**R. F. Harney Program in Ethnic, Immigration and Pluralism Studies**

**12th Annual Ethnic and Pluralism Studies Graduate Research Conference**

**January 31-February 1, 2019, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy Observatory Site**

**315 Bloor Street West, Boardroom**

**List of Abstracts**

**Day One: Thursday January 31, 2019**

**9:15-10:30 SESSION 1 Education and Integration**

Lucy El-Sherif (University of Toronto, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, PhD program)

"Off with her Head!" The Citizenship Study Guide and the Terrain of the Citizen

My goal in this paper is to unpack how the Canadian citizenship study guide spatializes a normative settler Canadian relationship with land. By living on this land, everyone from ‘old-stock’ Canadians to recent immigrants is in a relationship with Indigenous people that demands we fulfill our treaty obligations towards them. I argue that the official Canadian story described in the study guide portrays a settler-colonial capitalist relationship to land, one that invisibilizes our relationship with the land and Indigenous people. Drawing on Mohanram’s (1999) concept of relation to nation replacing relation to land, I examine how the booklet calls forth loyalty not to the people whose land we are living on, but to a nation through various constructions of social space. These spatial constructions are premised on the Canadian relationship to nation through the symbol of the colonial queen. Such a political order dictates an immigrant construct of land based on settler futurity and I examine how the booklet uses images, metaphors and geographic naming of places to do so. I end by discussing how immigrant pedagogies of citizenship reinscribe a settler colonial futurity, as well as racialized immigrants’ endorsement of their own subordination.

Antona Christus-Ranjan (University of Toronto, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, MPP Program)

Institutional Racism in the Education System

This paper explores how institutional racism in the education system leads Black students to experience an overall lower educational attainment level compared to their White peers, disproportionately perpetuating further disadvantages for the Black population. Socioeconomic status of Black students is a contributing factor to low educational attainment level as students are more likely to grow up in low income households, live in poor quality housing, and be more exposed to traumatic and violent incidents that act as an impediment to their learning outcomes. Placing students into non-academic and less rigorous programs can also be a barrier to Black students as they are disproportionately streamed into courses way below their abilities which leads to structural inequities in accessing advanced academic and career opportunities. Furthermore, high suspension and expulsion rates amongst Black students that results from harsh disciplinary policies increase dropout rates, causing a rise in youth’s involvement in criminal activities. This paper examines the educational attainment gap in Ontario, with a specific focus on Toronto and provides policy recommendations that different levels of governments can take to enhance the educational outcomes for the Black population.

**10:45-12:30 SESSION 2 Pathways to Multiculturalism**

Paul De Silva (Ryerson University of Toronto, Department of Communications and Culture, PhD program)

Cultural Diversity in Narrative Screen Media in Canada: Legislative Intentions and Current Realities for Screen Media Artists from Diasporic Communities of Color – Why the Gap?

Prime-time narrative is the most watched and influential genre of television. It creates a sense of belonging and contributes to identity formation. It also receives the largest amount of publicly mandated funding in the form of investment, subsidies, and tax incentives in Canada. Anecdotal and empirical evidence suggests that despite legislation requiring equitable representation in all aspects of screen media, and over thirty years of many ‘special initiatives’ and training and mentorship programs, little progress has been made in the area of equitable representation in narrative programming. This dissertation investigates the representation of diasporic people of colour in the screen-media industry in Canada. In particular, it studies how “authentic voices” from these communities are finding expression in the area of prime-time television narrative programming (scripted comedy and drama) and feature films, which ultimately find their largest audiences in broadcast screen platforms on television and increasingly via the Internet. The focus is on the legislative frameworks pertaining to the reflection of “diasporic communities of colour” in the production of screen media, specifically for prime-time broadcast in narrative, or iv what is referred to in the industry as “scripted programming,” as well as on the current realities faced by creators of screen media from diasporic communities of colour in telling their stories in this arena. Through a case study of the television series Little Mosque on the Prairie, it examines the issues that affect the expression of “authentic voice” from individuals who have had the opportunity to work in the area of narrative screen media in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Canada’s public broadcaster, which has as one of its key priorities the reflection of the cultural diversity of Canada. The issues involved in the production of feature films by diasporic people of colour is examined through a case study of the film Heaven on Earth, written and directed by Indo-Canadian filmmaker Deepa Mehta. Mehta’s film presents a unique situation in which the filmmaker, due to the previous international success of her film Water, was able to access the financial
resources to produce the film in Canada and maintain her “authentic voice” without mediation in the production from external players. Part of this case study includes a documentary film featuring an interview with Deepa Mehta conducted in 2017 about her film Heaven on Earth

Jennifer Guyver (McGill University, Department of Religious Studies, PhD. program)

Between Totemism and Secularism: a Durkheimian explanation of the controversy of the crucifix in the National Assembly

In May 2008, Charles Taylor and Gerard Bouchard released their report on reasonable accommodation of cultural practices in Québec. Of the thirty-seven recommendations made by the commissioners, the provincial government acted upon one immediately: the suggestion to remove the crucifix from the National Assembly. Before the report was officially released, members of the National Assembly passed a unanimous motion to keep the crucifix in place – a move widely interpreted as a rejection of the report. The commissioners had not adequately anticipated the public’s high degree of attachment to Catholic symbols in state institutions; a misstep that has been routinely exploited by subsequent governments in order to claim that the issue of reasonable accommodation is still unsettled in Quebec.

This paper will revisit the controversy over the crucifix in National Assembly in order to understand what went wrong. I propose that the commissioners are unable to anticipate the negative response to their recommendation because they overlook the totemic significance of the crucifix as a sacrificial symbol of the Québécois people. Furthermore, I argue that this blindness towards the totemic is evident in Charles Taylor’s (mis)interpretation of Emile Durkheim’s theory of religion contained within Varieties of Religion Today and A Secular Age. By considering the crucifix as a totem, this paper offers Durkheimian explanation of the persistent attachment to the crucifix in a largely secularized society.

Shalini Ramgoolam (University of Toronto, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, MPP program)

The Social and Economic Impacts of Hybridization in Trinidad and Tobago

Cultural hybridization is often referred to as a product of migration or colonial trends. This paper builds on existing literature to illustrate the intergenerational effects of migration on socio-economic structures. This paper presents a case study of Trinidad and Tobago, a prime example of post-colonial transculturation, to demonstrate the transformative power of hybridization. The evolution of soca music, a fusion of Creole and Indian musical traditions, reflects an ongoing blending of the two major ethnic groups. Through music, the country has overcome strong racial divides that originate from the sugar-slave trade under the British Empire in the 19th century. The focus of this paper demonstrates the reshaping of social and economic structures to create a more tolerant, homogenized country. Soca music has since become a proud national symbol and a central component to Trinidad’s nation-building scheme after it’s independence in 1962. Soca has been leveraged to create a shared cultural identity and promoted abroad to grow the tourism and entertainment industries. Each year Trinidad and Tobago, an atypical travel destination, attracts between 30,000 to 40,000 visitors for its annual Carnival music festival. This event showcases the country’s colourful cultural commodities and generates over $30 million USD in just two days. Trinidad’s entertainment industry at large generates an estimated $54.8 million USD annually. Soca music continues to evolve through Trinidad’s global network of diaspora communities and promotes a further mixing of other cultures across the world. In essence the transformative power of soca music, a product of globalization and hybridization, has reimagined cultural spaces, national identity and international markets to promote themes of harmony through music.

Francisco Rivera (Universite de Montreal, Department of Anthropology, PhD program)

This paper approaches immigration and exile from an archaeological perspective. Urban odonyms and public art that refer to the Chilean dictatorship (1973-1990), in Toronto and Montreal, are artefacts within both cities’ cultural landscape. An archaeological reading of this contemporary materiality forces us to understand them not as isolated but intersubjective artefacts. I explore this hypothesis: odonyms and public art that commemorate a traumatic event of Chilean history are artefacts that open a symbolic healing space for exiled Chileans in Canada. They are part of a cultural landscape that offers meaning to the experience of exile, contributing to the formation of a foreign community. This contemporary materiality takes shape through the monumentalizing of political violence, creating social relations between people and symbolic spaces in the present. These discreet artefacts are the result of different temporalities that survive in today’s Canadian territory and they contribute to define present and future social spaces.
Viveka Ichikawa (University of Toronto, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, MSW program)

“Where I’m from, I would be dead by stone”: LGBTQ Newcomer Women’s Journey in Canada for Building Comprehensive Sense of Self and Belonging

With individuals and couples fleeing from countries with anti-gay laws and persecutory environments, there is a growing LGBTQ newcomer women population in Canada (Access Alliance, 2018). While there is increasing evidence of the violence, systemic discrimination, and service barriers faced by LGBTQ groups, and by LGBTQ newcomers, little research exists on the specific experiences and challenges of LGBTQ newcomer women living in Canada (Access Alliance, 2018). Gender identity and sexuality are significant components of one’s identity: ethnicity, race, class, ability, age, and citizenship status all intersect to comprehensively shape one’s identity (Alessi, 2013). Many newcomers experience a reshaping of their identities by going through an adjustment process in a new country (Alessi, 2013). The western conceptualization of gender and sexuality in immigration and settlement systems, exclusion from both ethnic or newcomer communities and mainstream LGBTQ communities, and economic instability due to un/under employment are interconnected and put LGBTQ newcomer women into a vulnerable position.

This paper focuses on the journey of LGBTQ newcomer women for rebuilding one’s sense of self and belonging to a host country. Being involved in one’s ethnic community and being connected to people who share the same cultural background is seen as a positive factor to increase newcomers’ resilience in the adjustment process (Spitzer, 2011). For LGBTQ newcomer women, the home country and its citizens are connected to memories of discrimination, and it is common for them to express hesitation and fear of interacting with people from their home countries in Canada (Lee & Brotman, 2011). On the other hand, they often experience isolation and racism in mainstream LGBTQ communities which tend to be shaped through lens of sexual stereotypes and norms (Heller, 2009). Many minority groups in Canada hold traditional sexual and gender orientation values and thus there is a strong LGBTQ stigma, which also affects the Canadian born (Logie et al., 2016). However, forced migration because of their sexuality and gender identity may add another layer to this already complex issue, thus making the LGBTQ refugee experience of developing a sense of self and belonging in Canada different from other newcomers or Canadian born queers. This paper aims to synthesize existing literature and on-going research “Among Friends: Overcoming Systematic Discriminations and Building Positive Spaces for Lesbian, Bisexual, and Trans (LBTQ+) Newcomer Women” by Access Alliance: a multicultural health care service organization in Toronto. Then, recommendations to improve LGBTQ newcomer women’s settlement process in Canada based on anti-oppressive practice will be suggested.

Natalie Krzywiecki (University of Toronto, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, MPP program)

“And in the process they both inscribe a vision of home”: The Significance of Female Epistolary Networks in the Reclamation of Identity for Nineteenth-Century Female Immigrants

In a letter dated April 1829, Frances Stewart laments that all my pursuits are so completely changed that I can scarcely help thinking that I myself have become a different being, for no two people could be more unlike that Fanny Browne of Dublin and Fanny Stewart of Douro [sic]. But my dear friends are the same and equally fond and tender. Oh, this makes me know most exquisitely that I am Fanny Browne still. (Dunlop 114-115)

Frances, who emigrated to Canada from Ireland in 1822, alludes in this excerpt to the profound rupture of self that occurs within the immigrant who has abandoned his or her home for an alien environment. For genteel women like Frances, it was especially difficult to leave home, as they tried desperately, and often failed, to see their privileged traditions replicated within the Canadian wilderness. However, through the letters she exchanged with female relatives and friends, Frances could retain the notion of home internally, and in this way, it could be carried over to the New World. An examination of her archived letters reveals that the migrant letter is a privileged space for the female voice, as many of her letters are conversations between women, thus making it an important site for the study of female bonds. The letters of Frances Stewart suggest that, through the written word, 19th century emigrant women were able to access the support that eased their transition into a new life by helping them to uphold key, familiar parts of their identities. This revelation stresses the importance of a nuanced...
Alex Verman (University of Toronto, Department of Political Science, MA program)

Diasporic Nationalism and the Queer Question: Intimacy and Envelopment on Taglit-Birthright

Nationalist movements seek to reinforce affective and material ties between states and diasporas, and tend to perceive feminist, queer, or otherwise non-normative identities as threatening commitment to the nationalist project. For the Jewish diaspora, one technology of normativity is diaspora tourism, most clearly embodied in Taglit-Birthright — free group trips to Israel for diasporic Jews aged 18-27. Birthright has offered LGBTQ trips since 2008.

Scholars of gender and nationalism find that feminism and queerness are perceived as antithetical to the nation, and provide women and queers with opportunities for resistance. In the case of the Jewish diaspora, young diasporic Jewish people indicate that they are less interested in and approving of Israel and nationalism in general than ever. They are also more likely than previous generations to be childless, to be feminists or to transgress traditional gender roles, and to share community with non-Jewish people. All of these trends challenge the normative sexual and racial politics of Jewish nationalism, or Zionism, which has historically theorized the diaspora as a space of sexual perversity and gender chaos — a position that animates current Israeli anxieties around intermarriage, same-sex marriage, and demographics. Nonetheless, theories of pinkwashing and homonationalism suggest that feminist and queer movements can be successfully enveloped by nationalist movements and incorporated into the normative politics of the nation-state.

This article studies Birthright as a technology for maintaining normative notions of national continuity and sexual discipline for the Jewish diaspora, and raises the example of LGBTQ Birthright trips to show how nationalist movements contend with and envelop diasporic challenges to nationalist narratives.

Lynda Chubak (University of Toronto, Department of Anthropology, PhD program)

From counting to reifying: A survey of research exploring ethnic and racial classifying within national censuses

Census taking is not a neutral endeavour. Historical and ethnographic investigation into census making and data collection has shown that these processes have the capacity to amplify, diminish, transform, and reify populations. Through the workings of the census apparatus, individuals and groups may experience positive and negative ‘real’ world outcomes, from being granted or restricted access to government programs to being able to self-identify ethnicity. What has not received in-depth ethnographic examination is how the effects of these processes may trickle into urban communities when national...
census data are rolled into municipal government documents and local policy decisions. Intuitively, there must be consequences. This paper is a non-exhaustive survey of anthropology, history, and linguistics informed research on census making. It begins with a brief historical perspective, and then sketches some of the key texts that address the interwoven themes of racial, ethnic and linguistic classification, and the identity (de)constructions that emerge during the political process of enumerating populations, coming from both international and Canadian research. The paper closes by introducing power and spatiality in connection with censuses as potential research directions to pursue. This exploratory review is intended to serve as a doorway into and, perhaps, an encouraging nudge to others to consider going down this analytic rabbit hole, as there is much work to be done, especially when census research shifts from the national to the municipal level, where the literature terrain is especially barren.

Karol Czuba (University of Toronto, Department of Political Science, PhD program)

The Effects of Electoral District Population Composition on Ethnic Identity Mobilization and Intergroup Alliance-making: Evidence from Marsabit in Northern Kenya

Political agents commonly rely on ethnic ties to mobilize voters. However, ethnicity often encompasses multiple distinct, if overlapping, identities, with a single larger-scale ‘ethnic group’ composed from several sub-ethnic groups. If political agents have more than one ethnic identity at their disposal, which of those identities will they choose to mobilize? I argue that these choices are shaped by the distribution of ethnic identities in electoral districts. In electoral contests taking place in constituencies shared by multiple larger-scale ethnic groups, those groups will serve as the primary bases of voter mobilization. Where one larger-scale ethnic group dominates, however, political agents will rely on smaller-scale sub-ethnic identities to build popular support. In many electoral districts no single ethnic group—of either type—commands the majority of the vote. What strategies will political agents pursue in such settings? Political agents whose own group is too small to secure electoral victory need to construct an alliance with counterparts from other groups. Both ethnic identity mobilization choices and intergroup alliances are sensitive to modifications of the size and boundaries of electoral districts. In this article, I draw on the case of Marsabit, a Northern Kenyan county that has experienced frequent redistributions of ethnic identities within constituencies, to investigate the effects of electoral district changes on ethnic identity mobilization and intergroup alliance-making.

Valeria Vergani (University of Toronto, Department for the Study of Religion, MA program)

Writing Indigenous Temporality: Anthropological Approaches, Recent Critiques, and Methodological Considerations

Indigenous scholars working on strategies of resurgence and decolonization have repeatedly raised the question of temporality in order to show that colonial domination entails, and partly depends on, a settler time of linear progress and racial inheritance. As a result, Indigenous scholars have argued that affirming Indigenous ways of being-in-time is fundamental to the revitalization of Indigenous communities and their traditions, and can help destabilize the epistemological foundations of colonial domination. Following this lead, this paper asks: how can issues of temporality be productively engaged in anthropological work that stands in solidarity with Indigenous peoples? In order to answer this question, I start by introducing seminal anthropological approaches to temporality through the work of Johannes Fabian in Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object (1983). I then critique Fabian’s approach through the lens of Indigenous studies, focusing on the work by Mohawk anthropologist Audra Simpson and Dene political scientist Glen Coulthard. I aim to show that the insights of these Indigenous scholars offer a geopolitical grounding – centered on questions of Indigenous sovereignty – for assessing questions of temporality in ethnography. Third, I employ the considerations drawn from this analysis in order to critically evaluate two recent attempts at examining Indigenous temporality: Mark Rifkin’s work on “Indigenous temporal sovereignty” (2017) and Paul Nadasdy’s “spatio-temporal politics of bureaucratization” (2017) of wildlife management in the Yukon. My purpose throughout this exploration is twofold: first, I hope to draw out some broader implications for methodological approaches to the anthropology of Indigeneity through the study of temporality; and second, I hope to show the critical importance of Indigenous studies’ scholarship in relation to other fields of study, including anthropology.

12:30-14:00  SESSION 5 Policy and Integration

Yu-Chen Chen (University of Toronto, Centre for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, MA program)

Past and Present Suspect Minorities in Canada and the Evolution of Canadian Immigration Acts
National security issues in Canada sometimes place a particular minority group under public suspicion. History has shown that the Canadian government does not always help those minorities eliminate the suspicion. Indeed, in using immigration laws to target vulnerable minorities, this phenomenon often transforms into lasting xenophobia. Contemporary Canadian Muslims post-9/11 and Germans-Canadians in the interwar period share the experience of being suspect minorities; and both suffered sudden and unnecessary exclusions in their host society.

Nicholas Alexand Rymal Fraser (University of Toronto, Department of Political Science, PhD program)

Shared Heuristics: How Organizational Culture Defines Asylum Policy

Despite decades of policy convergence there is considerable variation in asylum recognition rates across the developed world. Within political science, previous studies have argued that asylum policy is shaped by adherence to international norms, party politics, or institutions. However, these theories cannot explain countries with consistently high or low recognition rates even when focusing on refugee status determination (RSD) procedures that typically grant bureaucratic decision-makers a high degree of autonomy. Challenging conventional approaches, I argue that stable trends of high or low recognition rates are the product of organizational culture rooted in assumptions about refugee applicants that decision-makers develop through training and work experience. My study employs a qualitative approach based on 81 interviews with refugee advocates as well as bureaucratic decision-makers in countries with traditions of high and low recognition rates including settler societies (Canada) and recent countries of immigration (Ireland, Japan, and South Korea). I find that decision-makers will tend to be generous when they focus on structural factors that produce forced migration, but will be strict when they focus on the micro-level behaviour of refugee applicants.

BrCic Bello, Nikola (Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, MPP program) and Lucia Lopez (University of Toronto, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, MGA program)

The income trajectory of immigrants from the Global South to Canada

This study uses a multilevel linear regression model with data from the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC) to examine the income trajectory of immigrants from the Global South in comparison to that of immigrants from the United Kingdom (UK). In addition to region of origin, the variables of gender, immigrant class, marital status, educational attainment, and official language proficiency were added to the model to control for possible demographic differences. The results show a statistically significant difference between the income of immigrants from the UK and their counterparts from the Global South during the first year of settlement in Canada. In contrast, their income trajectory in successive years was not statistically significant. However, individuals from the UK experienced a higher income across all three time points of the data collection. Because of the similarity in slopes among all immigrant groups, the income gap experienced during their first year of immigration is sustained throughout the all cycles of LSIC data collection, except for immigrants coming from Southern Africa, who experienced a catch up with those arriving from the UK.

Marie-Eve Melanson (McGill University, School of Religious Studies, PhD program)

Being True to Ourselves: Identity and Difference in Québec's Public Policy

This paper addresses the instrumentalization of moral norms in the process of identity building of a pluralist minority nation — the French-Canadian Québécois — and its effects on religious minorities in particular. A feature of Quebec’s social imaginary is the continuous emphasis put upon the necessity of creating a shared identity within the boundaries of Quebec, while maintaining clear identity distinctions with English-speaking neighbours. Using Hansards transcripts and bills introduced at the National Assembly of Quebec between 2007 and 2017, I argue that the demand to protect Quebec’s particular identity obscures the distinction between individual ethical beliefs and general moral norms in debates on public policy, such that establishing and applying stringent moral norms is considered necessary to the creation of a shared identity. This paper suggests that what is referred to as the Quebecers’ “fundamental values” in political discourse is raised to the level of moral norms in order to sustain a thick conception of civic identity. Such conflation results in an overemphasis on limiting behaviours deemed “other” without adequate justification. In the process, migrants are portrayed at once as tools and threats to the integrity of the nation.