

CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH



A Message from the Director, Dr. Sandra Styres:

I hope this message finds you all safe and well during this challenging and difficult year. It certainly has been a year fraught with protests, political upheaval, violences, and a global pandemic. Not to mention the mental, emotional, spiritual and physical toll that all of this has taken on everyone but particularly those from our most vulnerable and marginalized communities. As I am writing this, I am listening to the robins enthusiastically singing their songs and heralding in the coming of spring. The snows have melted, the sun has warmed the earth, and we have hope as we emerge from the cold, dark winter and embrace Iethi'nihtsténha Ohwentsia'kékha (our Mother the Earth) as she awakens from her long winter slumber. We can have hope in the fact that no matter what darkness swirls around us, no matter what crisis we face, Creation is still fulfilling its roles and responsibilities – and so can we. As such, I am forever grateful for Iethi'nihtsténha Ohwentsia'kékha's teachings about how we are to be in right relationship with one another. This present day is an opportunity for us all to really and truly open our eyes, hearts and minds to the realities around us and to take a stand against racism, inequities, violences, as well as political and social injustices wherever we find them. Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer said it best when she stated that “the well-being of one is linked to the well-being of all”.



I am so pleased that the Centre has been able to play a small role in holding space and creating opportunities for your voices to be heard through your amazing work. I want to thank everyone who participated in the Speaker Series during the first year of the Centre and for a job well done. The responses to the series have been overwhelmingly positive and it is something we hope to continue next year. So, if you are a Black,

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Indigenous and/or Person of Color (faculty or student) we would love to have your work showcased in our speaker series beginning in the Fall 2021. As well, please let us know if you would like to propose a session in which you or a group of individuals can cohere around a topic or issue of relevance and concern to our communities (i.e. panel discussion, joint presentation, tea time with Aunties, etc.). I wish you all happiness, health, and wellness as we wind down this past term and get ready to go our separate ways for the summer. As I look forward to the next phase of our journey together, I would like to leave you with the words of Dr. Eber Hampton that are as relevant today as they were when he wrote them in 1995:

Standing on the earth with the smell of spring in the air,
may we accept each other's right to live, to define, to think, and to speak.

Indigenous Artists-in-Residence

Vanessa Dion Fletcher

We are pleased to share the final artwork of the Centre's Indigenous Artist in Residence from the fall. As she explains in her artist statement, "these two works use the meditative process of quillwork to represent and process grief. They use dyed and natural quills, the zigzag and straight stitch. They are titled with words in the Lenape language, not translated into English." Vanessa's work will be printed and displayed within the CTL department at OISE. Make sure to look out for it when we are back in the building!

Ange Loft

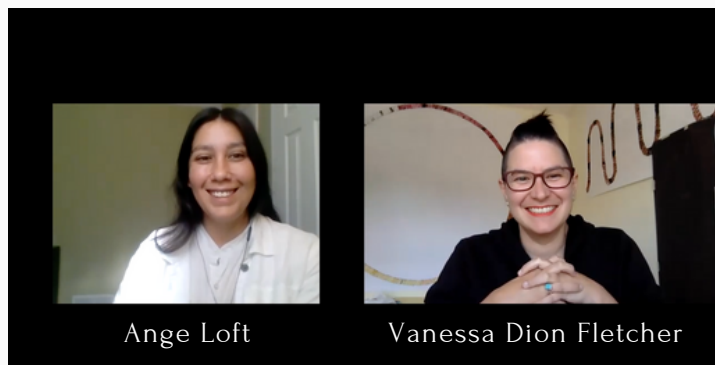
Ange has been working on developing movement exploration activities with a team of Indigenous choreographers. Strict lockdown measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for Ange to share this work with the Centre this term, but we look forward to continuing working with her into fall 2021! She will share more of this work, as well as explore a book she has in the works for 2022, titled Treaty Guide for Torontonians. This book will include a series of activations/activities, intended for further development in collaboration with Indigenous educators at OISE. Look out for more information and opportunities to work with Ange in the classroom or to learn more about her work!



Kii Kuwiishawleew - 2021
Digitally manipulated
quillwork, 18 x 14



Apaacjiiw - 2020
Porcupine Quills, thread,
cotton paper, 30 x 22 cm



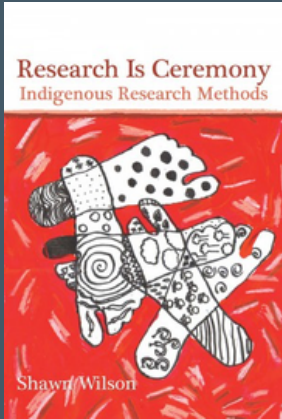
Ange Loft

Vanessa Dion Fletcher

If you are interested in learning more about Ange or Vanessa's work, make sure to check out their interview from fall 2020 on the CIER OISE YouTube channel!



Resource Spotlight



"[Shawn Wilson's] book describes a research paradigm shared by Indigenous scholars in Canada and Australia, and demonstrates how this paradigm can be put into practice. Relationships don't just shape Indigenous reality, they are our reality. Indigenous researchers develop relationships with ideas in order to achieve enlightenment in the ceremony that is Indigenous research. Indigenous research is the ceremony of maintaining accountability to these relationships. For researchers to be accountable to all our relations, we must make careful choices in our selection of topics, methods of data collection, forms of analysis and finally in the way we present information.

You can find it at:
fernwoodpublishing.ca

Deepening Knowledge Project

The Centre looks forward to the launch of the brand new Deepening Knowledge Project website in the upcoming year! Make sure to keep an eye out for more news about the launch.

The DKP seeks to build relationships by integrating Indigenous peoples' perspectives, histories, knowledges and pedagogies into all levels of education in Canada; providing a forum where Indigenous and settler people can come into relationship with one another; opening up spaces where settler Canadians can come to know their own storied connections to place and tangled relationships to Canada's colonial history; calling teachers to their responsibilities in taking up Indigenous knowledge (not culture) into their classrooms and teaching practices, and activating understanding of what it means to be in good relationship with Land that has and continues to exist first and foremost in relationship to Indigenous peoples. The Deepening Knowledge Project has a strong Indigenous presence/leadership. DKP is committed to deepening Indigenous knowledge and resurgence in education. We seek to do this work through modelling relationality in reconciliation by opening opportunities for non-Indigenous faculty, students and staff to pick up their responsibilities and commit to stepping into respectful and meaningful relationships with the work of DKP.

Student Speaker Series

The Student Speaker Series this year has been a wonderful opportunity to build community through online events, and to showcase the research and work of BIPOC students at OISE. As some may remember, the first event was held in the fall, and throughout the winter term, the series has continued with great success! We were pleased to host a total of 9 speakers within 8 events over the year, and it was wonderful to see so many people attending. The Centre looks forward to continuing this session next year, and to hearing more about the work of more students! Thank you to all speakers who presented their work, and to all who have come to support these events. In case you missed any, or would like to explore, some of the talks are available for viewing on the CIER OISE YouTube page. You can also read on to learn more about all the presenters and events!

Link to Channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoHU3pO_gD1fcRtImLWJeA/featured



Doing Ethnography Back Home - Yecid Ortega

Yecid is a PhD candidate in the Language & Literacies Education program. In this session, he presented on his experience doing ethnography back home in Colombia. Through examples from his research with high school students and teachers in English classrooms, he offered an interesting insight into the considerations researchers should make before, during, and after research, offering practical ways to do ethnographic research in responsible ways.

Indigenous Language Work, Teaching and Distance Learning: Sharing Ideas and Practice from Work During the COVID-19 Pandemic - Ian McCallum

Ian is a member of the Munsee-Delaware Nation, an Education Officer for the Indigenous Education Office/Ministry of Education, and a PhD student researching the best strategies for Munsee language revitalization. In this talk, he discussed Indigenous language work, teaching, and distance learning in order to share ideas and practice from work during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Reconciliation: A Commitment to Relationship - Heather Watts

Heather is Mohawk & Anishinaabe from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, and a second-year doctoral student at OISE in the Social Justice Education program. In this discussion, Heather shared learnings based on the design and implementation of Reconciliation-based trainings across various sectors in Turtle Island. She spoke to her thoughts on what a Reconciliation pedagogy for educators might include and called on attendees to reflect on their Reconciliation journeys thus far and where they might be headed in the future. She also pinpointed some key learning opportunities that K-12 educators could bring to their classrooms.



Storytelling Method: A new 'very old' method of teaching and learning Ojibway - Red Bear Robinson

Red Bear is the CEO of Sweetgrass Journey and designs and delivers workshops in cultural awareness, self-help, language teaching and other specialized workshops. In this session, he discussed his PhD thesis on the Storytelling Method. This is a method for language revitalization wherein learners are understood to have Ojibway internalized through blood/body memory, and that they can bring it out through repeated exposure. He offered examples of how this method can be applied in other contexts.





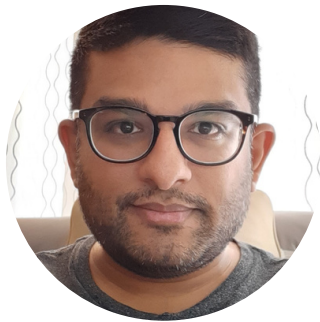
"Before engaging in research, for me, it's important to explore and reflect on my own worldview."
- Yecid Ortega

"Learning and speaking Indigenous languages are acts of decolonization."
- Ian McCallum

"Reconciliation is something that calls on us to be very reflective and reflexive in our positionalities and what it is that we are going to do to engage in that work, and breathe life into reconciliation."
- Heather Watts

"My purpose in life is revitalization of the language."
-Red Bear Robinson

"Métis people see kinship as connections to place... these connections represent our knowledge and our relationships...our common history and our belonging."
- Angelique Belcourt



Losing Innocence: Settler Reconciliation and Figures of Childhood - Neil Ramjewan

Neil is a doctoral candidate in the department of Curriculum and Pedagogy. His doctoral research focuses on the figures and functions of child and childhood across colonial literary archives to disrupt and reconceptualize colonial and racist formations of childhood. In this talk, he critiqued the Survivors Speak Report as a form of settler literature in which the state's trauma is implicated and where it "works through" its own traumatic loss of childhood imagined as innocent ignorance.

Takiskimsoyahk - To Know Ourselves: Métis Youth in Conversation - Angelique Belcourt

Angelique is an MA student at OISE and a Wiisaakodewinini Anishnaabekwe. In this talk, she discussed her own unique experience coming to know herself as a Métis woman, and her research on the importance of being in conversation with Métis youth across the homeland on how they know and view themselves as being Métis. She sees this as an important benchmark for Métis youth to discuss their own futurisms, rather than having organizations or representatives having these discussions for them, but without them.



"Your White Tears Aren't Sacred, This Land Is": Spatial Relationships to Land and Nation in the Canadian Citizenship Study Guide and Oath - Lucy El Sherif

Lucy is an Arab Muslim mother and immigrant to Turtle Island. She is a doctoral candidate in the Curriculum and Pedagogy program at OISE. Her doctoral research on Palestinian folk-dancing, dabke, and its engagement by youth on Turtle Island examines how race unevenly fashions the structural subject positions available to settlers and the pedagogical processes of social citizenship that shape their subjectivities. In this talk, Lucy highlighted ways that the Canadian Citizenship Study Guide and Oath forms problematic spatial relationships for immigrants to Canada on land and nation.



A Comparative Inquiry into Religious and Secular Students' Perspectives on Peace and Conflict Resolution Through Science Education in Bangladesh - Pamela Khaled

Pamela is a doctoral candidate at the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning, OISE. In this talk, she highlighted an ethnographic study she conducted in Bangladesh where she analyzed Grade 10 students' perspectives on the learning of science concerning peace and conflict resolution, and the use of science in their everyday lives to negotiate peace and resolve conflicts. She also expressed the need for holistic approaches in curricula for Bangladesh and other multicultural societies, such as Canada.

Honouring our Responsibilities to our Ancestors and the Land - Sarah Proulx

Sarah Proulx is Anishinaabekwe from the community of Shebahonaning situated on the shore of Georgian Bay. She is a field archaeologist, material culture analyst and researcher, and a doctoral student in anthropology. In this talk, she discussed a land-use and occupancy study within her home community that will document past and contemporary land-use practices spanning thousands of years. She highlighted how commercial and residential development within the community is responsible for the destruction and disturbance of archaeological, sacred, and burial sites, and how her community has advocated for the protection of these sites and worked to resist ongoing land dispossession and appropriation.



Faculty Speaker Series

Alongside the Student Speaker Series, the Centre was very pleased to host the Faculty Speaker Series throughout the winter term. This was a valuable opportunity to learn more about the research and work of esteemed BIPOC faculty members. We were very happy to host Dr. Njoki Wane, Dr. Rubén Gaztambide-Fernandez, and Dr. Jennifer Wemigwans. We also look forward to hosting more faculty members during the next 2021/22 academic year!

Read on to find out more about each faculty speaker session.



Indigenous Spiritual Practices from an African Perspective -

Dr. Njoki Wane

Dr. Wane is a professor at the University of Toronto, currently serving as Chair in the Department of Social Justice Education at OISE. In this talk, she explored the following questions: What is the nature of African spirituality? What informs it? In the contemporary world, how do we sustain our spirituality? In the conclusion, she explored the potential of African spirituality to inform and enhance education, learning, and human relations.



"Spiritual tools will depend on each person's spiritual practices and it is for that reason that I turn to the ancient wisdom of the Indigenous peoples of Africa to explore spiritual practices, and in particular, how the philosophical aspects of spirituality may be incorporated in our teaching and my everyday life."

- Dr. Njoki Wane



Indigenous and Latinx Youth Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Participatory Research Exploration of Resiliency in Tkaronto Communities - Dr. Rubén Gaztambide-Fernandez & Youth Researchers

In this presentation, OISE professor Dr. Rubén-Gaztambide and a group of Indigenous and Latinx youth and adult allies shared the findings from a participatory research project they conducted in summer 2020, which focused on how a group of Latinx and Indigenous youth in Tkaronto, also known as the Greater Toronto Area, navigated the COVID-19 pandemic. As a team of youth researchers and adult facilitators, they conducted virtual focus groups using visual methods with a group of peers from a larger youth participatory project and asked questions about what challenges young people faced and what strategies they developed to deal with these challenges. In this presentation, youth researchers and adult facilitators summarized how they decided to pursue this project, why it was important, and how they went about collecting and analyzing the data. They also summarized their analysis and findings and explained how they decided to share the findings from the project with the broader community in a participatory manner, as well as shared a digital story they created using the data.

All Presenters:

Luisa Karime Gonzalez, Jaden McGregor, Valeria Pineda, Lainey Rios, Annie Silva, Mike Carlson, Pedro Morán Bonilla, Kaitlind Peters, Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández

"Youth are kind of pushed aside a bit... they're not really given the word... so I think it was really special that we got to hear from younger people throughout this project"

- Valeria



Digital Bundles and the role of The Helper: A look at using collaborative traditional models for working with new technologies - Dr. Jennifer Wemigwans

Dr. Wemigwans, PhD, is from Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory on Manitoulin Island, Ontario, Canada. She is a new media producer, writer and scholar specializing in the convergence between education, Indigenous knowledge and new media technologies. Her



research examines how Indigenous knowledge sites online contribute to the efforts and goals of Indigenous nation building and therefore represent a new cultural form and social movement that delivers new capacity for Indigenous communities. In this talk, Dr. Wemigwans offered a look at using collaborative traditional models for working with new technologies.

Online Resources

Indigenous Teachings Online:
FourDirectionsTeachings.com

Deepening Knowledge Project:
<https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/deepeningknowledge/>

Updated DKP website coming soon

Tea, Tu Cho & Teachings

The Centre was honoured to host a special event this term as well, called Tea, Tu Cho & Teachings. This event was coordinated by Yukon Community Advocate and Ed.D student at OISE, Amanda Buffalo. Attendees were invited to listen in on a conversation between Kaska Dene land defenders and advocates to learn more about the issues Kaska Dene are facing on their lands, and what it means to be a land defender in Kaska homelands (what is now Yukon, NWT and Northern BC). Kaska Aunties and advocates explored land as medicine, and how connection and relationship with the land is at the heart of decolonization. Resources were provided to participants on where they can learn more. At the end of the event, participants were invited to ask questions. We hope to have the Aunties and advocates back again for another session in the fall of 2021. We look forward to seeing you at the next event!

To find out more about the work and advocacy discussed throughout this event, resources are provided below:



https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kN3Ali-IPEJ_VIY8sTBqyXH2X3jIWGV?usp=sharing

"We live here because this is the most beautiful place on Earth and our Elders taught us to be respectful and to keep the land clean.

- Leda, Kaska Auntie

"We're worried about what our children are gonna eat and what water they're gonna drink and how mining is gonna affect our communities"

-Carla, Kaska Advocate