

CALL FOR PAPERS

“Decolonizing Conference” CIARS 2016

“Race, Anti-Racism and Indigeneity: Anti-Colonial Resurgence and Decolonial Resistance”
Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of CIARS & 10th Anniversary of “Decolonizing the Spirit”

November 3 -5, 2016

OISE, University of Toronto
252 Bloor St. W

The [Centre for Integrative Anti-Racism Studies \(CIARS\)](#) brings together faculty, students and community organizations whose research interests and political commitments are in anti-racism and critical race studies. In collaboration with New College, Equity Studies (University of Toronto) and the Harriet Tubman Institute (York University), CIARS is pleased to announce that it is holding a three-day international conference to lead critical discussions on the theme of “**Race, Anti-Racism and Indigeneity: Anti-Colonial Resurgence and Decolonial Resistance**”.

To commemorate the 20th Anniversary of CIARS/10th Anniversary of the “Decolonizing the Spirit”, the “**Decolonizing Conference**” intends to bring together a range of international and local scholars, activists, and artists in order to reframe the way anti-racism and critical race studies are tied to questions of Indigeneity and decolonization. As anti-racism and critical race thinkers, it is imperative that we challenge liberal articulations that negate the saliency of *Land, bodies*, and *knowledges*. We ask: how do we differentially engage sites of knowledge production (material and ideological *spaces* such as academic institutions) to understanding settler colonialism? How do Land, bodies, and knowledges help open up conversations on Indigeneity and decolonization? How does viewing Indigeneity as an international category help expand discussions of decolonization, and how can our work help re-imagine and create new futures? By reframing questions on Indigeneity and decolonization and asking new ones, our intention is to foster a robust understanding of Indigeneity and decolonial praxis and to complicate ontological claims to the primacy of the Land as a starting point for all decolonial and anti-colonial engagements. With anti-racism and critical race studies at the forefront, we invite participants to engage the central theme from multiple perspectives that are anchored in specific geopolitical contexts, social identities as well as different ontological, epistemological, and ideological orientations.

We look forward to a stimulating learning experience with you all.

Enclosed

- Registration
- Pre-Conference
- Plenary Sessions
- Subthemes
- Questions
- Submission Categories
- Submission Guidelines
- Plenary Session Descriptions
- CIARS Decolonizing Conference Collaborative Partners

REGISTRATION

Registration information, conference website, and other details will be updated on [CIARS](#).

PRE-CONFERENCE

November 1 (1) Decolonizing Conference Undergraduate Research Symposium

The Decolonizing Conference Undergraduate Research Symposium is dedicated to sharing the work of local undergraduate scholars whose commitments lie in anti-racism and critical race studies. This is an excellent opportunity for undergraduates to gain valuable conference experience and meet other scholars.

(2) Workshops

CIARS will also be offering workshops for undergraduate and graduate students aimed at enhancing the student experience.

PLENARY SESSIONS

Day 1	November 3	Indigeneity as an International Category
Day 2	November 4	Anti-Blackness in the Academy and in Activism
Day 3	November 5	Reparations, Reconciliation, and the Politics of Refusal

SUBTHEMES

CIARS invites submissions that speak to the central theme of “Race, Anti-Racism and Indigeneity: Anti-Colonial Resurgence and Decolonial Resistance”. While submissions should clearly connect to the central theme and contribute to the advancement of critical race and anti-racism theory, practice, methodology, and/or community organizing, we also welcome proposals that consider the following subthemes:

- Afrofuturisms and Indigenous futurisms
- Race and Gender Violence
- Blackness and Anti-Blackness
- Race, Policing and the Justice System
- Indigenous Resurgences and New Possibilities
- Race, Queer, and Disability
- Race, Culture and New Media
- Counter-Visions of Education
- Revolutionary Spiritualities
- Reframing Intersectionalities
- Language, Race, and Education
- Race, Immigration and Resettlement
- Race, Environmentalism and Health
- Anti-Racist Feminisms and Intersectionality
- “Mixed” Race Identities and Post-identity politics
- The Nation State, Citizenship, and International Development

CONFERENCE QUESTIONS

The CIARS conference planning team has collectively curated a broad range of questions that are aimed at expanding the conference theme.

1. **Who can claim Indigeneity?** How does Indigeneity as international category change the way “Indigeneity” is understood? Is there a place for mestizo or people in the construction of Indigeneity?
2. **What tensions and potentialities arise?** What tensions and potentialities arise when colonized bodies move into settler colonial contexts and situate their decolonial struggles against the nation state? How can we form “equal” alliances between Indigenous and racialized communities? “Can” we form alliances that will speak to the denied realities of impact that Indigenous and racialized communities continue to face?
3. **What does settler colonial citizenship require?** To what extent can the racialized bodies of immigrants and refugees fleeing from violence and injustices in their source countries be implicated as they navigate and are drawn into the wider net of the continued and historicized colonial practices of (Canada’s neo-liberal) immigration structures?
4. **What is the role of “global” education?** How are settler-colonial structures of “global education” linked to conceptions of modernity and development?
5. **How does Blackness function?** As Blackness is increasingly commodified in our consumerist culture such as through “social justice”, how do scholars and activists respond/resist this commodification, domestication and co-optation of Blackness?
6. **How is the discourse of health and the environment understood?** How can Indigenous and decolonial perspectives contribute to an understanding of environment and health?
7. **What does resurgence, reparation, and reconciliation entail?** What is to be learned from such community-based grassroots-driven movements that have advocated for social justice and equity through claims of Indigenous resurgence, reparations and reconciliation?
8. **What are the possibilities of looking ahead?** How does Afrofuturism and Indigenous futuristic perspectives help us to speak of new possibilities, new framings and new coalitions beyond the politics of “solidarity”? What is the place of Land in these futurities?
9. **What are the possibilities/impossibilities of resistance?** How are communities challenging and resisting the dominant displacement, dispossession, and denigration tactics of the nation-state?
10. **How are queer, gender, and disability politics engaged?** What new perspectives do queer, gender, and disability politics offer in the work of decolonization?

CONFERENCE SUBMISSIONS CATEGORIES

CIARS welcomes a wide range of submission categories, from individual papers to arts-based installations. We highly encourage a range diverse contributions¹.

1. Individual papers
2. Individual posters
3. Group poster sessions
4. Group panel sessions
5. Workshops (aimed at enhancing Undergraduate/Graduate Student learning)
6. Other Critical Contributions: Arts-based Installations and New Media (Poetry, Songs, Dance, audio-based media such as podcasts, Visual-based media such as Film, and other New Media)

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Proposals should clearly connect to the conference theme and contribute to the advancement of critical race and anti-racism theory, practice, methodology, and/or community organizing. Please see format (a), word limit (b), and deadline (c) below:

(a) Format

Your abstract should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. 5 Key Words
2. Title
3. Research question
4. Aims and Objectives
5. Methodology/Theoretical Framework (such as method of data collection, modes of inquiry, conceptual framework)
6. Results/conclusion (even if they are preliminary at the time of submission)
7. Author Bio

(b) Word Limit

Individual Papers	250 words
Group Panels	500 words
Poster	250 words
Other Arts-based or New Media	250 words
Bio	50 words

(c) Deadline

Email your submissions to the CIARS Conference Planning Committee at oiseciars@utoronto.ca by May 15, 2016. Accepted proposals will be contacted via email by July 1, 2016.

¹ *Participants may submit a maximum of three different proposals to three different categories. Please specify.*

PLENARY SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Plenary 1

INDIGENEITY AS AN INTERNATIONAL CATEGORY

November 3

This plenary intends to open up critical discussions on Indigeneity as an international category. The discussion will highlight some of the possibilities, challenges and limitations when Indigeneity, and the bodies that claim Indigeneity, move across multiple spaces. Indigeneity and, particularly, the question of *Land, bodies, and knowledges* as they relate to racialization, geopolitics, identity, and spirituality, must be engaged. The dispossession of Land and displacement of bodies is not simply a historic event. It is important that we understand Land and bodies as sites of violence, dispossession, and contestation as well as spaces of knowledge production, sacredness, and spirituality. We must bring multiple readings to both the understanding and relations to Land and bodies in order to complicate ontological claims to the primacy of the Land and bodies as starting point for all decolonial and anti-colonial engagements. What does it mean for certain bodies to claim Indigeneity on colonized Land? What tensions and potentialities arise when colonized bodies move into settler colonial contexts and situate their decolonial struggles against the nation state? How do we begin to offer counter readings of the “Indigenous” speaking to New Indigenisms and Pan-Indigeneity? How do futuristic perspectives help us speak of new possibilities, new framings and new coalitions beyond conventional discourses of “solidarity”? How are communities engaging Indigeneity, and how does it inform their political practices?

Plenary 2

ANTI-BLACKNESS IN THE ACADEMY AND IN ACTIVISM

November 4

This panel session attends to the linkages between Blackness in the academy and Blackness in community (activism) spaces. The academy is deeply entrenched in colonialism and persistent racialized hierarchies that actively work to manage bodies. Recognizing this, this panel asks: for Black scholars/activists, how does our presence in the academy implicate us in continuing such history? How do our bodies *feel* and *move* differently through white academic spaces? Where are the Black womyn and how is their presence understood? How can we challenge *and* transform dominant forms of knowledge production in the places we occupy? What significance do we place on non-dominant forms of knowing and being (i.e. Indigenous African cultural knowledges, spirituality, emotionality)? In a global context, how does Blackness function within the international and national consciousness? As Blackness is increasingly commodified in our consumerist culture such as through “social justice”, how do scholars and activists respond to this commodification, domestication and co-optation of Blackness? How are academic and community spaces racially-coded with acceptable and unacceptable enactments of Blackness? There is urgency to pursue stronger linkages between academics and community activists that open up conversations about precisely how Blackness can be used as a political tool to challenge dominant ontologies, epistemologies, and ideologies.

Plenary 3

REPARATIONS, RECONCILIATION AND THE POLITICS OF REFUSAL

November 5

Reparations and Reconciliation is more than seeking accountability or acknowledging systemic complicities in multiple forms of genocide (physical, psychological, and cultural). It is a process that requires critical dialogue and political praxis for change. In Canada, a long awaited Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report on Indigenous communities that examines the impact of residential schooling in Canadian colonial history was released with calls for action on Indigenous education. The challenge the report raises explores ways for scholars, students, community activists and policy workers to come together with new cultural framings to inform social reality and political practice for racialized and Indigenous peoples. Similarly, in early 2016, a UN Working Group of Experts on Peoples of African Descent released a report recommending that the US government pay reparations to the African-American descendants of slaves. Similar discussions have occurred in many other nations (e.g., Jamaica) whose peoples were enslaved through the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade. These reports speak to the legacy of cultural genocide, Indigenous land dispossession, displacement, violence, enslavement, racial subordination and segregation. Together, these reports provide an opportunity to foster collective critical dialogues about the conceptions of reconciliation, reparation, refusal, and resentment. What is to be learned from such community-based grassroots-driven movements that have advocated for social justice and equity through claims of Indigenous resurgence, reparations and reconciliation? What are the possibilities and limits for social transformation and change in the current geopolitical climate of memory and remembering?

CONTACT

CIARS Conference Planning Committee at oiseciars@utoronto.ca

CIARS COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS | More coming soon

