



**Virtual Student Conference: February 26-27, 2021**

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS: Due November 6, 2020.**

**Conference Theme:**

**Recognition, Agency, and Deservingness: (Re)framing Refugee, Black, and Indigenous Movements**

**Keynote Speaker: TBD.**

The Centre for Refugee Studies (CRS), in collaboration with The Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC), invites abstract proposals for its 15th annual Student Conference on the theme of **“Recognition, Agency, and Deservingness: (Re)framing Refugee, Black, and Indigenous Movements.”**

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a time during which movement has become a focus. Moving during confinement has had disparate effects for different populations. Yet, the sense of being constrained has been felt around the world.

Migrants and refugees are amongst the communities most significantly impacted by COVID-19. Being forced to move despite global restrictions on mobility, migrants confront heightened border restrictions and are at increasing risk of exposure to the virus. Physical distancing safeguards have been inadequately implemented (if at all) in refugee camps, immigration detention centres, and temporary migrant worker programs that comprise the essential service sector so heavily relied upon during the pandemic. With limited access to health services, job and income security, and forced to work in unsafe environments, migrants and refugees remain vulnerable. These inequalities are not new; the pandemic has merely exposed and heightened existing conditions of precarity.

How can we interpret these constraining effects—disproportionately affecting refugees, Black and Indigenous communities—in light of the various responses to physical regulation during the pandemic? Governments purport that restrictions are a justifiable measure in response to the virus, framing the lived experience of confinement as one of “pause” or “suspension.” However, governments’ implementations of restrictive choreographies (Lepecki 2020) demonstrate that some bodies have the power to control and manage the movement of others. Thus, movement has not stopped but is re-modulated and (re)choreographed through the framework of public security and surveillance, whereby socializing, gathering, and action are seen as threats that must be interrupted by the hyper-mobilization of police and other militant tactics. Furthermore, movement(s) as ‘threat(ening)’ frames public protests against police brutality—such as the Black Lives Matter marches and demonstrations following George Floyd’s death—as “dangerous” and “criminal” because they “break” COVID-19 protocols.

Simultaneously, political action reached a breaking point in 2020 as many protests that began in 2019 spilled into the new year. To name a few, Wet'suwet'en Nation's rallies, blockades, and protests against Coastal GasLink's pipeline project; Black Lives Matter protests calling for an end to anti-Black state sanctioned violence; civilian marches in Chile fighting for social equality after the price of public transport in Santiago increased; demonstrators in Hong Kong opposing China's imposition of national security laws; and Algeria's Hirak movement dissenting leader Abdelaziz Bouteflika's attempt to seek a fifth term as president. Further political action(s) have responded to COVID restrictions by moving into virtual space through tactics of adaptation as well as making information more accessible and visible. The recent Scholars Strike Teach-Ins in Canada, the U.S, and in other parts of the world, have demonstrated that it is possible to circulate (Black and Indigenous) knowledge and experiences to wider audiences, and that interruption and learning can exist simultaneously. Additionally, social media platforms serve to mobilize solidarity and resources such as the #challengeaccepted black and white photo challenge, which most recently sought to illuminate femicide in Turkey and promote women's empowerment.

As Judith Butler (2009) reminds us, situations and people are always already framed. These frames materialize perceptual realities which in turn create frames of perception. Accordingly, we need to think about how and what our framings render perceptible and what exceeds them. This conference seeks to re-frame the movements of refugee, Black, and Indigenous peoples, and their allies, in terms that recognize these communities' agency to choose their ways to mobilize and assert their deservingness. We stand in solidarity with these distinct movements to action, with their global interconnectedness, and with their capacities to effect change.

The purpose of this conference is:

1. To open a virtual window which brings together students, researchers and advocates from diverse disciplinary, regional and international backgrounds. With this diverse view we can better analyze and understand struggles regarding recognition, agency and deservingness for refugees, forced migrants, Black and Indigenous movements during a global pandemic.
2. Recognizing that the struggles of refugees, Black and Indigenous groups are not exclusive to the current pandemic, this conference seeks to bring to fruition meaningful discussions on these issues, calls to action, and potentials for liberation before, during, and after the pandemic. Presentations and works need not necessarily address Black, Indigenous or refugee issues directly, but can amplify these voices.

### **Submission Criteria:**

A wide-range of submissions will be considered, in addition to conventional academic paper formats, including: story-telling, spoken word, photos, virtual (dance) performances, poetry, media, art work, theatrical productions, and literary pieces reflecting on the following broad themes:

- eligibility and legibility
- frames and regulatory apparatuses of recognition (borders, enforcement, detention, 'temporary' status)

- global/international (im)mobilities
- placement/displacement and (emerging) sites of political action
- globalized movements
- community and solidarities between movements
- visibilizing/visibility and accessibility
- amplifying voices
- virtual movements
- reclamation and reparation
- contestation and resistance to regulatory violence
- political action under COVID-19 and in response to restrictive choreographies of governments
- linguistic and racial divides in Latin American and Caribbean scholarship

We welcome you to submit proposals on other topics as well!

In addition to live conference panels hosted via Zoom, we will also publish a selection of pre-recorded and read-only presentations on the conference website. Furthermore, in addition to English, submissions for presentations in French, Portuguese, and Spanish are also welcome and encouraged, and we will provide language interpretation/ translation as needed. Applicants may indicate their preference for presentation format and requests for language interpretation along with their abstract submission.

**Instructions for Abstract Submission:**

Individuals, groups, or panels wishing to participate in the conference must submit a 250-word abstract to [yorkcrscaucus@gmail.com](mailto:yorkcrscaucus@gmail.com) by **November 6, 2020**. Submissions will be assessed and responded to by mid-December 2020.

Abstract submissions **MUST** be accompanied by the following:

- Name(s) of presenter(s)
- Key presenter email address
- Title of Abstract
- Three to five keywords
- A short personal profile (no more than 150 words)
- Indication of whether the presentation will be made by a panel or an individual
- Indication of the preferred presentation format (live talk, pre-recorded, or read-only)
- Indication of language interpretation and translation needs/requests, if applicable
- Indication of the time zone you are located in (panel time frames will be staggered to facilitate participation of presenters in various time zones)

For more information about presenting at the conference please contact:

[yorkcrscaucus@gmail.com](mailto:yorkcrscaucus@gmail.com)

Or visit: <https://crscaucus.info.yorku.ca/crs-cerlac-2021-conference/>