Public Art
A critical discourse of migrant inclusion and exclusion through public displays

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Agenda

• Why Public Art?
• Background
• Theoretical Framework
• The Emigrant
• The Volunteers
• Excluding racialized migrants’ experiences
• Take Away
Why Public Art?

• “...as a public phenomenon, art must entail the artist’s self-negation and deference to a collective community” (Neill & Ridley, 2008, p.406).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Philomena Essed’s
Everyday Racism

Everyday racism:
• Helps researchers articulate how omnipresent micro-aggressions are a result of systemic racism (p.56).

Kendall L. Walton’s Categories of Art

• The amount of information an observer has access to determines the way in which art is experienced (Adamu et al., 2019, p. 7).

Neoclassical Migration Theory

- Embedded in the need to advance economically by moving to another country (Todaro and Smith, 2006).

Public Art in Halifax, NS
The Emigrant
The Emigrant
The Volunteers
Exclusion at Pier 21

- Pier 21: In operation from 1928 to the end of the 1960s.
  - Full operation during the period of exclusionary migration policies
Migration policies preceding or during the height of Pier 21’s operations

- Chinese Immigration Act (1885)
- Hayashi-Lemieux Agreement (1908)
- Black Exclusion (1911)
  - Order-in-Council P.C. 1911-1324
- Caribbean Domestic Scheme (1911)
The Emigrant
Policy Implications

• **Social**: Legislation around the type of art that gets placed in public spaces
Take Away

• In the face of population growth and demographic shift due to migration:
  – Monuments about migrants should be reflective of the many faces that shape the population
  – Homage in the form of monuments such as “The Emigrant” should be more specific, rather than attempt to represent the general migrant population