

SETTLEMENT EXPERIENCES OF TRANS LATINX REFUGEES IN CANADA

by

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ABSTRACT

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This MRP works to examine the intersectional experiences of Trans Latinx Refugees around gender identity, language, citizenship, sexual orientation, race and class during the settlement process by answering the research question: What are the experiences of Trans folks during their Refugee and Settlement process? The study used Qualitative Phenomenological design to focus on two different types of phenomena: the participants' trans identity and their settlement process as refugees. The following themes were found and analyzed: 1) Intersections of Transphobia and Racism; 2) Systemic Barriers & Access to Services; and 3) Moving Forward: Empowerment, Community Building & Allies on the Inside. In conclusion, the implications for both social work and research with these communities have been identified.

DEDICATION

To all the Trans Latinx folks in Canada and around the world who fight for a world that will, one day, accept us all for who we really are and not the gender roles we are supposed to perform from the day we were born.

To Tara. The love of my life. Thank you for loving me for who I really am. Thank you for supporting me on my gender journey.

To my three children. I hope one day you will remember me as the parent I hope I am to you. I love you to the moon and back!

To Darcy. Thank you for being my sister and making me a huge part of your life. Thank you for introducing me to Ivan's books and to the queer world. Thank you for your endless love.

To my mother. Thank you for not judging me and welcoming this new version of myself you did not know before. Thank you for asking the right questions. Thank you for your unconditional love.

To Claudio, my ex-husband. Thank you for being my partner in crime before, during and after our marriage. I am proud of you and your own journey.

To my family and friends, who have supported me throughout this endless journey of self-discovery.

This is one of my favourite quotes of all times:

“No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background or his religion. People learn to hate, and if they can be taught to hate, they can be taught to love, for love come more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

Nelson Mandela

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this MRP is to examine the intersectional experiences of Trans Latinx Refugees around gender identity, language, citizenship, sexual orientation, race and class during the settlement process. This MRP aimed to answer this question: What are the experiences of Trans Latinx Refugees during their settlement process? This study explores how immigration policies are rooted in heteronormativity and cisnormativity, two of the main components of the dominant discourse that impacts the process of determination for Trans Latinx refugee applicants. This study focused on two different types of phenomena – Trans and Latinx identities – utilizing a theoretical framework which focused on a fusion of Queer and Intersectional Theories and its methodology is that of Qualitative Phenomenological Research.

Prior to understanding the implications and motivations behind this work for the Trans and Latinx communities, a definition of both concepts, including common discourse used, is essential. The concept of Latinx must be understood in the context of both its origin in discourse and politics as well as its place in history as a politicized identity. Since the Spanish language is not gender neutral, in order to use gender neutrality, Spanish speakers use “o/a” at the end of words to refer to male or female nouns and the “x” at the end of a word represents gender neutrality for Trans or gender non-conforming language. In the early 21st century, the Hispanic community living in the United States of America expressed the need for racial and gender identity validation through the creation of the term *Latinx* that includes all genders and empowers marginalized, racialized non-binary folks (DeGuzmán, 2017). Just as the LGBTQ community has reclaimed *Queer* as an umbrella term, *Latinx* represents a political gender-neutral term for the Hispanic population, allowing for non-binary identities that refuse to be forced to choose a masculine or feminine gender (Milian, 2017).

Moving beyond the understanding of the Latinx identity, we must then understand the historical context and evolution of the Trans identity. In an attempt to reclaim different gender identities, the term *Trans* was created to describe people who identify with a different gender than the one they were assigned at birth. Unfortunately, the dominant cisgender discourse has historically used the term *Trans* as a way of othering, discriminating as a clear example of transphobia (Buck, 2016). As mentioned before when referring to the term Latinx, *Trans* has been used by part of the Trans community as an umbrella term that is not limited to folks who physically transition by means of gender reassignment surgery. It includes non-binary and gender non-conforming folks who believe in gender fluidity as well as those who identify as transgender whose gender expression represent a gender identity that oppose that assigned by society (Milian 2017).

My motivations for exploring this topic are twofold. Firstly, this study chose to focus on the LGBTQ refugee experiences due to the lack of literature which specifically focuses on Trans refugee claimants. During my literature review, it became apparent that there is a virtual nonexistence of articles which explore the specific intersectionality of the two identities discussed in this MRP and, as such, much of the literature reviewed in the upcoming literature review chapter will extrapolate upon LGBTQ and racialized minority identities in order to speak specifically to Trans and Latinx experiences. In addition, we cannot look at the settlement process, without looking at the pre-migration discrimination refugee claimants experience, particularly Trans, Latinx migrants, as will also be discussed.

Finally, in selecting my research question for this MRP, I felt drawn to the aforementioned question based largely on my drive to explore the ways in which AOP social work practice can be driven forward to be more inclusive of Trans Latinx communities,

particularly during their Refugee and Settlement process. Based on my personal and professional experience, I have come to realize that the social work field needs to create more resources in order to support the development of a more inclusive, intersectionality and diversity-based settlement process for Latin American gender minority immigrants and refugees. Critical social work practice, which is based on a thorough understanding of power relations, gender identities, sexual orientations, discrimination, race, class, age, religion, and disability, is much more effectively equipped to explore the aforementioned research question. As an AOP social worker my research is meant to deconstruct power, privilege and oppression (Wong, 2004). It is very important to fully understand the pressure Trans Latinx go through during their refugee and settlement process in order to address challenges and to not perpetuate oppressive practices (McKinnon, 2011).

The following chapter will discuss four main themes found in the literature that was reviewed for this MRP.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The following themes are the four components of the literature reviewed for this study:

1) Experiences of LGBTQ Refugee Claimants & The Settlement Process 2) Colonialism in Latin America: An Analysis of Coloniality 3) Sexual orientation and Gender Identity – links to White Supremacy, Racism and Power 4) Masculinity and Male Power. Following an analysis of these four themes, this literature review also highlights the minimal amount of research conducted which specifically focuses on the intersection of the Trans and Latinx identities and, thus, the motivation behind this MRP.

Experiences of Trans & Latinx Refugee Claimants in The Settlement Process

The purpose of looking at the experiences of Trans and Latinx refugees and their settlement process is to speak to the barriers that Trans and Latinx identities face in a community which constructs citizenship based on a preconceived, heteronormative, cisnormative and white understanding of immigration and gender as depicted by Brotman and Lee (2011) in their discussion of systemic and institutional violence exercised by the immigration and refugee process in Canada. It also speaks to the importance of exploring the broader lived experiences of intersectional identities in the settlement process as it describes the more specific discussion of the intersection between Trans and Latinx identities (Epstein and Carillo, 2014).

Canada is no exception when it comes to conservative and normative immigration laws that perpetuate oppression, stigmatization, stereotyping and judgment, since eligibility of refugee claimants is analyzed and looked at through a patriarchal lens. Epstein and Carillo (2014) discuss how “[t]he heteronormative character of citizenship is made evident by the history of immigration policies aimed at the exclusion of “sexual deviants” – policies that likewise establish boundaries between “good” and “bad” sexual citizens (Epstein and Carillo, 2014, p.4).

The rigidity of the refugee process is also analyzed by Berg and Millbank (2009) from a sociological approach to refugee claims that are based on sexual orientation and gender identity and how passing as male or female and behaviour determine whether those claims will have a positive outcome. Such rigidity won't allow for a deeper analysis of the intersections of the different layers of oppression that refugee claimants face throughout the refugee application and their settlement process. In order to understand how intersectionality over determines the experiences of sexual minority refugees, it is imperative to examine the specific barriers these minority groups face throughout the determination process (Brotman & Lee, 2011, p. 152). The intersectionalities of refugee applicants have a tremendous impact on the eligibility and determination process. Individuals' life journeys cannot be looked at or analyzed based on one characteristic only. Logie, Lacombe-Duncan, Lee-Foon, Ryan and Ramsay (2016), speak to the idea that the intersections of sexuality, race, gender, class, and immigration status can increase discrimination and stigma for newcomers. Further, Logie et al. (2016) express that there is another layer of oppression, such as racism, classism, homophobia and transphobia for LGBTQ newcomers and refugees due to their intersecting identities.

Brotman and Lee (2011) also discuss the systemic and institutional violence exercised by the immigration and refugee process that forces claimants to re-tell their stories to different government officials, doctors, psychologists and other service providers throughout their immigration and refugee process. This notion that migrants are forced to re-tell their stories over and over also speaks to the above discussion of discrimination faced by newcomers whose intersecting identities are held up to scrutiny over and over to determine their 'validity', emphasizing once again Logie et. al's (2016) above discussion around intersecting layers of oppression being linked to intersecting identities.

Alessi, Kahn and Van Der Horn (2017) demonstrate that much of the literature available on the experience of LGBTQ identities in the immigration process focus on the individual experiences of persecution and their eligibility as refugee claimants, without paying much attention to the structural violence that LGBTQ refugee claimants face in their countries as a result of their queer identities. As Alessi, Kahn and Van Der Horn (2017) also speak to, this discussion must take place within a framework which acknowledges that the lived experience of LGBTQ *forced* migrants (and those who are both Trans and Latinx) is such that by the time of settlement, they have typically been victims of violence and unsafe situations that have put their lives in imminent danger. Lifelong trauma and mental health issues have a higher prevalence among LGBTQ forced migrants (Shidlo and Ahola, 2013). LGBTQ Latinx identities show multiple examples of the trauma and emotional/physical abuse faced by sexual and gender minorities specifically within the settlement process (Shidlo and Ahola, 2013).

Colonialism in Latin America: An Analysis of Coloniality

In order to understand the Latin American history of colonialism and resistance, it is important to explain the concept of Coloniality of Power explored by Argentinian author Walter D. Mignolo (2000) in his work which engages in a critical analysis of the impacts of colonization in Latin America, primarily based on the idea that systems of knowledge are Eurocentric in nature. The Coloniality of Power is an imperialistic system of distribution of morality, epistemology and ethical agendas, which perpetuate oppression and power. White supremacy predetermines all of the above in order to reflect a Eurocentric, imperialistic nature (Mignolo, 2000). Colonialism as the base of modernity, through its narratives of progress and its mainstream Eurocentric focus on humanity, works to justify a historical European domination around the world (Alcoff, 2007).

Quijano's (2000) discussion of the success of Eurocentrism in becoming the epicenter of

the modern world also highlights the idea that a system of racial classification and hierarchy existed after the colonization of America which pitted Latinx identities at an automatic disadvantage in the migration and settlement process. Quijano (2000) specifically states that a European, colonial domination in Latin America (and around the world) is still very prevalent today, particularly through the domination of the western culture around the world. Quijano (2000) continues on to explain that countries in Latin America have been historically oppressed and dominated by Europe but also have dominated and oppressed other countries through an imposition of a western culture. In order to achieve cultural and social liberation, it is essential to deconstruct the type of knowledge that has led to colonial power and oppression (Quijano, 2007).

European colonization of both knowledge and social norms (including the resultant racial and political hierarchies) in Latin America has resulted in the newer concept of the Coloniality of power. Specific European Colonialism, according to Quijano (2007), is a relic of the past, even though classism, racism and other forms of discrimination were not related to power dynamics and structures, but these social constructions were described merely as natural or isolated incidents. This unreflective way of looking at that structural violence negated power and privilege and in turn, it did not allow for a deep analysis of power imbalance. “This power structure was, and still is, the framework within which power operate the other social relations of classes or estates” (Quijano 2007, p.168).

The work of Walter Mignolo on analyzing the Coloniality of Power describes the intersection between ethnicity and racism and, further, how ‘colonial nation states’ have emerged in search of ethnic equality and freedom from white colonial domination (Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2007). Latin America’s fight against European domination, however, resulted instead in ‘Internal Colonialism’. This took place when a creole elite, described as a White Latin American

elite of European descent, gained the power from Spanish and Portuguese colonizers thus rearticulating the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2007) In an attempt to achieve freedom, modernity has thus created additional classism, sexism, racism, and discrimination – through its process of de-coloniality – by imposing Western domination which perpetuates oppression, power and privilege (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, Quijano, 2007; Mignolo, 2007).

It is important to highlight the idea that the intersections of race, caste, gender and sexuality are so interrelated that they cannot be studied independently as the world is divided into different categories and one identity can impact the rest. Gender and sexuality are not isolated identities, as they intersect with race and ethnicity (Maldonado-Torres, 2007).

Sexuality and Gender Identity – Links to White Supremacy, Racism & Power

This theme is perhaps best exemplified by Poon (2011) who speaks to the need for a race analysis of the LGBTQ within the social work literature. This is based on the fact that racialized queerness has not been studied or written about in the field of social. In spite of this lack of literature, this study addresses the link between sexual and gender identity with structures of racism and power.

For Trans Latinx refugees, language is not the only barrier to accessing services and resources, there are many cultural differences in the way Latinx refugees connect and build community in comparison to other cultures and to white trans people. For some Latinx folks, accessing services and participating in Trans support groups that are rooted in white, Eurocentric ideas can increase isolation as opposed to reducing it, and it can also be traumatizing (Gastaldo, Mercado-Martinez, Ramasco-Gutierrez, Lizardi-Gomez, & Gil-Nebot,2002). Ultimately, notions of language and culture acting as a barrier to accessing services and resources can be seen as

being linked to deeper notions of power and oppression which are faced by Trans Latinx refugees in a white, Eurocentric society.

Power and oppression can take many different forms, such as whiteness and discrimination. White supremacy in social work literature is critiqued by Poon M. (2011), a gay immigrant of colour, who talks about race and queer bodies as being ignored by social work scholars who continue to perpetuate western ideas of LGBTQ culture. White supremacy leads to racism in the LGBTQ community, which is the subject of analysis for Jones (2016), who developed a critical, intersectional analysis of culture and identity politics, and speaks about a need for queer identity consciousness of race. There is an alarming lack of commitment to identity politics, and to learning and acknowledging cultural differences in the most mainstream gay culture (Jones, 2016).

Racism in the LGBTQ community can be interpersonal or systemic, it is not always overt, and it can be invisible at times. Daily micro aggressions against Blacks and Latinos have been identified by researchers as being much more impactful than is commonly assumed (Follins, 2014). Racism is explored by Giwa and Greensmith (2012) who claims the importance of social constructions of race relations and racism within the LGBTQ community of Toronto, Ontario. The authors speak to the intersections of oppression and how racism and discrimination within the LGBTQ community is sometimes invisible to the heterosexual and cisgender world.

The intersections of language barriers, power imbalance, racism, transphobia and other types of discrimination have a huge impact on the fate of sexual minority refugees. Deciding whether or not refugee claimants are allowed to live in this country is ultimately determined by the Canadian Refugee Board system through historical, social, financial, political, structural, cultural and psychological intersections of migration and sexuality (Brotman & Lee).

Interconnections between Trans and Latinx identities also impact how the IRCC controls the lived experience of these communities, insofar as to dictate their access to the social determinants of health. There is a gap in access to healthcare by the Latinx community, which how this population is negatively impacted by their social, financial and immigration status. There is a need to draw attention to how self-medicating and taking estrogen or testosterone hormones is so common in the Trans community (Rotondi, Bauer, Scanlon, Kaay, Travers & Travers, 2013). Their marginalized and intersecting identities that lead to significant social isolation, lack of access to medical care, social stigmatization, lack of education and lack of trust in the transphobic medical institutions that have been historically transphobic. Further, Tanner, Reboussin, Mann, Song, Alonzo & Rhodes (2014) also identify that there is a need for understanding the different intersecting reasons why Latino subgroup communities face higher levels of oppression and stigmatization, based on the many issues they face around access to healthcare.

Building on these difficult assertions about the barriers in place to accessing the social determinant of health for Trans and Latinx individuals, there is a need to create cultural specific initiatives and resources that will allow marginalized communities to have access to healthcare and other services due to the imminent growth of the Latino community (Rhodes, Alonzo, Mann, Simán, Garcia, Abraham & Sun, 2015). Such need for interventions that are specific to Latin service users that are part of sexual and gender minority groups due to their vulnerability and specific needs. The idea of developing culturally congruent public interventions for these intersecting communities can be extrapolated upon, as we utilize this formula to apply to other aspects of the settlement experience including: education, employment opportunities, housing, childcare and access to resources (Rhodes et al., 2015).

Masculinity and Male Power: A Deconstruction

Patriarchy, masculinity and male power are all concepts which will be deconstructed throughout the analysis portion of this research project. To that end, an exploration of the intersections of these three concepts is critical to understanding the role that they play in the identity formation of Trans Latinx individuals involved in the settlement process. The idea of gaining or losing power based on masculinity weighs heavily on gender non-conforming and Trans folks, therefore, male privilege cannot be discussed in isolation, as it is one of the structural barriers depicted in this research project (Liu, 2017).

There has been a shift in the way male power and masculinities are studied in the last decade, which include psychological models and social constructions of masculinity. Some authors, such as Connell & Messerschmitt (2005) and Parent, Gobble & Rochlen, (2018) talk about a new concept of multiple masculinities as they challenge academics to focus not only on gender inequality but also on dominant groups who overpower subordinated masculinities. This is a concept that addresses gender from a unique point of view by looking at hierarchies of male power, which is very relevant and visible in the LGBTQ community, specifically within Trans identities (Connell & Messerschmitt, 2005).

Hegemonic masculinity takes on a different level of male privilege through a focus on femininity, in order to address, gender inequality is considered a women's problem. Even though the focus on women's oppression and marginalization is supposed to empower the female gender and deconstruct male privilege and gender inequality, the outcome is actually the opposite (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

For decades, fighting against gender inequality has resulted in critiquing male power but not addressing the role of women in society, as opposed to planning on how to best educate

males to equalize the historical gender inequalities and power imbalance (Parent, Gobble & Rochlen, 2018). Instead of focusing on teaching males' equality and teaching women what their social role should be, there has been an emphasis on the oppression women have faced throughout history. This keeps the focus and surveillance on the oppressed which results in reinforcing toxic masculinity and overlooking male power being overlooked.

Gender carries power relations, which are further entrenched in “modernist notions of power [which] seem to conceptualize power as a ‘commodity’ (Fook, 2012, p. 56). This notion of power as a commodity is particularly evident in the exploration of Masculinity and Male Power as it applies to the intersection of Trans and Latinx identities in the settlement process (Fook, 2012). Studying Trans Latinx immigrant and refugee experiences requires an analysis of social constructions of power that determine how identities are formed and performed (Fook, 2012). Those structures include white supremacy, male privilege, class and gender identity, and they cannot be addressed without talking about male power through the performance of masculinity, which determine a hierarchy of privilege, that creates further oppression for Trans folks. (Follins, 2014) Male privilege cannot be discussed in isolation, as it is one of the structural barriers depicted in this research project.

Essential to deconstructing notions of masculinity and power is the idea of Discourse (Fook, 2012). In order to understand the language and discourse of our experiences and our world, we must acknowledge that they are social constructs. The concept of unsettling dominant discourses is essential to critical deconstruction and reconstruction (Fook, 2012). Looking at language (or discourse) as not fixed, will allow for a more diverse lens from which to deconstruct notions of masculinity and power as they relate to the intersection of Trans Latinx identities. Fook (2002) points out that in order to critically analyze and deconstruct discourse and

power, the most powerful way of engaging in resistance and changing dominant discourses is by rejecting and challenging social constructs and mainstream ideas of dominant groups. Male power and patriarchy reinforce heteronormativity and cisnormativity, which in turn reinforce transphobia. The IRCC determines sexual and gender minorities eligibility through a heteronormative, patriarchal lens. Therefore, main discourses that are rooted in male power and patriarchy inform those in charge of making decisions of eligibility during the refugee process in Canada (Brotman & Lee, 2011).

The following chapter is based on two main theories used throughout this study: Queer Theory and Intersectionality Theory have been the basis of this MRP with the purpose of analyzing the experiences of Trans Latinx Refugees through a Qualitative Interpretive Phenomenology approach.

CHAPTER 3. THEORETICAL APPROACHES

This MRP utilizes a Qualitative Interpretive Phenomenology approach, using Queer Theory and Intersectionality to analyze the experiences of Trans Latinx individuals. As such, the following chapter will outline my theoretical approach and framework for this MRP by: 1) defining Queer theory and how it relates to the notion of identity 2) defining intersectionality and exploring how the Trans and Latinx identities intersect 3) exploring the connection between Queer Theory and Intersectionality and 4) extending Queer and Intersectional theories to my research by identifying what the key authors ask me to focus on in my research.

Queer Theory & the Notion of Identity

Judith Butler is one of the most renowned poststructuralist thinkers of all times. Butler's work is based on the study of dominant normative discourses and social constructs that determine sexuality and gender. Butler's went beyond a feminist study of sexuality, and contributed to the creation of a Queer Theory (Butler, 1990). Butler critiqued Foucault's lack of focus on gender and claimed that gender is a social construct and not a natural truth. The author describes gender as a performance: "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (Butler 1990, p. 33).

Contributing to the creation of a Queer Theory, Butler's work of deconstructing ideas of gender is particularly relevant to this study. In opposition to radical feminists who negate the existence of other genders, Butler's work consisted of challenging binary gender roles and welcoming genders that were not seen as "normal" before, such as Trans identities (Butler,

1990). This challenge to heteronormativity and cisnormativity was the foundation of Queer Theory. The premises of Gender Theory are challenging fixed identities and deconstructing dominant discourses that perpetuate oppression (Hicks and Jeyasingham, 2016).

Hicks & Jeyasingham (2016) indicated that radical social work have a tendency to exclude and neglect notions of queerness. Queer theory was originally developed to challenge discrimination rooted in heteronormativity against folks who have a gender identity, expression or sexual orientation that challenges normativity (Nagoshi et al, 2014). In order to explore how Queer theory has challenges fixed notions of heteronormative and cisnormative, it is important to differentiate between Queer theory and radical feminist movements. Through challenging fixed identities, Queer theory has confronted radical feminist movements that have created structural barriers for Trans folks throughout history, in part by excluding queerness from radical social work (Macdonald, 2005; Nagoshi et al., 2014; Hicks & Jeyasingham, 2016). Radical, second wave feminism has a notably controversial history of oppression and othering Trans folks due to their resources and services being transphobic, patronizing and exclusionary (Macdonald, 2005). Contrary to the basis of Queer theory as challenging fixed identities, radical feminist theorists have essentialized gender identities, while Queer theory looks at gender identities as social constructs (Nagoshi et al, 2014). Radical feminism has been challenged by the fourth wave of feminism, however, which is called Postmodern feminism. Noreen (2012) finds similarities between Queer theory framework and postmodern feminism, which claims that gender is socially constructed. Postmodern feminism and Queer theory challenge fixed identities and critique a stream of transgenderism that oppresses gender non-conforming folks.

The causes of transphobia and racial discrimination can be deconstructed through interpersonal relationships, but most findings for this MRP show that immigration settlement in Canada for Trans Latinx folks can be analyzed through this type of discrimination and oppression on a macro level. This concept is addressed by Rossiter (2007) through the use of *self* in social work history: “[t]he liberal humanist conception of “self” stops the investigation at the “personal,” while a concept of use of self as subjectivity allows for a “whole self” that is thoroughly social, invested in power relations, given through history” (Rossiter, 2007, p. 31). Participants in this MRP were given a platform on which to share their immigration and settlement journeys through both interpersonal relationships and their challenging experiences of systemic oppression.

Canada’s mainstream discourses of race, class, eligibility, heteronormativity and cisnormativity have been extremely harmful and *othering* towards Trans Latinx folks, not only through their refugee determination process, but also during their settlement and integration to a North American society; this holds a double message. Not only are Trans Latinx folks discriminated against because of transphobia and racism, but the type of marginalization they face is systemic and is rooted in power relations. Even though not every participant identified power dynamics that have led to discrimination, most of them were able to describe how dominant discourses can reinforce discrimination and marginalization. This topic was studied by Rossiter (2007) who talks about Foucault’s analysis of discourse, which is extremely rich and includes not only *meaning production* but also institutional power relations (Rossiter, 2007). This use of Foucauldian analysis of discourse and meaning production was utilized in the analysis component of this MRP to identify the types of resistance found in the narratives of participants.

The participants in this MRP were found to use two types of resistance to systemic barriers and social challenges: the first is the *everyday* resistance while the second is a political, more organized type of resistance. In both of its forms, resistance is an *oppositional act*, which has historically lacked a proper analysis, since social work and social science in general have focused primarily on power and oppression. In order to understand power, it is essential to study *resistance* (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013). The authors describe how *everyday resistance* can be seen as politically invisible, in comparison to the more organized types as was also evidenced by the participants of this study. Further, “[t]he heterogenic and contingent practice of everyday resistance is, due to its entanglement with and intersectional relations to power, discursively articulated by actors, targets and observers” (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013, pg. 208). Once again, this was paralleled by all participants who expressed a need for services and who have become advocates for Trans Latinx community. All of them, in their own way, have contributed to social justice, community building and creating awareness around gender, sexuality, culture, class and other intersections.

Mainstream notions of masculinity and femininity have had a huge impact in the trans community and in the Latinx community. Many Trans Latinas I have worked with have been under pressure to “pass” or look like feminine cis-women. The stereotype of mainstream beauty has been extremely oppressive towards Trans Latinas, perpetuating discrimination towards those folks who do not conform with the mainstream standards of beauty. Raymond (1995) identifies the risk of creating a space where everyone is trying to pass as there is more concern about fashion and femininity than there is about the politics of transgenderism. Trans folks who police transgenderism based on mainstream stereotypes of beauty and femininity have depoliticized the trans movement as they are more concerned with style than resistance (Raymond, 1995). Certain

areas of gender conformity lack political resistance as there are specific groups of transgender people who have been more interested in their gender expression than resistance and politics, since passing as female or male is more important to them than fighting for equality. (Pyne, 2016). Queer theory asks to effectively challenge the notions of fixed identity, by avoiding focusing on one shared characteristic, but rather recognizing how intersections and the different identities of individuals are fluid.

Queer Theory aims to undo gender construction lead to reflections on gender and sexuality, focusing on trans identities, the psychology and politics of gender, and the collateral damage derived from structural and social violence against gender non-binary folks. In an attempt to help undo dominant notions of personhood, Queer theory considers gender normativity through trans movements and gender politics (Butler, 2004).

Intersectionality: How do the Trans and Latinx identities Intersect?

An analysis of the intersections of different identities allows for an understanding of the different layers of oppression that Trans Latinx refugees face. Kimberlee Crenshaw (1991) was the first scholar to identify all of the different identities of a marginalized, racialized women, and she named them *intersectionalities*. “Race, gender, and other identity categories are most often treated in mainstream liberal discourse as vestiges of bias or domination-that is, as intrinsically negative frameworks in which social power works to exclude or marginalize those who are different” (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1242). The experiences of marginalized, oppressed folks, such as Trans Latinx refugees, have historically been looked at through a patriarchal lens that perpetuates systemic barriers and negates that the marginalizing realities of these folks are the product of intersecting patterns of discrimination (Crenshaw, 1991). Looking at racism, transphobia and

other ways of discrimination and oppression as individual incidents is limiting and it prevents opportunities for awareness and empowerment. A view of intersectionality will help understand how ethnicity, race, gender and sexuality shape the experiences of the marginalized communities (Crenshaw, 1991).

Exploring the intersection of Trans and Latinx identities, requires to look at their experiences and to analyse the different social constructions of power that determine how identities are formed and performed. McCall (2005) defines intersectionality, at its most basic, as “the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations” (p. 1771). This MRP emphasizes, three particular structures which are highly relevant to the intersection of Trans and Latinx identities include white supremacy, male privilege, class and gender identity. White supremacy and male power performed through masculinity, which determines a hierarchy of privilege that creates further oppression for Trans folks who have rigid ideas of beauty and femininity based on patriarchy and male privilege (Liu, 2017). White male privilege has determined mainstream ideas of beauty and passing. The idea of gaining or losing power based on masculinity weighs heavily on gender non-conforming and Trans folks (Liu, 2017). This is a direct example of the structural oppression faced by Trans Latinx refugees in the settlement process. Looking at systemic barriers through the lens of intersectionality allows us to identify all different forms of structural and institutional oppression that LGBTQ newcomers have faced in Canada (Brotman & Lee, 2011). Critical to understanding the impact of structural forms of oppression on Trans Latinx refugees, is understanding the role of intersectionality in privilege and oppression.

This MRP aims to look at different types of marginalization that lead to higher levels of oppression in order to do research from an AOP framework. These intersections of

marginalization are depicted by Jenson (2000) who claims that new immigrants face challenges that lead to social isolation and discrimination, challenges which are multiplied by the intersectionality inherent in being a newcomer and identifying as Trans and Latinx. Trans Latinx Immigrants and refugees, who are visible minorities, are in a state of constant alert, as they face transphobia, racism and discrimination on a daily basis.

Queer & Intersectional Theories: How do they Connect and Why were they utilized?

As discussed in Jones (2016) Queer and Intersectional Theories have historically been linked by several authors such as Hooks (1989), Anzaldua (1999) and Morris (1992) however further examples are limited, particularly in the context of the research question for this MRP. As Jones (2016) points out, Queer Theory has historically failed to utilize intersectionality in its contributions to resistance against Transphobia. This lack of intersectional approach speaks more broadly to the need for further work that utilizes *both* Queer and Intersectional theories in its approach to qualitative, phenomenological research. This is one of the primary motivations behind the choice in theoretical frameworks for this MRP as well as the critical linkage between the two frameworks.

Hicks and Jesayingham (2016) point out the need for social work theory to study and analyze both Queer and Intersectional theories in order challenge all different types of discrimination against the LGBTQ community that exceed homophobia and transphobia in order to question and deconstruct heteronormativity. social work theory which ignores the connection between queer and intersectional theories pushes aside the lived experiences of Trans Latinx refugees in the settlement process. This MRP will focus on an Intersectional and Queer Theory approach to the phenomenon associated with Trans Latinx refugees during the settlement process.

Queer Theory would ask questions regarding the gender journeys all participants in this study have embarked on. It would ask questions around gender performativity, such as why none of the participants were able to perform their true identities in their own countries. Queer Theory would also ask participants what the process of self awareness and identity was like for them and how they were able to navigate transphobia and homophobia within their fixed identities.

Intersectionality theory would ask questions regarding the racialized experiences of all participants in this study. Participants would be encouraged to reflect on how systemic barriers have prevented them from leading a life without racism. Intersectionality theory would ask how participants have been able to overcome overt racist comments as well as everyday macroaggressions and how they were able to identify, name, address and challenge all of the different types of racism that they were not aware about at a younger age.

The next chapter aims to answer the research question of this study. The question is: What are the experiences of Trans Latinx refugees during the Settlement process?

CHAPTER 4. METHODOLOGY

The research question that this study will explore is what are the experiences of Trans Latinx refugees during the Settlement process? This study will focus on two different types of phenomena. One is the participants' trans identity and the other focus is on their settlement process as refugees

Interpretive Phenomenological Research: What is it & Why was it chosen?

For this qualitative research project, the utilization of an interpretive phenomenological approach is the most appropriate for this study, one because it focuses on one phenomenon that several people have in common (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The authors explain that the goal of phenomenological qualitative research is to analyze text in order to understand human action through asking open questions about specific phenomena. Within this framework – although it is not narrative in nature – phenomenology allows for the different narratives of transphobia, homophobia, immigration and settlement process to be considered in order to find commonalities within the analysis. As such, the above discussed research question can best be explored from an interpretive phenomenological approach, the focus of which is to focused on the lived experiences of participants, and to keep in mind that those experiences are not isolated, but determined by their surroundings (Tuohy, Cooney, Dowling, Murphy & Sixsmith, 2013).

“A phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon. Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon” (Cresswell & Poth, 2018, p.137). Given the ultimate goals of this research, the specifically identified methodology was critical in moving beyond a descriptive approach to one which allows the reader to seek unity in lived experience or ‘common phenomenon’.

Tuohy et al. (2013), points out the main difference between descriptive and interpretive phenomenology. The author explains that descriptive phenomenology focuses on merely describing a phenomenon, while interpretive phenomenology moves beyond description, as participants' experiences are described, understood and interpreted. Thus, as McConnell-Henry, Chapman & Francis (2009). identify, interpretive phenomenology best allows us to expand hermeneutic ideas through back and forth questioning, in order to give meaning to participants' common experiences. McConnell-Henry et al. (2009) discussion of utilizing the hermeneutic circle as a tool of phenomenological research is one which will be central to the structure of the interviews I conduct for this MRP. Further, Matua and Van Der Wal (2015) "phenomenological research becomes 'hermeneutic' when its method and focus is interpretive" (p. 23). This is directly in line with the anti-oppressive, queer and feminist goals of this research.

Moving beyond the above discussion of interpretive phenomenology's goal of describing, understanding, and interpreting participants' experiences, interpretive phenomenology also critically seeks to examine the intersections of culture, gender, employment and wellbeing that influence the experiences of a specific phenomenon lived by individuals or communities (Matua and Van Der Wal, 2015). This can be expounded upon to focus on learning and understanding experience and the intersectionality of the identities of Trans and Latinx refugees (Matua & Van Der Wal, 2015). Specifically, the utilization of interpretive phenomenology for this project aims to explore the phenomenon (and potentially barriers) commonly experienced by Trans Latinx refugees in the settlement process and, through the utilization of intersectional theory, how the intersection of these two identities create unique and specific phenomena.

Ethics Approval: Identifying risks & Implementing Risk Management Strategies

In any research study, one of the most essential elements of importance is to ensure the safety and security of the participants. One of the primary manners in which this is accomplished is to obtain formal Ethics Approval through the Research Ethics Board (REB). Having already obtained approval to move forward with this project, a number of strategies were also utilized to ensure participant safety as outlined here. Although Potential risks in this MRP were minimal, they needed to be taken into consideration in order to implement effective risk management, which is essential to any AOP study. Interviews about participants' lived experiences may be triggering and upsetting to some people. Participants' vulnerability and lack of trust towards a new researcher who is asking very personal questions might cause anxiety, depression or re-traumatization. In terms of risk management and to counter some of the issues mentioned, I encouraged participants to skip questions they did not feel comfortable answering. Participants were informed that should a participant require any emotional support, the interview would be cancelled, and a referral would be made to formal counselling services. Further, these interviews were completely voluntary in nature, and participants were informed at the outset that the interview could be halted at their discretion. Participants were also informed that their data would be destroyed if they withdraw after or during participation. These safeguards were all put in place and clearly explained to participants to ensure their safety.

Another important component of ethics approval involves guarding against conflict of interest. Although I did not foresee, nor experience, any conflict of interest during the interviewing and research process, my experience in the field lead me to believe that during recruitment, due to my high level of advocacy and involvement in the Trans community, I might come across people I know in the community, or participants from previous projects. Given this

likelihood, for the purposes of this MRP, I was clear at the outset that I would only interview participants I had never worked with before or those I had no previous connections with at all. In addition, another issue I anticipated early on was the setting of boundaries. Based on my work experience, I could foresee having to explain policies and procedures of a research project and reiterate that I cannot help with direct services or have a professional relationship in the near future. All I could do was refer participants to outside services if deemed necessary.

In addition to identifying risks, implementing risk management strategies, guarding against conflict of interest and setting appropriate boundaries, I also identified potential benefits for voluntary participants in this study. Some potential benefits identified included empowerment and feeling heard. Sharing life experiences can feel liberating, especially in this MRP, where participants and researcher shared both a trans gender identity and first language. Participants were given a voice and, hopefully, felt validated by this. Community resources were also shared with participants, which hopefully resulted in knowledge production in regards to participants' rights, benefits and access to community services. Finally, it is hoped that having a more active role in the community resulted in a decrease in isolation.

Recruitment

For this MRP, I recruited four (4) participants by delivering flyers to all LGBTQ focused organizations in Toronto. I identified the following organizations at which to post flyers: Latinx Group HOLA at 519, the Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples (HIV Prevention branch), the Rape Crisis Centre, Ryerson University, MUJER organization, community centers and David Kelly at Family Service Toronto.

This interpretive phenomenology study aimed to collect data about participants' meaningful experiences of the same phenomenon and analyzed their narratives and their social

location, understanding the meaning of human action (Carter, Little, 2007) in order to bring back to this community and to advocate for change (Neuman, 2006).

Because this study focuses on two different types of phenomena, the participants trans identity and their refugee status and settlement process, participants had to meet requirements such as identifying as a Trans Latinx or gender non-conforming Latinx, which is essential for the purpose of this MRP. Another eligibility requirement is the participants age, between 30 and 60 years old. The reason for this criteria is to focus on participants' immigration experiences as adults. Being refugee claimants is the other eligibility requirement, in order to focus on participants' experiences of immigration and settlement in Canada, and most Trans Latinx have arrived to Canada as a Refugee claimant, or as a student or visitor who applied for refugee status after arrival

Sampling

Data was collected by interviewing four (4) participants face to face. Interpretive phenomenology studies often use face to face interviews, due to their qualitative nature. By interviewing participants from a community in which I have lived experience, I was hoping to, as a researcher, be able to build a stronger and more trustworthy rapport in interviews, thus allowing for a more in-depth discussion of racial and gender politics. I was able to accomplish this due to the quality of the interview answers. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to interview participants who are insightful, political and social justice advocates.

Data Collection

Interviews were selected as the data collection method as a very useful tool. The reason for this choice is that the use of a Phenomenological approach allows for a much less intrusive

interviewing process than interviews used with other methodologies such as narrative, ethnographies and case studies (Cresswell & Poth, 2018, p.177). These in-depth interviews were audio-recorded, conducted in Spanish and translated by the principal investigator who has over 20 years of Spanish/English translation experience. Language differences have been neglected as a result of the predominance of English as a dominant language in the United States and other English-speaking countries in qualitative research (Padgett, 2008). As such, the utilization of Spanish in this MRP was both intentional and essential, given interpretive phenomenology's goal (as discussed above) of examining the context of an experience in relation to other influences (Matua & Van Der Wal, 2015).

Analysis of Qualitative Data

As was identified above, this MRP has focused on two different types of phenomena. One is the participants' Trans Latinx identity and the other focus is on their settlement process as refugees. These phenomena, however, had to be explored in the specific and proscribed manner of phenomenological data analysis, the origination of which is credited to Moustakas (1994), as cited in both Cresswell & Poth (2018) and Padgett (2008). Phenomenological studies have an analytical nature that leads to reports being prestructured and focused on participants' experiences as well as other factors that have impacted and guided those experiences Padgett (2008). Building on this understanding that phenomenological research is prestructured based on its analytic structure, and explores the situations and conditions of lived experiences, Cresswell and Poth (2018) summarize the following steps in the phenomenological analysis of qualitative data:

describe personal experiences with the phenomena under study... develop a list of significant statements... group the significant statements into broader units of

information... create a description of ‘what’ the participants in the study experienced with the phenomenon... draft a description of ‘how’ the experience happened... write a composite description of the phenomenon. (p. 201)

These steps were used for this MRP as a guided, analytic outline from which to explore both the participants' Trans Latinx identities and their settlement process as refugees, as well as any other phenomenon which are identified.

A further synopsis of Moustakas’ work (1994, as cited in Padgett, 2008) identifies the following components of phenomenological data analysis: “synopses of each study participants’ experiences (‘textural description’), examination of the context and setting of these experiences (‘structural description’) and a condensation or summary of major themes with associated excerpts from the interviews” (p.150). These components of phenomenological data analysis (for the purposes of this MRP) can be understood practically as: 1) transcribing and translating five interviews 2) scouring transcripts for quotes that are both symbolic and representative of commonalities across the data in relation to the lived experiences of Trans Latinx refugees during the settlement process 3) bundling or grouping quotes by the aforementioned commonalities which ultimately become the themes upon which the MRP were structured around (Padgett, 2008).

Cresswell and Poth (2018) describe the double hermeneutic nature of interpretive phenomenology as, even although the main focus of this type of research is participants’ lived experiences, it is essential to also note the importance of the role of the researcher in capturing the participants’ journey of understanding themselves and the social impacts on their experiences. In order to study Trans Latinx refugees’ experiences, it is essential to analyze social constructions of power that determine how identities are formed and performed

An important component of the data analysis process for this MRP is the underlying analysis of social constructions of power that determine how identities are formed and performed. This is particularly relevant in the context of studying the impacts of Trans Latinx immigrant and refugee experiences and how participants made sense of their world. Structures include white supremacy, male privilege, class and gender identity were identified throughout the interviewing process. I cannot address any of those structures without talking about male power through the performance of masculinity, which determine a hierarchy of privilege that creates further oppression for Trans folks. In this vein, it is critical to the process of phenomenological analysis (and to my commitment to ensuring social responsibility as an ethical stance) to situate participants within a historical/social/political context and to ensure that this is represented throughout the analysis (Padgett, 2008). Ultimately, “PA [phenomenological analysis] is uniquely suited to leave readers feeling as if they have ‘walked a mile in the shoes’ of participants (Padgett, 2008, p. 36).

Participants

It is important to point out that, even though this study has analyzed data from 4 interviews, there were five interviews done. One of the participants, who used Lorena as a pseudonym, was interviewed as a fifth participant. Her interview cannot be used because she did not meet one of the requirements for eligibility, which is having applied and obtained refugee status. Lorena has no immigration status at the moment, so her narrative could not be used of the purposes of this MRP.

Even though her interview has not been analyzed and no data has been from it, it is essential to reflect on the fact that Lorena did not disclose her immigration status at the time of

recruiting. This shows another layer of oppression that Trans Latinx have experienced, this is fear of being reported to Citizenship and Immigration Canada and in turn, being deported back to their country where they face persecution, transphobia and in many cases, torture and abuse. Only after building trust, the researcher learned about Lorena's immigration situation and was able to refer her to an immigration lawyer who will support her in her journey.

The small sample of Trans Latinx individuals interviewed for this MRP, there was a great deal of variation in the narratives and lived experiences individuals disclosed around their migratory experiences. Participants discussed negative experiences fraught with systemic discrimination and violence and having more positive experiences, in which they felt supported by the system. All participants agreed and signed consent forms

Salomé

Salomé introduces herself as a 37-year-old trans woman from Honduras (though if anyone asks, she's 25) who uses the pronoun 'she' when referring to herself. She immigrated to Canada via Vancouver in October of 2001 with a college education, speaking little to no English. Salomé's experience claiming refugee status at the border was fraught with stigmatization and discrimination, before she reports being left in the middle of nowhere, where she knew no one and did not speak the language. Salomé identifies herself as a very political individual who is both familiar with and aware of systemic marginalization, particularly against the Trans Latinx community. Finally, Salomé speaks to being very involved with the Trans Latinx community, particularly in the context of creating safe spaces.

Messi

Messi introduces himself as a 34-year-old trans man from Honduras who uses the pronoun 'he' when referring to himself. Messi immigrated to Canada via Toronto in December of 2016 and also speaks to the trauma of his experience. Messi's plan for his immigration journey did not play out the way he intended. His original plan was to stay in Toronto with his visitor's visa and see what this country was all about, however he reported that upon arriving at the border, he was forced to claim refugee status. Messi has begun a degree in sociology in Honduras, though he did not have the opportunity to complete it, and upon his arrival to Canada spoke no English. Messi identifies himself as being politically active and engaged in creating programs for the Trans Latinx community.

Gabriel

Gabriel introduces himself as a 39-year-old trans man from Mexico who uses the pronoun 'he' when referring to himself. Gabriel immigrated to Toronto in 2001 with a visitor's visa which allowed him to remain in Canada for a time while navigating the immigration process. Conversely to the previous two participants Gabriel reported a positive experience with immigration officials and throughout his migratory journey. Gabriel was enrolled in medical school in Mexico and had completed his first year at the time of his migration. He reports speaking no English at the time of his arrival in Canada. Akin to the first participants, Gabriel also identifies as political and aware of marginalization and also works to build community and create spaces for the Trans Latinx community.

Rocío

Rocío introduces herself as a 47-year-old trans woman from Mexico who uses the pronoun 'she' when referring to herself. Although Rocío identifies as a Trans woman, and uses the pronoun she, she also identifies as a cisgender man at times. Rocío immigrated to Canada via

Vancouver in the 1990's to be with her boyfriend and claimed refugee status at the border. She also speaks to having a positive experience with immigration officials throughout her migratory experience, however Rocío notes that due to her HIV diagnosis, she had unique access to services which most Trans Latinx individuals do not. Further, Rocío feels that her experience with the Canadian Healthcare system, as well as the ease with which she had access to services, are linked to her HIV status, and thus links Canada more strongly with the social determinants of health than Mexico. Rocío has a degree in Travel and Tourism which she obtained in Mexico and did not speak any English at the time of her arrival in Canada. Rocío is looking forward to continuing to be involved in the Trans Latinx community.

This methodology chapter is followed by the powerful findings of this MRP, based on 4 face to face interviews to Trans Latinx Refugees.

CHAPTER 5. FINDINGS

Interpretive phenomenological analysis, in the context of this MRP, sets out not only to incorporate the lived experiences of Salomé, Messi, Gabriel and Rocío, but also to do so in the context of broader systemic issues at play which impact how these individuals made sense of their experiences of migration (Cresswell & Poth, 2018). Using this interpretive phenomenological approach to analysis, the findings of this MRP were ultimately broken down into three significant themes, each of which touch on several ideas. Such findings derived directly from the data collected.

The first major theme of this MRP ‘Intersections of Transphobia and Racism’ explores the ways in which participants have experienced both systemic and individual oppression and marginalization, including systemic and institutional violence. It explores the traumatization and re-traumatization participants experienced, as well as the ways in which their visibility impacted their lived experiences. Finally, this first theme will explore suggestions participants have for creating systemic change.

The second major theme of this MRP ‘Systemic Barriers & Access to Services’ explores the ways in which Trans Latinx individuals face unique systemic barriers in accessing both support and social services and resources. As well, this theme will touch on such ideas as: the devaluation and erasure of foreign education and its link to accessing secure employment. Finally, this theme will link back to the first theme and touch on how the intersections of Transphobia and Racism have created these systemic barriers.

Lastly, the third major theme of this MRP ‘Moving Forward: Empowerment, Community Building & Allies on the Inside’ explores the ways in which participants spoke about the importance of their identities as Trans Latinx individuals as well as linking these identities to the

larger notion of empowerment and community building. Finally, this third theme will explore the assertion of all participants interviewed that there is a distinct need for more gender and culturally specific services and their suggestions moving forward.

**Theme #1:
Intersections of Transphobia and Racism**

The intersections of transphobia and racism have had impact on the lived experiences of the participants in this research during their migratory experiences. This was represented in multiple ways, all of which spoke to a common understanding: that the intersections of these two phenomena (transphobia and racism) played out such that participants experienced both systemic and individual oppression and marginalization, including systemic and institutional violence. When asked if, in their experience, participants felt Canada was a positive place for individuals who are both Trans and Latinx, their responses spoke to the impact these identities had on them. Gabriel's answer to this question spoke to the discrimination he experienced as a result of these intersections in the workplace: "No, I feel that Canada is not ready yet... I think that for both identities, at least in my experience, in my work, I have gone through a lot of discrimination because of the two identities" (Gabriel)

Similarly to Gabriel, Salomé felt that whether Canada was a positive place for Trans Latinx individuals depended upon how people locate themselves and their identities:

In general, yes [it is a positive place] but you have to know how to locate yourself on the map. It is not the same to live in Toronto or in Etobicoke or Scarborough, there are places that are safer than others, but in general the majority of the country is very ignorant, except the big cities or in the centers. It's sad, just because you're Trans it doesn't mean you want to live in a city. There are people who would like to live more isolated. But they can't do that, I know that there are Trans people who wanted to move to more distant places and have suffered physical and verbal violence, it's amazing how different a place is, a few miles here or there.

Messi shared similar thoughts about Canada as a positive and negative country for Trans Latinx:

Yes, and no. Here I underwent my gender transition and I have access to hormones. But no, because they have a double moral. The government speaks with their left side but executes with their right hand, they shut down any possibilities for this or that. Their discourse is very progressive. It's mainly on their pamphlets. (Messi)

Although it does not translate to English effectively, in Messi's reference to 'pamphlets' he is actually referring to mainstream media's portrayal of the Canadian values of diversity and 'open arms' as, in fact, being a sort of propaganda. In order to push this analysis further, the researcher then questioned *what* kind of impact the intersection of transphobia and racism had on participants and *how* they were impacted?

One of the key impacts participants identified, in their narratives, was one of re-traumatization as a result of the migratory process. Two participants, in particular, spoke about the systemic oppression and marginalization they experienced; Salomé talked about the lack of tolerance and acceptance of diversity by immigration officers, while Messi described it as one of the most unexpectedly traumatizing experiences of his life:

I definitely felt 'less' – I guess they do not have a lot of education or a lot of tolerance or acceptance for people who are different from them. There was a somewhat ugly atmosphere, but they were also doing their job. I had to wait until they finally let me through. They gave me an opportunity, given the proof I had. I showed them my documents I received when I left the hospital back home, when I was beaten up, from doctors. They told me they were going to let me go through after midnight. They knew there were no buses or cars. When they let me in, I realized that I had nowhere to go, it was a black forest and it was so cold. My concern was "how am I going to get to civilization?" (Salomé)

In my life, I have had bad and good experiences. One of the worst experiences of my life was seeking refugee status at the border. When I arrived I only knew how to say "Hello". I could not explain that I was visiting because I had planned, through an organization that supported me, to go on a country tour because I was a student leader. The officer told me that I wanted to rob Canada without paying taxes, when I arrived, I gave her the letter that had been given to me to present in immigration. They did not care. They handcuffed me, they checked my luggage, they undressed me to see if I had drugs, they took everything out of my luggage. Simply because I came from Honduras, which the only thing I could find out later from the interpreter. I arrived in Canada at noon and was able to leave at 1 in the morning the next day. They said there was an alert about people travelling from Central America, who were bringing drugs. It was terrible. There is a jail downstairs, and I was there for about an hour and a half. (Messi)

Similarly to Messi and Salomé's narratives of trauma, Rocío shared two of the most traumatic experiences of her life: sexual assaults. Even though both sexual assaults happened to her in Canada, she blames both incidents on her Trans identity and the transphobia that comes with it.

Rocío explained that she contracted HIV as a result of the first sexual assault incident:

In Vancouver I was sexually assaulted and became HIV positive. A boy came to a party at my house because it was my roommate's birthday. I met this boy in the street and he came and took advantage of me...I used to feel very good but two years ago a boy from Africa raped me. Then I do not go out because of this experience.... Yes [I was attacked because I am trans] because he told me that I was a man. People see me like that sometimes.

Messi, Rocío and Salomé's experiences of trauma (and of re-traumatization at the hands of border officials) speak to this MRP's findings that the intersections of racism and transphobia have had a demonstrable impact on participants' narratives of migration, as will be discussed further below in the context of visibility.

When asked if living in Canada is harder for a Trans Latinx, all participants spoke about the difficulties they faced. Messi shared a very insightful explanation of how oppressive life can be for Trans Latinx, based on their visibility:

It's like walking through life, especially in a place like Toronto dressed in fluorescent colours for being Trans and an even brighter fluorescent color for being Latino. It's like something exotic, in a way. In my country I never assumed my gender as such. Here I have had the opportunity, the chance to access hormonal treatment, surgery. Being Trans and Latino is being a part of a double category. It's difficult, you face so many barriers, but it makes me proud that even though I'm outside of my country, I can do things that other people would like to, but can't.

Messi then went on to explain that both Gender and ethnicity are so visible it is not possible to hide one, let alone both. He also challenges a mainstream idea of Canada as a welcoming country to newcomers through a deep look at whiteness and privilege and oppression:

To me, it is like walking down the streets, dressed in a fluorescent colour shirt, fluorescent pants and a fluorescent cap. The cap is because you are a person of colour, the shirt is because you are trans and the pants are because you are Latino. We do not have the

privilege that white people do, who can walk around unnoticed. I do not say that they do not struggle, they also have challenges, but I believe that they, despite being Trans, have many more privileges because of their color, language etc. Latinx don't have that. White people do not even realize. They say: here in Canada we support immigrants, but it is not like that.

Messi's insightful words speak directly to the intersections of transphobia and racism work to create institutional and systemic oppression for Trans Latinx individuals during the migratory process.

The institutional and systemic violence which has been perpetrated against participants in this MRP was found to often have occurred as a result of the intersection of transphobia and racism. For example, Messi spoke about his feelings of being 'less than' human as a result of his social location:

They take away your dignity. They strip you of everything, they destroy you. You are so diminished that you do not even feel human. Now I can talk about it, but at the time it was incredibly hard...I was stripped down, so that they could see if I had drugs on me. It was terrible. And I imagine it happens very often, there is so much abuse. But when you do not know how to speak English, what can you do? I'm not denying that there are privileges but... The worst thing is that they misgendered me as a woman. They did not give me the right to answer, to be able to explain who I was.

Messi's recollection of being misgendered in the refugee process (and of not being allowed to address it) is a primary example of the systemic and institutional violence perpetrated against Trans Latinx refugees. Salomé's narrative, below, also provides a real-life example of the ways in which immigration authorities have the power to perpetrate institutional violence:

They do not understand the socioeconomic exclusion we suffer, and how difficult it is for us to find a SAFE space, if it wasn't for organizations that are there to help us, the government does not care what we are going through. Because it is easy to say that I have a problem of domestic abuse, but when there is a problem of social abuse it is different, more difficult to explain it, difficult to prove it, they do not take it into account... It was the longest day of my life. When I arrived at the border and told my brief story, you had to line-up behind a car to get through. When I claimed refugee status, for some reason the immigration people told me that my luggage looked too luxurious so for me to be seeking refuge. I felt very uncomfortable because he judged my appearance. The comment felt a little hostile. I felt that

he had a slightly odd, dismissive, authoritative energy. They searched everything and made me wait in an office for 6 hours.

When asked if there is anything to be changed about the determination process during a refugee claim in terms of immigration policies, multiple participants shared that they feel there is a lot of work still to be done to eliminate systemic blocks for Trans Latinx migrants. For example, Salomé shared:

I think I would change a lot ... there's a lot of stigmatization, there's something very strange. Stereotyping. The questions I was asked were very invasive. When a person is in a situation like that, they are very vulnerable. It felt like I was accused, on the stand in court. I felt that they did not believe me and I felt that there was a lot of stereotyping, a lot of stigmatization in the way they treated me for being Latinx, obviously I could not hide my ethnicity, my background, even if I put a tie on, you knew that I was a Latinx person. I felt like they saw me as a "freak" phenomenon. If I had been a man, identified as a white man, they would have treated me differently, the tone would have been very different.

Gabriel explained that in order to help eliminate systemic oppression for migrants, people need to be educated about diversity in Canada:

No, I feel that Canada is not ready yet. Yes, there are changes. I think that for both identities, at least in my experience, in my work, I have gone through a lot of discrimination because of my two identities. There is no education, neither for the Trans community, nor Latinx nor for people where English is your second language. It is a large company I work for, but there is not enough education.

Gabriel continued to explain the impacts of not knowing one's rights, specifically due to lack of resources and language, a barrier he felt could be better addressed through increased access to resources and education:

When I arrived here in 2001, I came through the Caregiver's program. I did it for a year and a half. In 2001 my transition was not yet started, I was a lesbian. When my family found out that I was gay, they kicked me out of the house and told my employer that I was gay, and they kicked me out. Then I made an application with the government. At first, I went to see someone who did not guide me well, so I stayed without status for about 7 or 8 months. Then I met my first wife. We made a refugee claim based on our sexual orientation. And then my lawyer told me that we could have sued my employer for firing me based on my sexual condition. Then we had to wait to start the refugee claim process.

All Trans Latinx refugees interviewed suggested how the system could be changed to better address the needs of Trans Latinx refugees, Gabriel and Salomé have demonstrated that although participants faced oppression, marginalization and systemic and institutional violence at the hands of authorities, they remain actively engaged in their communities and have suggestions and hopes for improvements to the system. Intersections of transphobia and racism have real-life impacts on participants and create real-life barriers for them,

Theme #2:

Systemic Barriers and Access to Services

One of the key themes that emerged throughout the findings was the systemic barriers participants faced in accessing support and social services as well as in accessing resources such as housing and employment. All four participants in this MRP identified that accessing (or even locating) social services in Toronto was incredibly difficult. In particular, accessing housing emerged as being one of the most notably difficult tasks they faced. Further, they all identified that the language barrier they were facing exponentially increased their difficulties and, as such, linked their ‘luck’ in accessing services with access to interpretation and translation services and/or coming across service providers who spoke Spanish or found ways to communicate. Ultimately, the notion that there are systemic barriers to accessing supports and services in place for Trans Latinx migrants emerged as a central finding of this MRP.

Participants Salomé and Gabriel spoke about the barriers their community faces in accessing housing:

Housing is very, very, very difficult in Toronto. For Latinx people or Trans people in general, they do not give Trans Latinx the priority they deserve. They think of us just as any other person who has to wait 7 years to access housing. (Salomé)

Housing is fxxxed, if you do not have your ID changed according to your gender, you have to explain that you have a different name. There were several places that did not give me the apartment for rent, I think because they saw papers that did not match a man. (Gabriel)

Participant Rocío spoke about how, before her HIV diagnosis (which she feels gave her unique access to services) she, too, had difficulties accessing housing: “Finding a house in Vancouver was very difficult, we finally found a house in Burnaby with some friends and we used the money we had brought with us to pay the rent” (Rocío).

After housing, the major barrier identified by participants was language and lack of access to interpretation and translation services. Gabriel and Messi both utilize the discourse of ‘luck’ around accessing interpretation and translation services which thus provided them with pathways to accessing social services:

I think I had good luck. When I went to Revenue Canada, I told them I did not speak English and I told them everything that had happened to me. The person who helped me felt sorry for me, and she wrote everything and referred me to different places (Gabriel)

I was very lucky to find health care providers, because I found a great center and they have translators. For me the most difficult has been housing. Toronto is too expensive, you are Latino, you are racialized. You do not speak English; you are a person of colour. It is too problematic. After a year and a half, I have not been able to feel that my home is my home. (Messi)

These examples both speak to the notion that accessing services requires access to translation services. Further, the intersection of language *and* cultural barriers is highlighted by Messi, who points out that these factors cannot be considered in isolation. Rocío built on the notion that access to services requires access to language and, in doing so, also highlights access to employment as a systemic barrier faced by Trans Latinx migrants:

At first, I didn’t even know how to make coffee. I asked some friends how to make cappuccino. I had no idea. Eventually I found a school for people from all over the world, and they taught English there. I did not know that these services existed.... We eventually found a job in a cafe, as dishwashers, and that's where we started. I only communicated

with people who spoke Spanish. Because of this, it was quite difficult, and I did not know that there were free services.

Here, Gabriel, Rocío and Messi indicated that accessing translation services was a key factor in identifying pathways to accessing social services and employment within a system ridden with obstacles.

Messi linked Rocío's (above) discussion of barriers to employment with the lack of recognition of foreign credentials:

The other thing is work. Even though I have a job, it's crap and only immigrants work there. Education has also been a complicated issue for me. When teenagers come to this country without English language knowledge, they can enrol in high school, but when you are older than 21, you have to get a student permit even though I went to university, that is not valid here. It's like they say: "Welcome to Canada, everyone is welcome" but you have to start from scratch. I have 4 years of university that mean nothing here and will not help me at all.

This example highlights the complex ways in which the lived experiences of Trans Latinx refugees are intersectionally impacted by language barriers, cultural barriers, colonial understandings of knowledge production and ultimately, the reproduction of white, heteronormative values. Finally, Gabriel, in his interview, also spoke about the systemic barriers to employment created by the intersection of his identities as a Trans Latinx refugee:

I've been in Canada since 2001, it's been 17 years ...After working as a nanny, I found a job with my partner for 8 years, I worked for 10 years as a bar tender and my other job is the one I have now, so I have not had many different jobs to compare. When I started working I identified as a lesbian, I was not a trans man yet. When I talked about it [my transition] with my employer, it was quite difficult, it's still difficult.

These narratives illustrate how they are linked and built upon one another; this theme findings (intersections of transphobia and racism) can be seen as the root causes of the second theme (systemic barriers and accessing services) and ultimately are the motivation for the third and last theme which emerged from this research around the need for empowerment, community engagement and allyship.

Theme #3:

Moving Forwards: Empowerment, Community Building & Allies on the Inside

Building on the first two themes identified in this study (the third major theme which emerged from this study focuses on what participants identified as the takeaways from this research and what they feel is important moving forwards. Notions of identity, empowerment, community building, allyship and the need for more gender and culturally specific services in order to counter the impacts of racism and transphobia will all be discussed in the context of targeting the systemic barriers identified earlier.

During their interviews, all four participants touched on the importance of their identities as Trans Latinx individuals. Beyond this, however, some linked these identities to the larger notion of empowerment and community building as being important and key to the development of their cultural and gender identity in a new country:

Trans Latinx is my identity. Having that identity is very important to me. To be able to leave a trace in Toronto, we [the Trans Latinx community] can also make social changes... In Honduras I never had the opportunity because of too many barriers that I had to face from church, family, conservative jobs, a completely ignorant school and university system, ignorant about so much human diversity. In Toronto my identity is a very important part of me, because I can finally identify myself, project myself, express myself as Latinx in comparison to other countries and other cultures. The first group I joined was with the *MUJER* (women) group, which was called *PODER descolonizador* (decolonizing POWER) a program for Latinx people. (Salomé)

I just want to tell Trans Latinx people to take care of themselves because you do not know when something may happen to you. For example, that person who killed many people somewhere. We need to take care of ourselves. We should take care of ourselves in community. I would help my friends; I do not have many but the community around me. (Rocío)

I think that inclusion is needed. So far, I have not found a place where I can feel accepted. They should open more doors to understand the Latinx community. You have to have Latinx people there, to be able to feel identified. The places would have to have more Latinx people working with them to be able to identify us. (Gabriel)

I am thinking a bit on a Macro level. In particular, it seems to me that there is a space here that is missing, but I talk about these issues when I go for a beer with someone. It is very important to have a group of Trans Latinx people. It needs to be created. It seems to me that maybe there can be tools after these interviews. It is very important. (Messi)

Salomé, Rocío, Gabriel and Messi have identified, in their narratives, the linkages between identity building, community development and macro-level systemic change. Further, they have clearly highlighted the need for empowerment and community development to come from *within* the community. As Messi mentions, macro-level change can still have micro level impacts on community. Similarly, Gabriel's mentioned of the need to feel accepted within a community, and his plea for open doors, also speaks to the need for micro and macro level change, coming from within the community.

Despite this notion of grassroots, bottom-up empowerment and community development, finding allies in Canada when accessing different services was also identified as a common denominator for all participants. Even though everyone experienced some degree of discrimination, transphobia and racism at some point during their immigration or settlement process, they all emphasized how pleasantly surprised they were to meet service providers who went out of their way to support them in their journey:

I felt nervous, anxious, afraid, I was terrified to be rejected, for them to send me back. In the end, they accepted me right on the spot, which they told it was not something that happened very often. The lawyer had told me that we had to wait and that sometimes it took a long time to give answers. When I got there, I connected with an employment center to learn how to write up my resume and to connect and they gave me a beautiful recommendation letter that I submitted that day. That letter made a big difference during my hearing. (Salomé)

Emotionally it was difficult, but I found people who helped me. A social worker helped me in everything and told me where to go. The lady who fired me from where I was worked as a nanny threatened to call the police if I didn't leave so I was advice to call the police myself. I did and they were very kind and accompanied me to go there and collect my belongings. (Gabriel)

My experience at the refugee hearing was scary at first, I was nervous after hearing about other people's experiences, but mine was really good because the judge was very kind. He asked

only about 3 questions. It took about 15 minutes for him to interview me, 15 minutes with the other person, and in 45 minutes we were out of the hearing room. My lawyer could not believe it. He thought it would be difficult because the hearing was over television, and when that happens, the humanizing piece of the hearing is not usually present. In my case, it was excellent. The judge was very kind... No intrusive question. Simple things. It was amazing. (Gabriel)

Gabriel, Messi and Salomé's experiences illustrate ways in which allyship can be embraced as means of creating pathways to accessing services. In fact, all four participants expressed having positive and empowering experiences thanks to people they met who guided them around access to services and informed them of their rights. Messi, however, also spoke about the notion of accessing allyship as a privilege:

I was very privileged because I met a group of people who helped me tons. Obviously, there are spaces where you cannot get any support. It is still frustrating until today when I cannot clearly say what I want. Public servants in Ontario have much less patience when it comes to language. But I've also had very good people helping me through government services. (Messi)

Although the notion of allyship was not necessarily an expected outcome of this MRP, it is nonetheless a consistently raised theme amongst participants in the context of navigating the systemic barriers identified in the earlier second theme.

All four participants used the above notions of community building and empowerment to explain the importance of culturally specific services in Toronto. Some of them have attended services for Trans Latinx folks and have felt welcome and empowered like never before.

Therefore, building community and creating spaces that feel safe, validating, affirming and culturally familiar was identified as essential. Salomé shared how she felt when she accessed services in Spanish that empowered Latinx women:

It felt like home, like family, similar cultures. It's totally different than when you go to other groups or local organizations in Toronto. Everything was very new to me, like wow, what a beauty, an adventure, and finally I felt protected. I had been told that there were laws that protected me, that I could call the police if anyone said something to me that I did not like.

Messi then offered some recommendations to agencies that provide services to Trans Latinx to support cultural and gender identity in order to face individual and systemic barriers:

I would focus on 3 main issues. First, education. When you come to learn English, you attend spaces, schools where other immigrants do not even know what a Trans person is. If I had the power, I would like to dig deeper into these issues. We are a small group but there are Latinx and Trans people. I want to tell them: “these are your rights.” Even if you do not have permanent status, or if you are a student, you have these rights. I met people who guided me about my rights but there are many people I know who do not know their rights at all. There are people who do not start their transition before the hearing because they are afraid of being accused of fraud. That would not happen but it is a valid fear that they have. What I would do is explain and create more awareness about the rights of Trans Latinx people. (Messi)

Finally, in terms of targeted service provision which works to eliminate systemic barriers to accessing services and resources, all four participants of this MRP advocate for the inclusion of language-based services which are targeted *specifically* to the Trans Latinx community based on the gaps (and racism and transphobia) they themselves have experienced:

Creating a space for Trans Latinos who learn English in a safely and comfortably space is essential, so that people can have access to it. The agencies do not have enough information on how to treat Trans and Latinx people. Raising awareness is important in order to have access to information centers on how to get a job, access to name changes. Out of fear, some folks will not make their name changes, even when they have the right to do so. But that type of information is not openly known. You have access only if you know. (Messi)

Many of us do not speak English, it is a barrier when English is not spoken. We need a specific agency for Trans Latinx. I would feel more secure, because it is my people, my language, I can develop, and there is not at this moment. Certain places should open more for Latinx people. (Gabriel)

All four participants in this MRP talked about their experiences as Trans Latinx in Canada as unique and empowering and they expressed how important it is to have access to culturally specific services in the community. This was identified as the main recommendation of all four participants.

The findings in this study have been ground breaking, insightful and incredibly empowering for any Trans Latinx Refugee who will read this MRP and will be able to relate to

some or all of the powerful experiences of these participants. In order to discuss these findings in depth, the following chapter shows an analysis of such findings based on the four main components of the study.

CHAPTER 6. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The four components of this study are 1) the Experiences of LGBTQ Refugee Claimants & The Settlement Process 2) Colonialism in Latin America: An Analysis of Coloniality 3) Sexual orientation and Gender Identity – links to White Supremacy, Racism and Power 4) Masculinity and Male Power. Out of those themes, some were more present throughout the interviews than others, and there were themes that were never considered before the research process but were very relevant to participants and therefore will be addressed and promoted in future research.

One of the themes that was not as present as the rest during the interviews with participants, and that is the concept of masculinity and male power. Even though all participants were aware of gender power imbalances, only half of them addressed it as a main issue in their gender or immigration journeys. Trans masculine participants were able to identify changes and power differences after transition, while Trans feminine participants acknowledged transphobia based on femininity, but did not link it to male power throughout their interviews.

When it comes to the experiences of Trans Latinx Refugee claimants and the role of the IRCC during the process of eligibility and determination for Trans Latinx refugees, Brotman and Lee's (2011) discussion of systemic and institutional violence exercised by the immigration and refugee process in Canada was prevalent and certainly addressed by half of the participants. The other half acknowledged that the immigration process can be abusive and racist for most Trans Latinx folks but they experienced it very differently. In terms of their settlement process, one of the most prevalent themes throughout all interviews was the hardship, discrimination and endless challenges faced by all participants throughout their settlement process. This validates the

importance of exploring participants' intersectional experiences since their arrival in Canada. It shows how relevant the discussions of the intersectionalities of gender and race identities can be (Epstein and Carillo, 2014).

The sexual orientation and gender identity topic was brought up by every single participant. The link of their trans identity to discrimination based on white supremacy, racism and power was present, mentioned and reiterated by all participants. In different ways and at different times throughout their interviews, all participants were able to identify white supremacy as the key to the discrimination they faced in Canada, whether upon their arrival or throughout their settlement process.

One of the most important themes in this MRP that was not reflected in the literature review or anticipated by the researcher is the importance of strong allies in the field of social work who have supported all participants throughout their immigration and settlement process. Having said that, in order to see positive outcomes in service provision, success cannot rely merely on the importance of individual support of allyship of social workers, there is an immediate need for culturally specific programs that will focus on all intersections of Trans Latinx service users, in order to reduce marginalization and, institutional violence and endless systemic barriers.

Moving beyond the mere identification of the impacts that transphobia and racism have on Trans Latinx individuals during their migratory process, this MRP also sought to identify how participants felt the system could make changes in order to eliminate some of the systemic barriers created for participants. Participants provided a wide variety of examples, illustrating that systemic barriers to accessing housing are multiplied for Trans Latinx migrants, given the

unique intersections of transphobia and racism they face as a result of their intersecting identities.

As mentioned in the introduction, this MRP utilized a Qualitative Interpretive Phenomenology approach, using Queer Theory and Intersectionality to analyze the experiences of Trans Latinx individuals. All participants' experiences and their incredibly generous approach through sharing of narratives of both phenomena, Trans and Latinx experiences, have helped identify intersectionalities of race, gender, sexuality, class and ability. Their stories have also allowed for a deep exploration of how the Trans and Latinx identities intersect. The questions asked to participants were based on the interconnection between Queer Theory and Intersectionality, and their answers have contributed to extending Queer and Intersectional theories to my research. One of the most relevant impacts of this research process was to identify how much culturally specific programs are needed for the Trans Latinx community.

Even though not every participant identified power dynamics that have lead to discrimination, most of them were able to describe how dominant discourses can reinforce discrimination and marginalization. This topic was studied by Rossiter (2007) who talks about Foucault's analysis of discourse, which is extremely rich and includes not only *meaning production* but also institutional power relations (Rossiter, 2007). This use of Foucauldian analysis of discourse and meaning production was utilized in the analysis component of this MRP to identify the types of resistance found in the narratives of participants.

Implications for Social Work

As a critical social worker, when it comes to critical reflexive practice, in order to honour the type of work that I do and to advocate for the type of work I think all social workers should be doing, I find Rossiter's interrogation of our whole *self* very useful, as it allows for deeper

interrogation with regards to our social selves. As service providers, we are encouraged to understand the social constructions of our relationships with clients that determine our behaviour and approach when dealing with service users and their needs (Rossiter, 2007).

Even when dealing with folks who socially locate themselves in a place that is very similar to ours, we need to check in with our biases and do work on identifying socially constructed notions of stereotypes (Rossiter, 2007). Extrapolating on this, constructing new narratives should be the goal of social workers, who need to ask the right questions in order to guide participants through a deconstruction of a mainstream discourse that leads to further oppression: “[a]s professionals, continuous questions about how power works through our subjectivities is critical reflexive practice as ethics, and I assert that this ethics is the first concern of practice – not theory, not technique, not knowledge” (Rossiter, 2007, p. 34). most participants were able to identify power imbalance and oppressive policies in place that have contributed to stigmatization and discrimination. They emphasized how essential it was for them to feel welcome, understood and seen by social workers who were reflexive, ethical and progressive in the provision of social services.

The field of social work has successfully focused on deconstructing dominant discourses, working towards empowering service users, creating programs that are inclusive and anti-oppressive in nature, and there have been incredible progress in terms of service provision that look at intersectionalities as a priority. Having said that, it was immediately notable in this research that all participants mentioned the need for culturally specific services due to a definite lack of resources for Trans Latinx individuals and communities in Toronto. As participants in this research identified, service users need to feel that they can speak their own language and talk about their culture without feeling discriminated against. They need to feel included, welcome

and safe based on ALL their intersections, not simply their gender identity or their cultural background. Ultimately, there is a need for *both* intersectionalities to be accounted for and taken into consideration when planning programs for Trans Latinx.

Social services are only successful when new programs are created taking service users' needs into consideration. As participants have expressed, placing all Trans folks in the same program, without addressing their culture is not inclusive but rather perpetuates oppression and discrimination. Further, offering services to Latinx who are not Trans is equally oppressive and the outcomes are unsuccessful, since Trans Latinx do not attend programs that will pose a risk to their safety. Listening to participants is not only helpful to achieve goals and succeed but it is a moral obligation and it should be applied to every single program and community development project.

Finally, it is essential to reflect on the role and moral responsibility of researchers. Being a researcher implies not only collecting data, but also analyzing it in a way that will be used to learn about gaps and support the creation of programs that will eventually give back to the community. Even though the story of Lorena, the participant whose interview could not be used due to her immigration status at the moment, she was guided around her legal rights and responsibilities through the provision of legal resources. This is key to critical social work and research practices in order to provide support as opposed to simply taking information without giving anything in return.

Limitations

One of the limitations faced throughout this study is the lack of literature that is specific to Trans Latinx. Even though it was feasible to find literature that describes the experiences of Trans folks and separately, experiences of racialized Latinx folks in North America, this study is

unique in its essence so finding literature that discusses both identities, has been extremely challenging and frustrating at times. This is an interpretive phenomenological study and it would have been easier and at times more validating to have available literature that describes both types of phenomena studied. Some of the references used in this study were contacted by the researcher directly to find out ways of collecting further data and literature but all authors agreed on the fact that this is a unique topic, which will be ground-breaking but it is presently lacking resources due to a limited bibliography.

Another limitation was found during the recruiting process. This was unexpected, since the eligibility requirements were quite broad, there was no gender restriction, the age requirement was not limiting, but the refugee experiences requirement was a bit more challenging than predicted. Also, a few potential participants who contacted the researcher initially, could not come to the interviews due to the fact that they work long hours or their medical conditions prevented them from travelling. Initially, it was difficult to recruit male identified trans folks, so the researcher contacted agencies to find out if that was a pattern, since only trans women were interested in participation. All agencies shared that it is in fact a pattern and in most cases, almost all participants are female identified. After a few weeks that was no longer an issue as half of the participants were male identified.

Based on participants' narratives and suggestions for future research projects and culturally specific programs, the main limitation to this type of work is funding. Most programs in Toronto are funded for a certain amount of time and they must meet a certain criterion. Based on the researcher's own professional experience and on the findings on this research project, receiving funding for small projects that do not include a diverse variety of participants will be a real challenge.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION

Building on the notions of intersectional relations of power as discussed above, the findings of this MRP demonstrated that, at this point in their settlement process, all participants have learned the importance of both every day acts of resistance and of fighting for social justice. In their narratives, they all spoke about resisting by refusing to stand still or remain silent when it comes to either their rights or other people's rights. Further, they all spoke about being involved in community development and are all looking forward to changes in culturally specific programs. This demonstrates that resisting is not only a political act, it is a choice to live the daily values of challenging patriarchy, neoliberal politics, racism, transphobia, homophobia, sexism, ableism, classism and all kinds of marginalization through simple acts that will make a difference on both a micro *and* a macro level.

Based on the lack of literature on Trans Latinx Refugees' experiences of settlement and immigration, it is evident that this MRP is ground-breaking and it opens the door to new research for this understudied community. I am confident that this new body of knowledge will benefit and create new studies in the fields of social work, public health, immigration and refugee studies, sociology and politics. As this study has proven to be unique, it reinforces the notion that, in order to create change, it is essential to address issues that have not been researched before. Participants' request for specific programs for Trans Latinx Refugees in Spanish has emphasized the need to build from this pioneer project.

At the conclusion of this MRP, I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to interview such insightful participants who shared their most personal and heartbreaking stories with me. I feel even more privileged to have received advice and tips on how to support Trans Latinx in the future. This brings a huge sense of responsibility and it reminds me of the many reasons why I

decided to work in this field – as the findings of this MRP show, all participants were able to identify their own experiences of oppression, marginalization, transphobia and homophobia, through a deep critical reflection of their journeys. They were also able to identify how important interpersonal relationships have been to them and they are eternally grateful to those allies who understand how systemic oppression works and who have walked the extra mile to support them. That is, to me, incredibly empowering and it provides different perspectives of the same situation.

APPENDIX A. RECRUITMENT FLYER (SPANISH)



*Proyecto de Investigación para personas que se identifican como
Trans Latinx
Experiencias de Asentamiento de Refugiadx*

Trans Latinxs en Canadá

Si tu:

*Te identificas como **Trans Latinx** o*

Como Latinx que no pertenece a un género en particular

Tienes entre 30 y 60 años

*Has llegado a Canadá como **Refugiadx***

Te gustaría compartir tus experiencias para un Proyecto de Investigación

Por favor, envía un e-mail a Caro Castro, Estudiante de Maestría en Trabajo Social
A ccastrop@ryerson.ca

Este estudio ha sido revisado por el Doctor Henry Parada, supervisor de investigación de la Universidad Ryerson.

Este estudio de investigación está siendo conducido por Caro Castro, estudiante de la Maestría en Trabajo Social, como parte de sus estudios de postgrado en Trabajo Social.

Lxs participantes deben hablar español como primer idioma, ya que las entrevistas serán en español. Lxs participantes recibirán fichas de transporte y refrigerios.

La Junta de Ética de Investigación de la Universidad Ryerson (REB). El número de REB de Caro Castro es 2018-131. Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en este estudio, comuníquese con:

Research Ethics Board
c/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation
Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3
416-979-5042
rebchair@ryerson.ca



APPENDIX A. RECRUITMENT FLYER (ENGLISH)



***Trans Latinx Research
Settlement Experiences of Trans Latinxs Refugees in Canada***

If you:

*Identify as a **Trans Latinx** or*

*Identify as a **Gender non-conforming Latinx***

Are 30-60 years' old

*Came to Canada as a **Refugee** claimant*

*Would like to share your experience for a **Research Project***

Please e-mail Caro Castro, MSW Candidate
At ccastrop@ryerson.ca

This study has been reviewed by the Henry Parada, MSW, PHD, Ryerson University research supervisor.

This research study is being conducted by Caro Castro, MSW Candidate, as part of their graduate studies in Social Work.

Participants must be fluid in Spanish, as interviews will be carried out in Spanish. Tokens and refreshments will be provided.

Ryerson University Research Ethics Board. Caro Castro's REB number is 2018-131. Should you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study, please contact:

Research Ethics Board
c/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation
Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3
416-979-5042
rebchair@ryerson.ca



APPENDIX B. CONSENT FORM (SPANISH)

Universidad Ryerson Acuerdo de Consentimiento

Queremos invitarle a participar de un estudio de investigación. Lea este formulario de consentimiento para comprender en que consiste su participación. Antes de dar su consentimiento para participar, formule cualquier pregunta para asegurarse de comprender lo que implicará su participación.

EXPERIENCIAS DE ASENTAMIENTO DE INMIGRANTES Y REFUGIADXS TRANS LATINX EN CANADÁ

INVESTIGADORXS: Este estudio de investigación está llevado a cabo por Caro Castro, Candidatx a la Maestría en Trabajo Social (MSW), bajo la supervisión de Henry Parada, MSW, PhD, de la Escuela de Trabajo Social de la Universidad de Ryerson. hparada@ryerson.ca , 416-979-5000, interno 6223

Si tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud sobre la investigación, no dude en ponerse en contacto con Caro Castro en: ccastrop@ryerson.ca

PROPÓSITO DEL ESTUDIO DE INVESTIGACION

El propósito de este estudio es examinar las experiencias interseccionales de lxs refugiadx Trans Latinxs en torno a la identidad de género, el idioma, la ciudadanía, la orientación sexual, la raza y la clase durante el proceso de asentamiento. Este estudio tiene como objetivo responder a esta pregunta: ¿Cuáles son las experiencias de las personas Trans durante su proceso de Refugio y Asentamiento? El estudio es una investigación fenomenológica cualitativa. Este estudio se enfocará en dos tipos diferentes de fenómenos. Uno es la identidad Trans de lxs participantxs y el otro enfoque será su estatus de refugio y proceso de asentamiento. Los datos se recopilarán entrevistando a cinco participantes. Estas entrevistas se grabarán en audio y se realizarán en español y serán traducidas por el/la investigadorx principal, que cuenta con más de 20 años de experiencia en traducción. Los resultados se utilizarán en el Artículo Principal de Investigación de Caro Castro al completar su título de Maestría en Trabajo Social.

En que consiste su participación: Si usted se ofrece como voluntarix para participar en este estudio, se le pedirá que preste su consentimiento al firmar este formulario después de explicarle sobre la confidencialidad y el/la investigadorx responderá a cualquier pregunta o inquietud que usted tenga. Se le harán preguntas sobre su género, etnia, ciudadanía/estatus migratorio, educación e ingresos. Habrá preguntas con final abierto desde su propia perspectiva y basadas en sus propias experiencias.

La entrevista no debería durar más de una hora. Después de su participación, puede comunicarse con Caro Castro por cualquier pregunta complementaria que pueda tener.

Beneficios Posibles: a pesar de no beneficiarse directamente por participar de este estudio, esperamos que su participación contribuya a Refugiadx Trans Latinx en el futuro y ayude a reconocer sus experiencias de asentamiento.

¿Cuáles son los posibles riesgos para usted como participante?

Puede sentir cierta incomodidad al compartir y reflexionar sobre experiencias difíciles con unx investigadorx, ya que se lx colocará en una situación de vulnerabilidad. Esto podría provocar sentimientos de malestar, ansiedad o emociones incómodas. Si ese es el caso, no es necesario que responda ninguna pregunta desconcertante y puede pedir que esta entrevista se suspenda de manera temporaria o permanente.

Confidencialidad:

Solo el/lx investigadorx principal (Caro Castro) y el supervisor involucradxs en este proyecto tendrán acceso a esta información. La grabación de audio de la entrevista se almacenará en un dispositivo bloqueado por contraseña. El formulario de consentimiento se almacenará en la caja fuerte bloqueada en el hogar del/la investigadorx. Después de que se hayan transcrito las entrevistas, se usarán seudónimos y se borrará la información de identificación y la grabación de audio de la entrevista. Los datos se almacenarán durante un año en la unidad de google protegida por una clave de la Universidad Ryerson, del/la principal investigadorx. Las copias impresas de los formularios de consentimiento se almacenarán en un gabinete protegido por llave en el hogar del/la investigadorx principal.

Incentivos para la Participación: Usted brindará la oportunidad de compartir sus experiencias que pueden utilizarse para empoderar a futurxs participantes y refugiadx Trans Latinx que han tenido que enfrentar situaciones similares.

Compensación por su participación: No hay ningún costo asociado con su participación. Se proporcionarán fichas de transporte y refrigerios.

Participación Voluntaria y Retiro de la misma:

Su participación en este estudio es completamente voluntaria. Usted tiene el derecho de negarse a responder a cualquiera de las preguntas que se le harán. Puede retirar su participación de este grupo en cualquier momento. Retirar la participación de este estudio no tendrá consecuencias y sus datos no serán utilizados para el estudio. Puede dejar de participar en cualquier momento y aun así recibirá los incentivos descritos anteriormente. Su decisión de retirar su participación en este estudio no influirá en sus relaciones futuras con la Universidad Ryerson o con lxs investigadores.

Difusión de data

Los datos se difundirán a través de presentaciones de clase y conferencias en la universidad Ryerson, Universidad de York y la Universidad de Toronto (UofT), así como en terciarios como George Brown, Humber y Seneca. Este estudio será publicado como un artículo de revista. El/la

investigadorx principal presentará su solicitud para presentar en conferencias, tales como la Conferencia Anual Interdisciplinaria de Estudiantes de Estudios Trans en la Universidad de York y otros. El/la investigadorx principal tiene como objetivo desarrollar un proyecto de investigación más amplio sobre este tema durante sus estudios de doctorado en un futuro cercano. Lxs participantes no recibirán una copia de los resultados de la investigación

Preguntas sobre el estudio: si tiene alguna pregunta sobre la investigación ahora, por favor no dude en preguntar. Si tiene preguntas más adelante sobre la investigación, puede comunicarse con:

Caro Castro
ccastrop@ryerson.ca
Universidad Ryerson
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, Ontario
Canadá M5B 2K3

Henry Parada, MSW, PhD.
Profesor asociado
Escuela de Trabajo Social
Universidad Ryerson

Este estudio ha sido revisado por la Junta de Ética en Investigación de la Universidad Ryerson. Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en este estudio, comuníquese con:

Junta de Ética de la Investigación
c/o Oficina del Vicepresidente de Investigación e Innovación
Universidad Ryerson
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3
416-979-5042
rebchair@ryerson.ca

Proyecto: EXPERIENCIAS DE ASENTAMIENTO DE REFUGIADXS TRANS LATINX EN CANADÁ

CONFIRMACIÓN DEL ACUERDO:

Su firma a continuación indica que ha leído la información en este acuerdo y ha tenido la oportunidad de hacer cualquier pregunta que tenga sobre el estudio. Su firma también indica que acepta participar en el estudio y que se le ha explicado que puede cambiar de opinión y retirar su consentimiento para participar en cualquier momento. Le dieron una copia de este acuerdo.

Le han informado que al firmar este acuerdo de consentimiento no está renunciando a ninguno de sus derechos legales.

Nombre del/la participante (por favor escriba)

Firma del/la participante

Fecha

Acepto que graben mi participación en audio para los propósitos de este estudio. Entiendo cómo serán almacenadas y destruidas estas grabaciones.

Firma del/la participante

Fecha

APPENDIX B. CONSENT FORM (ENGLISH)

The logo for Ryerson University, featuring the text "Ryerson University" in white on a blue rectangular background, with a yellow vertical bar to its right.

Ryerson University
Consent Agreement

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Please read this consent form so that you understand what your participation will involve. Before you consent to participate, please ask any questions to be sure you understand what your participation will involve.

SETTLEMENT EXPERIENCES OF TRANS LATINX IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN CANADA

INVESTIGATORS: This research study is being conducted by Caro Castro, Master of Social Work (MSW) Candidate, under the supervision of Henry Parada, MSW, PhD, from the School of Social Work at Ryerson University.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Caro Castro at: ccastrop@ryerson.ca

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this Major Research Paper is to examine the intersectional experiences of Trans Latinxs Refugees around gender identity, language, citizenship, sexual orientation, race and class during the settlement process. This Major Research Paper aims to answer this question: What are the experiences of Trans folks during their Refugee and Settlement process? The study is a Qualitative Phenomenological Research. This study will focus on two different types of phenomena. One is the participants trans identity and the other focus will be on their refugee status and settlement process. Data will be collected by interviewing five participants. These in-depth interviews will be audio recorded and conducted in Spanish and translated by principal investigator who has over 20 years of translation experience. The results will be used for the Major Research Paper of Caro Castro in completion of their Master of Social Work degree.

What You Will Be Asked to Do: If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to provide consent by signing this form after being informed of confidentiality and the researcher answers any questions or concerns you may have. You will be asked questions about your gender, ethnicity, citizenship/immigration status, education, and income. There will be open-ended questions from your own perspective and based on your own experiences.

The interview should last no longer than an hour. After your participation, you can contact Caro Castro for any follow-up question you may have.

Potential Benefits: Although you will not benefit directly in participating in the study, it is our hope that your participation may contribute to future Trans Latinx Refugees and help validate their settlement experiences.

What are the Potential Risks to you as a Participant?

You may experience some discomfort while sharing and reflecting upon difficult experiences with a researcher, as you will be put in a vulnerable position. This could lead to upset feelings, anxiety, or uncomfortable emotions. If that is the case, you do not need to answer any unsettling questions and you may ask for this interview to stop temporarily or permanently.

Confidentiality:

Only the principal investigator (Caro Castro) and the supervisor involved with this project will have access to this information. The consent form will be stored in the researcher's locked safe at home. After the interviews have been transcribed, pseudonyms will be used and identifying information as well as the audio-recording of the interview will be erased. Data will be stored for a year on the principal investigator's password-protected Ryerson google drive. Hard copies of consent forms will be stored in a key-protected cabinet at the principal investigator's home.

Incentives for Participation: You will provide the opportunity to share your experiences that may be used to empower future participants and Trans Latinx refugees who have had to face similar situations.

Compensation for Participation: There is no cost associated with your participation. Tokens and refreshments will be provided.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to answer any of the questions you will be asked. You may withdraw your participation from this group at any time. Withdrawing participation from this study will have no consequences and your data will not be used for the study. You may stop participating at any time and you will still be given the incentives and reimbursements described above. Your decision to withdraw from this study will not influence your future relations with Ryerson University or investigators.

Data Dissemination

Data will be disseminated through class presentations and lectures at Ryerson University, York University and the University of Toronto (UofT), as well as colleges such as George Brown, Humber and Seneca. This study will be published as a journal article. The principal investigator will apply to present at conferences, such as the Annual Interdisciplinary Trans Studies Students conference at York University and others. The principal investigator aims to develop a larger research project on this topic during their Doctorate (PHD) studies in the near future. Participants will not be provided with a copy of the research findings

Questions about the Study: If you have any questions about the research now, please ask. If you have questions later about the research, you may contact:

Caro Castro
ccastrop@ryerson.ca

Ryerson University
Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5B 2K3

Henry Parada, MSW, PhD.
Associate Professor
School of Social Work
Ryerson University

This study has been reviewed by the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board. Should you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study, please contact:

Research Ethics Board
c/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation
Ryerson University
350 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2K3
416-979-5042
rebchair@ryerson.ca

Project: SETTLEMENT EXPERIENCES OF TRANS LATINX IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN CANADA

CONFIRMATION OF AGREEMENT:

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this agreement and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to participate in the study and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this agreement. You have been told that by signing this consent agreement you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature of Participant

Date

I agree to be audio-recorded for the purposes of this study. I understand how these recordings will be stored and destroyed.

Signature of Participant

Date

Guía de Entrevista

Preámbulo

Gracias por participar en este proyecto de investigación. Esta entrevista tomará aproximadamente de 1 a 2 horas para completarse. Quiero asegurarle que su identidad seguirá siendo confidencial, y solo mi supervisor de investigación y yo tendremos acceso a la información que nos proporcione. Su nombre será reemplazado por un seudónimo y se eliminará todo tipo de identificación cuando transcriba esta entrevista. Antes de comenzar, quisiera pedirle permiso para grabar esta entrevista.

Puede solicitar en cualquier momento de esta entrevista que pare la grabación para tomarse un descanso. También puede omitir cualquier pregunta de la entrevista que no desee contestar, y no es necesario que proporcione una razón para hacerlo. Puede detener la entrevista y retirar su consentimiento en cualquier momento durante esta entrevista, y no necesita dar una razón para hacerlo.

¿Tiene alguna pregunta para mí antes de comenzar?

Por favor, conteste a las siguientes preguntas:*Datos demográficos*

- 1) Dado que no usaremos su nombre real, ¿qué nombre le gustaría que usemos para referirnos a usted a los fines de esta entrevista? Lorena
- 2) Cuántos años tiene? 39
- 3) ¿Hay algún género en particular con el que usted se identifica? ¿Si es así, Cuál?
- 4) ¿Cuál es su nivel más alto de educación?
- 5) ¿Cómo obtuvo su estado de residente permanente? ¿Llego aquí como solicitante de refugio?

Guía de Entrevista

- 6) ¿Cuándo se mudó a Canadá? ¿Hablaba inglés antes de mudarte a Canadá?

- a. En caso afirmativo, describa sus experiencias para encontrar servicios sociales en Toronto como anglo-parlante.
 - b. Si no, describa sus experiencias para encontrar servicios sociales en Toronto para alguien que no habla inglés.
- 7) ¿Qué significa para usted identificarse como Trans Latinx? ¿Qué significó para usted involucrarse con su identidad Trans Latinx en Canadá y en su país de origen?
- 8) ¿Se identificaba como Trans en su país de origen?
- 9) ¿Dónde hizo su solicitud de refugio? ¿Cuál fue su experiencia al llegar a las fronteras de Canadá?
- 10) ¿Cuál fue su experiencia con funcionarixs de Inmigración, qué pensaba y sentía en ese momento? ¿Cuál fue su reacción? ¿Cómo se sintió con respecto a la reacción de ellxs? ¿Cómo te pareció que lxs canadienses lo percibían como unx refugiadx de una minoría de género?
- 11) ¿Qué le pareció su audiencia de la junta de refugiadx de Inmigración? Si pudiera cambiar algo sobre el proceso de determinación, ¿qué sería? ¿Por qué?
- 12) ¿Cuáles han sido algunos de los desafíos que ha enfrentado desde que llegó a Canadá? ¿Cómo describiría su proceso de búsqueda de vivienda/empleo/medicx en Toronto?
- 13) ¿En tu experiencia, crees que Canadá es un lugar positivo para Trans Latinx?
- 14) ¿Qué recomendaciones les darías a las agencias que brindan servicios a Trans Latinx para apoyar la identidad cultural y de género y enfrentar barreras para el desarrollo de la identidad de género?

15) ¿Hay algo más que quiera contarme con respecto a su identidad de Trans Latinx que usted considere importante para mí que podría ayudar a otrxs Trans Latinx en el futuro a través de la investigación?

Preguntas de chequeo:

A lxs participantes se les harán estas preguntas de chequeo durante la entrevista:

- ¿Cómo te sientes?
- ¿Quieres parar?

- ¿Necesitas un descanso?

Interview Guide

Preamble

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. This interview will take approximately 1-2 hours to complete. I want to assure you that your identity will remain confidential, and only my research supervisor and I will have access to the information you provide. Your name will be replaced by a pseudonym and other identifying information will be removed when I transcribe this interview.

Before we begin, I would like your permission to record this interview.

You may ask at any point during this interview to pause the recording and take a break. You may also skip any interview questions that you do not wish to answer, and you do not need to provide a reason for doing so. You may stop the interview and withdraw your consent at any point during this interview, and you do not need to provide a reason for doing so.

Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Please answer the following questions:

Demographic Data

- 1) Since we will not be using your real name, what name would you like for us to use to refer to you for the purpose of this interview?
- 2) How old are you?
- 3) Is there any particular gender you identify with? If so, which one?
- 4) What is your highest level of education?
- 5) How did you obtain your permanent resident status? Did you arrive as a refugee claimant?

Interview Guide

- 6) When did you move to Canada? Did you speak English before moving to Canada?
 - a. If yes, describe your experiences finding social services in Toronto as an English speaker

b. If no, describe your experiences finding social services in Toronto as a non-English speaker.

- 7) What does it mean to identify as a Trans Latinx? What did it mean for you to engage in your identity as a Trans Latinx in Canada and in country of origin?
- 8) Did you identify as Trans in your country of origin?
- 9) Where did you make your refugee claim? What was your experience upon arriving at Canada's borders?
- 10) What was your experience with immigration officials, what were you thinking and feeling? What was their reaction? How did you feel about their reaction? How did you feel you were being perceived by Canadian's as a gender minority refugee?
- 11) How did you perceive your Immigration refugee board hearing? If you could change anything about the determination process what would it be? Why?
- 12) What have been some of the challenges you have faced since arriving to Canada? How would you describe your process of finding housing/employment/a health care provider in Toronto?
- 13) Have you experienced Canada as a positive place for trans Latinx?
- 14) What recommendations would you make to agencies that provide services to Trans Latinx in terms of supporting cultural and gender identity and addressing barriers to the development of gender identity?
- 15) Is there anything else that you want to tell me related to your Trans Latinx identity that you feel is important for me to know as a part of research that might be able to help other Trans Latinx in the future through research?

Check-up questions:

Participants will be asked these check-up questions throughout the interview:

- How are you feeling?
- Do you want to stop?
- Do you need a break?

APPENDIX D. ETHICS APPROVAL



To: Caro Castro Social Work

Re: REB 2018-131: Settlement Experiences of Trans Latinx Refugees in Canada Date: May 16, 2018

Dear Caro Castro,

The review of your protocol REB File REB 2018-131 is now complete. The project has been approved for a one year period. Please note that before proceeding with your project, compliance with other required University approvals/certifications, institutional requirements, or governmental authorizations may be required.

This approval may be extended after one year upon request. Please be advised that if the project is not renewed, approval will expire and no more research involving humans may take place. If this is a funded project, access to research funds may also be affected.

Please note that REB approval policies require that you adhere strictly to the protocol as last reviewed by the REB and that any modifications must be approved by the Board before they can be implemented. Adverse or unexpected events must be reported to the REB as soon as possible with an indication from the Principal Investigator as to how, in the view of the Principal Investigator, these events affect the continuation of the protocol.

Finally, if research subjects are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and approvals of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research.

Please quote your REB file number (REB 2018-131) on future correspondence. Congratulations and best of luck in conducting your research.

Dr. Patrizia Albanese, PhD
Chair, Ryerson University Research Ethics Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrizia Albanese". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

The Following protocol attachments have been reviewed and approved.

Caro Castro Interview Guide .docx (submitted on: 15 May 2018)
Caro- MRP Consent Form Spanish (May 8).docx (submitted on: 15 May 2018) Comments to Chair .docx (submitted on: 15 May 2018)
Trans Latinx Research Flyer SPANISH.docx (submitted on: 15 May 2018)
Caro- MRP Consent Form Final (May 8).docx (submitted on: 15 May 2018)
Spanish Interview Guide Trans Latinx Research .docx (submitted on: 15 May 2018) Recursos de Salud Mental en la comunidad para gente Trans.docx (submitted on: 15 May 2018)
Trans Latinx Research Flyer.docx (submitted on: 15 May 2018)
Community Resources for Mental Health Support for Trans Folks.docx (submitted on: 15 May 2018)

If any changes are made to the attached document throughout the course of the research, an amendment **MUST** be submitted to, and subsequently approved by the REB.

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