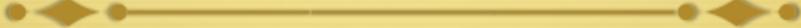


Purpose



- ✦ To explicate the importance of:
 - ✦ understanding migration contexts of families;
 - ✦ keeping the bi-national (transnational) nature of these families present;
 - ✦ partnering with respected community partners
 - ✦ recognizing power dynamics in the research.

Studies From Which I Draw



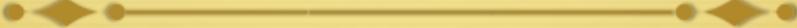
- ✦ Voluntary Mexico-Minnesota transnational families who have a family member in Minnesota working in agriculture
- ✦ Karen refugee families who fled the Karen State in Burma, lived in camps along the Thai border, and were resettled in Minnesota
- ✦ Cambodian refugee families who fled the Pol Pot regime, lived in camps in Thailand, were resettled in Minnesota, and have recently experienced the deportation of a family member to Cambodia

Contextual Considerations



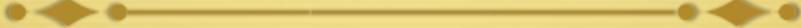
- ✦ Push-Pull Factors
 - ✦ Economics, Safety, and Rite of Passage
- ✦ Migration Policies
 - ✦ Vulnerability, Trust, Human Subject Protection
- ✦ Political Context
 - ✦ Role of researcher

Family “Bi-nationalness”



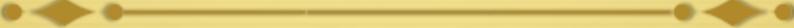
- ✦ Intentionality about including questions about family members who were physically absent but psychologically present
- ✦ Recognizing the worry and concern that both voluntary and involuntary separation from family generates
- ✦ Interviewing family members in both locations if at all possible

Community Partners



- ✦ Engagement with community critical
 - ✦ Trust is critical
 - ✦ Benefit to persons who are focus of study
 - ✦ Opportunity to contribute; avoid exploitation
 - ✦ Mexican Project: U of MN Extension
 - ✦ Karen Refugee Project: Karen Organization of Minnesota
 - ✦ Cambodia Project: Release MN8

Power is Not Equally Distributed



- ✦ Recognize researchers' privilege: social location - race, education, employment, citizenship, etc.
- ✦ Spend time with interpreter to build relationship prior to interviews
- ✦ Follow cultural customs; bring food, fruit; engage in conversation prior to beginning the interview; share pictures of your family; break down barriers

Challenging research, however....



- ✦ It has been the most humbling, emotional, and rewarding work I've ever done in my career.
- ✦ Thank you for allowing me to share my experiences.
- ✦ csolheim@umn.edu