Discussions

The Latin American/Latin@ Feminisms course as an example of feminist popular participatory education: A conversation.

Lorena M. Gajardo and R. Magaly San Martin

This is an excerpt of a conversation between Lorena M. Gajardo and R. Magaly San Martin, founders of the Latin@ Feminist Research Collective (LFRC) and creators of the Latin American/Latin@ Feminisms course. The LFRC was created in 2009, in part to address the dearth of feminist education with the Latin American community in Toronto as well as the lack of courses specifically focused on Latin American and Latin@ feminisms within the academy. That is, the LFRC\(^2\) was created to prioritize Latin American and Latin@ women’s experiences, history and, knowledge production and one of its first projects was the Latin American/Latin@ Feminisms course. Both Lorena and Magaly had, for some time, discussing the possibility of doing a feminist popular pedagogical exercise of this kind within the Latin American community in Toronto. This excerpt discusses the first iteration of the course in 2009 when both Lorena and Magaly taught the course, offering observations about the course’s genesis, logistics, pedagogical aims, and social justice goals. In 2009 a variety of factors came together to make the creation and teaching of the course as an exercise in feminist popular pedagogical praxis possible. Both the LFRC and the Latin American/Latin@ Feminisms course were a result of a long-time goal for both Lorena and Magaly who, as members of the Latin American community, as feminists, as scholars and researchers, realized the importance of creating accessible sites of knowledge encounter and production. This was particularly important in spaces like the academy where there is a dearth of Latin@’s as either students or faculty.

Conversation (Excerpt):

**Magaly:** So maybe we could start talking about when and how we started discussing the idea of this project?

**Lorena:** It was back in 2007, 2008, that we were thinking about it. I mean because of the work that I was doing for my research, you know, I was reading the work of Latina/o scholars in the field of Latina/o Studies, its new paradigms, its new frameworks and new ways of thinking about both

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the importance of the Latina/o identity but also, about Latina/o knowledge production. So those were two things that were kind of guiding my intellectual work at the moment. And, at the same time, I was invited to teach a course with the Latin American Studies Program at the University of Toronto, based on my research on Latinas/os here, the course ended up being called Latina/o identity in Canada. To my knowledge, and I think to this date, this remains the only course taught in a Canadian university that specifically deals with Latina/o identity in Canada. I think for me one of the important things of doing that, was of course, well, the privilege of actually developing myself intellectually in order to do the research I was doing and to also be able to teach the course using frameworks that were not familiar in the Canadian context. It was a privilege to engage with the Latina/o Studies literature and also to be able to bring some of that literature and theoretical analysis to the local context of being in Canada, right? At the same time, many, though not all, of the students who were enrolled in my course were young Latinas/os. Over the three years that I had the pleasure of teaching the course, I was told by many of the students how much they had enjoyed the chance to participate in a course that centered the experience of Latina/o subjectivity. And that for them, and here I am specifically referring to the Latina/o students, it also represented a first time experience with a teacher and a curriculum where they felt identified not only in terms of the subject matter discussed but, also, in terms of acknowledging Canadian Latina/o identity itself as a particular subject position with its own history. So that was really important for me. At the time, like now, I was also involved with CWSE, the Centre for Women’s Studies in Education at OISE as well as with the feminist journal. So all of these factors came together for me to start thinking about the feasibility of taking what I had learned from my research on Latina/o identity, from Latina/o Studies and from the teaching of the course as well as from the activities at CWSE and the journal and begin a process of developing a more democratic and accessible pedagogical practice – one that would open up spaces that are not traditionally inhabited by Latin Americans.

Magaly: I was also very much involved as an activist, participating in the activist experience in women’s group in the Latin American community and specifically, at that point, I was working a lot with the Latin American women’s group MUJER where I had been a founding member. This group, MUJER, has an interesting history – before MUJER was formed, there was the Latin American Coalition to End Violence Against Women and Children or LACEV of which I was part in a variety of roles. This was quite an active coalition made up of more than 50 agencies and individuals that served the Latin American communities and was quite active in anti-violence activism. In 1995 LACEV held the first Latin American Women’s Encounter – el Encuentro – and I was very involved as one of the main organizers. An important theme that emerged from the 1995 Encounter
was the idea that our Latin American community needed women community leaders and that to that end, women, and especially young women needed to be trained or what we called in Spanish “formación,” to undertake these leadership roles. At that point then, LACEV, taking into consideration the needs identified through the Encounter, decided to transformed itself into MUJER – an organization that would have as its mandate what it referred to as Latin American women’s integral development. So the focus on anti-violence work would remain important but it would also be done within a new approach, one that considered an integrative analysis of violence against Latin American women and children and identified leadership formation as one of the main tools in the fight against violence in its varied forms. I participated quite actively in the formation of MUJER as a viable organization in the community and in the development of appropriate leadership training materials – from curriculum development to the imparting of workshops that focused on the “formación,” or training of Latina community leaders.

Lorena: I think it might be interesting to speak a bit about how these leadership trainings were approached and your role in that process?

Magaly: The idea of leadership that we were trying to develop was very different from the one you usually find in the mainstream Canadian context. Our understanding of leadership was rooted in a political, social activist perspective that did not think of leadership as the result of an individual’s charisma or ability to mobilize people. We thought of it more in terms of conscientización or awareness-raising activity that requires knowledge and commitment. The methodology and curriculum I developed for the leadership sessions that MUJER carried out in the community were informed by this approach. The idea was to help develop among community members, and we focused on young Latina women, the skills of leadership but also a grounded analytical awareness of what it takes to be an effective leader within the Latin American community. After three different leadership projects, I engaged in a thorough evaluation of the leadership training that resulted in a comprehensive report. One of the things that struck me most in the participants’ comments was the demands for more knowledge, for more understanding of feminism and particularly of Latin American feminism.

Lorena: So, I think that from the very beginning, from the moment we started talking, imagining and dreaming about the Latin American/Latina Feminisms course coming to life, we felt that our experience with community activism and within the academy would serve as important anchors on which to base the pedagogical, methodological and theoretical frameworks upon which the project as a whole would be based. That is, we felt that our particular life trajectories as Latinas in Canada combined with
the intellectual and activist labour we had taken years to acquire provided the necessary expertise to get a project of this nature off the ground. At the time it was also very clear from the experiences we’ve talked about that if we did pursue our dream of developing a course on Latin American/Latina feminisms there would be a very good chance that people would be interested in it. I mean, from the questions and demands that both you and I were getting in our respective milieus when we began talking about the possibility of offering this kind of course, it was clear that we had hit a moment when it was time for this to happen.

**Lorena:** Perhaps it would be a good idea here to address some of the logistics of being able to make something like this happen and the kinds of resources and supports that were needed to make the course a reality. I mean although it sounded marvelous to us when we first came up with the idea, we were also very aware that it was not going to be easy and that we would have to put a lot of our volunteer labour, along with the kinds of connections and supports from others, towards its realization.

**Magaly:** Yes, we considered some of the problems and even that it might not be a very feasible project but, at the same time, the two of us had been talking about the need for such a course for a while and we came together at this really amazing moment when the two of us could dedicate some time to it and so we said, let’s do it, let’s do it ourselves, let’s not wait anymore. So when we started talking about, envisioning, what, and how, the course would be done, we discussed not only the logistics but also the kind of pedagogy, that is, using a new kind of pedagogical approach.

**Lorena:** I think at the time we were thinking of the idea of a pedagogy that reclaims the kind expertise that had been developed already in Latin America through political and historical action. So we looked at some of the ideas that came from the work of Paolo Freire on participatory education. We also looked at some of the critical scholarship that was coming out of Latina/o Studies and Chicana scholarship from the US. Another really important concept that we wanted to keep in mind was the whole idea of knowledge not as the exclusionary property of a few. We really felt that we wanted to engage these in our pedagogical practice; we understood, of course, that there were limitations in terms of resources but we also felt, like you said, that this seemed to be the right moment to not only imagine but to act. I mean, we were both institutionally located within organizations and institutions that could potentially provide us with some of the material support we needed. You were working actively with MUJER and I was part of the Centre for Women Studies in Education. And, we had experience with curriculum development and course delivery at the university level and within the community.
**Magaly:** In my Master Thesis on reclaiming the history of the Latin American Women’s Collective,² I made the point that I wanted to disrupt that notion that Latin American women learn about feminism when they come here to the North, or that it is white women who taught us feminism when, in fact, the history of Latin American women and of Latinas counts with a rich feminist foundation and their own historical etymologies. And I think this also permeated our thinking about the importance of the course, from the beginning we always talked about the Americas and about the fluidity of transnational identities; about the history of women in Latin America occupying important roles, at times leadership roles, in resistance movements like the role of women in Chile actively resisting the Pinochet regime, or the women of El Salvador and Nicaragua. And of course, your knowledge of the work of the Latina canon like the works in Chicana feminism that you’re very familiar with. And so, the idea was to reclaim Latina feminist identities as something complex and as a process that represented a continuity with Latin American feminisms. We wanted that to come through in the course materials as well.

**Lorena:** Yes, we wanted to create an understanding of identity, including Latin@ identity, as not merely experiential or based only on individual experiences which, although important, tend to leave out the articulations that influence the expressions and possibilities of those identities. We wanted to re-center, as a political praxis, the continuity of latinidades between Latina feminists here, Latin American feminists in Latin America, and Latina feminists in the US. So the course would have to include these histories and knowledges.

**Magaly:** We were also very conscious about how little work had been done on this or from this perspective in the Canadian context.

**Lorena:** Yes. We understood at the time that in the mainstream academic environment, we were not present. We were not present as knowledge producers nor, in any kind of significant numbers, as students or within the mainstream curricula.

**Magaly:** Yes, the traditional approaches continue to construct Latin America and Latin Americans as subjects of study but not really as knowledge producers in their own right. But we, as Latin American/Latin@ subjects, have different, embodied perspectives that allow us to create our own knowledges.

**Lorena:** Yes, like Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa made clear, it is important to consider the importance of what they call theory in the flesh.
**Magaly:** Also, Latin American communities do not tend to see themselves represented in places of higher education. And there's also a bit of mistrust from community organizations towards university generated knowledge because of some of the approaches towards community participation used by university experts when dealing with the community. For example, academics would come down to the community level, gather their data, write something and leave. We were, on the other hand, cognizant that we belong to both communities, the academic community and the Latin American community. And because we also come from working class backgrounds, and we are academics, and we are Latinas, we felt we could bridge some of these traditional divides.

**Lorena:** For us, it was extremely important to view the course as part of addressing issues of inequality in education. For both of us it had been a rare occurrence to find Latin@ teachers, professors or even students when we were coming up. The work of scholars like Daniel Schugurensky showed how the education system really fails Latina/o students and how many of these students do not even finish high school so never mind making it to higher education. So we have alienated students, alienated in the sense of being pushed out from the system, from accessing the system altogether so, how are you going to find them in these [academic] spaces at all? We thought about all the baggage that comes along with being marginalized from certain spaces. There are the material obstacles but there are also sometimes obstacles in terms of not being able to see yourself within particular spaces, of not seeing others like yourself in those spaces, or of having experienced limiting beliefs on your capabilities by authority figures in the system. All of these work to keep you from even attempting to enter those spaces and to reinforce exclusionary institutional cultures. We knew how important it was for us to approach the course as a course that would not only deal with content that was rarely available but also to make it a course where Latinas, as students, would see themselves represented both in terms of the material covered as well as in terms of the educators. So, it was really important for us to in a way to occupy the space, to make the course as close as possible to an experience of an actual university undergraduate course. Our course was going to be taught along the lines of how it would actually be experienced if the students actually took the course in university, so it was not going to be a remedial course, it was not going to be a workshop or a discussion group, it was going to be an actual experience of what university would be like for a Latina coming into an academic space that studies Latin American and Latina identities and feminist histories.

**Magaly:** It was important to claim space in a terrain where we were not really present. You had experiences already with students in your other course on Latina/o Identity telling you how happy they were having that
kind of a course in university and I had experiences being guest lecturer in university level Women's Studies courses where I was invited to do lectures on Latino Studies and Latina/o students would actually come up to me and say "oh, my god, you're the first Latino teacher I've seen." So we knew how important it was to try and get a classroom located within a university for the course, to bring Latina bodies into an academic space. We thought this was an important way to counteract some of the messages that Latina/o students were getting about their abilities, capabilities, and possibilities for making knowledge. We also paid attention in the curriculum to use pedagogies that expanded upon existing academic ways of teaching and evaluating and included things like art, theater and documentary making as part of the evaluation process.

**Lorena:** Yes, we were using our experience with alternative critical and feminist pedagogical practices that challenged some of the normalized ideas about what it means to learn and to produce knowledge; I had done some of that in my own course on Latina/o Identity in Canada where, as final assignments for example, I gave students the choice of taking the more academically traditional route of writing a final research paper, or they could produce a video, or a movie script, or play, or photography project in order to delve into some of the themes discussed in the course. This was something I learned from some of the work of Chicana scholars.

**Magaly:** And also from Latin America.

**Lorena:** Exactly! We mentioned continuity, right? The continuity of things which are not invented out of nothing. They represent histories of practices, they come with the people, like you don't just cross a border and your knowledge becomes erased.

**Magaly:** It is also part of our history, art has always been part of political activity in Latin America. It is not separate. Art was always part of the mural movement, the political, and also poetry, singing songs and music. It actually makes sense to use this as a pedagogy for us, it actually makes sense in our context. It is not something new or different for people because it formed part of our own personal development as well as part of Latin Americans social and political development.

**Magaly:** Going back to the question of logistics - we were talking about getting the right space within a university to teach the course but, as a community driven project, as Latinas who wanted to do a course for and with Latin American women, we required specific people to be connected to different networks in order to make it happen. So, in your case, we were able to secure space for the duration of the course because of your work with the Centre for Women's Studies in Education.
Lorena: Exactly. I presented it to the Centre as one of the projects that perhaps they could sponsor. I had to go through the usual channels for selection of projects but I was lucky that it fell within the purview of the Centre which was very interested in pursuing collaborations like the one we proposed to them. It was thanks to that that we were able to access classroom and audiovisual facilities.

Magaly: And of course, MUJER, as one of our partners and sponsors, not only helped us disseminate information about the course but also we were able to invite many of the women who had participated in MUJER's leadership training program which I was involved with as curriculum developer and instructor, to come and apply for our course. It was a good network to access, some of the young women who were in MUJER and had also taken leadership training program became part of the LRC and we invited two of them, Carolina Ríos and Silvia Arauz, to be part of the course as assisting facilitators. They, along with other women from the LRC and MUJER, played an important role in disseminating information about the course and helping out with social media and all kinds of outreach activities including the selection of the participants that would make up the course first set of students.

Lorena: Yes, I think that when we decided to have assisting facilitators in the course, we felt that this would be an opportunity for those who had already been through MUJER’s leadership training and who wanted to get further training. We felt that being involved in a course that was modelled after a university level course, would give them valuable skills and knowledge about pedagogical practices. Given the lack of Latin American, Latin@ students at the undergraduate and graduate levels in universities, we felt this could be an important way of inspiring some of them to pursue academic studies. And, in fact, some of them did go on to higher education.

Magaly: Yes, in the follow-up interviews I had with the different course participants, asking how the course had impacted them, they were very positive about the course and one participant who had gone back to Chile said she had even replicated the course over there. But to go back a bit to the question of logistics and resources. Another organization that was involved as sponsor of our course was Parkdale Community Legal Services, where I was working at the time. They also provided us with some material support as well as access to some of their networks to disseminate information. I want to make the point that part of the process of accessing support and sponsorship was having access to our own networks.

Lorena: Yes, I think it’s important to acknowledge that without our personal and professional networks a project of this kind would have been much more difficult. So we were fortunate that at the time we could access
all of this institutional support which did not cover our own labour or that of the assisting facilitators, but it did provide us with valuable in-kind support and networking.

**Magaly:** I also think that it is important to point out that the expertise we brought from our personal and professional lives as pedagogues, scholars, and community members played an important role in how we designed the course, chose curricula, and taught. Because the course involved not only having experience with pedagogical approaches but also knowing Latin American and Latina/o histories and theoretical frameworks; having experience and understanding the history and needs of the Latin American community which gave us specific insights into the way in which the course was to be taught - for example, the decision to use Spanglish along with Spanish and English as one of the languages in which communication would happen in the course.

**Lorena:** Yes, we knew that some of the young women that had gone through MUJER’s leadership training were not one hundred per cent comfortable in Spanish, or others were not one hundred percent comfortable in English, so it was important that within the course, the instructors, assisting facilitators and students would be open to communicate in either Spanish, English, or Spanglish. And we saw that that worked out okay, and sometimes when someone didn’t speak one of the languages, someone beside them was willing to facilitate translation for that person. There was lot of internal labour that was happening in the classroom itself, from both us, as the teachers, from assisting facilitators and from the students themselves, in trying to make it a kind of cooperative learning experience, and to help each other out. There was a willingness from all involved to make this an accessible space regardless of the obstacles we might face.

**Magaly:** Yes, and we also decided from the beginning that in order to make the course accessible to anyone who wanted to take the course from the community, we would not charge any kind of enrollment fee. The only expectation we put was for those interested in participating in the course to write a letter of intent that would tell us why they wanted to take part in the course. And, what I found fascinating was that even though some people warned that if we did not charge people would not recognize the value of the course, we found the opposite to be the case. The 17 women who took the course committed themselves to actively participating, they did the readings, participated in the discussions, did the assigned projects and were engaged throughout the course. I think this incredible commitment on the part of participants, speaks to the necessity of having these kind of courses; there is also a demand within communities like the Latin American one to have these kind of courses and to offer them in an
accessible manner so that community members have a chance of participating. Although we would have like to pay for transportation and childcare our lack of resources could not cover these expenses but we did provide all reading materials free of charge. The level of commitment was incredible.

**Lorena:** Yes. It was very exciting particularly as there was no official gain to be had by participating in the course. What I mean is that although we did provide them with a certificate of completion at the end of the course, as a popular education course from the community, it had no official status and could not be used as an approved course within the university system. The gain therefore was purely at the level of developing a knowledge praxis about Latin American/Latin@ feminisms which was fascinating. And, in terms of teaching, I have to admit that it was one of the most rewarding experiences for me precisely because of the level of involvement of the students, how engaged they felt with the material, and with ourselves, with us, as teachers. I really felt the power of being a role model there, I mean, I don’t like to overemphasize that too much but I did feel that the process of seeing Latina instructors played an important role - this was for many of the students a first exposure to a Latina at the front of the class, a Latina as a teacher, a Latina with a kind of authorizing voice, right? And I do think that a kind of alternative, of another possibility gets opened up in people’s imagination and I think we, along with our assisting facilitators, represented some of that. I think that contributed to the energy, the palpable energy, of both us, as teachers, wanting to teach and sort of being energized to teach and the students wanting to learn and being energized to learn. And even though at times we experienced some difficult classroom moments, we weathered them with such willingness to go on that the prevailing vibe was, I felt, like a kind of energy of wanting to be there regardless, we are going to solve this, we are going to get through whatever it is we need to get through because we want to continue this journey together, we want to do this. To me, that was an extremely rewarding pedagogical experience.

**Magaly:** For me another important aspect of this course involved also bringing forth experiences that have been forgotten. When I taught history in the course I taught not only Latin American feminist history but also focused on the history of Latin American/Latina feminism in Toronto. I had access to the latter because of my own direct participation in this history and so I could teach about a history that has not been written. And, I thought it incredible when students in the class would say, “Wow! I didn’t know that we had done that?” when I taught them about the 1995 Primer Encuentro de Mujeres Latinoamericanas/First Encounter of Latin American Women where 500 women came together in Toronto for three days. Very few outside the community or even within the community,
remembered or knew about this history, so having access to this knowledge made them proud of being part of it. This is important because we are a marginalized community and are excluded from academia, and it is important because we are a stereotyped community where one of the pervasive representations is that we are good for manual labour but not intellectual work. So linking up the knowledge from Latin America and the knowledge that has been done within our own community here becomes a source of pride for young Latinas.

**Lorena:** Yes, and as I was teaching the course I would also often think that the work we did in the course served to open up that space that we inhabit as immigrants in Canada. You know, the cultural space where we’re very boxed in. I felt that during the course we kept opening up that boundary, we kept crossing the line, we kept saying, yes, we eat empanadas, we dance salsa, we do all that fun ‘cultural’ stuff but that is not all of “it”, there is more to our story, there is more to us - we are political beings, we are historical beings, we are creative beings. And is so doing we kind of expanded the ontological aspect of latinidad and doing so is incredibly gratifying because you exist on a different plane when you do so, right? Politically, intellectually, at all levels.

**Magaly:** When you are able to think about your sense of self differently, which the course curriculum tried to do by providing perspectives that centered Latinas a subjects, as knowledge producers, an incredible process of repositioning oneself can happen. And that was one of the most important parts of the course.

**Lorena:** Well, one of the things that we emphasized over the 8 weeks that the course lasted, regardless of the particular topic that we were covering for that week, was the importance for students of thinking of themselves as knowledge producers. We kept reiterating, you guys are knowledge producers, you guys are learning here to be knowledge producers, we are not just passively consuming knowledge here, we are producing knowledge. And, I think that was really taken in, especially when towards the end of the course the final assignment had to be presented and handed in, some of the projects were to continue even after the course was over. This really showed us that what we were doing was what I like to call a kind of epistemological activism. And it was very important for us because the core of the course had been conceived by us as something that would teach us how to reclaim space within privileged spaces like the academy that exclude us not only physically but also epistemologically. Like the core idea of the course was to occupy a privileged space not only physically but also in terms of learning how to tell my own story using critical knowledge that allows me to carry out historical analyses and understand how we, as Latin@s fit within a matrix of power that attempts to shape our possibilities.
The last class, where people presented their final projects was particularly amazing given the level of work and commitment that the students put into these projects and like I said, how some of them wanted to continue with their projects even after the course was over.

**Magaly:** And it actually did continue for some - I remember a group of Mexican young women, who were part of this group called, Mujeres al Frente, and they were quite active in terms of migration issues for the LGBT community; they had actually organized a very large group of LGBT Latina refugees who became refugees because of persecution based on their sexual orientation. They were also very interested in raising class issues and also wanted to reclaim a lesbian subject position. And when in one of the classes I taught, they found out about the Encuentro and about the discussions that had occurred within that Encuentro back in 1995 around Latina lesbian identities brought up by the group "No me digas que no sabias/Don't tell me you didn't know," they actually wanted to go out and interview these women that had gone through the same kind of thing that they were going through so that became their final research project. And, also, there was the young woman, Camila, who after returning to Chile asked us whether she could replicate the same project there, using the course design and curriculum, with women from the "barrios." A project that she carried out successfully and so, yes, I think the course really inspired people to continue doing their own thing in their own locations.

**Lorena:** And that was, I think, part of the value of it, you know. I mean, having to struggle against constant marginalization does takes its toll, it takes a lot of energy. So when you come into a space like the course where you are valued and considered and also taught different modes of analysis and thinking about latinidad so that it becomes a positive experience. This happened to me in my own development as an academic when I first discovered the scholarship of Chicanas and Latinas. So, I think it may generate a different way of thinking about oneself where you recognize yourself in others around you, within the institution and also as creators and students of valid and valuable knowledge. This is after all what we wanted to affirm for the students of the course, not that we believed they didn't have agency before coming to the course but that involvement in the course would, we believed, reaffirm that agency by expanding their parameters through pedagogical practices that centred them - as historical, ontological and epistemological subjects.

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**Comment:** The 2009 Latin American/Latin@ feminisms course proved to be a success and has been taken up by others as a model of feminist popular participatory education. The third iteration of the course, for example,
organized by the feminist Latin American organization MUJER in 2015 after Magaly and Lorena could no longer take on a leading role due to other professional duties, built upon the course and curriculum development created in 2009 and used it as a framework of methodology, pedagogy and curriculum design in the development of their own course on Latina feminisms which, according to MUJER's 2015 president, Carolina Ríos, became a platform for the training of the organization’s board members. And, as mentioned, the course’s model of feminist popular participatory education was taken up internationally by one of the graduates of the 2009 course as a framework for a course on Latin American/Latin@ feminisms in Chile. Magaly and Lorena find it very rewarding to see that the 2009 Latin American/Latin@ feminisms course served to inspire others to engage with epistemological activism, a term coined by Lorena to refer to activism that focuses on the reclaiming and opening up of spaces for Latin@s, materially and in terms of knowledge production, through the interpellation of Latin@ subjectivities as knowing and agential subjects.

Notes
1. This is part of an article by Lorena M. Gajardo and R. Magaly San Martin entitled, "Latin@ epistemological activism: The Latin American/Latin@ Feminisms course and feminist popular participatory education." (Forthcoming, 2017).
2. Other members of the LFRC included recent graduates of the leadership training program for young Latinas offered by MUJER, a Latin American feminist organization. They were invited to join the LFRC and to take part in the activities of the research committee, including the course. Two of these women, Carolina Ríos and Silvia Arauz were active members of MUJER, joined the LFRC and became assisting facilitators in the course. Magaly was, at the time, actively involved in numerous pedagogical projects and developing funding proposals for MUJER. Lorena was also involved with MUJER. Although both the LFRC and the course were autonomous projects, both Lorena and Magaly saw the value of seeking collaboration with community groups like MUJER who had earned its reputation as a serious and important feminist community group with the Latin American community and beyond.
3. For more details on this process see the article by Lorena M. Gajardo (2009) “Latin American Women’s Organizing in Canada: An Introduction to MUJER and its leadership Training for Young Latinas.” Canadian Woman Studies, Volume 27, No. 1.
6. see Schuguresky, Daniel, Mantilla, Daniela and Jose Francisco Serrano (2009). Four in Ten: Spanish-Speaking Youth and Early School Leaving in Toronto. Toronto: Latin American Research Education and Development Network (LARED), Transformative Learning Centre (OISE), University of Toronto (OISE).