuable insight, once again

informing those around it, providing deeper understanding and often necessary

context. Nevertheless, the *Welcome to Pine Point* never pretends to encompass all

experiences and facets of this town though; the fragmented nature of the media used

also inevitably alludes to all the parts which are either lost or left out.

The intentions of the creators of *One Millionth Tower* and *Welcome to Pine Point* may

differ slightly, but in both of these web documentaries multimedia was a crucial

element in realizing them. It is the interplay and proximity of the media elements to

one another that allows meaningful connections to be made by the viewer. While this

relationship leaves space for interpretation on the part of the viewer, it shapes the

viewer's interpretation and perception of the media elements, and ultimately the message taken from the experience.

METHODOLOGY: NEW ETHNOGRAPHY

Through my research and interview process New Ethnography was utilized to examine how the diversity of Latin American immigrants have shifted into Latin American Canadian identities beyond the first generation. I employed the methods of polyvocality and testimonio to look at ways of being Latin American Canadian, how they were formed, and what they are constructed from. Testimonio dictated my approach to the interviews and how to approach the building of the multimedia storytelling interface, while polyvocality was used to provide a more complete representation of Latin American Canadian identities. Both methods were crucial to the structure of the multimedia component and are at its forefront. This will be elaborated on later in the document.

New ethnography's two defining tenets are also honoured. The first is the commitment to be 'truer' to lived realities of other people[63] by avoiding assumptions

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[63] Paula Saukko, *Doing Research in Cultural Studies: An Introduction to Classical and New Methodological Approaches* (London: Sage Publications, 2003): 57.

of universal truths and objective realities by considering many accounts through

polyvocality.[64] The second tenet is the challenging of how people are categorized[65]

and to view these labels with skepticism in order to uncover discourses that dictate the

way in which we view social and lived realities.[66] This aligns with this thesis'

commitment to understand identification (and by extension identities) as creations of

discourse. In order to do this, it is important to contextualize the identities of the

population within the histories, experiences, and surrounding discussed in the *Context*

Review.

Within my interviews I followed these tenets by discussing the terms of

identification the interview subjects use to understand how and why they identify as

they do. The questions asked, explore how Latin American Canadian identities play

out in their lived realities in contrast to what they are told it means by the society

around them while also avoiding assumptions of objective truths by capturing different

experiences through seeking out a range of interview subjects.[67] The core methods

employed throughout the process are central to new ethnography; self-reflexivity,

polyvocality, testimonio.

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[64] Saukko, 18.

[65] Saukko, 57.

[66] Saukko.

[67] D. Soyini Madison, *Critical Ethnography: Method, Ethics, and Performance* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Ltd., 2005): 7.

Self-Reflexivity

Self-reflexivity forces me to acknowledge my bias and subjectivity within my research, interviews and in relation to my interview subjects.[68] It is a method I struggled with early on in my project. The largest challenge revolved around how I would ultimately present the findings as it seems counterintuitive to the method of testimonio which requires a passive role on the part of the storyteller; they are only meant to be a vessel through which the stories are told rather than an active participant. Ultimately it was decided that my voice will not be active within the multimedia component but deployed as an artist's statement displayed at the exhibition to accompany the project, while also including a peripheral presence throughout the multimedia component which I will detail further later in the *Multimedia* section of this document.

During the thesis process I was open about my connection to the subject matter due to my heritage and life experience, as well as how it is the source of my interest in the research. I am the demographic which I am studying and I made a point of being open with my interview subjects, sharing my personal experiences and opinions when asked for them. My reflections on the subject matter is included in an appendix. It is important for transparency's sake as well as honouring my methodology throughout the entire process.

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[68] Madison, *Critical Ethnography: Method, Ethics, and Performance,* 7.

Polyvocality

There is no one singular version of a 'lived experience' for any identity.[69] No two people identifying as Latin American Canadian will have the same relationship to the identity because they don't have identical experiences, and it must be remembered that there are always multiple versions of lived experiences and realities.[70] Any attempt to 'be truer' to a lived experience must keep this in mind as they attempt to present an account of the identity, freeing it from agendas, and contrasting several lived realities to the idea of a universal truth.[71]

Multiple interviews were conducted because the different ways of experiencing these identities is a significant component this thesis. It would be impossible to speak to that diversity without speaking to multiple people. Individuals of different genders, national heritages, ages, and racial representations were included. In this process I was initially concerned with representing the breadth of the identities rather that creating a more 'complete' portrait of the lived experiences of Latin American Canadians. The initial focus shifted to understanding the important formative influences these identities experience. Overarching themes began to arise from the interviews to form

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[69] Madison.

[70] Saukko, *Doing Research in Cultural Studies, 64*.

[71] Saukko, 65.

a clearer picture of the state of Latin American Canadian identities in Toronto. These

themes dictate the subjects discussed within the multimedia storytelling interface.

Testimonio

This method has been described by different terms, some preferring dialogue

while others use the terms of interview or testimony.[72] I chose to honour the form of

the Testimonio. Testimonio has often been associated with Latin America and is a

genre of writing which is dedicated to bringing forth a silenced experience.[73] It

requires the ethnographer to distribute firsthand accounts of a local point-of-view and

then distribute it to wider audiences. They are the messenger and 'editor' of the story

rather than the author of the stories they transmit.[74]

Interviews were recorded on video rather than in writing but they were

approached with the principles of Testimonio: I sought out first-hand accounts of an

experience which is not at the forefront of the cultural conversation and will distribute

my findings in an edited product but not claim authorship over them. I am simply the

vehicle through which the stories will be heard. The process was approached without a

set script to fit the interviews into, and to instead let subjects lead the narrative. The

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[72] Madison, *Critical Ethnography: Method, Ethics, and Performance,* 5.
[73] Saukko, *Doing Research in Cultural Studies: An Introduction to Classical and New Methodological Approaches, 64*.
[74] Saukko, *Doing Research in Cultural Studies,* 65.

results find collective experiences amongst the diversity of subjects, but the fact that it

is a personal account dictated by the subject takes priority above all else. This will

become more apparent as I discuss the utilization of testimonio through interview

process.

Scope & Limitations

My research includes the investigation of what formulates Latin American

identities and how they are formed in Toronto through my interviews for research and

the final web documentary. In order to study the current state of the identities in

Toronto I interviewed individuals who fall into the category of second generation Latin

American people by the Canadian definition. These are people who were born in

Canada and have at least one foreign-born parent[75] who is from a country generally

accepted to be a part of 'Latin America' as I defined in the introduction.

I sought out as diverse a group as possible to speak to different experiences

with the identity, attempting to show different experiences not only according to

nation-state but also gender, race, age, sexuality, languages, indigenous groups etc…

Due to my sample size many of the subjects are the only representation of their

intersections; each contributes their own distinct borderland perspective to the project

while being tied together through the Latin American Canadian identity. That being

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[75] "Generation Status: Canadian-Born Children of Immigrants" (Statistics Canada, July 25, 2018).

said, this thesis does not come close to representing all the intersections which exist within this identity.

Finally, which term to use when discussing this identity throughout this thesis has undergone many changes. 'Hispanic' was decided against early on because is not representative of the research demographic since it denotes individuals of a Spanish lineage, including European Spanish. This has a direct link to the colonizing power while erasing those indigenous populations and the diversity of other heritages. 'Latino/Latina' has fallen out of favour with many populations in Toronto and Canada because of the emphasis on gender binary while 'Latinx' has been critiqued because of the prioritization of gender neutral language. While it has its roots in queer identities, it has since been adopted by the broader population. The term anglicizes the identities into gender neutral terms to better suit English speakers. As someone who does not speak Spanish or Portuguese, I do not feel it is my place to force the anglicized change for reasons related to personal comfort. For a large process of my research I simply used the term 'Latin' but it was pointed out to me that this refers to the language and etymology more than a region or people. Meanwhile 'Latin Canadian' refers to Canadians who speak a Latin-rooted language (French, Spanish, Portuguese), one again opening up the identity to Europeans. The 'America' needs to be there to point to countries in South and Central America.

The terms I've chosen to use have been ever-changing, and similarly the people I interviewed used a variety of the terms discussed above. For the time being I will continue to use the term 'Latin American' when referring to individuals from the geo-political region and 'Latin American Canadian' to refer to Canadians who identify with the Latin American identity.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

Guided by the principles of polyvocality and testimonio, I allowed the subjects to lead the interviews with their responses and stories. While I went into each interview with the same set of twelve questions, the subject dictated the direction in which the interview went. As a result of this, each interview subject focused on the areas that they were most concerned with due to their lived experiences. Throughout the creation of the multimedia storytelling interface I treat the interview subjects' stories as exactly that: their stories. Together they will result in a polyvocal project to emphasize different ways of being Latin American Canadian.

After receiving Research Ethics Board Approval in December 2018 I began reaching out to interview subjects. Over the course of January 2019 I conducted nine interviews with individuals who identify as Latin American Canadian, were born within Canada, and have at least one parent from a Latin American country. The sample

group was as diverse as possible given the time and location constraints. A further

breakdown of the sample can be viewed as an appendix to this document. Since

community was an important starting point in my research I chose to utilize it to find

interview subjects through word-of-mouth 'snowball sampling.' I began with my own

network to locate interview subjects. I reached out to individuals I was already in

contact with who fell into my demographic and from that point I was put in contact

with new subjects.

For the most part my interview subjects were happy to open up in the interview

and to discuss their thoughts and emotions, many of which were mixed. I found that

my interview subjects were wanting a space or forum in which they could explore this

identity. Over the course of my interviews there were six themes and subjects which

were common threads throughout the process.

Cultural Entwining

All of my interview subjects stated that they feel an affinity with other

people of Latin American heritage, and that the cores of each culture came from the

same place.[76] On multiple occasions I was told this lay in the fact that they felt they

were better understood by other Latin American Canadians because of similar

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[76] For Nadia, who spent a majority of her childhood in Costa Rica despite being born in Canada, this was narrowed to Central Americans rather than all Latin Americans.

experiences in childhood. Language, dancing, music, food, and the understanding that they were 'different' or 'other' from mainstream Canadian culture were all mentioned as the core characteristic of what tied them to one another. There was also a majority amongst my interview sample who believe that it is the broad and shared culture of Latin American Canadians that everyone should be working together to support. This belief existed regardless of differing nationalities, with the actual specificities of any singular culture being generally not of concern to the majority the interview subjects demonstrating a preference for panethnic cultures.

The merging of many Latin American cultures was perhaps best demonstrated in an interview with one of the interviews with a young man of Chilean heritage named Octavio. He listed off music he listened to which he considered an important part of his Latin American and Chilean identities; to him there was no distinction between the two. He proudly listens to salsa (music of Cuban origin), Bachata (Dominican), and Samba (Brazilian). Perhaps this is the perfect example of how cultures adapt into new identities in new locations like Canada and Toronto. These genres and dances are surviving in Toronto because of how Latin American Canadian identities have evolved to include a broader region than the country which first allowed them to claim the term; Bachata is growing in Toronto because of a Chilean's feeling of cultural affinity with a dance which originated far from the country which originally allowed him to feel

that connection. Together they perhaps create a new culture of Latin American

Canadian, increasingly independent of the borders of the countries of origin.

These responses encounter the core tension that exists with panethnicities:

erasure of distinct identities versus cultural defense and preservation in the face of a

dominating society. The fact that only one interview subject could distinguish what

made her Nicaraguan versus what made her Latin American Canadian suggests that

the distinctiveness of each culture has already experienced erasure by the second

generation. Of course, most of the interview subjects spoke in favour of the Latin

Americana Canadian panethnicities as a source of preservation and defense while

noting that this population is too small to be selective. This once again alludes to

Mata's findings that Latin American immigrants in Canada are a smaller yet more

diverse group than their American counterparts.[77] They were all happy to have

someone to share what they know of the culture and language with. They see the

broader identities as a positive and accepting ideal; they've taken what has been

passed down to them from their parents to find new ways of connecting with others.

This could be interpreted a number of different ways. The first is that broad Latin

American Canadian panethnic identities contribute to cultural erasure, rather than

preservation and defense against the mainstream society. Another interpretation is

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[77] Mata, "Latin American Immigration to Canada: Some Reflections on the Immigration Statistics."

that the blame of erasure should not fall on the panethnic identities. Instead the

erasure has occurred because singular national communities are too low in numbers to

offer a strong defense.[78] In this interpretation panethnic identities offer a small space

for celebration of otherness and remembrance of the cultures that influenced their

upbringing.

The Importance of a Physical Space

Community, and the subsequent sense of belonging or not belonging, was

either a source of pain or pride amongst all of my interviews. They either took refuge

within their Latin American Canadian communities or were in search of one to call

home. The majority of my interview subjects felt they were lacking a strong Latin

American Canadian community while in the same breath expressed their desire to be a

part of one. The lack of an ethnic neighbourhood in Toronto in the way that

Greektown or Little Italy exist was often cited as a reason for this. A small population

of Latin American Canadians was another explanation mentioned often throughout my

interviews, reflecting my previous research.[79] It is worth noting that while the second

generation is lacking community, they mentioned that the first generation seems to

have strong communities which offer them a space to transition into Toronto. Few

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[78] Mata.

[79] Mata.

offered reasons as to why this hasn't translated into or been passed onto the second

generation; but many of them mentioned moving around in childhood, suggesting

that their first-generation parents lost touch with their initial Latin American Canadian

contacts over time as they were more focused on establishing themselves in Toronto.

There is one clear exception to this trend, and that is with Xavier. He grew up

deeply embedded in his Latin American Canadian community and was raised in the

Chilean co-op, a Toronto housing co-operative created by Chilean immigrants who

came to Canada during the Coup Wave. While it still carries the name of 'Chilean,' it

has expanded its welcome to all Latin Americans. While my other subjects spoke

about longing for community and feeling as though they belong, he felt a strong sense

of belonging to his community and found comfort in that. The housing co-op is a

series of townhouses lined up on parallel streets, with the backyards opening on a

shared space for community events. Multiple generations exist within this co-op, so

the second and third generations are raised surrounded by their culture and

experience it through multiple first-generation sources. This supports the other

interview subjects' theories of the lack of a strong cultural neighbourhood as a factor

in their lack of Latin American Canadian communities and belonging. They do not

have the same level of access to culture and witnessing multiple ways of being Latin

American Canadian firsthand. The proximity to, and therefore role within, a physical

location and community gave him a strong sense of belonging within his community

and a clearer understanding of his Latin American Canadian identities. Finally, it is

worth reiterating that the Chilean co-op has adopted a panethnic policy within its

mandate. The identities of 'immigrant' and 'Latin American' have become equal to, if

not taken precedence over the national identities within Toronto. Once again, regional

identities are lessening as we move further in time and space away from the country of

origin in favour of broader comradery. In this case it has been done in order for both

their community and co-op to continue to flourish.

Spanish as the Identity

Language was an important issue for all of my interview subjects and

represented Latin American culture itself to a number of them. It was often sighted as

the source of a feeling of affinity and comradery amongst members of the population

based on my interviews. That being said, there is a clear distinction in how people

relate to the language by those who speak it and those who do not. All of the Spanish-

speakers (I did not have the opportunity to interview Portuguese-speakers)

consistently cite the language as the most important part of their culture and believe

that without it they would not be able to properly identify with their parents' culture or

claim the Latin American Canadian identities; without the language of their parents

they could not truly be a part of that identity or culture. There were different reasons

for this; many said that the language is necessary to properly understand worldview, to

frame lived experience, and to access the cultures themselves. The ability to at least understand the language is necessary in order to understand idioms and jokes. Without the language, these interview subjects see the culture as lost entirely. These interview subjects all referred to a need to distinguish themselves from the general population. To them, language is an identifier of difference which gives them a 'ticket' to Latin American Canadian identities.

This aligns with identification coming from being 'other' from the dominant group who do not speak the language rather than being based on innate similarities; not one of my interview subjects mentioned similarity to other Spanish speakers, rather that it gives them access to a culture which is other than Canadian. The fact that Hall defines as identification coming from discourse[80] must be reiterated as these interview subjects primarily see it as distinguishing them from the general population; it identifies them as other and seems to be a stand-in for their parents' culture itself. When asked about the individuals who do not speak Spanish but identify as Latin American Canadian,[81] the Spanish-speakers did not insist that they should not claim these identities, simply they are limited in their understanding of the culture from which it comes.

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[80] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity*.

[81] In contrast to the Spanish-speakers, the interview subjects who don't speak Spanish did not see the language as integral to the culture. They saw it similarly to the way they viewed music, family, and cultural events; it is one aspect to what they consider Latin American culture but it is not dominant in the way that Spanish-speakers view language. To them, it was the combination of all of these cultural pieces with other them. While all the non-Spanish speakers expressed a desire to learn Spanish, they felt no qualms about not speaking the language and claiming the Latin American Canadian identity.

One interview subject in particular, Josue (a non-Spanish speaker), took issue

with the emphasis that language receives. He believes that the preoccupation with

Spanish succumbs to the North American stereotypes of what being Latin American

Canadian means. He argues that the emphasis on Spanish in Canadian communities is

once again another instance of the narrow representation of what it is to be Latin

American Canadian, while fighting to protect the language of the colonizers rather

than the original inhabitants who deserve to have their unique tongues remembered.

This is further supported by Michael's discussion of indigenous cultures of the

Guerrero region of Mexico where his father is from; in this region over 200 languages

are spoken, let alone throughout the rest of Mexico and Latin America as a whole.

While this does not directly tie in with language as a way of othering oneself, this is a

profound opinion in regards to the language and needs to be included when

discussing the role of language within these identities.

This view suggests that language is perhaps more necessary for nationality

based identities (Colombian, Venezuelan, etc…) compared to Latin American

Canadian. After all, if someone is not assumed to be Latin American Canadian based

on their appearance but speaks Spanish, why are they 'more' Latin American Canadian

than someone who does not understand the language but who is visually racialized as

such, and therefore encounters stereotypes associated with the identities daily? In

truth there are many different ways of claiming Latin American Canadian identities,

with an equal amount of different experiences to it. Language, location, community, and visual representation are simply a few of the factors which influence the relationship to these identities. Each Latin American Canadian navigates their own cultural and ethnic borderlands in which they mediate between panethnic identities, national heritage, and their own nationalities.

The Prevalence of Imposter Syndrome

Imposter syndrome, and the varying terms it was called, was present in five of the nine interviews conducted. While they identified by nationalities and panethnic terms, there was an underlying sense of imposter syndrome. Interestingly enough, only Spanish-speakers spoke about this notion; none of the non-Spanish speakers discussed these emotions if they experienced them at all. This imposter syndrome was rooted in different places for different interview subjects, but the underlying sentiment was the same; that they were lacking the elusive element of authenticity in some capacity.

Monica

Monica is of Colombian heritage, spent extensive time there as a child, and speaks Spanish but acknowledges it was not until later in life that she began to identify as 'Latina' and 'Colombian.' This dictates how she currently relates to these identities. In her interview she discusses how she speaks a 'child's Spanish' and the anxiety this

creates when communicating with individuals she perceives to be 'more' Latin than herself. She describes the excitement she feels when meeting Latin American and Latin American Canadian people because she wants them to teach her 'how to be a Latina' since she does not feel she is enough of one already.

Jorge

Of all my interviews, Jorge expressed perhaps the least feeling of connection to his Latin American Canadian identities. Jorge's parents are from El Salvador, he speaks basic Spanish, and frequently comes into contact with first generation Latin Americans through his work as a union organizer. He believes that any affinity which is felt amongst this community is rooted more in class than in cultural heritage. This has made him question his 'Latinoness' and so he now separates himself from Latin American Canadian identities more than he did in the past. While he still holds on to some remnants of this identity, he does not feel truly 'Latin American Canadian.'

Laura

 The feeling of not being 'Colombian enough' for Laura was rooted in comparisons to her cousins who remain in Colombia. While she still strongly identifies as such, she does not have a strong Latin American community in Toronto and she discusses how

she feels too Canadian when speaking with her cousins, noticing a discrepancy in

proficiency of Spanish.

Xavier

Despite growing up surrounded by a Chilean, and by extension Latin American

Canadian, community where Spanish was constantly spoken, Xavier discussed feelings

of imposter syndrome based on his appearance. He has blue eyes, light brown hair,

and a fairer complexion than many of the Chilean friends he grew up around resulting

in feelings of a lesser 'Latin American Canadian experience.' While accepted by the

community as a 'Latino' because of his fluency in Spanish and familial and friendship

ties, there is always an underlying sense that he will never be 'as Latino' as those who

present more stereotypically so. He does not necessarily believe this to be a bad

thing, stating that had he looked more stereotypically Latin American (dark hair, olive

complexion, etc…) he would might have fallen into problematic stereotypes that other

members of his community did; in his opinion they began to mimic the American

television representations of 'Latinos' as they grew up.

Josue

While Josue did not discuss any feelings he currently has in regards to imposter

syndrome, he openly introduced the topic in order to reject it; 'as Latin people we

don't need any more reasons to feel like imposters or like we aren't good enough!' He

talked about how they were issues for him in the past but no longer feels that they are

useful to him since he is racialized as a Latin American man and in his lived experience;

He walks through life dealing with associations and stereotypes and therefore does

not need to justify his Latin American Canadian identities to anyone.

Analyzed through my lens, it is difficult to conclude why imposter syndrome

seems to be so prevalent amongst the sample, especially since it is rooted in many

different places. Concerns of authenticity lie at the heart of each case. Comparisons to

those perceived to having more 'authentic' experiences seem to be a cause while

external validation also seems to be often sought out. This is interesting when taken

into consideration that many of the interview subjects consider themselves to be

lacking a cultural community. Perhaps a community would lend external validation and

support in this regard while giving them a space to enact these identities in a way they

believe to be more 'authentic.'

What's in a Name?

Eight of my nine interview subjects made no distinctions between national and

panethnic identities and view both as being comprised of the same qualities. All of

them identify by both, with national identities taking priority but switching between

the two interchangeably, enacting their borderlands and resisting and constant

identities. Perhaps unsurprisingly given this view, when asked what distinguishes their

national heritage from being Latin American Canadian or from one Latin American

nationality to another, only one had an answer.[82] Nevertheless this re-emphasizes that

the national heritage is a necessity for the panethnic identities and therefore must be

maintained regardless of how panethnic the identities and communities become.

Tension instead arose around which panethnic terms to use rather than whether

it was a positive or hurtful concept in general; Nadia discussed how she understands

intellectually that she is 'Latina' but feels she lacks the racialized aspects she perceives

within the identity to claim it for herself. Instead she claims 'Hispanic.' In his interview

Josue discussed issues he took with panethnic terms other than Latin like 'Hispanic'

and 'Spanish.' He believes that these reference the colonizers and hinges Latin

American identities on European powers. He claims 'that is the worst thing that we can

call ourselves.' To him, any variation of the word 'Latin' is the proper term because it

denotes colonized populations separate of colonial powers. He did not comment on

how the word 'Latin' itself also calls upon European colonialism. Ultimately, each term

of identification references a history of colonization and oppression, all that changes is

who is being referred to with the word.

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[82] She offered a difference in mentalities which come from unique histories within each nation. She cited Costa Rica's 'Pura Vida' lifestyle as an example which differentiates it from surrounding countries with more violent recent histories which have resulted in harsher mentalities.

Reflections & Conclusions from Interviews

Through my interview process I found that little of the distinctiveness of each individual Latin American national identity has survived by the second generation within my sample. It has been replaced with a sense of an imagined nationality[83] amongst broader Latin American Canadian identities and as a stand-in for the individual cultures of their parents and the aligning identities. These distinct cultures have entwined to perhaps create something else entirely. While it references the countries of origin, it has been undeniably shaped by circumstances unique to Toronto. As a result, Latin American Canadians each possess a 'shifting and multiple identity' which allows them to switch between their Canadian identity, panethnic label or a national heritage according to context and situation.[84] In the same vein, they experience different identities as being more present in different contexts, as their borderlands continually defy a static existence.[85]

In regards to what binds Latin American Canadian identities, otherness is constantly invoked through the differences between what the interview subjects perceive to be the cultures of their parents and Canadian culture: 'the music is different,' 'it's a different lifestyle,' 'different food,' 'a different language.' In this sense

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[83] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso Books, 1983).
[84] Anzaldua, *Borderlands, La Frontera: The New Mestiza*.
[85] Anzaldua, *Borderlands, La Frontera: The New Mestiza*.

their Latin American Canadian identities are very much shaped by the discourse[86] they have experienced within the Toronto context they live in; they see little otherness from each other in terms of national background, because they have little reference for how one differs from another in a city with a small, diverse population with no large constant flows from a singular region within Latin America.[87] They only see what differs them from the dominant Canadian culture. Language in particular is among the greatest signifiers of otherness from the dominating Canadian culture, often serving as a substitute for the cultures themselves. There is no ambiguity around it; they either understand or speak it, or they do not. Unfortunately, this perspective on language is limiting and ignores different ways of being Latin American Canadian and the Borderlands of others.[88] This limited understanding Latin American Canadian identities is a fault of panethnicities which create the illusion of a homogenous experience and group. I speculate that this contributes to feelings of imposter syndrome amongst my interview sample; if they do not fit into what they perceive to be that experience they feel as though they do not fully belong. This is emphasized further when they do not have a strong community to turn seemingly validate these experiences.

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[86] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity*.
[87] Patrica Landlot, Judith K. Bernhard, and Luin Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto," *American Behavioral Scientist* 55, no. 9 (August 2011): 1235– 1266.
[88] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity*.

The conclusions drawn from the complex, interconnected Latin American

Canadian experiences and identities have lent a clearer understanding of how to

represent them in meaningful ways. As this thesis moves forward with the multimedia

storytelling interface, different ways of experience and identities drawn from

multiplicities intertwining to create something new are objectives for this project. No

two participants' experiences should be the same, because no two Latin American

Canadians experience their identities in the same way, just as both individual and the

broader identities are comprised of many different pieces combining to make a whole.

MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING INTERFACE

I have chosen a multimedia storytelling interface as a medium to host the

outcomes of my exploration of these identities because the medium itself parallels the

subject matter and analytic lens employed throughout the process. I draw a parallel

between digital spaces and identities because both entities derive their meaning from

their relations to others. In the case of digital narratives they create meaning through

text, image, sound, and movement. It is the interplay of these modes used which construct the message and meaning,[89] an idea discusses in *Works Review's* examination of projects like *Welcome to Pine Point* and *One Millionth Tower.* This interplay reflects the lens through which I treat Latin American Canadian identification where identities are a matter of relations of spaces and events;[90] what the identities 'are' and what determines their meaning are their surrounding and histories. Similarly, web narratives are fluid, layered, and changeable[91] because their digital nature implies variability;[92] echoing sentiments of borderland identities which are built from a range of components and are ever-shifting and fluid throughout different situations.[93]

In regards my reviewed works and how they informed *Who We Are/Quienes Somos*, *Welcome to Pine Point* and *One Millionth Tower* both influenced the way in which the multimedia is placed together. Images, video, audio, and text are used to support and inform each other to help the viewer better understand the content. The placement of the media is intentional to affect the ways in which it is perceived. This is done to help viewers draw conclusions while still leaving room for interpretation. This was a technique which came from *One Millionth Tower* and their use of educational

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[89] R Lyle Skains, "The Materiality of the Intangible: Literary Metaphor in Multimodal Texts," *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies* 25, no. 1 (2019): 133–47.

[90] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity*.

[91] Sandra Gaudenzi, "THE INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY AS A LIVING DOCUMENTARY," *Digital Magazine of Cinema Documentário*, 2013, 9–31.

[92] Gaudenzi.

[93] Skains, "The Materiality of the Intangible: Literary Metaphor in Multimodal Texts."

articles of broad concepts and histories placed next to stories of the lived realities of these histories. This placement conceptualized the stories while making the histories tangible. The use of the migration map, which will be discussed further in the following sections, also lies in this vein of thought; it visually connects these local stories to the countries and histories from which they came.

While a dense virtual space had been envisioned for the interface, similar to that of *Welcome* to *Pine Point, Who We Are/ Quienes Somos,* is ultimately sparser. In terms of empty space it is more comparable to *One Millionth Tower,* although the virtual landscapes in which they exist vastly differ. Ultimately, a sparser approach is more intuitive when these works are taken into account. After all, *Who We Are/Quienes Somos* is not attempting to reconstruct a world from memories in the way that *Welcome to Pine Point* is, rather it is more interested in exploring the internal worlds of the interview subjects through testimonies. These spaces are vague and empty space leave room for reflection.

The World in Ten Blocks allowed me to opt for simple interactions and pathways through the webspace. Scrolling is the main navigational interaction through the interface. It requires the viewer to make the decision to continue on through the webspace. With this action they are able to uncover images and additional audio beyond the main video chapters. Similarly to *Universe Within,* not all content must be seen in order to draw meaningful conclusions because each chapter is independent of

each other. While lacking a guide, and more linear than the web documentary which

influenced these decisions, the viewer has option to come and go from *Who We*

Are/Quienes Somos interface as they please. They are able to see a small part of it

and still draw meaningful conclusions while also having the ability alter the paths they

take through the interface if they wish.

It is important from a conceptual standpoint that it facilitates variations within

the user experience. It has been emphasized throughout the interview process and

core concept of borderland identities that there are many different ways of being Latin

American Canadian with each individual possessing their own unique ways of relating

to their identities. As a result it would be counter-intuitive to the interview findings to

impose a path upon the user without opportunity to create their own relationship to

the content. The viewer can access the content with altering paths and a changeable

order of the narration[94] which in turn allows them to forge differing ways of

experiencing the Latin American Canadian identities being discussed regardless of

their own heritages and backgrounds. They are able to engage with the content at

their own pace and with as much depth as they choose, but once again, the path they

choose is determined by themselves. The user will be offered a lens through which to

consider the content through the use of facts and quotes about borderlands, tensions

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[94] Stefano Odorico, "Between Interactivity, Reality and Participation : The Interactive Documentary Form," n.d.

surrounding panethnicities, identification, and the histories of Latin American

migration to Canada. These will be woven into the website between videos and other

media resulting from the interview process.

Structure from Methods

The structure of the *Who We Are/Quienes Somos* is determined by the

interviews conducted as a part of my research and the methodologies I employed

through the process. In the spirit of new ethnography and testimonio, I attempt to

represent the perspectives and opinions put forth by my interview subjects and do not

seek to fit them into a pre-constructed narrative. Instead, the intentionality of the

narrators and their messages are more important than my position as the recorder,[95]

and therefore the narrative would follow accordingly. The video format allows for this

as opinions are heard 'in the words' of those who spoke them without my

interpretation of them into another medium. It is the interviews which drive the shape

the narrative. Challenges quickly arose through honouring testimonio as a method

because testimonies by nature are stories without a proper beginning and end.[96]

Unlike linear narratives which follow a logical path from one point in time to the next,

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[95] John Beverley, "The Margin At The Center: On Testimonio," *Modern Fiction Studies*, 1989.
[96] Rebecca Adami and Marie Hallander, "Testimony and Narrative as a Political Relation: The Question of Ethical Judgment in Education," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 49, no. 1 (n.d.): 2015.

testimonies and interviews are fragmented and subjective, leaping between different

times and points.[97] This created the need to identify themes within the interviews in

the first place; there was never a possibility that they would follow identical structures

and formats. In turn this creates a non-linear structure for the multimedia storytelling

interface. The themes, while all important components for understanding the Latin

American Canadian identities, leave gaps within the experience of the identities. Like

the interviews from which they came, the narrative is fragmented and leaves ample

room for other experiences to fill in the cracks.

These patterns of fragments became the themes for five chapters in which the

video interviews have been edited together: 'Importance of a Place,' 'Imposter

Syndrome,' 'Language as the Culture,' 'What's in a Name?' 'Cultures Entwining.'

Contrasting and supporting opinions are juxtaposed and supported through edited

portions of the video interviews to reflect the polyvocality throughout the process. No

one voice is highlighted or given priority at any point in the piece, instead the

polyphony of voices lend strength to the 'testimonies.'[98] Together they create a

picture of the lived experiences of Latin American Canadians in Toronto. Originally I

had planned to maximize the polyvocal nature of the project by including different

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[97] Adami and Hallander.
[98] Beverley, "The Margin At The Center: On Testimonio."

languages but time constraints limited me in this regard. It is something I'd like to

work with in future iterations of the project though.

The method of self-reflexivity has made it necessary for me to acknowledge my

relationship within this project,[99] and while I've written about this in an appendix, I also

want it to be present in the multimedia component itself. Rather than placing my own

thoughts and opinions into the chapters, I've chosen a less direct method. Instead, the

decorative images and backgrounds which are seen throughout the piece are personal

photographs taken on my trips to Latin American countries, around Toronto, and

during interactions with my interview subjects. This references that despite my efforts

to be impartial, everything within the multimedia storytelling interface is filtered

through my 'lens' which has been present throughout the process. Many of these

photos were taken on disposable cameras without any intention to be used in this

capacity. As a result they are imperfect, often unaligned, and sometimes unclear or

out of focus.

Intended Purpose

The purpose of the multimedia component of this thesis is to create a space to

present the complexities of Latin American Canadian identities in a way which reflect

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[99] Paula Saukko, *Doing Research in Cultural Studies: An Introduction to Classical and New Methodological Approaches* (London: Sage Publications, 2003).

their nuance while facilitating discussion of the identities which acknowledge their existence beyond a homogenous group. The thesis began with these identities and it was able to continue throughout the entire process thanks to them as well. In turn, the results of the interviews provided the finalization of the medium and a structure to follow through the creation of the multimedia component. Due to this beginnings and the process throughout the project, this multimedia component is first and foremost intended to serve as reflection space for those navigating Latin American Canadian identities, while also ideally offer a virtual community in place of a physical one many of the interview subjects lack. This is discussed further in *Next Steps & Future Directions.*

Final Results

I constructed a multimedia storytelling interface without a linear narrative, which provides a singular and dictated path for a participant, in order to better facilitate different ways of experiencing the content. It is as much an exploration for the viewer between disparate aspects of the subject matter as it was during the investigation throughout the research and interview process. The viewer enters the multimedia component at a 'welcome' page which offers them a brief explanation into the project and from there they continue on to the homepage. Upon entering the homepage the viewer is presented pages with the key themes identified in *Interview* and are able to construct their own experience through the path they choose. Through the same

method of testimonio where the narrative is not dictated by myself, neither are the

conclusions which will be drawn on the part of the viewer. They will be presented with

the videos edited together from the interviews, the broader histories which led to

them, and supporting media which they are left to interpret themselves in the way that

many of these identities have been in the past and currently are.
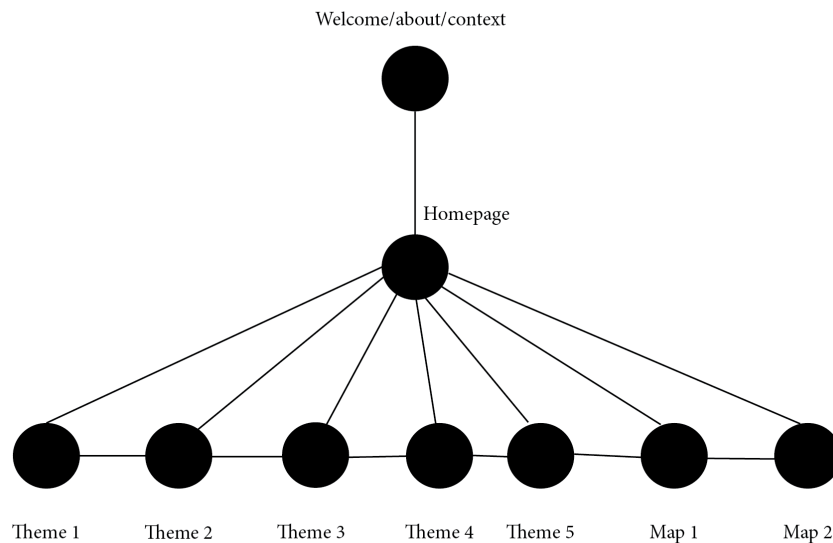

Fig. 1. Viewing Structure, Photo by Emma Brito

As previously discussed, my lens is ever present in the space in a practice of

self-reflexivity where I acknowledge my biases within the research. I attempt to keep

them on the periphery in order to ensure that the words of my interview subjects

remain their own and I maintain my position as an editor rather than the author of

narratives created. Instead, photographs I've taken in Latin American countries and

around Toronto as the 'wallpaper' to both acknowledge my lens and bias while also visually tying these locations together as they are in the term Latin American Canadian.
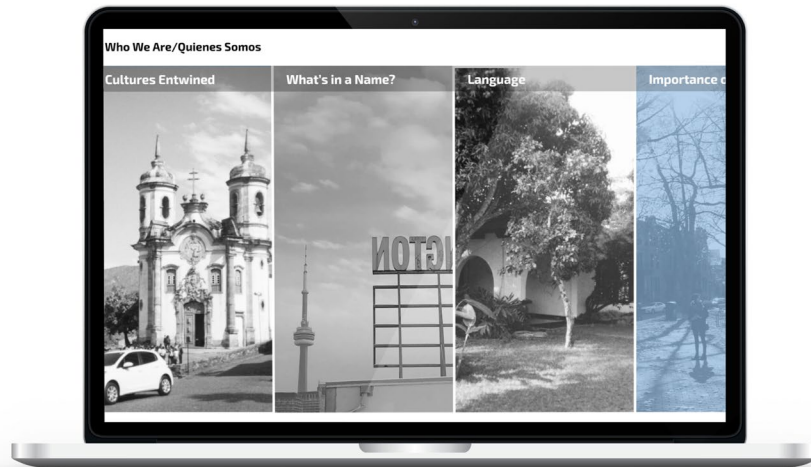

Fig. 2. Homepage, Photo by Emma Brito

Each page leads to a video where the voices of the interview subjects are edited together in conversation to form a picture surrounding that aspect of Latin American Canadian identities in Toronto. Upon clicking on a theme they are taken to a page where a video auto plays and depicts ambiguities and complexities surrounding that particular subject. This is a key component of the piece which follows the method of testimonio; the opinions being shared are truly 'in the words of' the interview subjects. Their opinions are at the forefront of the experience. The viewer can then continue and 'dig deeper' into the material as parallax scrolling uncovers additional

images and media, allowing them to make further connections. The concepts of

panethnicities, identification, borderlands, and their complexities used to analyze the

interviews are included within these multimedia sections. This is done through the use

of quotes and definitions in order to allow users to probe the content further and

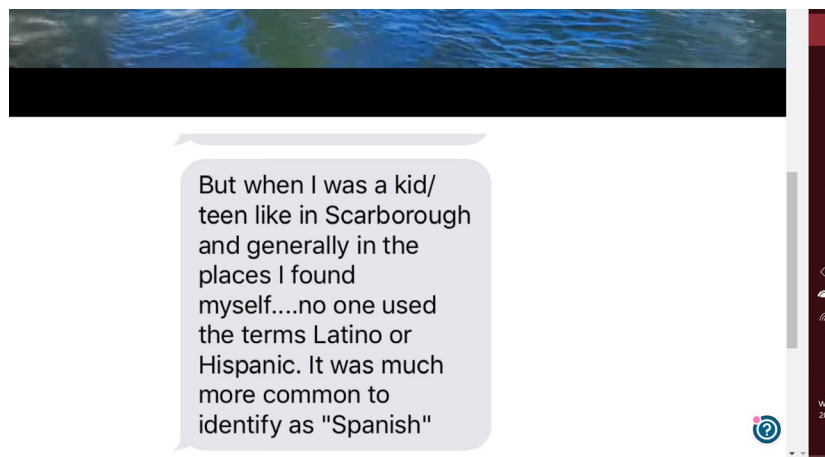consider how these concepts apply to what they are experiencing.
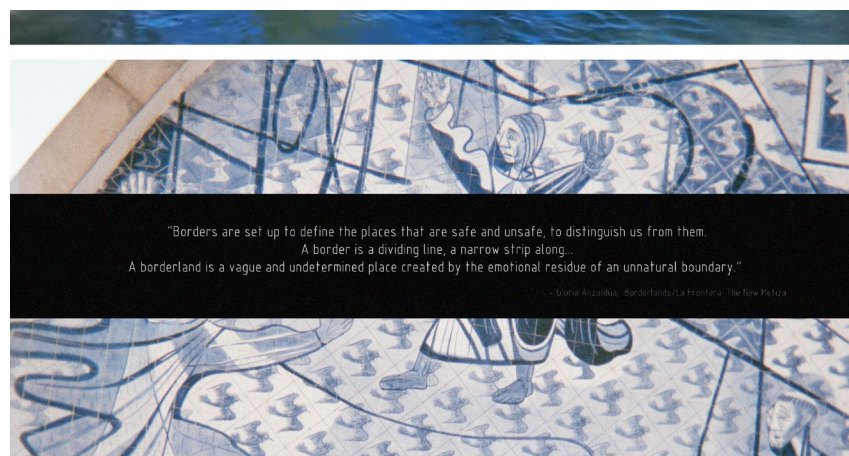

Fig. 3. Multimedia, Photo by Emma Brito

Fig. 4. Multimedia 2, Photo by Emma Brito

The importance of context and an understanding of discourse in both new

ethnography[100] and identification[101] is addressed through the use of maps on their own

pages. On these pages viewers are able to learn more about the history of Latin

American identities in Canada and how the landscape in which Latin American

Canadian identities exist, formed. How these manifested within Toronto in terms of

the population demographics will be available on the *Toronto* page. These maps are

created with *Mapbox* and included through plugins.

Fig. 5. Maps, Photo by Emma Brito

Who We Are/Quienes Somos successfully utilized new ethnography's methods to

create a multimedia storytelling interface which is conceptually aligned with the analytic lens

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[100] Saukko.

[101] Hall and du Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity*.

of the research. It draws on independent media to create a new web space, each piece of media deepening the meaning of the space through their relation to one another. The interface provides historical context, a lens through which to view the content, many experiences while still leaving room for others, and different ways of experiencing the multimedia storytelling interface for the user. Most importantly though, Latin American Canadian identities are given a space in which the are able to be explored as nuanced, aligned and differing, intersectional, and even contrary to one another at times.

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis began with the objective to understand how distinct, national Latin American identities and cultures shift into broad Latin American Canadian identities within Toronto. I sought out to examine what the defining characteristics are of these Latin American Canadian identities in Toronto and what they are comprised of. The interview process ultimately did not identify any key characteristics, rather it highlighted discourses and histories which formed the landscape in which these identities exist and how they have manifested as a result. This thesis uncovered Latin American Canadian identities rooted in otherness which are invoked through difference from what is perceived to be mainstream Canadian society. They create new identities and cultures, increasingly independent of the national heritages from

which they were born. Despite the entwining of many cultures into a broader way of identification, an overwhelming majority of the interview subjects were lacking a Latin American Canadian cultural and ethnic community beyond the first generation, as well as a pattern of imposter syndrome which accompanies this lack.

I then applied concepts within the analytic lens and cultural studies methods used throughout the interview process to create a space which reflects these perspectives. It allows us to explore them in ways which acknowledge that there are many different ways of being Latin American Canadian. The new ethnography principles of testimonio, polyvocality, and self-reflexivity are adhered to through the narrative structure of the multimedia, while alluding to concepts of identification creation and transnational borderlands through medium, content, and user experience. Testimonio was the driving force behind the narrative and while the method proved challenging while attempting to prepare for the assembly of the multimedia, it was crucial in the ultimate formation of the structure. Testimonio, along with polyvocality and core research concepts provide answers for how to proceed through the creation of the multimedia component. The results are of a multimedia storytelling interface which both houses and reflects the range and multifaceted experiences of the Latin American Canadian interview subjects from whose testimonies it was built upon.

Next Steps & New Directions

Potential next steps for the multimedia component would be a provided space where Latin American Canadians offer feedback and connect through the web space; while not a physical space, this would better serve the intended audience by seeking to help them find the community which many interview subjects are lacking.

In future iterations I would like to increase interactivity and a further delineated structure. This would provide a wider range of different experiences on the part of the viewer to once again to better reflect the multiplicity of ways of being Latin American Canadian. Research sources would be further diversified as well to expand references to include more sources directly from Latin American writers and ones originally written in Spanish and Portuguese. Time and language constraints limited searches for texts other than English ones in this thesis. I would also apply this practice to the multimedia narrative itself and make it a more multilingual experience. Finally, as I've touched on throughout the document, I'd like to further diversify my sample group to include a wider range of intersections to better represent the different experiences of Latin American Canadians, especially with Indigenous perspectives, and where they align and differ.

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APPENDIX A

The Latin American Canadian identity is one which I have struggled with throughout most of my life. As a child I took a lot of pride in my father's Mexican origins and loved that it was a part of my own heritage. We visited his family in Acapulco a few times throughout my childhood but my father expressed a desire for my siblings and I to prioritize Canadian culture. The divide between my 'Canadianness' and Mexican culture became very apparent as I grew older and kept in contact with cousins who grew up in Mexico. The fact that none of us speak fluent Spanish makes this divide even more distinct.

I was always excited to meet people who were Latin American and Latin American Canadian throughout my teenage years though. It was important to me that they were aware of my heritage, feeling that same underlying sense of comradery that my interview subjects describe. In many ways I think my interview subject Monica perfectly summed up the feeling I had at that point in my life; that I wanted them to 'teach me how to be Latina.' What this feeling came from is hard to say. It was probably a combination of a number of things including a desire to learn more about my personal history, to find a community or my 'tribe,' and learning more of my father

whose past was always something of a mystery to me despite him always being very present and available throughout my life.

As I learned more about Mexican history and cultures I realized how little I knew about the country. I also was never visually profiled as being of Latin American heritage; instead often being asked if I was of Mediterranean origins. These things combined with not speaking Spanish led me to let go of the identity; In my opinion I had no right to the identity since I didn't speak the language, am not racialized as such (and therefore don't experience negative stereotypes associated with it), and know little of the culture.

It was interesting to hear other opinions on the matter though when it came up. Latin American Canadians often agreed with my conclusion or empathized with it in some way while those outside of the identity didn't understand my mentality. To them the lineage alone was enough to call myself Latin American Canadian. From here I became curious about what exactly the identity is, what constitutes it, and who dictates it. While I went through the project with this mentality I never held my interview subjects to my own conclusions. If they asked how I identify I shared my reasons for it, but always emphasized that identity is a personal thing and no one can make a decision on someone else's behalf. The two who are friends of mine also confessed that they don't see me a 'Latina' but have placed that on me. They both

said that they think if I claim the identity their opinion would change as well. Two more

interview subjects who I was put in contact with said that they believe I've succumbed

to imposter syndrome.

APPENDIX B

Process Journal

       Originally I had extensive plans for an interactive web documentary, with visualizations of the population within Toronto, interactive maps, and video. This, unsurprisingly, was scaled down over the course of my research. I have since taken out 'interactive' as an explanatory term for the project because of limitations within the platform I've encountered. Since my method of testimonio dictated that the interview subjects lead the interviews and it is my job to transmit them as accurately as possible, the interviews received would also dictate the structure which the project would ultimately take. Until beginning the interview process, much of my work was done in anticipation of what I believed would be the case.

       Initially I was planning on building my research on ArGIS Story Maps, a platform that has built-in integrated maps. It hosts video and can have images and other media uploaded. I began experimenting with the platform but was limited in the extent to which I could begin to build my project as I waited for my REB approval since the interviews I received would determine much of the structure and content. I began by creating maps which would display the migration waves and how they could be viewed.
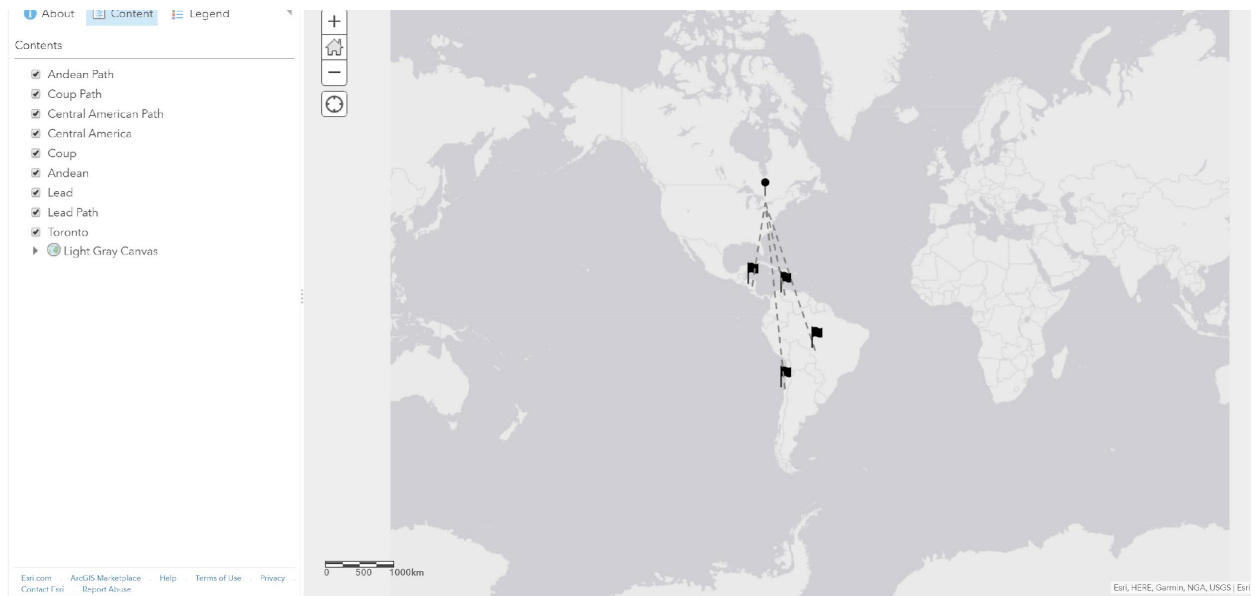
Fig. 6. Original Map, Photo by Emma Brito

Each point could be selected to view additional information about when the waves

occurred and the events in each country that led to the migration. I then planned on following

with a map of Toronto to situate the viewer further in Toronto. I had anticipated drawing

stronger connections to the migration waves and how this familial histories of migration would

impact the identities of each individual. I had planned to ties these waves to my interview

subjects and utilize this as an interface for the documentary. The waves were the focus at this
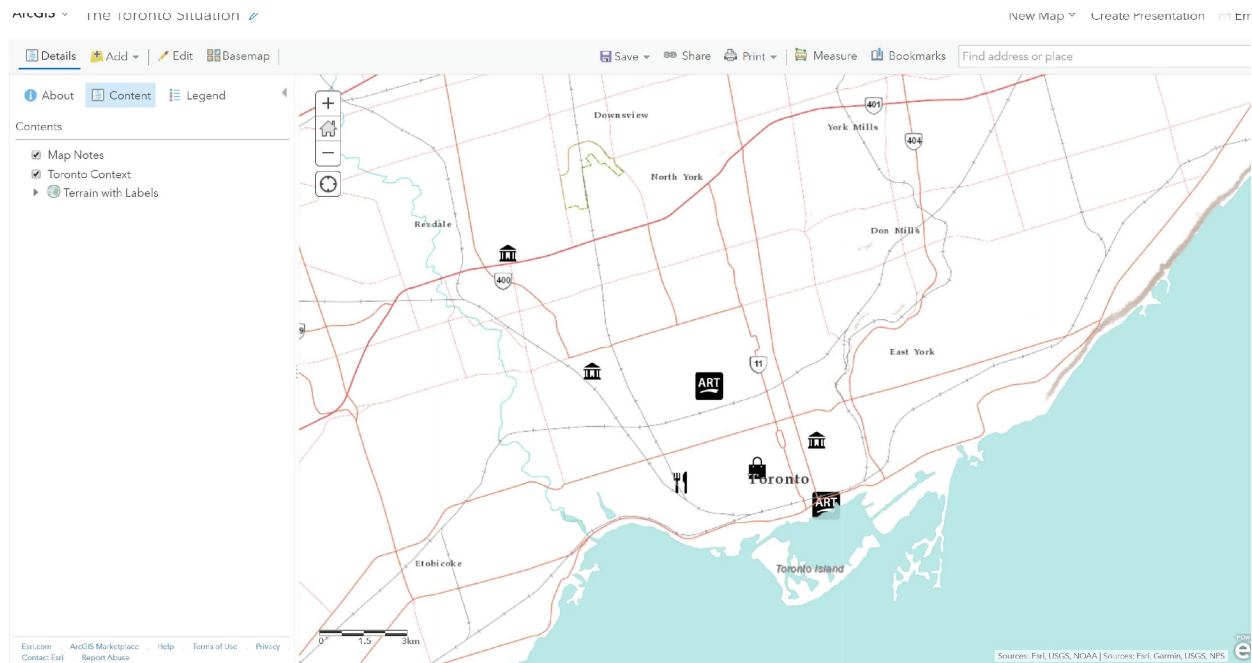
point in my process.

Fig. 7. Toronto Map, Photo by Emma Brito

I also planned on mapping out significant cultural locations and organizations which resulted from the waves to better understand how these identities and their communities have manifested within the city. It was suggested to me by my advisor to employ colour to highlight regions, particularly in regards to the migration waves to better visualize the waves. The points seen in Image ## only select a single point rather than all the nations in each wave. She suggested using colours of the flags of these countries for added depth. This is where I began to run into the limitations of the Story Map platform; I was not able to highlight countries, only select points and choose from a limited range of colour options. I attempted to build these

images on Illustrator, foregoing the interactivity of this map in the process.

The Coup Wave
1973 - '80s

Chile
Uruguay
Argentina

Fig. 8. Wave Maps, Photo by Emma Brito

I embraced the messiness of identities and attempted to have it reflected here.

Unfortunately the waves section became extremely bulky and demanded a larger portion of

the experience than I had intended. It had become the focus of the piece. Similarly, far more

reading, scrolling, and effort was demanded on the part of the viewer.

At this point all of my interviews were completed and the raw footage was sorted into

five themes I had identified throughout the process. It became clear that the identities was

going to be explored through these themes, rather than the waves. I had to restructure my

project accordingly. The structure was no longer tied to timelines in any capacity, which in turn

raised more issues with what Story Maps allowed; the reliance on scrolling for navigation made

the project feel disjointed, being far better suited for a more linear narrative. I was not

satisfied with the direction it was headed in so I chose to look for alternatives.

I decided to create a Wordpress website as a foundation so that I could have more

control over the navigation and experience of *Who We Are/Quienes Somos.* The homepage

allows viewers to better select their path because it does not take them along on the journey

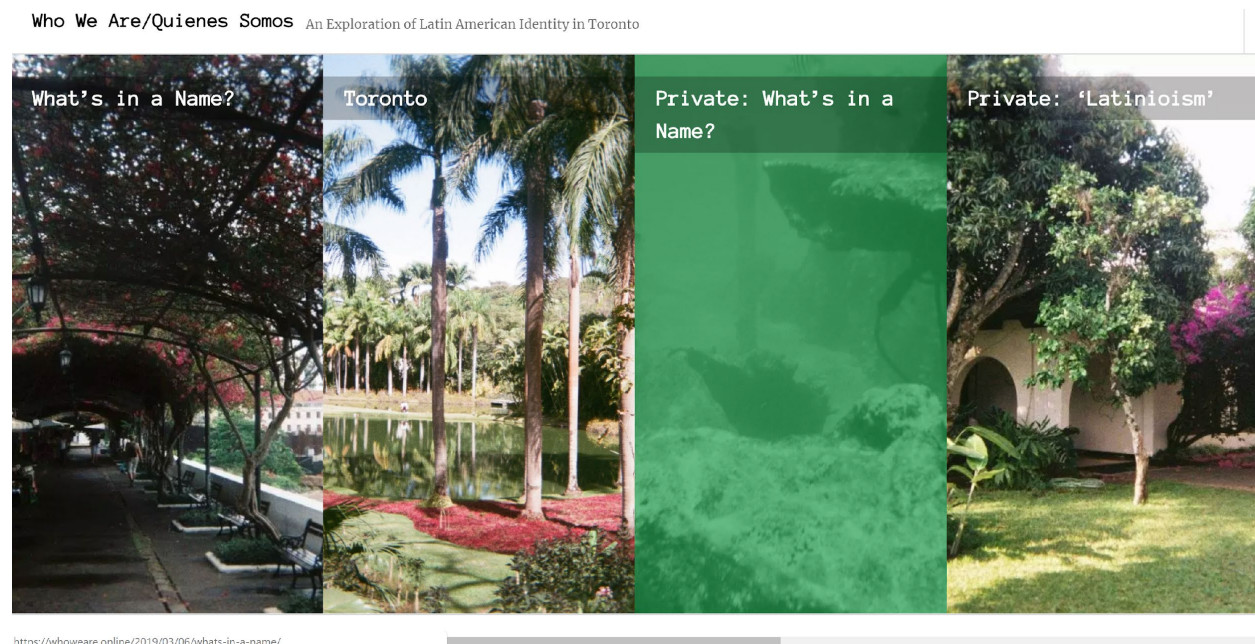in the way that the previous one had. They can select their page as they wish.

Fig. 9. Homepage, Photo by Emma Brito 10

I still used colours from the flag and they are present throughout the website. On each page I

embedded the video and upon scrolling down viewers can explore additional images and

Content from the interview process like images and other audio.

> But when I was a kid/
> teen like in Scarborough
> and generally in the
> places I found
> myself....no one used
> the terms Latino or
> Hispanic. It was much
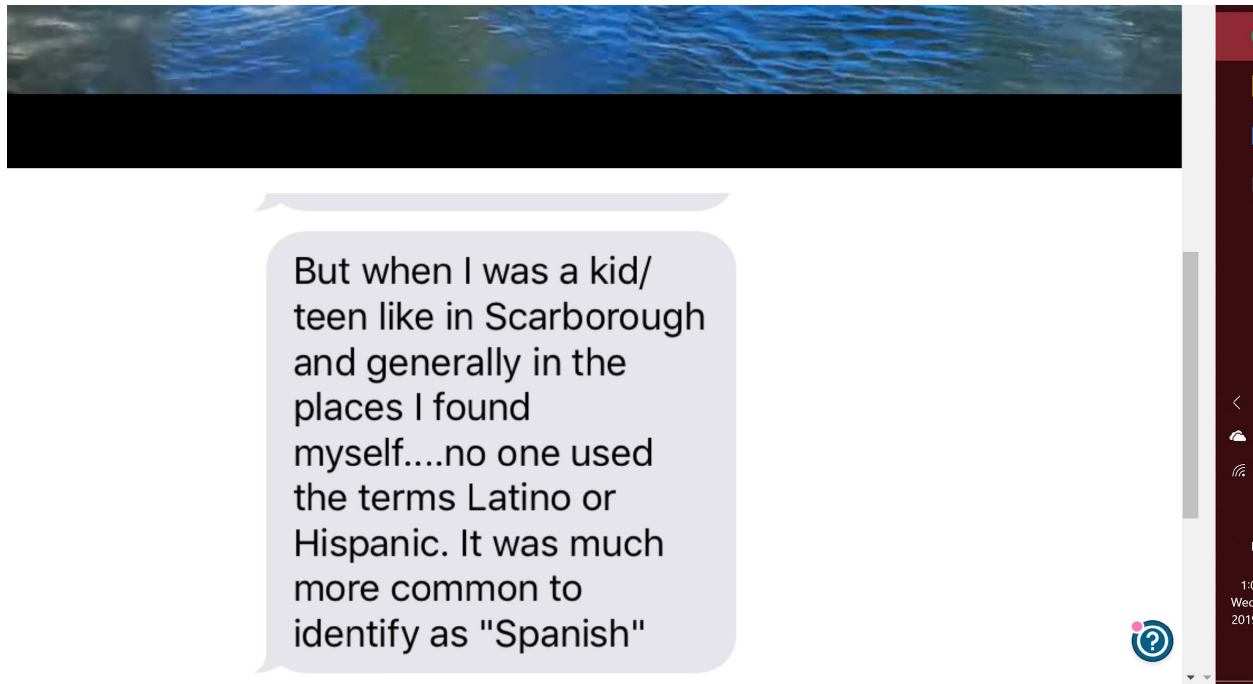> more common to
> identify as "Spanish"

Fig. 10. Multimedia, Photo by Emma Brito 10

I am still incorporating interactive maps, although in a less significant capacity than I had

originally planned. Through the use of APIs and plug in I will include a map of the waves and
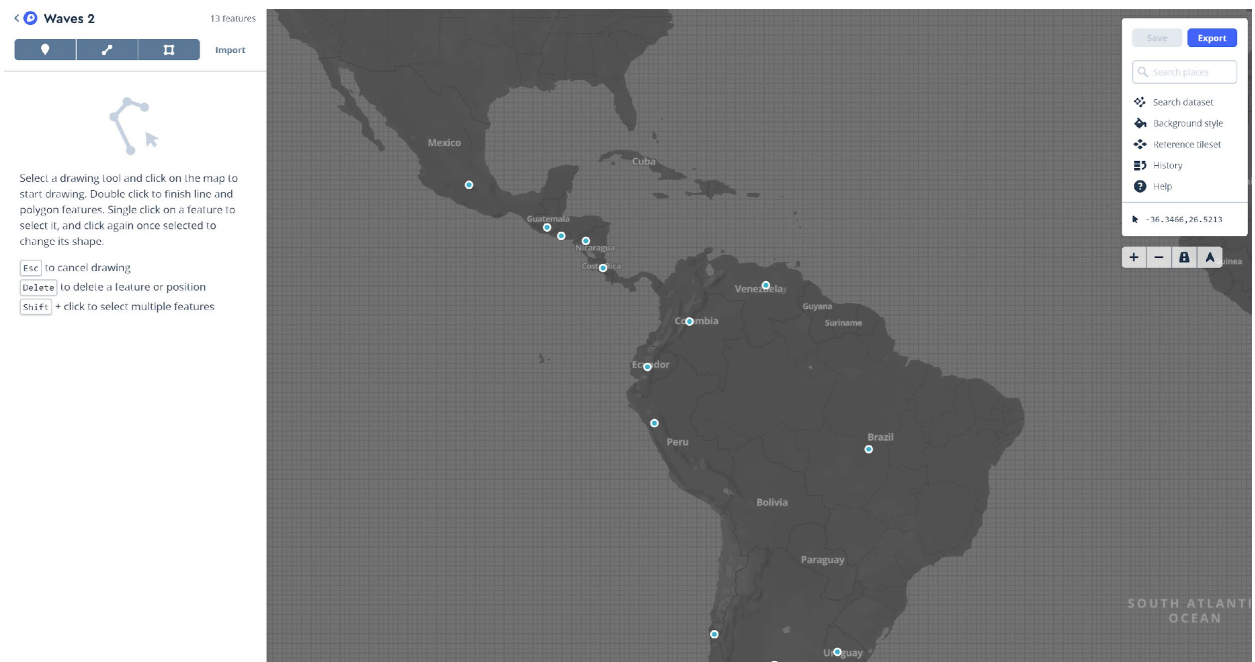
of Toronto with Mapbox to offer additional context.

Fig. 11. Maps, Photo by Emma Brito 10

APPENDIX C

Latin American Migration Waves

There have been five distinct migratory waves from Latin America to Canada from the 1970s to the 2000s which would ultimately forge the Latin American identity in Canada today.[102] These waves overlap with each other and are not absolute in their timeline, but can be distinguished since each has been short-lived and connected to specific events, many of which are economic and political.[103] Each one began in response to a crisis in the country (or countries) of origin and to international circumstances which favoured entry to Canada. The largest waves were from Chile in the 1970s and from El Salvador in the 1980s. Both began and continued due to flight from dictatorships. Some other still significant flows from Argentina, Guatemala, and Peru arose in periods of internal strife approaching civil wars.[104]

During this time Canada had become a more attractive option than it had been previously for two key reasons. The first lies in the changes in Canadian immigration and refugee policies mentioned previously; they made Canada easier to access and connected it more fully to this larger hemispheric system.[105] The second reason is during this time the United States was also known to be backing military governments like the Pinochet Regime in Chile,[106] which motivated refugees and people fleeing these regimes to seek out other destinations in

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[102] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto," 1243.

[103] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, Patrica Landlot, Judith K. Bernhard, and Luin Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto," 1243.

[104] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

[105] Simmons.

[106] Simmons.

places like Canada, Europe, and Australia. Upon arriving at these destination, word of them as

an alternative would flow back to the countries of origin and lead to the movement of relatives

and other immigrants and further the flow.[107]

The Lead Wave

During the 1950s and 1960s professionals and skilled workers came to Canada from

the more industrially advanced countries of the region like Argentina, Brazil, Mexico,

Venezuela, and Uruguay.[108] This was a result of the 1952 revisions in the Immigration Act, a

growing need for skilled professionals in Canada, and mounting tensions in the countries

which contributed to this migration. Argentinean and Brazilian immigrants made up the

largest portion of the Lead wave due to political turmoil within these nations.[109]

Brazil was experiencing escalating tensions in the 1950s with military circles joining

the elite and right-wing activists in opposition to Presidents Juscelino Kubitschek and João

Goulart due to a fear of their supposed support for Communist ideology. After Goulart

assumed power in 1961 those fearing the regime sought out opportunities to leave the

country.[110] The outward wave continued through the 1960s as a Military dictatorship took

power in 1964. The civil unrest motivated many leaving the country at this time with 3000

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[107] Simmons.

[108] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto."

[109] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

[110] Michael Wallerstein, "The Collapse of Democracy in Brazil: Its Economic Determinants," *The Latin American Studies Association* 15, no. 3 (1980): 3–40.

Brazilians immigrating to Canada in the two years following the 1964 coup.[111] Argentina on the other hand, was experiencing a low Peso value, growing population, and low economic growth coming out of the Peronist years. This led to Argentineans seeking opportunity elsewhere in the face of an uncertain national future at home.[112]

While immigration spilled over into the surrounding countries, those who came to Canada were mainly the elite because they had the necessary financial means to do so. This, combined with the fact Canada had not yet made revisions to the status of refugees, resulted in the elite and middle class being one of the defining features of the Lead wave.[113] The other defining feature, as previously mentioned, lies in immigrants' ethnic ties to Europe.[114] Overall, the lead wave was defined by educated, elite groups with strong European ties. The Latin American immigrants of this wave did not create community organizations and support within Toronto as some of the following waves would.[115]

The Andean Wave

The Andean Wave followed in the early and mid 1970s with Ecuadorian, Colombian, and Peruvian economic migrants.[116] This wave was a result of lowering of living standards in the Andean countries.[117] During this time in Andean countries skilled professionals and labourers

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[111] Mata, "Latin American Immigration to Canada: Some Reflections on the Immigration Statistics."
[112] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."
[113] Simmons.
[114] Mata, "Latin American Immigration to Canada: Some Reflections on the Immigration Statistics."
[115] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto."
[116] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto," 1234.
[117] Mata, "Latin American Immigration to Canada: Some Reflections on the Immigration Statistics," 29.

left their countries of origin in favour of better opportunities, and similarly to the Lead wave, in response to political turmoil.[118] This took the form of a military dictatorship in Ecuador[119] and rebel groups exercising guerilla warfare for control over the parts of the Colombian countryside.[120] This wave was equally tied to those from the countryside and those in large cities, distinguishing it from its predecessor which had mainly come from urban environments.[121] Large groups travelled to Europe, the United States, and Canada to find new work opportunities. In Canada they were readily absorbed by expanding industries and the need for labour.[122]

This wave overlapped with the 1973 Amnesty which allowed thousands of Ecuadorians and Colombians to regularize their status in Canada.[123] From 1973 to 1975 immigration Ecuador and Colombia accounted for 30% of the total Latin American countries inflow.[124] This wave was also the first one which benefited from the 1966 changes to the Immigration Act which introduced the points in Canada. This facilitated the movement of the Andean labourers and workers to Canada as they were looking for stability and opportunity while Canada was looking to fill the increased demand for labour and skilled professionals. European Latin Americans were no longer the singular group coming from the region.

The Coup Wave

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[118] Mata, 40.

[119] "The Oil Boom and The Military Dictatorship," n.d., http://www.quitoadventure.com/ecuador-info/history/ecuador/index.html.

[120] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

[121] Mata, 38.

[122] Mata, 37.

[123] Mata, 37.

[124] Mata, 28.

The third 'coup wave' began in 1973 which included immigrants and refugees from Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay and, to a lesser extent, Brazil.[125] This was perhaps the most overtly political Latin America wave Canada had experienced.[126] Leading up to the migration wave, countries in the region had been experiencing harsh treatment and repression from their military governments.[127] Uruguay and Argentina saw the military imprisoning students and the middle class who were demanding reforms in their governments but by far the largest number of migrants came from Chile.[128]

Chile began experiencing a similar situation underneath the Pinochet regime after the 1973 coup of the Salvador Allende government.[129] Prior to this Chilean immigration to Canada had been primarily immigrants who came due to Canada's need for labour. Once the coup occurred, this changed to university professors and students after the military raided universities and technical schools.[130] Leftist and socialist groups were persecuted as censorship and oppression ran rampant through their country, University Faculties of Arts and Sciences were closed to 'weed out' the Marxists, and professions seen as subversive by the military were banned or monitored.[131] Thousands of refugees fled to Europe, the United States, Canada and Australia, many of whom had previously been organizers and community leaders in Chile.[132]

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[125] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto," 1244.

[126] Mata, "Latin American Immigration to Canada: Some Reflections on the Immigration Statistics."

[127] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

[128] Simmons.

[129] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, 1234.

[130] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

[131] Simmons.

[132] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, 1243.

This fact would play an important role in how they formed communities and organizations in their host countries, including Canada.[133]

The Chilean exodus also was one of the first major cases which made use of Canada's addition of 'Refugee' to the immigration changes with nearly 7000 Chileans claiming the status in 1973.[134] It did not originally look like this would be the case though since the Canadian government at the time had been opposed to the Allende government prior to the coup following the United States' lead.[135] Due to this there was originally official sympathy for Chileans seeking asylum by the government. The view would only later change as word emerged of the brutality of the Pinochet dictatorship and as pressure mounted from Canadian domestic labour and human rights groups.[136] It is interesting to note that The United States saw higher numbers of Chilean fleeing the regime than any other country, but lack of receptivity and rumours of the United States government contributing to the downfall of the Allende government motivated Chileans to seek alternative destinations.[137] These factors placed Canada as an attractive option in a way it hadn't been before.

The Chilean asylum seekers and immigrants would be the first Latin American group in Canada to push their political beliefs in formal organization of the community.[138] They created transnational groups affiliated with those back in Chile like the *Chilean Communist Part* and the

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[133] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring.

[134] "Canada: A History of Refuge" (Government of Canada, 2018), https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/servic.

[135] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

[136] Simmons.

[137] Simmons.

[138] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto," 1246.

Toronto Chilean Association.[139] This Latin American wave followed in the footsteps of its

predecessors as one initiated by political upheaval and uncertainty, but distinguishes itself as

one overtly political upon arrival in Toronto. It is also the first wave in which both labourers and

the elite arrive simultaneously within Canada, which would a more diverse group within the

community than had previously been seen.[140]

The Central American Wave

The 1980s saw the fourth wave of migration from Latin America came from Central

America, particularly El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala.[141] This wave saw large numbers of

Salvadorans being admitted to Canada as refugees following the start of the 1981 civil war.[142]

They fled to neighbouring countries, the United States, and Canada to avoid the violence.[143]

Some of these individuals were targeted by death squads but most were passive victims of the

conflict and violence in their communities.[144] Regardless of the reasons for leaving, the United

States did not view them as refugees because their government was supported by the United

States government. Canada served as an alternative to the United States because of the 1976

Immigration Act opened to door for Salvadoran refugee status. It started in 1979 and grew

steadily until 1989.[145] Over 25 000 Salvadorans moved to Canada between January 1979 and

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[139] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, 1247.
[140] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, 1247.
[141] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto," 1243.
[142] Mata, "Latin American Immigration to Canada: Some Reflections on the Immigration Statistics, 41."
[143] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."
[144] Simmons.
[145] Simmons.

December 1990, which is slightly more than the number of Chileans migrating to Canada during the duration of the Coup Wave of 1973 and 1990.[146]

Canada saw fewer of the other nationalities despite ongoing violence in the area because of outside factors; Nicaraguans fleeing the Sandinista government were more readily accepted by the United States than the Salvadorans,[147] while geography played a role for Guatemalans. The majority of Guatemalans who fled from the military which had killed thousands of civilians and indigenous communities fled to neighbouring countries and like the south of Mexico. They preferred these areas so they would be better able to return home if the opportunity arised.[148]

This wave differs from the precious waves because it is not defined by education and social ideologies like the Lead and Coup waves or the skilled professionals and labourers seeking opportunity of the Andean Wave.[149] As previously mentioned, many who came to Canada were simply victims of violence in their countries of origin who came to Canada due to the changes of the 1976 Immigration Act. Upon arrival Salvadorans and Guatemalans organized their communities, starting organizations like the Toronto Guatemala Solidarity Committee and the Central American Refugee Community of Toronto which would help shape broader Latin American organization and identity in Toronto in the years to come.[150]

The 5th Wave

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[146] Simmons.
[147] Simmons.
[148] Simmons.
[149] Mata, 41.
[150] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, "Agenda Setting and Immigrant Politics: The Case of Latin Americans in Toronto," 1247.

The final wave has been the least studied, simply because there has been less time to do so. The fifth wave of migration from Latin American began in the mid 1990s, and unlike the previous ones, it is more diverse in the countries of origin, contexts of departure, and with four modes of entry.[151] The first mode is generally Brazilian, Colombian, Costa Rican, and Mexican migrants who enter Canada as tourists or students but stay to work.[152] The second is migrants who seek asylum either at arrival or after entering the country while the third mode generally are Mexicans and Central Americans entering Canada through temporary foreign worker programs. The fourth mode includes middle-class professionals who enter based on the points system. They dominantly come from Mexico, Colombia, El Salvador, and Argentina.[153] This wave continued throughout the mid 2000s, and is more diverse in all regards compared to its predecessors. Similar to the Andean wave it has ties to opportunities and education and, while political climates play a role in motivation for leaving, this wave is not a direct result of any singular political event.[154]

Another analysis of this wave is simply that it is the result of Canada playing a larger role in the hemispheric migration movements thanks to immigration changes throughout latter half of the 20th century and growing Latin American transnational networks which came from the previous waves.[155]

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[151] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, 1234.
[152] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring. 1235.
[153] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring, 1244.
[154] Landlot, Bernhard, and Goldring.
[155] Simmons, "Latin American Migration to Canada: New Linkages in the Hemispheric Migration and Refugee Flow System."

APPENDIX D

My Interview Sample

In an effort to create as nuanced a picture as possible, I sought out Latin people who

bring diverse experiences to the project while still residing in Toronto.

Total Interviewed: 9

Sex	*Occupation*
Male – 5	Students – 2
Female – 4	Graphic designer – 3
20 – 29 in age – 5	Lawyer – 2
Appearance Affecting Lived Experience	Artist - 1
Self Identified as Afro-Latino – 1	Retail worker- 1
Self Identified as 'white' - 2	Translator – 1
Self Identified as 'ethnically-ambiguous'	Union organizer – 1
– 4	*National Heritages Represented*
Self Identified as 'Latino' appearance- 1	Colombia – 2
N/A - 1	Mexico – 1
Age	Nicaragua – 1
Over 40 – 1	El Salvador – 1
30 – 39 in age – 3	Ecuador – 1
20 – 29 in age - 5	Argentina – 1

Chile – 2

All of these nationalities reflect the major waves of Latin American migration to

Canada. They are typical of our unique circumstance and history.