

The Department of French & Italian presents
a PhD Dissertation Defense

Claire Fouchereaux

Redefining the nation? Rap, communities, and institutions in Québec

9:00 a.m., Wednesday, May 28, 2025, in GA 1060, in English.

For more information, please contact Prof. Vincent Bouchard (vbouchar@iu.edu).

During the late 2010s in Québec (Canada), local rap regained mainstream prominence after years of more limited recognition. Although Québécois rap has benefited from scholarly attention to its socio-linguistic or literary elements, especially as it has risen in popularity, little work has yet been done on the institutions surrounding music in Québec and this apparent watershed moment in terms of visibility. This dissertation treats the construction of community and articulation of power in Québec through structures of funding, diffusion, public reception, and validation of local popular music from the mid-2000s to the late 2010s. More specifically, it considers the relationship between these kinds of structures, which were generally established in a logic of perpetuation of Franco-

Québécois identity in a nationalist perspective, and the local hip-hop subculture. The first part of this dissertation is an analysis of the differing norms and structures of Québécois popular music and Québécois hip-hop and of the interaction between the structures of popular music and rap artists, for example, in scrutinizing how the selection criteria for grants and awards reflect



*Québécois rappers Loco Locass performing at the Fête nationale concert in Montréal in 2022.
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a disjuncture with the values of local hip-hop. The second portion uses case studies to establish the senses of community constructed around rap artists both accepted and rebuked by these structures, drawing on sources like music videos, album packaging, lyrics, and reception data, with a particular emphasis on the artists' aesthetic, identitary, and affective resonances. Ultimately, this dissertation argues that, from the mid-2000s up through the late 2010s, the structures of popular music in Québec tend to function to support and circulate the work of rap artists who replicate and reaffirm existing notions of community belonging on ethnic-linguistic lines, as well as who mute the expression of marginalities bound up in hip-hop's foundations.

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