A Parade of Identities: Negotiation of Ethnic Identities in Three New York City Cultural Parades

Julia M. Herrera-Moreno

The Graduate Center, City University of New York

Recommended Citation
https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_etds/3066

How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!
Follow this and additional works at: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_etds
Part of the Migration Studies Commons, Multicultural Psychology Commons, Race and Ethnicity Commons, Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons, and the Sociology of Culture Commons
A PARADE OF IDENTITIES

NEGOTIATION OF ETHNIC IDENTITIES IN THREE NEW YORK CITY

CULTURAL PARADES

by

JULIA HERRERA-MORENO

A master’s capstone submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

2019
A Parade of Identities
Negotiation of Identities in Three New York City Cultural Parades

by

Julia Herrera-Moreno

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the capstone requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

Date

Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis
Capstone Advisor

Date

Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis
Executive Officer

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
ABSTRACT

“A Parade of Identities” is, in essence, a digital project that applies social theories of international migration to ethnographic visual data in order to analyze ethnic identity and space appropriation found in three of New York City’s cultural parades. The project’s purpose is to trace and analyze the historical meaning and emerging directions in terms of ethnic identity construction, of NYC immigrant parades through the use of the author’s photography and video collections (2012-2018) of St. Patrick’s Day, Columbus Day and Chinese New Year parades, in association with a website and blog via digital humanities’ platform. Additionally, by activating the blog platform, between author and users, this project looks to create a dialogue, about some of the aspects of the complexity and diversity of living in a global city such as New York.

A Parade of Identities website
URL: https://nyjhm.commons.gc.cuny.edu/
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Migration, seen through eyes wide open is always an intimate encounter, whether one experiences it from inside or outside the path. You just need to stand still and document what you see, hear and smell around you. Drinking in the tiny specks of light that pass you by. Finding the hidden places in your mind. A Spanish troubadour of the 70s once said: “Caminante no hay camino, se hace camino al andar,” which roughly translates to “Walker, there is no path; the path is made by wandering.”

First, I would like to thank my Capstone Advisor Professor Dr. Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis, Acting Executive Officer of the Master program in Liberal Studies, in the CUNY Graduate Program. She lent me a hand through tumultuous times and guided me through a sea of change. Her knowledge of methodology, her openness of mind and critical thinking were completely instrumental.

I want to thank Assistant Program Officer Katherine Koutsis of the CUNY Graduate Center, Master’s program in Liberal Studies. She was my constant point of reference, an infinite well of practical knowledge, and a friend through all my years at CUNY.

I would also like to acknowledge Ketan Parmar, a natural blogger, adept in the dark arts of web design, who came into my assistance when I struggled to decipher the enigmas of Word Press.

And finally, my gratitude and love goes to my daughter, Oriana, my anchor, my support and companion through my journey of individuation and my many self-discoveries.

But also to the Graduate Center as a whole: thank you for giving structure and meaning to my experience as an immigrant member of a minority group. This has been the right place to be.

The path could not have been wandered without any of you. Thank you.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Manifest</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An American History of Parades</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Patrick’s Day and Columbus Day</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Lunar New Year</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Development</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curating a Digital Library</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges and Solutions</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Practices</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to the Track and Previous Course of Study</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuation of Project</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Cited</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DIGITAL MANIFEST

I. Capstone White Paper (PDF)

II. Archived website, created with WordPress and hosted on the CUNY Academic Commons (WARC files)

III. Original project URL: https://nyjhm.commons.gc.cuny.edu/
INTRODUCTION

Massive migratory waves, both past and current, bring with them increasing amounts of people from diverse cultures and backgrounds that deeply unseat and transform the social construction of race, ethnicity, native-born identity, nationhood, and intergroup relationships in global cities worldwide. In North America, New York is considered the quintessential port of entry to the Eastern Coast—it cannot escape its destiny. Its remarkable ethnic and racial diversity comes from a long history of confrontation, negotiation, and accommodation of successive migratory flows over the course of the late eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This crossroad of origins transformed and infused the urban space with an outstanding multicultural flavor of traditions, languages, and religious beliefs. It is in this urban multicultural space that food and parades are considered cultural vehicles *par excellence*—ones that bridge the gap between said cultures. Far from being stagnant representations of an imagined culture, the showcase of ethnic identities seen at parades is in constant flux; a cycle of ceaseless production and re-production culminating in the creation of hybrid identities; ones that blend the cultural symbolism imported from the home society, as well as borrowed symbolisms from the receiving society. The so-called syncretic culture. This negotiation of identities results in a manifestation that embodies both pre-migration values and customs that are then re-shaped through the lens of new social circumstances and the audience’s specific cultural connotations. This process of cultural translation is evident in New York City parades.

New York City annually hosts more than 180 ethnic parades (Malik, 390). The city with its *bazaar* of different heritages and cultural backgrounds is one of many contrasts: I cannot count the times where I have heard people describing themselves as hailing “from here and there,” from that place and the other, from within and from without. Here, identity lays claim to more than one culture and heritage. As Glazer and Moynihan wrote fifty-five years ago, when
contesting notions of acculturation in *Beyond The Melting Pot*, “The assimilating power of the American society and culture operated on immigrant groups… to make them, […] something they had not been, but still something distinctive and identifiable” (13). Hence, it comes as no surprise that a myriad of public festivals and parades are held each year to celebrate and exhibit not only the city’s cultural foundations and one of its most important tenets, that of a city proud and participant in its own diversity. Through these demonstrations immigrants allege spatial affirmation and display valid cultural claims within the host society. Furthermore, the particular routes and the urban context of these parades highlight the socio-political affiliations and the incorporation level of the group that partakes in the parade along with the ideology that they want to convey; one in which the community plays a double participative role both entertainer and audience.

The oldest and largest of these parades travel along Fifth Avenue or Broadway, where large audiences gather to enjoy the festivities under the visible companionship and surveillance of local law enforcement. During my time in the Big Apple, I have observed that the *Saint Patrick’s Day Parade*, the *Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade* and the *Chinese New Year Parade* are the ones that attract the most audiences and participants both local and tourists. *Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade*, although extremely popular, does not serve the Capstone’s migration and global cities’ focus. With this omission and the addition of the equally relevant, albeit decidedly more controversial, *Columbus Day Parade*, these examples present themselves as perfect instances to compare the changes and historical evolution in the construction and reproduction of ethnic identity, as well as notions of spatial appropriation and incorporation.

**AN AMERICAN HISTORY OF PARADES**

North America has a long history of parades meaning, a public celebration involving a large part
of the local public; groups representing different segments of the society march like organized units, across the public path. As to reenact history and education, a public celebration performed before a sea of people, one that is heavily charged with symbols and ideologies of distinctive representatives of a society marching linearly through a city (Ryan, 132). Ingrained in political, military and religious contexts, these public manifestations (e.g., national celebrations, festivals, parades or public mourning rituals) were initially rudimentary in nature, beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, and reaching their maturity in the nineteenth century. The parades’ role was to establish political power, accent mainstream traditions, and maintain historical and cultural heritage. Historian Mary Ryan explained this phenomenon in 1989 when she stated that North Americans developed a distinctive model of public performance. By marching under a specific rank along a planned route, the participant embodied the group’s identities and alliances in the eyes of the mass spectator. This seemingly subtle display was complete with ostentatious decoration, costumes, and classically patriotic symbols which gave parades their airs of communal festivity and jubilee. Indeed, being part of the parade meant being part of the community at large for one did not simply spontaneously walk on: the planning was left to an organizational committee tasked with grouping community members in marching units that represented specific social identities. The first significant procession to be documented in the United States was the one that took place in Philadelphia the day the Constitution was ratified on June 21, 1788: it did not display the typical ‘street line’ ceremonial organization of a parade and ended, as it was the custom at the time, with all the participants and the surrounding public gathering together, like neighbors, to feast around a communal larder (Ryan, 135). Over the following decades, this convivial aspect of early parade-gatherings was lost in favor of the far less intimate, processional-style as we see nowadays.

What makes parades a particularly interesting socio-cultural case study are the
microcosms of connections they encompass as well as their historical progression: the ranking system displayed in the procession line and the relationships between the participants, who was at the beginning of the procession or at the end of the line, and who was allowed in or left outside the parade’s course. In other words: class, ethnicity, and gender, were the filter inside the social system, in a sea of urban diversity. In this sense, the initial parade (1820-30s) was composed of group of men together according to their occupation and the higher the socioeconomic status, the closer to the end line was the location. After the Civil war, parades in New York saw changes in the class position of the line, progressively the higher social status got out of procession line, followed by the skilled craftsmen and replaced by unions, civic associations and benevolent-fraternal organizations (Ryan, 140). Women did not enter into the parade’s visible dynamics until later in the nineteenth century, almost everyone who applied to the organizational committee was granted participation; rare exceptions were made on the basis of gender and race (Ryan, 147).

It was between 1825 and 1850 that the parade became the norm of the street ceremonial in American public life. During the 1880s, the demographic landscape radically changed through great migration waves in cities like San Francisco Bay, New Orleans, and New York, the urban space had to quickly albeit unwillingly transform by absorbing and accommodating new racial minorities. This incorporation brought about change in the way public space was used and performed in as ethnic groups progressively started to enter in the parade arena and lobby to be recognized as an independent social entity. After many years of push-and-pull, Irish communities were the first to break through the barrier into the civic stage and open the way for distinctively ethnic parades (Ryan, 153). A new tradition was discovered: one in which parades became a public vehicle of identity proclamation and validation for any group with enough organizational abilities and overall unity (Ryan, 142).
COLUMBUS DAY AND ST. PATRICK’S DAY

Although Irish and Italian migration to America happened at different times, I opted to study them in similar ways under historical and geopolitical lenses in conjunction with deep dives into the reasons that led each group to emigrate; touching upon migration theories of determinants, processes, and patterns of migration, as well as ways in which newcomers become incorporated or not, different types of settlements and ethnic-minority formations in the host society (Castle and Miller, 20). Pinpointing what made each migratory group unique and how each group’s processed its acculturation experience. At this point and before approaching the social-economic theories of international migration, it is relevant to define what we mean by acculturation. Due to the fact that approaches to migration studies diverge whether one takes a psychological (mental health) standpoint or sociological one, using theoretical frameworks from the European or from the North American sociology school, I would like to specify that this project embraces the European model of acculturation as it refers to the process that takes place when two different cultures come into contact, the way in which they interact and what ensues after said interaction. The outcomes can be as follows: in some cases, the asymmetrical relationship that results from the influence of only one of the cultures over the other can result in domination, while in others both cultures reciprocally impact each other transforming, more or less, the traits encompassed by each. Additionally, changes in physical space (e.g., habitat, new environment), biological determinants (e.g., new alimentation, types of food), different political systems (e.g., loss of autonomy), economical changes (e.g., employment v. unemployment) and social dynamics (e.g., new inter or intra group dynamics), can have positive (e.g., better quality of life) or negative (alienation, identity disorders) psychological effects, visible in the individual and/or the groups in question. Therefore, sometimes the result of this cross-cultural encounter, is not a suitable fit (as in, separation, segregation or marginalization) and the groups settle into a pattern of conflict,
with results in acculturative stress or psychopathology—“Acculturation Stress” (Berry, 14).

There are four basic models of acculturation: the first is an assimilation in which the individual leaves behind his/her cultural identity in favor of the dominant society. The second is an integration where the individual keeps his/her cultural identity (language, traditions) while actively participating in the economic, political and judiciary structures of the dominant society. The third is a process that leads to segregation or separation in which the individual or group avoids establishing connections with the dominant society in order to protect his/her cultural identity (such as long-settled Chinese immigrants that do not learn the English language); while the fourth, and most undesirable one, is the process of marginalization; the loss of one’s cultural identity (frequently caused by mainstream political dynamics) coupled with an exclusion from participation in the institutional and communal lives of the dominant society.

Upon immigration, many societies become culturally plural. That is, people of many cultural backgrounds come to live together in a diverse society. In many cases they form cultural groups that are not equal in power (numerical, economic, or political); these power differences have given rise to popular and social science terms such as “mainstream,” “minority,” “ethnic group.”

As I mentioned before, four economic theories of international migration were utilized to approach the mechanisms of migration in our case of study. The Neoclassical theory, the Push-Pull model, argues that people move from dense areas into sparsely populated areas, or from low to high income areas; ‘push’ signifies the constraints to leave a region (e.g., low quality of life, political or religious oppression) and ‘pull’ signifies the appealing factors (e.g., good economic opportunities, land availability, political freedom) that draw one out of one’s homeland. The Dual or Segmented labor market theory argue that international migration occurs when advanced economies are in structural need of skilled and low-skilled manual workers (e.g., Asians) the
formers characterized by lack of education, gender, race, minority status and non-authorized status. The Historical-Structural approach (Castle and Miller, 26) is based on the unequal distribution of political power and economical resources around the world, the mobilization of cheap labor for capital, with an emphasis on social capital (e.g., Italian). Lastly, the New-Segmented theory entails that emigration is decided by the group (family, household or community) not the individual (Italian). Social capital is a strong determinant in the historical model (Castle and Miller, 25). None of these models can entirely unravel the complex nuances of migration; still, these theories are widely used in combination with newer models based on geographical migration systems and network systems reinforcing the notion that migration occurs between countries that have a pre-existing history of migratory exchange (e.g., colonies, trade markets, political influences) (Castle and Miller, 27). In sum, migration is complex, multifactorial and therefore demands a conjunction of approaches.

Due to the prevalent political and religious nature of two of the parades, the climate surrounding each was reviewed in order to better represent the current turmoil. The research concludes with how the emergence of new sub-groups (LGBTQ in the Irish community) within the immigrant community as well as without (minorities lobbying for Columbus Day to be changed to Indigenous People’s Day) continue to question and contest both Irish American and Italian American identities—Pushing for a redefinition of each group in the multicultural urban arena.

CHINESE NEW YEAR

In the case of Chinese migration, the former theoretical frameworks were applied in addition to an analysis of Chinatown as a powerful prototype of a self-supporting enclave; a segregation model that can help elucidate the construction and reformulation of the Chinese American ethnic
identity through cultural parades. With this in mind, I approached the first Asian wave to America at the end of the nineteenth century, taking into account the historical and socio-political context and how they fit into migration theories. Special attention was paid to the ideas of origin, social structure and gender in the development of the enclave from an urban spatial perspective. Special care was given to notions of violent American nationalism and racist behavior against this group as these are essential when dealing the confrontation and segregation suffered by Asians in general and the Chinese in particular, during the nineteenth century. Furthermore, nineteenth century political cartoons provided a terribly illustrative and explicit representation of the Chinese Exclusion period which helped anchor the enclave’s history and development—a picture is indeed worth a thousand words.

CAPSTONE DEVELOPMENT
The “Parade of Identities” project began with the arduous task of choosing a subject that matched in symbiotic ways the background of a health care provider, the academic structure acquired at the program of Liberal Studies on the Migration and Global Cities track, and my experience as a first generation immigrant and member of a minority group. The final idea came to me as the result of a series of attempts oriented to put ethnic identity into focus and pinpointing which social determinants would be taken into consideration. Initially, I began looking at the endeavors of immigrant medical doctors in search of professional recognition beyond their ethnic stereotypes, which led to the encounter of implicit bias reinforcing negative Hispanic American stereotypes in public and private institutional visual art exhibitions, and finally, to the impact of minority groups in the public space through the analysis of a collection of street art and public performances. As a neophyte resident of the state of New York, I had been attending many of the city's ethnic parades for years before realizing that these
commemorative performances of culture, heritage, and identity were the perfect basis on which to build the Capstone. They were tangible evidence of immigrant identity through time, as I went on to discover not only through the different pictures I had accumulated through the years but as I delved into the history, background, and evolution of these processions.

The basic contents and context of the research were established; with the following steps requiring the curation of my personal [visual] collection that would reflect the meaning of the study, as well as becoming familiar with the WordPress to create a website that would encompass all mentioned above.

CURATING A DIGITAL PHOTO LIBRARY

The truth is that curating the digital files included in the “A Parade of Identities” website was not a straightforward process: I did not know when I began taking pictures with an iPhone 4, six years ago, that they would be used for an undertaking such as this one. At the time, I was first and foremost a spectator; observing how different immigrant groups display their heritage in culture within the ever-changing city of New York. I began accumulating pictures of festivals, community gatherings, and of street art from all over the five boroughs. I was particularly interested in examples that were indicative of a strong sense of identity; ones that reflected the surrounding neighborhood local culture, cross-cultural effects or, on the contrary, ones that were symbolic of struggles against change, systemization, and gentrification. When the time came to begin crafting my thesis and the scope of the capstone, I originally thought that the self-expressions I found in graffiti and street art (e.g., murals, building’s front door, facades, paved paths) would prove to be the perfect material on which to base theories of ethnic immigrant identities, spatial claims, enclave validation and survival, but this was not the case. As I was sorting through years of snapshots and videos, I first realized that the street art visual bank in my
possession was too diverse (e.g., multi-ethnicity, art, music, religion/believes, politic, social activism/movements) to put together within the urban space-ethnic identity container of the project. It was a time-consuming task. Still, through the selection, I realized that the most vivid, consistent, yet ever-evolving displays of immigrant identity were found in yearly parades—packed with colors and ideals during these annual commemorations of self. These images as visual reports documented not only the events but gave useful information about the intentions, values and strategies displayed in the parade. Once I made that distinction, the street art content was left aside as I began looking for images that supported different aspects of the identity building process inside and out the cultural parade. Additionally, I also realize that another type of image “in-time” was needed to visually represent an important aspect of the immigrant’s identity construction, the historical construction of cultural parades and ethnic group involved. The public domain, Digital Collections of the New York Public Library-NYPL and the Library of Congress-LOC websites exceed my expectations, both are user-friendly interfaces and the images’ copyright status is clearly display and supported, if necessary, by telephone-based resources.

The basic steps in building the capstone were:

- Choosing the topic and design of the study
- Access to the GC-Digital Fellows learning resources (one-to-one and communal meeting, WordPress-1 workshop)
- Advisor’s previous WordPress experience as starting block
- Design a WordPress site (theme and basic structural choices)
- Build the WordPress site and blog (draft pages and posts)
- Visual curation (photos and videos) of the personal and institutional-second sources visual data
• Adaptation of visual data according to WordPress standard (resize and reformate photos and videos)

• Upload visual data to WordPress and create media galleries

• Analysis of theoretical framework (primary and secondary academic sources)

• Write content for site pages and white paper

• Write analysis and interpretation for visual material (photos and video caption)

• Review and expand content for all the site pages

• Overall evaluation of the site and white paper (final edition)

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

“Parade of Identities” due to the digital humanities-website of its design is the result of an experimental process trying to find the best method and platform to convey my ideas or at least, what I imagined would be. As an individual with basic digital training and no experience in website’s construction, the most challenging aspects were learning the “how to” of building the capstone website with the GC Digital Fellows-WordPress-WP platform and estimate the length of time to finish it. One of the first issues came with choosing a theme that could fit my ideation of the capstone. One thing is what to want and another what you get. WordPress include a variety of them according to the purposes of the prospective site. Moreover, due to their busy schedule and limited communal-assistance hours during which to ask advice (15 minutes) on specific problems, it was difficult to rely on the support of the Digital Fellows. The solution came from two different sources: access to online WordPress tutorials/blogs and most important, regular meeting with my advisor, Prof. Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis where she was a tremendous help and show me how to work with WordPress tools during one-on-one sessions.

One issue I encountered was the notion of copyright as it pertains to visual material under
the CUNY Academics Commons rights of user. When one opens an account on the Academic Commons, the first step of site construction on the platform is to accept the terms of the site; effectively giving away any visual material uploaded to be used by the Commons without restriction or credit to the author. One wonders: what happens after graduation once the benefits of the program are over? Past the possibility of migrating the website to another platform, does one recover the copyrights of the visual material originally uploaded or not? These questions have remained unanswered and that is the reason why, I have previously mentioned the ambiguousness of the copyright framework. If one wants to keep the rights over one’s material, is the only option to restrict one’s use the website? Because I did not want to suffer from the restricted usage of the WP platform, I began intermingling pictures from the NYPL and LOC collections with my own; not compromising the quality of the website’s content as well as the rights to my pictures. When preparing the visual data for the site media galleries, I was advised to first start uploading one gallery of 25 images; it was easier said than done. My bank of images was built and stored without too much attention to: file dimension (pixels), size/weight (Kb) or type of files (e.g., JPEG, TIFF, PNG). In other words, the images were heavy, lost transparency or depth when trying to crop or downsize them. Finding ways to adapt WordPress’ basic tenets-theme to fit the project’s needs without the use of tools that came at an additional cost was frustrating and somewhat restricting; for the website to reflects the former comment. In this sense, I started with a basic theme, “Attitude” but it did not visually work, I wanted to have different images, as headers, on each category to make it less monotone; Attitude could not do that without upgrading the application. Late in the process, I eraser the entire website and started from scratch this time I chose “Radiate” as it supported parallax header images; allowing the different pages to move up/down. Moreover, Radiate also allowed transfer the gallery of images initially uploaded in Attitude. The help of my advisor, Professor Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis, and
her experience with building a digital presence for her academic interests, proved to be instrumental in the development of the project.

At the same time, in an attempt to move the project along, I changed my plans of website first and WP second, to a Word version of the site, as an initial draft in which to organize and insert content and paper. Easy, copy and paste. Working with that version, I spent much time and effort creating work that would end up not being included in the final version; simply because, without realizing it, I was developing a thesis-like document rather than one that would translate into a capstone-website. In other words, I was writing for a print version rather than an online audience.

Furthermore, only late in the process, I understood that the content of the WP should not be the same as the one in the website; the writing style is different in both. Basically, the WP is a narrative of a step-by-step process. It is not the final product of the [academic] analysis of the subject, but rather the tool we chose to arrive to that analysis, and why.

BEST PRACTICES
For “A Parade of Identities” project, once the type of study format according to the photographic use was decided (Thesis or Capstone/Website), the sample was minted (which immigrant communities-parade, and location), the study variables (ethnic-immigrant’s identity, all generations: first, second, third, generation) were designed, the next step while the theoretical framework, text analysis and the curation of the visual data was ongoing was to build the website and then write the corresponding white paper. Unfortunately, this exchange proved to be unsuccessful as well as time consuming. Therefore, the best practice for me was to build the website simultaneously with the image curation process, and the WP site with draft content for submission and corrections.
RELATIONSHIP TO THE TRACK AND PREVIOUS COURSE OF STUDY

In developing the “Parade of Identities” project, although not immediately apparent to me, I soon realized that parades in an urban context such as New York City are a useful template to apply most of the skills and tools acquired during my years in the Migration and Global Cities track; which is now a standalone Master’s in International Migration. In “Introduction to Liberal Studies: Colonialism and Contemporary American History”, Professor Karen Miller not only delved into an inside interpretation of known events, that until then I had only analyzed from a European point of view, but also initiated me in the research methodology for Humanities study. Professor Pyong Gap Min’s “International Migration” opened the door to becoming acquainted with the West’s history of classical and contemporary migration flows and causality theories. This course came to be one of the fundamental pillars in my way of understanding immigration and by extension, every other course taken in the program. Professor Angie Chung’s “Immigrant Communities,” with her rigorous methodical approach, took me through the evolution, structure, and dynamics of immigrant communities in the United States with particular attention to the ethnic economy and community politics of contemporary Asian and Latino enclaves; her course gave me the necessary social tools for my work with Harlem’s Mexican first and second generation groups affected by unequal access to health care attention in conjunction with community associations and the Mexican Consulate of New York. “Introduction to International Studies: Critical Issues in Migration and Human Rights” followed by “Migration and Security,” a year later, with Professor Anca Pusca expanded my knowledge beyond voluntary immigration to notions of refugees, asylum, forced displacement, ethnic extermination and the international institution—and Hannah Arendt. These ideas were reinforced by Professor Bryan Tuner’s “Human Rights and Citizenship.” My first encounter with the Chicago School of Sociology and
the idea of a social urban space came at the hands of Professor Philip Kasinitz and Professor Greg Smithsimon in “Theories of Neighborhood and Community Change: Neighborhoods Ghettoes and Enclaves”, in their ways of approaching exclusion and segregation patterns at the public space level and diversity and the City. A year later, Professor Philip Kasinitz in his course “Race and Ethnicity,” taught me how race, racism and the visibility of ethnic identities evolve in relation to the historical moment. Professor Erica Chito-Child and her course on “Race, Multiculturalism and Global Perspectives” complemented Professor Kasinitz’s courses on race with the study of racism’s dynamics within LBGT communities, interracial couples and Sexual Tourism. Last but not least, Professor Mehdi Bosorgmedhz’s course on “Muslim Integration in Europe and U.S.” explored Muslim communities’ pre and post 9/11 and the inevitable backlash that followed. To conclude, the Sociology Colloquium series and the Anthropology Colloquium on Friday

CONTINUATION OF THE PROJECT

The “A Parade of Identities” project is meant to be an ongoing project, a digital platform that could track the evolution and changes of yearly parades in the City and encourage exchange on a more personal level through a periodical blog. However, the WordPress site will be hosted by the CUNY- Graduate Center Digital Commoners as long as I continue to be a part of the CUNY community. After graduation, when leaving the Graduate Center, I have been told that the site files could potentially be exported onto another platform; this is something I will explore what digital-platforms I have available to pursuing past the completion of my degree.
WORKS CITED


http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47dd-94e5-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99


