

Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

SPEAKER SERIES

The After Life of SAWP: The post-migration experiences of former workers in Canada's Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) from Jamaica and Mexico

Etni Zoe Castell Roldán

My research will explore the experiences of former agricultural workers who were part of the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) in St. Elizabeth, Jamaica and Guerrero, Mexico. As a comparative and multi-sited ethnography, this research will explore the past work experiences of former international agricultural workers. It will also examine the challenges they face as they age and become eligible for pensions. The study will investigate how their interaction with local and international street-level bureaucracies has affected their access to employment benefits and how these conditions have influenced their family livelihood strategies where retirement remains almost unattainable. Drawing on the anthropology of work and political economy literature—focused on labour migration, feminist interventions on social reproduction and the anthropology of ageing—, this research will aim to analyze the SAWP in different scales of action, from the hiring process in sending states, the workers' labour experiences in Canada, to the aftermath of the program for the workers and their families once they return to their home countries. Little is known about the experiences of aging as former seasonal agricultural workers from the perspective of the former workers and from their countries of origin. I aim to bridge this gap by examining how the historical conditions of the SAWP have significantly impacted the current lives of those former workers in their hometowns once they stopped migrating seasonally to Canada.

Friday, April 5th, 2024

McCain, #1116

Reception to follow

All Welcome!