Day One: Thursday January 30, 2020

10:05-11:25 SESSION 1: “Canadian Urban Integration”
Coly Chau (University of Toronto, Department of Social Justice Education, OISE, MEd program)

Tracing the "world traveller": disrupting narratives of Asian im/migrant women spa workers in Toronto

At a City of Toronto General Government and Licensing Committee meeting in May 2019, councillor Jim Karygiannis referred to workers of massage parlours, body rub and holistic centres as "world travellers." Karygiannis described the "world traveller" as "someone who starts from the Orient, comes to Toronto, goes to New York, and from New York to San Francisco, up to Vancouver, into the U.K., and then into Australia, and then back home," in his attempt to support the increased regulation and surveillance of workplaces where racialized Asian im/migrant women workers are overrepresented. This paper traces the historic and contemporary racial, gendered and sexualized discourses that have come to create and facilitate the notion of the "world traveller." It aims to demystify the paradoxical and ironic uses of the term. Lastly, the paper attempts to explore the material, discursive and symbolic implications of such narratives.

Tahmid Rouf (York University, Department of Geography, PhD program)

Toronto’s Bangla Town and the Employment and Educational Experiences of Bangladeshi-Canadian Youth

Toronto’s Bangla Town hosts a rich web of co-ethnic operated institutions despite the fact that many residents are struggling economically. For generation 1.5 and 2 Bangladeshi-Canadian youth, ties with the ethnic concentration and co-ethnics can act as both a trapdoor and trampoline contributing to nuanced educational and employment aspirations and experiences. The findings from this exploratory study involving a total of 10 generation 1.5 and 2 youth engaged with Bangla Town explored through a focus group and semi-structured interviews suggests that the ethnic concentration influences their identity formation as 'third-culture kids' and embedded in co-ethnic social networks. Identity and social network formation processes impact their educational and employment aspirations. Bangladeshi-Canadian youth illustrate the plight of children of recent immigrant groups in Canada that face obstacles such as racialization and poverty in regards to integration and social mobility.

Christa Sato (University of Toronto, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, PhD program)

Canadian-born Filipino Men and their Motivations to Attend University

With Canada’s increasing ethnocultural diversity, understanding long-term integration patterns of immigrant communities is essential. From both a scholarly and practice standpoint, tracking the educational outcomes of the children of immigrants as a mechanism to understanding integration patterns is critical. The Filipino community is Canada’s fourth largest ethnocultural community; however, they are experiencing less-than-expected university outcomes that have important implications on the second-generation and their socioeconomic status and wellbeing in Canada. Drawing from my MSW thesis that explored processes that facilitated university completion by second-generation Filipino males in Calgary, this paper focuses on the educational drivers that influenced Filipino-Canadian men to pursue higher education. Using a pragmatic qualitative approach, eight face-to-face interviews were conducted with Canadian-born Filipino male participants along with journals that captured their reflections post-interview. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis and key themes emerged to describe participants’ motivations to pursue university including personal, familial, cultural, and gendered. Collectively, these findings provide a context for understanding what influenced the men to pursue university. In situating my study’s findings, I will discuss the study’s significance and implications for social workers and relevant stakeholders who are interested in promoting the social and economic inclusion of Filipinos in Calgary, and the broader Canadian context

Nidhi Panwar (University of Toronto, Department of Political Science, PhD program)

The Killing of a Militant: Political Narratives in Kashmir and India

This study explores the immediate articulation of the socially produced ideas that populated the political imaginary in the aftermath of the killing of Burhan Wani, a Kashmiri commander of the pro-Pakistan Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, in an encounter by a joint operation of the Indian army and paramilitary in 2016. Following Wani’s death, the social reality of the killing, protests and the counter-protest response was produced by various political elites within Kashmir and in mainland India. This
study identifies different practices of signification produced by key elites who were instrumental in constituting the social ideas around Wani’s death, the resulting protests and the government response. The axes identify a similarity in the mainstream discourse produced by the governments in power to ensure the prevalence of the status quo, a contestation of this discourse by the opposition and a third alternative discourse of separatists on the one hand and Hindu nationalists on the other. These discourses serve the political purpose of communicating the position and interests of actors in the wider conflict even as they reinforce past ideological orientations and point to future political outcomes.

Alicia Poole (McGill University, Department of Sociology, PhD program)
Migration as Conflict Risk-Management: A Case Study of Migration from Iraq to Canada
In a recent annual review, David Fitzgerald and Rawan Arar suggest that treating refugee and economic migration flows as related processes can lead to better understanding of migration decision-making (2018). Adapting the New Economics of Labour Migration theory to include the risk of violence as one of the risks managed through migration provides a framework to analyze and push theorization of refugee decision-making. This economic theory traditionally examines migration as a household or family-level process used to collectively manage risks of unstable financial structures of the global South (Massey et al. 1998; Stark 1991). Whether or not NELM provides a useful analytical tool to examine complex processes of migration from violence has yet to be empirically tested. This paper uses a case study to evaluate this theoretical claim with original data. It draws on qualitative interviews with 21 Iraqi immigrants and refugees in the Greater-Toronto area to trace their migration processes following the 2003 US-invasion. Based on a sampling strategy selecting on country of origin rather than entry status to Canada, the data provide empirical support for Fitzgerald and Arar’s argument (2018). While violence was a main motivation for migration, families considered the risk of violence against the risks of accessing livelihood strategies outside of Iraq, which include employment and educational opportunities. However, the ability to manage these risks outside of Iraq are structured by state immigration and residency policies in transit and destination countries, which dictate who can legally enter the state, the duration of their residence, and the extent of productive activities they can access. While further empirical work is needed, this paper empirically demonstrates the strengths of NELM for future analysis of refugee decision-making.

Yu-Chen Chen (University of Toronto, Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, MA program)
Revelations of mass incarceration of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in “re-education camps” have put a spotlight on China’s ethnic minorities policy, with some accusing the regime of perpetrating cultural genocide. By examining white papers issued on minority policy and Xinjiang from 1991-2019, this paper seeks to map out the evolution of the official narrative on ethnic relations in China, paying careful attention to how Uyghurs and other Xinjiang minority groups are described in relation to the Han cultural mainstream and “Chinese nation”. Changes in this narrative over time belie the multi-ethnic harmony once trumpeted by state and Party officials; rather, they suggest something else entirely: an extreme assimilation policy by another name.

Day Two: Friday January 31, 2020

10:15-11:45 SESSION 3 “Health”
Cansu E. Dedeoglu (University of Toronto, Faculty of Information, PhD program)
Health Information-Seeking Behaviour Among International Graduate Students In Toronto: A Pilot Study
The use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) presents unique challenges and opportunities for people seeking health information. This is no less relevant for transnational migrants. This exploratory pilot study focuses on international graduate students, a traditionally understudied group of people, and examines their health information seeking practices. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with international graduate students residing in Toronto. Qualitative analysis was conducted to capture the nature of information needs about healthcare resources and health issues. The preliminary findings identify sociocultural factors that influence the health information-seeking behaviors of international graduate students. Information gaps mostly occur due to inadequate information and service provision on campus. Participants also reported challenges of locating accurate and appropriate health information online. They mostly rely on ICTs to connect home (family, friends, and health professionals) or senior fellows in their faculties to meet their information needs.
R. F. Harney Program in Ethnic, Immigration and Pluralism Studies
13th Annual Ethnic and Pluralism Studies Graduate Research Conference
January 30-31, 2020, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy Trinity Site
Room 108N, 1 Devonshire Place
ABSTRACTS (January 19, 2020)

Shen (Lamson) Lin (University of Toronto, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, PhD program)
Racial inequities in late-life mental health burden: the prevalence of depression, distress, PTSD, anxiety and mood disorders among ethnic minority immigrants from the Canadian longitudinal study on ageing
To compare the prevalence and correlates between self-rated and physician-diagnosed mental health problems to identify unmet health needs among ethnic minority immigrants as opposed to Canadian-born white. Methods: Guided by the WHO's framework of Social Determinants of Health, this study draw on the baseline comprehensive cohort data of the Canadian longitudinal study on ageing and employed the binary logistic regression analysis to examine the association between ethnic minority immigrant status and six outcome variables, including three self-rated screening measure: depression (CES-D-10); psychological distress (K-10); PTSD (PC-PTSD) and three physician-diagnosed measures of clinical depression; mood disorder and anxiety disorders, when controlling for sociodemographic, health behaviors and health conditions. Results: In general, 15.2% of Canadian middle-aged and older adults experienced current depression symptoms; 11.4% experienced current nonspecific distress symptoms; about 19.5% had a diagnosis of clinical depression or mood disorder in their lifetime and 8.5% had a diagnosis of anxiety disorder in their lifetime. Among those with current depression symptoms, 57.3% of respondents did not have a diagnosis of clinical depression or mood disorder. The striking gaps were spotted among South Asian and West Asian immigrants. Although the prevalence of current depression symptoms among South Asian immigrants (OR=1.68, 95% CI:1.23 2.29) and West Asian (middle east) Immigrants (OR=2.32, 95%CI:1.60 3.38) is significantly higher than Canadian-born white, members of these groups are less likely to have had clinical depression (OR=0.35, 95%CI: 0.22 0.53; OR=0.49, 95%CI: 0.29 0.81) and mood disorder (OR=0.40, 95%CI: 0.26 0.61; OR=0.53, 95% CI:0.33 0.91) diagnosed by a physician in their lifetime, indicating unmet health needs. Other racialized immigrants (e.g., east Asian, black, and Latin America) were less likely to report physician-diagnosed clinical depression or mood disorder. Conclusion: The burden of mental illness is staggering and disproportionately affects racialized immigrants despite a universal health system in Canada.

Yu Lung (University of Toronto, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, PhD program)
Migration, Aging, and Place-Making: Affordable Housing Challenges among Immigrant Older People in Canada
The growing housing crisis in Canada has drawn attention to the necessity for a more effective housing strategy. However, the discussion has hardly focused on socially vulnerable older populations, especially immigrant older adults. The census data has shown that elderly immigrants constitute 31% of the older population aged 65 or above, and nearly one in four immigrant older people who landed less than 30 years ago are considered have a low income. Poverty is a prevalent and pressing issue in this marginalized population. Previous studies have shown that immigrant older adults who came to Canada at a younger age faced economic challenges resulting from unemployment, deskilling jobs, and poor working conditions during their working lives. Most of these late-life immigrants who came to Canada at an older age through family sponsorship are financially dependent on their children and lack secure sources of income. Although most immigrant older adults live with their family members, some elderly immigrants experience housing instability due to family problems, declining health, and financial difficulties. Drawing on the concepts of aging in and out of place, and intersectionality, this paper provides a critical review to the factors that influence immigrant older adults’ housing choices, concerns, and needs in Canada. A total of 12 articles are included in this review. The findings suggested that key factors, in terms of economic insecurity, language-related social barriers, cultural and family values, affect the living arrangements of immigrant older people intersectionally through gender, aging, immigration status, and ethno-racial identity. However, despite experiencing multiple adversities, immigrant older adults demonstrate considerable resilience in building social networks, supporting their families, actively participating in the community, and connecting with and passing their cultural roots to the next generation. Recommendations for future policies and research will be noted.

Hibah Sidat (University of Toronto, Department of Social Justice Education, OISE, MA program)
Investigating the Mental Health Impacts of Gendered Islamophobic Violence on Canadian Muslim Women and Responses from Mental Health Frontline Workers
Islamophobia is at an all-time high in Canada. Hate crimes are only the tip of the iceberg among the various forms of gendered Islamophobic violence faced by Muslim women which signal an intensified and increasingly widely acceptable
public Islamophobic discourse from the rise in white nationalism/white terror. Muslim women donning the hijab, niqab, or some other form of Muslim dress are particularly vulnerable to manifestations of Islamophobia in the public sphere on the premise that they are easily identifiable as Muslim, among other reasons. Gendered Islamophobic violence against Canadian Muslim women takes on multiple forms and occurs in varying degrees of severity. This includes a wide range of behaviour from everyday microaggressions such as staring, being subject to otherting questions, and being bombarded with negative Muslim representations in the media to spitting, physical assault and even rape and murder. The impacts of such events on the mental health of Canadian Muslim women who are survivors of gendered Islamophobic violence can often be longlasting and traumatic. The link between gendered Islamophobic violence and mental health begs examination. Moreover, rising anti-Muslim hate and white nationalism/white terror are creating a national public health crisis for Muslims in Canada. My study engages in the work required in this area by interviewing mental health frontline workers to understand the nature of this violence inflicted on their Canadian Muslim women clients, its mental health impacts, and how they (and the social organizations they work with, if applicable) work to address these challenges.

12:45-14:15  SESSION 4 “Segregation/Incarceration”
Yusuf Bulbulia (University of Toronto, Department of Political Science, MA program)

Exceptionally Unjust- The Root Causes and Consequences of Disproportionate Mass Incarceration In the United States

The United States has garnered a reputation internationally as the world’s ‘jailer and warden’, incarcerating more of its citizens than any other western liberal democracy. Being the only western country that retains the death penalty and imposes the harshest criminal punishments – short of death, life sentences without the possibility of parole (LWOP). The American criminal justice system is one of the most punitive and if not the harshest amongst western democracies. More notably, American mass-incarceration has disproportionately affected people of color, more specifically African Americans. What effectively explains the rise and the existence of disproportionate mass incarceration in the United States? Structural determinants and the retrenchment of the welfare state in concert with globalization related economic changes lead to higher rates of mass and disproportionate incarceration in the United States. To test this hypothesis, this paper draws on two variables: American welfare transitions post-1965 and the transformation of sentencing post-1970. This paper adopts a ‘mixed methods’ approach drawing on both a Quantitative and Qualitative analysis. To support this hypothesis this paper draws on an original data set from numerous government and non-governmental organizations between 1965-2018 on both welfare transitions and U.S sentencing. Lastly, this paper then provides policy recommendations to sentencing reform, reintegration, and drug and welfare policies.

David Howarth (University of Toronto, Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, MA program)

Housing Segregation and the Roma in Portugal: Rethinking Urban Exclusions to Chart the Way Forward

Portugal’s government approved the National Strategy for the Integration of Roma Communities (ENICC) in 2013 to improve the livelihoods of the estimated 50,000 Roma living in the country. Although housing represents one of the strategy’s four priorities for improving Roma welfare, weak implementation compromises the ambitions of this policy. In 2017, two reports from commissioners affiliated with the United Nations and the Council of Europe highlighted the failure of this policy to address the substandard housing conditions for the Portuguese Roma by arguing that the segregated housing situations had devolved into a human rights violation. How does the segregated residential landscape of Portugal impact the Roma’s integration into Portuguese society? My paper argues that the Roma’s residential segregation in Portugal undermines their integration and bolsters anti-ziganism in Portuguese society, which motivates discriminatory practices within the labour market, educational institutions, and police services. To begin, I describe the structural factors that establish typologies of Roma residential segregation in Portugal. Then, I draw on two case studies of ‘slum’ neighbourhoods in Lisbon and Porto to describe how the formal mechanisms of eviction, demolition, and forced relocation contribute to Portugal’s segregated housing geography. In order to illuminate the underlying motivations of the Roma’s housing segregation, I explain how Portugal’s labour market, educational institutions, and police services proffer negative stereotypes, promote anti-Roma sentiment through violence, and recast cultural differences as personal deficiencies to frame the relationship between Portuguese society and the Roma in terms of constant conflict. I conclude with policy recommendations centred around Roma community-led employment initiatives, housing subsidies, regulatory oversight commissions, and public awareness and education campaigns.
Daniella Marciano (University of Toronto, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, MPP program)
Reconceptualizing the Canadian Criminal Justice System: The Over-Segregation of Indigenous Inmates in Federal and Provincial Correctional Facilities

Segregation is considered by the Independent Review of Ontario Corrections (IROC) to be “the most complete deprivation of liberty authorized by law.” Approximately 560 out of 8000 inmates in Ontario correctional facilities are living in segregation for 22 hours or more every day. In Canada, Indigenous persons are incarcerated at a rate higher than that of the non-Indigenous population and therefore are more likely to be placed in administrative segregation. Throughout Canadian history, Indigenous persons have been perceived as a ‘threat,’ and are considered inherently risky, even in the absence of unlawful behaviour. This is often used to justify pre-emptively placing Indigenous inmates in segregation. In order to remedy the over-segregation of Indigenous peoples in correctional facilities, a fundamental transformation is required in how Indigenous individuals and the criminal justice system as a whole are conceptualized in Canada. This shift in approach will include abolishing the heavy reliance that the criminal justice system places on risk and security, improving oversight mechanisms and transparency with a consideration of criminological evidence, and framing criminal justice as an issue of human rights.

Jane Sanders (University of Toronto, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, PhD program)
"You Can Tell When Somebody is Scared of You": Barriers to Connection for Students Who Have Been Suspended or Expelled

Background and Purpose:
Students who are Black or Indigenous, have learning concerns, are male, or from lower income households are disproportionately suspended or expelled from school (disciplinary exclusion). Disciplinary exclusion is related to school dropout, subsequent suspension, ongoing behaviour concerns, arrest, and incarceration; very little study has included the perspective of these students. The objective of this grounded theory study was to understand the experiences of students who have been excluded. The following research questions were addressed: 1) What are the experiences of these students? 2) What systemic factors (school, community, family) have positively or negatively influenced their personal and academic success?

Method:
Grounded theory provides a method to understand student experiences and develop theory based on these data. Participants were recruited through exclusion classrooms in two school boards in Ontario in 2018/2019. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with students (n=15) and interdisciplinary staff (n=16). Student participants were aged 14-19, most were male (n=11), Black (n=10), and had an Individual Education Plan (n=9). University and school board ethics approval was obtained.

Results:
The findings revealed extremely high exposure to adversity, including school/community violence and systemic inequality (racism/poverty); "all that shit outside of school...I get into school I’m always still in that mindset". Students who felt unsupported "start[ed] putting things in [their] own hands and that’s where a lot of these problems happen". Moreover, students consistently expressed the importance of teacher relationships where they felt heard, understood and connected, “once you get to know me, I do the work”.

Conclusions and Implications:
Adversity affects an individual’s social, emotional and neurological development. Moreover, social identities are imposed on certain students, impacting the way student coping strategies are interpreted. Future research should examine the role of adversity within student discipline and inclusion of neighbourhood violence, and systemic racism and inequality in adversity research.

Lynda Chubak (University of Toronto, Department of Anthropology, PhD program)
From defeat to re-ignition: Tracing Toronto’s permanent resident voting rights campaign

Your City. Your Vote. This Toronto Election tagline does not hold true for the more than one in ten city residents who are denied the right to vote in their municipal elections. The political disenfranchisement of approximately 240,000 of Toronto’s
permanent residents (City of Toronto, 2017) reinforces the marginalization of immigrants, undermines newcomer integration and denies a basic human right. In 2013, Toronto City Council voted to redress this discriminatory legislation. In 2016, Queen’s Park defeated the single motion brought forward that would have delivered democratic equity. Now is the time to re-ignite electoral reform efforts and put permanent resident voting rights back on the political agenda. This paper returns to the 2013 campaign; it presents key arguments for and against non-citizen voting rights; and it traces the 2016 defeat in the provincial legislature. It then turns to the future to highlight comparable jurisdictions where non-citizen voting rights have been implemented and presents insights learned from these successful campaigns. It closes with a call to action. The governments of Toronto and Ontario have the opportunity and the moral obligation to symbolically and legislatively integrate the almost one-quarter of a million disenfranchised Torontonians into the city they call home as full voting members.

Fatemah Ebrahim (University of Toronto, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, MPP program)

Framing, Public Opinion, and Immigrant Integration in Canada

Negative public sentiments towards immigrants are rooted in a long historical process leading to the racialization of immigration and multiculturalism policy, subsequently acting as a major barrier to their effective integration. To better understand this, it is first important to examine Canada’s historic preference for economic immigrants, typically originating from Europe. As globalization broke down barriers, more newcomers from Asia and Africa were permitted entry to Canada. As such, government policies included aspects of multiculturalism and non-discrimination to facilitate a smoother integration process. While integration policy outcomes were holistic on paper, they were extremely ineffective in practice. To explain this, the concept of public opinion and the racialization of immigrant integration discourse will be explored, including the examination of the many factors that influence public perceptions, such as heuristics. These misconceptions are reinforced through framing and the racialization within discourse, which likely leads Canadians to hold prejudicial views and thus discriminate – whether implicitly or intentionally – against newcomers. Finally, two examples are briefly discussed: discrimination in the hiring process along with housing discrimination, both of which limit opportunities for immigrants to fully integrate economically, socially, and politically in Canadian society.

Shervin Ghaem-Maghami (University of Toronto, Department of Geography and Planning, PhD program)

Factors impacting immigrants’ candidacy and election for local government positions: A scoping review

The phenomenon of descriptive representation (i.e., the extent to which politicians reflect the descriptive characteristics of the communities they serve, such as gender or ethnicity), has been studied at various scopes and scales since it was first introduced in Hanna Pitkin’s The concept of representation in 1967. In recent years, scholars have begun to investigate immigrant participation in politics, including their representation at various levels of government, from the local or municipal level to the national level. The aim of this scoping review was to evaluate the current research on the factors affecting the election of immigrant candidates to local government. The paper employed a scoping review methodological framework set out by Arksey and O’Malley (2005) using a search conducted in eight databases. The studies identified for inclusion in the review represent a range of geographical areas and employ a wide variety of methodologies. Fifty-six distinct factors were drawn out from literature and classified under three broad areas: macro-level electoral structures and situational elements, meso-level immigrant group dynamics, and micro-level individual candidate characteristics. We elaborate on the most salient factors resulting from the study, discuss policy implications for practitioners, and indicate areas for inquiry for researchers.