

# Undergraduate Research Symposium May 17, 2013 Mary Gates Hall

## Online Proceedings

2B

### THE AMERICAS REVISITED: LOCAL VOICES CHALLENGING AND OCCUPYING CONSTRUCTED NATIONAL IDENTITIES

*Session Moderator: Julie Villegas, English*

**171 MGH**

*3:45 PM to 5:15 PM*

\* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

#### **Old War, Nuanced Soldiers: 'Generational Borderland' Catalysts of Chilean University Movement**

*Sara Jane Alstrom, Senior, International Studies*

*Mary Gates Scholar*

*Mentor: Jos?? Antonio Lucero, International Studies/CHID*

*Mentor: Carolyn Pinedo Turnovsky, American Ethnic Studies*

*Mentor: Raj Chetty*

*Mentor: Simon Trujillo*

The infamous dictator Augusto Pinochet came to power through a bloody coup on September 11, 1973 and drastically changed the face of the Chilean government. His regime instituted strict policies of neoliberalism that led to the privatization of the university system. Forty years after the coup, many of these policies remain in place, untouched and accepted as the reasons behind Chile as the 'economic miracle' of South America. However, tensions under these neoliberal policies, specifically in the university system, fomented a recent eruption of political activism in May of 2011. Why is it that Chile, one of the most economically 'successful' countries in South America and the 'pride' of the IMF and World Bank models, is seeing the rise of a powerful student movement against neoliberal legacies? My research juxtaposes the master narrative of Chile as a 'model country', in terms of hegemonic modernity, against the experiences of the Chilean university students who have fought to challenge it. I argue that the catalyst behind the student movement can be in part explained by the legacies of Pinochet's repression and the political struggles of past generations. This contradictory temporal space forms a 'generational borderland'. These generational ruptures combined with the legacies of repression, have led to the emergence of new forms of innovative and marketable protest, cultivated longevity for the movement through the mistrust of politicians, and inspired a reinvention of the Communist Party of Chile.

#### **Triquis from San Juan Copala: Identities Around Conflict**

*Michelle Carrizosa, Senior, International Studies*

*Mentor: Carolyn Pinedo Turnovsky, American Ethnic Studies*

*Mentor: Raj Chetty*

Colonization in the 16th century permitted the creation of borderlands of indigenous groups in Mexico. As Mestizos became the majority in the country, indigenous groups rested in a borderland of injustice and inequality. To this day, indigenous groups still live in the struggle for justice. My aim is to research Los Triquis from San Juan Copala, Oaxaca and explore the realities surrounding the conflict that is taking place there; especially the implications in shaping Triqui identities around this conflict. Though various scholars have examined the paramilitary conflict in San Juan Copala, Triquis along with a study of their identify formation have been left out of the picture of the conflict. I intend to focus on the direct consequences on the individual rather than on the nature of the conflict itself through analyzing interviews with experts on the conflict and videos with first-hand accounts by Triquis who have escaped such violence. Since 1988, rising Triqui paramilitary groups allegedly helping Triqui people in San Juan Copala against injustices from the government, have created a paramilitary conflict. The resulting violence has led to the displacement of thousands of Triquis, who find it impossible to return home as they are attacked by their own people once they try. The particularity of this conflict is the government's hidden involvement and it has affected every age and gender group in San Juan Copala thus changing the dynamics of interaction.

### **Queering the Discourse: The Importance of Intersectional Identities and Artivismo in Social Movements**

*Alejandra Juliette (Alejandra) Olivos, Junior, Comparative History of Ideas, American Ethnic Studies*

*Mary Gates Scholar*

*Mentor: Carolyn Pinedo Turnovsky, American Ethnic Studies*

This research will illuminate shared discourse between the Chicano Movement and the Undocumented Youth Movement to highlight the intersectionality of identities. The Chicano Movement has been studied extensively by scholars and much has been said about the machista exclusions of women and Queer Chicana/os. My research seeks to examine the Undocumented Youth Movement and how this group has changed the typical exclusionary elements of its predecessor by making active efforts for inclusion. Through theoretical framework surrounding Queer and Chicano identity and my own personal experience, I will compare cultural production created during the Chicano Movement by Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherrie Moraga y otras compañeras and the Undocumented Youth artivismo of Yosimar Reyes and Julio Salgado, who identify as “Undocu-Queer” artists. Their work contributes to an inclusive social movement crossing borders of sexuality, gender, citizenship, and race. Artivistas are providing new narratives and integrating it in U.S. society by claiming agency and demanding change in a country where anti-immigration laws are becoming more restrictive. The contributions of artists like Salgado and Reyes add to the strength of this movement. This research will add to a broader understanding of social movements, immigration policies in the U.S., and allow for a deeper understanding of the way culture fuels and defines social movements and politics. Additionally, through my own journey of understanding my Self and learning to survive through learning, creating and producing art I seek to queer the discourse that is occurring ahora in the Undocumented Youth Movement.

### **Between Longing and Belonging: Continuing Dilemmas of Chilean Exiles in the U.S.**

*Mahala Katherine (Mahala) Lettvin, Recent Graduate, American Studies (Bothell)*

*Mary Gates Scholar*

*Mentor: Julie Shayne, Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences*

During the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile (1973-1990), attempts to exclude leftist-oriented thinkers resulted in the exile of over one million Chileans from their homeland. In what was perceived to be a temporary absence, Chilean exiles faced unusual dilemmas while waiting for democracy and normalcy to return to Chile. This period of uncertainty was especially pronounced for those exiles arriving in the U.S., a nation that contributed to destabilizing the socialist government and securing the military coup in Chile. This research

seeks to examine the ways national identities or concepts of the homeland emerge in testimonies and cultural productions of these exiles. Primary sources include: testimonies of exiles, essays, short film, as well as the 9/11 Collective- a group of exiles responding to the shared date of national tragedy in the U.S. and Chile. Theoretical concepts surrounding diaspora, exile, identity, and memory provide an analytical lens to better understand the fluidity of nation, home, and identity in the self-representations of Chilean exiles in the U.S. This research highlights the permanent impacts that power dynamics impose on identity processes, as well as the role of culture to overcome these obstacles. I conclude with suggestions for possible avenues to both complicate and contribute to conversations surrounding the ongoing identity negotiations for Chilean exiles in the U.S.

### **Ecuadorian Nations 500 Years Later: Exploring Contradictions in the Formation of Indigenous Political Voice**

*Travis Galloway, Senior, International Studies, Spanish*

*Mary Gates Scholar*

*Mentor: Jos?? Antonio Lucero, International Studies/CHID*

The levantamientos of 1990 and '92 in Ecuador demonstrate the incredible ability of indigenous political organizations to present local concerns at the national level. After 500 years of resistance and oppression, the government was forced into serious political negotiations. I hope to add to an ongoing conversation regarding indigenous political organization in Latin America by studying the specific case of Ecuadorian indigenous peoples of the Oriente, and the construction of political voice in response to government policy, the actions of private companies, and the involvement of international lending organizations that led to years of unfettered, destructive practices of extraction and colonization in the last half of the 20th century. Through an analysis of documentary film, academic writing, and media coverage, this project looks to show that this struggle has been wrought with contradictions and unintended consequences and characterized by a high level of coordination at the local and national level. Emphasizing contradictions in the construction of political voice is appropriate in a discussion of political representation of historically marginalized or excluded peoples, who more than ever occupy an uncertain borderland space. I think it is crucial to understand that, in the construction of indigenous political voice, contradictions reinforce the borderlands they seek to escape, or the dominant power structures.

### **The People's Participation: The Use of Public Participation in Thailand and Canada's Mining Licensing Processes**

*Hannah Palkowitz, Junior, Environmental Studies and Sociology, Whitman College*

*Mentor: Jesse Abrams, Sociology and Environmental Studies, Whitman College*

The mining industry is extremely controversial. Resource extraction holds many negative environmental effects in addition to an overwhelming amount of economic benefits. Weighing these benefits often puts industry in conflict with the public, with governments forced to mediate the mining licensing process. Public participation is the means to ensure that the people's interests are voiced in order to limit the monopoly of power corporations would otherwise hold. The report provides an in-depth analysis of the two countries' dissimilar mining licensing processes, inspects the amount of public participation involved in those processes, and finally demonstrates findings through specific case studies relevant to each countries' licensing system. Through this comparison it becomes clear that the presence of the public participation is not enough to ensure that people's voices are heard.

### **Challenging Leadership: Occupy and the Challenges of 'Leaderless' Movements**

*Cody Steven (Cody) Lestelle, Senior, Comparative History of Ideas*

*Mary Gates Scholar*

*Mentor: Maria Elena Garcia, Comparative History of Ideas*

What does leadership mean to you? What does it mean to consider one's self a leader? What values, relationships and conceptions of the world inform ideas about leadership? What are some benefits and limitations to particular notions of leadership? What kinds of leadership should we favor in these "times of crisis"? This project explores these questions while examining notions of leadership popularized by the Occupy movement. Drawing on sixteen months of participant observation in the Occupy movement, I analyze the values of direct democracy, direct representation, and consensus as expressed through Occupy, and compare these ideals with more dominant notions of leadership prevalent in the world of Wall Street, and other corporate and governmental hierarchies. The results of this research suggest that horizontal and decentralized forms of organizing relationships are more likely to produce more directly democratic, informed, and sustainable collective actions than are more hierarchically organized relationships. This research has urgent implications, perhaps most surprisingly for those who currently occupy high positions in the dominant socio-political hierarchy.