YORK UNIVERSITÉ UNIVERSITY

MARCH 2022

CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH *Month*

CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH MONTH WAS INITIATED BY THE CENTRE FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH AND ORGANIZED BY:

SENSORIUM CENTRE FOR DIGITAL ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

ROBARTS CENTRE FOR CANADIAN STUDIES

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YORK UNIVERSITÉ UNIVERSITY YorkU Centre for Aging Research & Education (YU-CARE)

cerlac centre for research on latin america and the caribbean 40 Years

CONTENTS

In March 2022, York University's Organized Research Units (ORUs) hosted the first Climate Change Research Month with more than a dozen events aimed at generating awareness of climate change research and mobilizing the community to take action.

The events ranged from feminist perspectives to faith-based perspectives, to events focused on specific regions like Bangladesh, or specific populations like children. Read on for a comphrensive account of York University's inaugural Climate Change Research Month.

Special Features

March 3, 2022 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM EST

Gender Equality in Low-Carbon Economies: Continuities, Contradictions, Disruptions with Dr. Bipasha Baruah

Concerns about environmental sustainability and fossil-fuel insecurity have motivated countries around the world to transition to clean energy supplies derived from renewables such as solar, hydro, bioenergy, geothermal and wind. Since producing and distributing renewables is more labour-intensive than producing and distributing fossil fuels, this shift is creating new employment opportunities and addressing energy poverty in remote or under-served communities. Although there is tremendous potential to create employment in renewable and clean energy almost everywhere in the world, there is growing concern that women, who are already underrepresented in the sector, will become even more marginalized if gender equity policies and programs are not proactively planned and implemented. This presentation identifies opportunities and constraints for women's employment in renewable and clean energy in industrialized, emerging and developing economies, and makes recommendations for optimizing their participation.

Bipasha Baruah is Professor and Canada Research Chair in Global Women's Issues at Western U niversity's Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies. Her current research aims to u nderstand how to ensure that a global low-carbon economy will be more gender-equitable and socially j ust than its fossil-fuel-based predecessor. Author of a book and more than 100 peer-reviewed articles, b ook chapters, and other works, Dr. Baruah serves frequently as an expert reviewer and advisor to Canadian and intergovernmental environmental protection and international development organizations. The Royal Society of Canada named her to The College of New Scholars, Artists, and Scientists in 2015.

Organized by the Centre for Feminist Research

March 4, 2022 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM EST

Aging is a Hot Topic in a Warming World with Dr. Tamara Daly

This talk explores how climate change actions engage with inter-generational tropes. It highlights fault lines, raises questions about inter-generational blame and points to how we might consider inter-generational solidarity for climate action moving forward.

Dr. Tamara Daly is a Professor of health policy and equity at York University, Director of the York University Centre for Aging Research and Education (YU-CARE) and Director of a SSHRC Partnership grant assessing promising practices for Age Equity. She held a CIHR Research Chair in Gender, Care Work and Health. Her work investigates health equity for older adults with mixed methods research and interdisciplinary lenses to address questions about ageism, conditions in community, home care and long-term care, health and social care policy, formal and informal care systems, conditions of care and care work, and how gender and ethnicity shape access to health and social care services.

Organized by the York University Centre for Aging Research and Education

March 9, 2022 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EST

Climate Change, Sea Level Rise, and Community Planetary Health in Bangladesh with Dr. Byomkesh Talukder

Increasing salinity induced by sea level rise is causing planetary health impacts in the world's coastal communities. The coastal area of Bangladesh is no exception; the health and well-being of communities in coastal areas in Bangladesh have been strongly affected by increased water and soil salinity. These planetary health impacts can be categorized as (1) primary (communicable and non-communicable diseases; scarcity of potable water); (2) secondary (food and nutrition security, migration and related health impacts); and (3) tertiary (adaptation-related emerging diseases; disaster-related health vulnerability). Dr. Talukder will explore these multidimensional health impacts and associated salinity factors and present a collective intelligence-based framework to address the challenges currently being faced by coastal communities in Bangladesh.

Organized by
the Dahdaleh Institute for Global health Research

"GLOBAL SKILL SHORTAGES AND NEED FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF TRAINING IN THE CONTEXT OF A WORLDWIDE TRANSITION TO LOW-CARBON ECONOMIES REPRESENT A TIMELY OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD EQUITY AND DIVERSITY INTO THE LABOUR FORCE."

- Bipasha Baruah

Gender Equality in Low-Carbon Economies

Organized by the Centre for Feminist Research

In her presentation at the Centre for Feminist Research at York University, “Gender Equality In Low Carbon Economies: Continuities, Contradiction, Disruptions," York University alumni and Canada Research Chair Bipasha Baruah observes that, “globally, women represent only 22 per cent of the oil and gas industry and 32 per cent of the renewable energy workforce. Women are particularly underrepresented in the energy sector in jobs that require science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) training (28 per cent) compared to non-STEM technical jobs (35 per cent) and administrative positions (45 per cent).” For Baruah, this underrepresentation is not only a problem but an opportunity, as nations around the world are confronted with the urgent need to re-orient the energy sector for environmental sustainability. In developed, emerging and developing economies, the energy sector can be transformed to support more sustainable energy — and better jobs and more equity for women.

This is true in the developed nations, like Canada, where skill shortages in the renewable energy sector are a challenge but, Professor Baruah emphasizes, also an opportunity, “to train, recruit and promote women, Indigenous peoples, new immigrants, workers with disabilities, and other groups that have historically been marginalized in the energy sector.” This requires support for women to obtain degrees and diplomas in the better-paid science and technology fields, for instance, but also more flexibility for women who take maternity and parental leave to return to work and mandatory quotas for women in upper management and administrative positions.

Developing nations face their own challenges in the energy transition, but some offer useful models for ways forward for the rest of the world. In a chapter with Rabia Ferroukhi and Celia García-Baños López published in 2021, “Global Trends in Women’s Employment in Renewable Energy,” Professor Baruah and her colleagues point to Zambia’s gender-transformative approach as one helpful example. “Zambia’s National Energy Policy identifies measures to mainstream gender considerations in all energy access programs,” they observe, “and highlights the role of women not only as beneficiaries but as also active energy providers and entrepreneurs within the sector.” They conclude that “This is a good example of a[n]…approach that views women not simply as primary end users and beneficiaries, but as actors in the design and delivery of energy solutions.”

If the energy transition to sustainable industries is necessary and urgent, Professor Baruah’s work is a reminder that there is hope in this transition for creating a more gender-just world. This will require women’s active role as decision-makers, not just in the energy sector but in the social, political and economic structures that now reproduce inequities. They can and must be transformed to bring about both environmental sustainability and gender equity in the critical years ahead.

Written by Elaine Coburn

Preparing for Healthy Futures in Bangladesh in a World of Climate Change

Organized by the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research

In his seminar, “Climate Change, Sea Level Rise, and Community Planetary Health in Bangladesh,” Dr. Talukder observed that if traditional medicine is concerned with health within the human body, planetary systems are concerned with external systems, including the climate, that affect people’s health. This enables a more holistic, non-linear approach to understanding complex issues, including rising salinity associated with rising seas in Bangladesh due to climate change.

Today, the coastal areas of Bangladesh are home to more than 40 million people. It is estimated that by 2050 about 27 million people will be immediately affected by climate change, including heavily populated areas along coastal rivers. If sea levels rise by just 1.5 metres, more than 80 per cent of people in Bangladesh will be affected since the vast majority of the population lives in a flood plain. In addition, frequent cyclones originate in the Bay of Bengal. Annually, they bring water, now heavily salinated because of rising seas, that kills all vegetation, rendering previously fertile lands barren. Combined with more than 290 dams in India and more than 100 dams in China, which aggravate penuries of water during the dry season, and Himalayan ice melt due to climate change, Bangladesh suffers from significant water shortages and increased salinity. Not only water but soil is becoming increasingly saline.

Development projects along rivers in Bangladesh, including dams, have not worked well but create waterlogging that makes agriculture impossible. In response to changing conditions, farmers have shifted agriculture to saline-water crops, like shrimp, moving away from previous staple crops like rice. If shrimp farming has created economic benefits, the decreased agricultural diversity — in dramatic decline from the 1970s to about 2014 — because of the concentration on the monoculture of shrimp has created attendant health problems, due to food insecurity and diminished biodiversity. Shrimp feed has aggravated problems by interfering with the natural ecosystems. As mangrove forests decline, water is no longer retained by trees, making communities more vulnerable to the devastating effects of floods. Primary negative health impacts include the scarcity of freshwater. This is especially burdensome for women who must travel 5 to 10 km to search out fresh water. Many communities are using rainwater or open pond water for their daily household water needs. This creates communicable diseases, including skin infections, cholera, diarrhea, dysentery, and ocular diseases. Hypertension increases due to salt in water and in food systems.

Secondary negative health impacts include high rates of miscarriage among women who live close to coastal areas. Women stand in saline water for many hours a day, creating problems for women’s reproductive health, an under-investigated health concern observed by many local community groups. A lack of a diversified food given the concentration in the shrimp, creates vitamin D deficiencies, including rickets. Tertiary negative health impacts include the increase in breast and ovarian cancers in women. Women are harvesting drinking water in plastic containers and, since plastics are unregulated, some are contaminated which may be the cause of the increase in these cancers among women. There is increased mental health stress, especially among women, given the long distances they must travel to obtain basic needs, like water for the households. Internal migration often means a concentration of formerly rural people in urban slums, creating attendant health problems given the conditions in these slums which have weak sanitation systems. Overall, health inequities are increasing, especially in coastal areas.

Resolving these health impacts demands complex solutions from multiple stakeholders, everything from weather predictor systems to public health expertise. We need to listen to different stakeholders and the connections among the different challenges that they face to develop complex models that can help us understand the links among climate change, extreme weather events, internal migration and conflicts, and public health, all of which are, in addition, gendered. This means taking into account biodiversity, vector-borne disease and the causal relationships

among these different factors to create data beyond current tendencies to work in silos. Dynamic modelling is required if we are to develop scenarios, forecasting and support local communities and other stakeholders in developing community-based interventions to salinity and to enable monitoring to understand the present and better predict future health impacts.

But modelling is not enough. We need interventions that take into account complex systems to support the government of Bangladesh's 100-year delta plan, as the state seeks to ensure the sustainability of ecosystems for better livelihoods and intergenerational health in Bangladesh. We must prepare for different futures, knowing that if we do not take action now on climate change we will not be able to adapt to climate change in the future. We need to adapt today and we need to do this for many reasons, including for the health of people like those living in coastal areas of Bangladesh who are already being affected in their everyday life by climate change, especially rising sea levels and increasing salinity of coastal waters.

Written by Elaine Coburn

March 7, 2022 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM EST

"Pîkopayin (It is Broken)" Film screening and Q&A with filmmaker Dr. Angele Alook

Taking place in the oil sands regions of Alberta, *Pîkopayin (It is Broken*) is a documentary video project that foregrounds Bigstone Cree Nation members' perspectives and insights on energy projects and industrial activity within Treaty 8 Territory. The video project documents Bigstone Cree Nation members' experiences of resource-extraction projects and activity within the First Nation's traditional territory. Also featured are discussions about the cumulative impact of the oil industry and forestry industry on land-based teachings, and the lack of consultation of Indigenous community members that occurs when these large projects are approved by government and industry. This project was done in collaboration between Bigstone Cree Nation, iDoc, and the Feminist Energy Futures Project. Bigstone Cree Nation has collaborating members from the Indigenous Lands, Wildlife, and Environment Office. The film is 35 minutes and will be followed by a Q&A session with Professor Alook.

Organized by the Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Languages

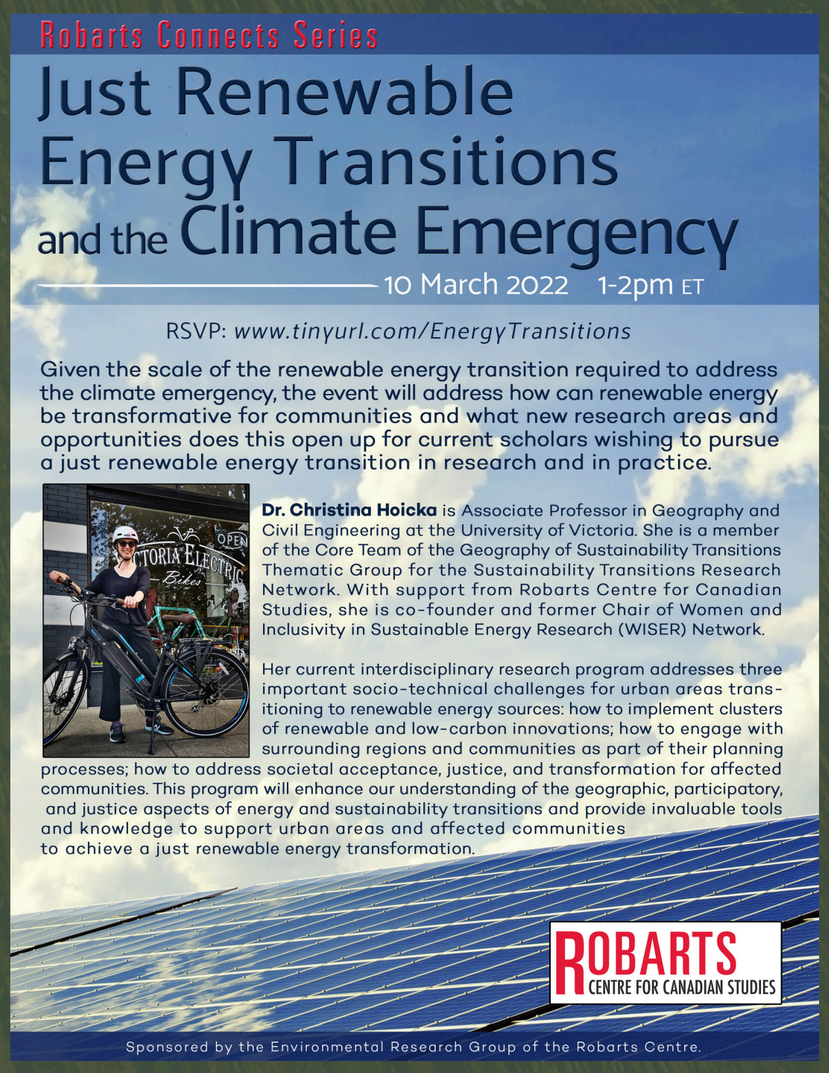
March 10, 2022 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EST

Just Renewal Energy Transitions and the Climate Emergency with Dr. Christina Hoicka

Given the scale of the renewable energy transition required to address the climate emergency, the event will address how can renewable energy be transformative for communities and what new research areas and opportunities this opens up for current scholars wishing to pursue a just renewable energy transition in research and in practice.

Dr. Christina Hoicka is Associate Professor in Geography and Civil Engineering at the University of Victoria. She is a member of the Core Team of the Geography of Sustainability Transitions Thematic Group for the Sustainability Transitions Research Network. With support from Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies, she is co-founder and former Chair of Women and Inclusivity in Sustainable Energy Research (WISER) Network. Her current interdisciplinary research program addresses three important socio-technical challenges for urban areas transitioning to renewable energy sources: how to implement clusters of renewable and low-carbon innovations; how to engage with surrounding regions and communities as part of their planning processes; and how to address societal acceptance, justice, and transformation for affected communities. This program will enhance our understanding of the geographic, participatory, and justice aspects of energy and sustainbility transitions and provide invaluable tools and knowledge to support urban areas and affected communities to achieve a just renewable energy transition.

Organized by the Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies



Bearing Witness to Climate Change in Treaty 8 Territory

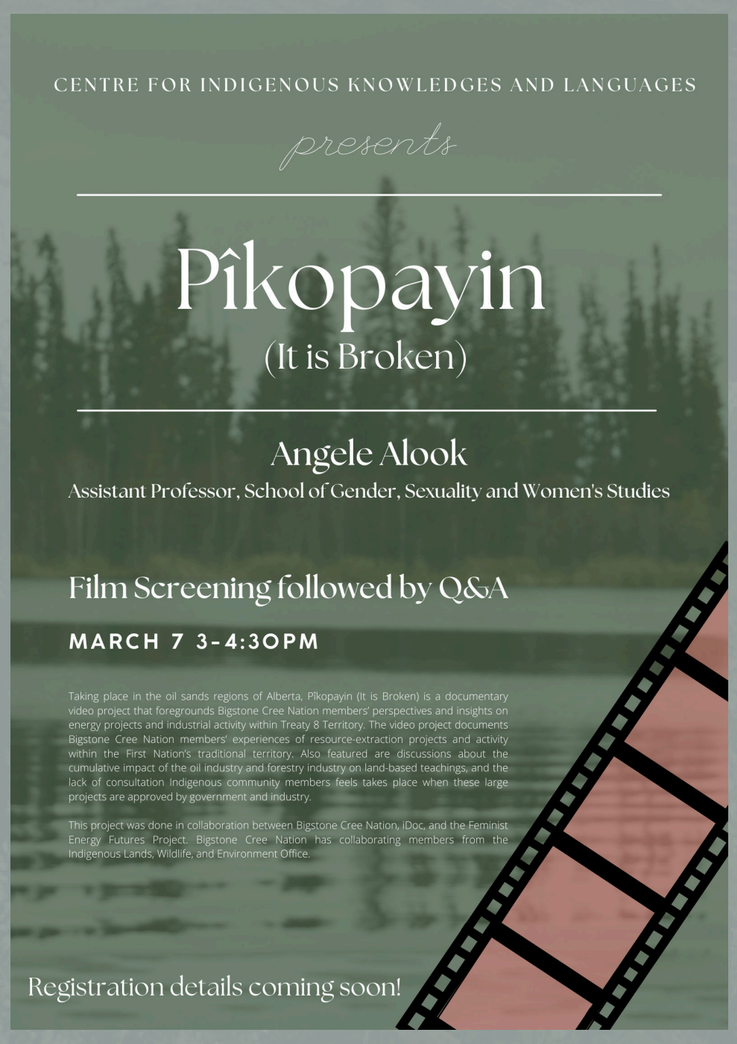
Organized by the Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Languages

Dr. Angele Alook is Assistant Professor in the School of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at York University. A member of Bigstone Cree Nation in Treaty 8 territory, her research focuses on the political economy of oil and gas in Alberta. She is a co-investigator on the SSHRC-funded Corporate Mapping Project Partnership Grant, where she has completed research with the Parkland Institute on Indigenous experiences in Alberta's oil industry and its gendered impact on working families. Dr. Alook is also a member of the Just Powers research team, a SSHRC-funded Insight Grant, enabling her to produce a documentary called *Pîkopayin (It is Broken)*. Featuring stories on the land, Indigenous traditional land users, environmental officers, and elders, the film bears witness to the impact that the fossil fuel industry, forestry and climate change has on traditional Treaty 8 territory. With Dr. Deborah McGregor, Osgoode Hall Law School and Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change (EUC), Dr. Alook is co-investigator on the project, "Indigenous Climate Leadership and Self-Determined Futures" funded by York University.

"The ways that bureaucracy deals with Indigenous peoples is to assign a group of experts to talk to us and the rest simply continue as they always have," observes Professor Alook. Government, often working hand-in-hand with corporations, together speak to Indigenous peoples, "but they do not consult us," continues Professor Alook, "nor do they respect their treaties with us." In the words of community elders, the consequence is that the land that makes up Treaty 8 territory is now broken, devastated by oil and gas wells and the infrastructure that supports them.

In the film produced by Professor Alook, *Pîkopayin (It is Broken),* she speaks to Elders from her community who bear witness to the devastation that the oil industry has wrought. "We care for the water. We care for the land. Because it is our diet, it is our livelihood," emphasizes Elder Albert Yellowknee. Since the oil industry has destroyed much of the land that gives life and livelihood, Yellowknee fears that he is the last generation to experience the land in this way: "What about my children, my grandchildren and my great-grandchildren? Will they have a place to go out into the woods and meditate? Like we do?" For Professor Alook, such conversations were difficult: "Elder Albert brought me and the film crew close to tears. Because he has a trapline, which has been in his family for many generations, and it has been literally cut down, destroyed, by the oil and forestry industry. He is no longer able to offer traditional, land-based teachings in the same way. We are no longer able to practice our treaty rights."

To create a future for the children of Bigstone Cree Nation in Treaty 8 territory means challenging the government for its failure to respect treaty rights. This demands confrontation with corporations, who fail to consult with the Bigstone Cree Nation in Treaty 8 territory, much less respect



Indigenous self-determination. If this is a very unequal struggle, it is a vitally necessary one. As Elder Verna Orr observes, "If we have no trees, there is no life out there." And she continues, "My hope is for people to stand together, pray together and be strong. And hopefully, the government and the oil companies will stop taking our trees."

Pîkopayin (It is Broken) is available through the Just Powers website.

Written by Elaine Coburn

World Water Day: A Solutions-Driven Workshop on Climate Impacts on Freshwater

Co-hosted by CIFAL and the Office of the Provost in partnership with the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research

World Water Day: A Solutions-Driven Workshop on Climate Impacts on Freshwater was co-hosted by CIFAL York and the Office of the Provost, in partnership with the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research, York University. The event is part of CIFAL York's In-Focus Knowledge Exchange Series for Nature, Climate, and People curated by Idil Boran.

The convenors of the workshop were Idil Boran, Associate Professor of the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, CIFAL York and Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research, and Sapna Sharma, Associate Professor in the Department of Biology, Faculty of Science and Provostial Fellow.

The event participated in World Water Day events, which have been held around the globe since 1993.

Professor Sharma observes that today, two billion people do not have access to clean water at home, while in Canada, more than 800 communities are subject to long-term drinking water advisories. Among communities that have not had clean water for more than ten years, two-thirds are Indigenous, characteristic of the inequitable distribution of fresh water in Canada and around the world. These facts frame the discussions for the workshop, bringing together concerns about access to fresh water and inequities within and across nations during an era of climate change.

Keynote speaker Professor James Orbinski, Director of the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research, began with the observation that freshwater is precious. The contemporary narratives about our relationship with the natural world are inadequate, however, to the challenges we face, given shrinking freshwater supplies due to climate change and inequitable access to water. "We need a different story about how we view ourselves, how we view our relation to each other and to the biosphere," Professor Orbinski emphasized, adding, "this demands an understanding of the complexity of the hydrosphere and more broadly the biosphere within which all human life exists." We are now an urban population of close to eight billion people on this fragile earth. The impact of climate change and biodiversity loss is massive, making it very difficult to make accurate predictions about the consequences of these disruptions for the biosphere and human communities. We do know, however, that as climate change diminishes the access to freshwater, competition and conflict increases, as different communities struggle to secure water access for fishing, farming, and other subsistence and cultural activities. To begin to address these challenges, Professor Orbinski argues, requires us to let go of tenacious ideas about human dominion over nature so that we may grasp the fundamental truth that, "we are part of nature and we depend on nature for our very being and survival."

Professor Daniel Olago, Chair of the Department of Earth and Climate Sciences at the University of Nairobi, Kenya, spoke about the continent of Africa, which holds 25 per cent of the world's surface water. Despite the abundance of freshwater sources, these have been negatively impacted by human activity, including deforestation and overfishing, as well as by climate change. Biodiversity suffers with cascading consequences. Flamingo populations in Lake Nakuru are decreasing, negatively affecting tourism and the economic health of the region, while in Lake Malawi the loss of native fish leads to hunger and malnutrition among communities dependent on healthy fish stocks. Solutions are made complex by the dozens of political jurisdictions acting in lake areas and sectoral approaches to management, leading to poor coordination in addressing systemic challenges. An Integrated Lake Basin Management approach is required, Profesor Olago argues, bringing a holistic approach that balances conservation with sustainable development goals.

As Dr. Syed Imran Ali, Research Fellow at the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research, observes, floods and droughts are the spectacular face of climate change and its devastating effects on freshwater sources. Equally important, but less noticed, are changes to the quality of the world's water due to contamination. Inadequate sanitation always poses risks to the quality of the water

supply, but these risks are experienced unequally. Worldwide, rural populations and refugees displaced due to conflict and disaster experience acute difficulties in accessing clean, fresh water. The consequence is the proliferation of deadly water-borne infectious diseases, like cholera, watery diarrhea and hepatitis E. Preventing deaths means improving water quality through chlorination at the point of consumption, where World Health Organization "universal standards" for chlorination are inadequate in many humanitarian crisis contexts. To improve water quality in refugee camps and similar contexts, Dr. Ali and his team have developed machine learning and numerical modelling tools that determine adequate levels of chlorination to ensure water remains safe. This is one example of solutions-driven research that responds to the challenge of providing clean water in crisis situations and that is now in use by seven major humanitarian organizations working around the world.

Dr. Angele Alook, Assistant Professor in Gender, Feminist and Women's Studies and a member of the Bigstone Cree Nation in Treaty 8 territory, observes that water crises are not only outside of Canada, but affect many First Nations communities on lands claimed by the Crown. She warns: "there is something happening beneath our feet. It will stop the rivers from flowing and the water from filling the lakes in the spring. We will lose our fish, our moose, and our traditional ways of living. The water will be stolen. All Canadians should be concerned because the hunger of the oil industry has no limits. If we contaminate waters upstream, we contaminate all water downstream and the ecosystems upon which they depend."

If Indigenous nations have shown remarkable resilience, they have been impoverished by the colonial theft of Indigenous land and left traumatized by genocide, including the infamous residential school system that sought to extinguish Indigenous kinship and ways of knowing and doing. The oil industries step into this context, making false promises to Indigenous communities that feel they have few choices as they seek to recover the power and knowledges that colonial actors have forcibly wrested from them. Dr. Alook emphasizes that this must end now through the recovery of Indigenous sovereignty, especially taking up responsibilities towards the land: "as long as the sun shines, as long as the rivers flow, let it be the sovereignty of our people that takes precedence over the capitalist and colonial theft of our lands. This is our land, this is our water, and let us be stewards of all that the Creator has bestowed upon us."

Dr. Catherine Febria is Canada Research Chair of Freshwater Restoration Ecology at the University of Windsor. Dr. Febria describes the Healthy Headwaters Lab, which she directs, as seeking to "connect land, water and people for future generations" using a decolonial, community-centered interdisciplinary approach. River restoration now involves billions of dollars worldwide but moving forward demands more than money — it requires coordinated actions at every level from the most local to the global. In coordinating, Dr. Febria emphasizes, "science matters, but so does communication if diverse communities are to be meaningfully involved in river restoration. Best practices foreground local involvement." In Canterbury in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Māori community members, farmers and community groups came together with scientists to create healthy rivers. "The relationships come before the science," Professor Febria observes. "It's about building trust by listening and mobilizing lived knowledge alongside science."

Human and environmental health depends on clean fresh water. On World Water Day 2022, these researchers came together to emphasize the importance of holistic approaches that take up science in collaboration with those most immediately affected by the contamination of freshwater sites, including Indigenous and other communities marginalized from power and decision-making. New ways of doing science with diverse knowledge holders and new/old ways of understanding human relationships within the natural world are necessary, they emphasize, for freshwater to be restored and for the flourishing of all life in generations to come.

Written by Elaine Coburn

March 14, 2022 12:00 PM EDT

Faith-Based Environmental Action: The Jewish Experience with Dr. Tanhum Yoreh

Faith leaders and activists are increasingly vocal about environment and climate issues. The common drivers of faith-based environmentalism are a sense of responsibility to care for the planet and the moral imperative to act. Yet, we know very little about how this discourse translates into action in individual faith communities. I will open this talk by broadly examining faith-based environmentalism, and then highlight some of the specific Jewish values that are emphasized in this discourse. Then, I will shift to present findings from empirical research on the way environmental action manifests itself in places of worship across the mosaic of faiths in the Greater Toronto Area and in Jewish communities in the United States.

Tanhum Yoreh is an Assistant Professor at the School of Environment at the University of Toronto. His research focuses religion and environment, faith-based environmentalism, faith-based environmental ethics, and religious legal approaches to environmental protection. He is particularly interested in the themes of wastefulness, consumption, and simplicity. Dr. Yoreh is currently researching environmental engagement in faith communities in Canada, the United States, and Israel. He is the author of *Waste Not: A Jewish Environmental Ethic* (2019).

Israel and Golda Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies at York University
המרכז ללימודי היהדות

Organized by
The Centre for Jewish Studies

"Beyond the aesthetics, art aspires towards a shift in consciousness towards the care and intimacy that we need to encounter, and be accountable to, our environments. Bioartist Jennifer Willet writes, 'notions of love are typically eschewed by academia and science as romantic, popular, or religious; but love can also be interpreted as a radical political act in the face of instrumental rationality.' Could we say this month, that we love our environment?"

- Joel Ong, Sensorium

March 17, 2022 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM EDT

Cities and the Climate Crisis with Dr. Laura Taylor

Laura Taylor is an Associate Professor of urban ecologies and environmental planning. As a researcher in political ecology and landscape studies, she is most interested in exurbia — the rural residential countryside — where she studies the processes and discourses of landscape settlement and landscape conservation at (and beyond) the urban-rural fringe. Recently, she has become more interested in climate change, which has become the most pressing issue facing cities. Reducing emissions and adapting landscapes to extreme weather have become the focus of her work. Laura is co-editor of two books, *A Comparative Political Ecology of Exurbia and Landscape: Planning, Environmental Management and Landscape Change* (2016) and *The Ideology of Nature: Green Sprawl* (2013).

Cities cause climate change. What are we doing about it? Dr. Taylor will provide an informative and timely discussion of the issues and challenges of cities and climate change, drawing upon her experience in the Toronto area. Cities are undergoing a paradigm shift to deal with climate change through a variety of actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from energy use and to prepare to be more resilient to climate impacts, while promising environmental justice and social equity.

Organized by the CITY Institute

"CITIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR 75% OF THE WORLD'S CARBON EMISSIONS. AND AS THE WORLD IS CONTINUING TO URBANIZE - A PROCESS THAT IS UNSTOPPABLE - THE WORLD'S CLIMATE IS CONTINUING TO GET WARMER. ALTHOUGH EACH CITY'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS DIFFERS, THE QUESTION OF HOW CITIES ARE RESPONDING TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS OF ENORMOUS SIGNIFICANCE, NOT ONLY TO ADDRESSING HOW WE CAN WORK TOWARDS EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN FUTURES BUT ALSO TO HOW SUCCESSFULLY THE CLIMATE CRISIS CAN BE MITIGATED."

- Linda Peake, The CITY Institute

Faith-Based Environmental Action

Organized by the Israel and Golda Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies

At the Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies, Dr. Tanhum Yoreh (PhD Humanities, York University) spoke about “Faith Based Environmental Action: The Jewish Experience.” In his talk, he considered possibilities and tensions around religiously rooted environmentalism, turning first to the words of the philosopher Roger S. Gottleib: “for as long as human beings have practiced them, the complex and multifaceted beliefs, rituals and moral teaching known as religion have told us how to think about and relate to everything on earth that we did not make ourselves.”

This observation is helpful, Dr. Yoreh argues, in part because it does not presume the usefulness of religion for understanding environmental questions. Rather, Gottlieb leaves open the possibilities that theology may be helpful or harmful to our interactions with the natural world.

Certainly, many religious people who are active in the environmental movement understand themselves as having a responsibility, even a moral imperative, to respond to the environmental crisis. If religion is life-giving and the ecological crisis is life-destroying, being a responsible part of the Created World demands action to protect life.

Practically, being able to mobilize religious communities around environmental causes, including their ability to organize and their financial and political clout, makes them at least potentially powerful actors. The United Church, for instance, is actively divesting from fossil fuels. Diverse faith communities are present at events, like the COP-26 at Glasgow in 2021, asking that we make difficult decisions to reduce ecologically destructive practices and support life in the natural world.

At the same time, Dr. Yoreh observes, religious communities may have entrenched habits that make new engagement with environmental questions difficult or environmental questions may seem irrelevant to the central spiritual mission. In some cases, religious communities may hold ideas antithetical to ecological activism, for instance, theologically rooted fatalisms make action meaningless, since the *Book of Life* is already written. Some monotheistic communities may understand environmentalists as spiritually wrong-headed, even dangerous, associating “tree hugging” with idol worship.

Prevailing Orthodox understandings of Jewish law, the halakhah, view environmental commitment as morally good but as extra-legal, praiseworthy but not legally necessary. Yet, other aspects of Jewish law may support environmental activism. For instance, if environmental damage is viewed as a form of self-harm, the life-privileging halakhah would be activated in full force to protect human life.

Ecclesiastes Rabbah, a commentary on the book of Ecclesiastes, includes a passage in which God reviews "each and every tree" in the Garden of Eden and warns Adam: "behold my creations how pleasant and praiseworthy they are. All that I created, I created for you. Pay heed that you do not ruin and destroy My world. For if you ruin it, there is no one after you who will fix it." (7:13). Such passages speak powerfully to many contemporary Jewish environmental activists, enjoining all of humanity to take care of the natural world, understood as God's Creation.

In contrast to those who understand Judaism as demanding stewardship for God's Creation, Reform and Orthodox communities may rely on very different vocabularies, for instance, evoking the need for cleanliness to urge an end to littering and pollution. Varying approaches and vocabularies within a diverse Jewish faith community speaks to the need, within the environmental movement, to mobilize a range of language that resonates with different religious actors.

In short, these are matters of different worldviews, different motivations that bring people of faith to the environmental struggle.

What is clear is that faith-based actors are important to environmental struggles. Scientists can measure risks, but they cannot answer the moral and spiritual questions that the contemporary ecological crisis poses. For the faithful, theological imperatives and religious responsibility provide an impetus to act that they find nowhere else.

Written by Elaine Coburn

"CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS ENGAGE WITH INTERGENERATIONAL TROPES. IT HIGHLIGHTS FAULT LINES, RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT INTERGENERATIONAL BLAME, AND POINTS TO HOW WE MIGHT CONSIDER INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY FOR CLIMATE ACTION MOVING FORWARD."

- Tamara Daly, YU-CARE

March 21, 2022

Agents for Change: Facing the Anthropocene

with Liz Miller (Feminist Media Studio), Nina Czegledy (Leonardo), & Jane Tingley (SLOlab)

As part of Climate Change Month, Sensorium will be hosting a curatorial presentation and artist talk around the exhibition Agents for Change: Facing the Anthropocene (2020) on March 21st from 11 am to 12:30 pm. The presenters are Elizabeth Miller (Feminist Media Lab, Concordia), Nina Czgledy (Leonardo Network) and Jane Tingley (SLO Lab, AMPD). A listening booth will also be set up to show Liz Miller's work *The Shore Line* (2017) that week, an interactive documentary that features over 40 collaborative videos made with individuals who are confronting the threats of unsustainable development and extreme weather with persistence and ingenuity.

SENSORIUM
CENTRE FOR DIGITAL ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

Organized by
Sensorium: Centre for Digital Arts and Technology

Agents for Change: Facing the Anthropocene

Organized by Sensorium: The Centre for Digital Arts and Technology

There's a growing realization in this epoch that much of the crisis we face is caused by decisions that externalize environmental costs and hide the true level of violent extractions and waste from view. As we encounter the real possibilities of metabolic interventions into the planet by industrial complexes and institutions, art and poetics play an important role in the interdisciplinary approach we all seek, and it is this trajectory that has gained much momentum in changing our narratives and behaviours around climate change.

At Sensorium and AMPD we are looking at ways to consider environmental solutions as a form of new civic knowledge, such as in collective imagining with communities of practice through site-specific and sustainable eco-scenographics; creative transductions of environmental data, film, and sound; simulated evolution and mixed reality world-making; and collaborations with scientists and engineers across the campus. These research-creation works are very much indebted to intersectional discourses in feminist, queer, critical disability and Indigenous studies that elevate the aspects of the environment that are traditionally neglected when thinking about climate action — what Marisol De La Cadena calls the 'anthropo-not-seen.' Here I will highlight Professors Mary Bunch, Dolleen Manning, and team's work, "Emerging from the Water" (2022), Professor Jane Tingley's "Foresta-Inclusive" (2021), student alumni Ella Morton's "Kajanaqtuq" (2020), and Nicole Clouston's, "Lake Ontario Portrait" (2017-), that consider the plurality of 'worlds' other than our own. These works have been featured in recent Sensorium group exhibitions.

But beyond the aesthetics, art aspires towards a shift in consciousness towards the care and intimacy that we need to encounter, and be accountable to, our environments. As Bioartist Jennifer Willet writes, "notions of love are typically eschewed by academia and science as romantic, popular, or religious; but love can also be interpreted as a radical political act in the face of instrumental rationality." Could we say this month, that we love our environment?

As part of Climate Change Month, Sensorium will be hosting a curatorial presentation and artist talk around the exhibition *Agents for Change: Facing the Anthropocene* (2020) on March 21st from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The presenters are Elizabeth Miller (Feminist Media Lab, Concordia), Nina Czgledy (Leonardo Network) and Jane Tingley (SLO Lab, AMPD). A listening booth will also be set up to show Liz Miller's work *The Shore Line* (2017) that week, an interactive documentary that features over 40 collaborative videos made with individuals who are confronting the threats of unsustainable development and extreme weather with persistence and ingenuity.

Written by Joel Ong

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"For the exhibition Agents for Change | Facing the Anthropocene, we wanted to highlight the often underrepresented voices of women artists and activists in an exhibition on environmental change. Women are so often on the front lines of this type of work (activism), and we wanted to put together a show that highlighted the stories that women artists want to tell. These stories were of course extremely diverse — starting with science, research, and observation — but for me the most exciting part was the interest in highlighting the stories of both human and non-human subjects. The works in varying degrees were informative, experiential, and interactive — and together helped the viewer develop empathy and better understanding of how deeply impactful human activity is on life on this planet — air, water, earth, plant, animal, insect, human. It is extremely important to have diverse representation in gallery exhibitions because ultimately this assures diversity in the stories that get to be told for public consumption. We need this as a society to assure that we begin to comprehend (and hopefully develop sensitivity to) the complexity and diversity that surrounds us in our everyday lives."

Jane Tingley, Curator
Director, SLOLab, York University

"BY COLLABORATING, THE ORUS, INCLUDING THE YORK CENTRE FOR ASIAN RESEARCH, AIM TO BRING TOGETHER YORK UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS WITH SCHOLARS AND ARTISTS FROM ACROSS CANADA AND THE WORLD TO SHOWCASE INNOVATIVE RESEARCH SOLUTIONS, WHILE GENERATING AWARENESS OF AND MOBILIZING ACTION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE."

- Abidin Kusno, YCAR

March 22, 2022 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM EDT

Thinking like an Archipelago: Design and Spatial Practice for Climate Change Adaptation in Indonesia with Dr. Teti Argo, Dr. Nashin Mahtani, & Discussant Ria Jhoanna Ducusin

In the wake of the failure of talks at COP-26, scholars and activists have taken grassroots actions to build for communities an alternative infrastructure they need for climate change adaptation. This talk presents a discussion about what we can learn from the local residential knowledges of residing alongside rivers in Jakarta; how the residents develop their own sense of risk and coping mechanism in and through social media; and how they work at the local level with scholars, designers and activists to provide a shared structure of knowledge and practice below the formal system of adaptation and mitigation plan. The talk raises questions about the role of the state, the possibility of planning from below, the promises of everyday technology and prospects of informality in finding a holistic approach to climate change adaptation.

Teti Argo is an Assistant Professor of Urban-Rural Regional Planning at the School of Architecture, Planning and Public Policy, Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB) Indonesia. Professor Argo holds a PhD from University of British Columbia and MES from York University, and has published extensively on various aspects of environmental issues, including planning and governance, community resilience and social-ecological questions. She was involved as representative related to UN Habitat New Urban Agenda 2016-2036 and participated in the country report 2021.

Nashin Mahtani is a designer, researcher and director of Yayasan Peta Bencana [Disaster Map Indonesia]. With Etienne Turpin, Nishan Mahtani is working on a new book called "Software for the City yet to Come."

Ria Jhoanna Ducusin is a doctoral candidate of Geography at Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change, York University. Her research interests include climate change vulnerability, adaptation, and resilience particularly in the agriculture and coastal urban sector.

Organized by

The York Centre for Asian Studies

March 23, 2022 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM EDT

Climate Risk Day with Risk and Insurance Studies Centre (RISC) at York University

with Corina Constantinescu (University of Liverpool)
Sapna Sharma (York University)
Eric Jondeau (University of Lausanne)
Usman T. Khan (York University)
and panel lead - David McGown

As part of our commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, RISC is delighted to invite everyone to a one-day workshop that brings together renowned international scholars from distinct disciplines and influential leaders from the private sector, aimed at generating awareness of climate change risks and mobilizing the community to take action.

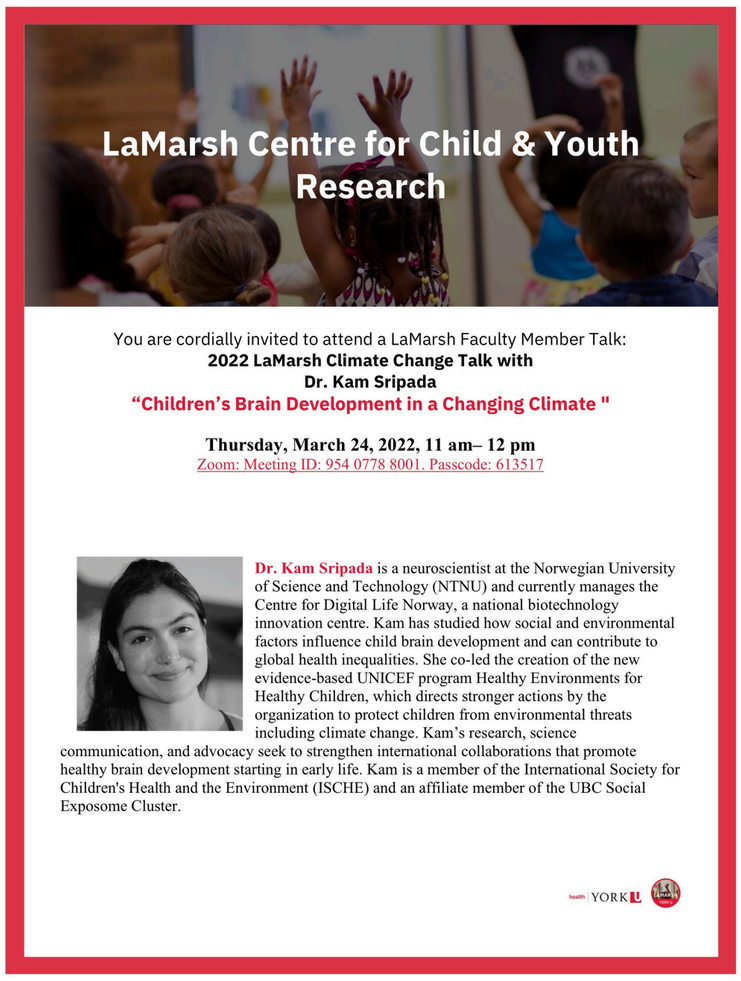
Organized by
Risk and Insurance Studies Centre

March 24, 2022 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM EDT

Children's brain development in a Changing Climate with Dr. Kam Sripada

Dr. Kam Sripada is a neuroscientist at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) and currently manages the Centre for Digital Life Norway, a national biotechnology innovation centre. Kam has studied how social and environmental factors influence child brain development and can contribute to global health inequalities. She co-led the creation of the new evidence-based UNICEF program Healthy Environments for Healthy Children, which directs stronger actions by the organization to protect children from environmental threats including climate change. Kam's research, science communication, and advocacy seek to strengthen international collaborations that promote healthy brain development starting in early life. Kam is a member of the International Society for Children's Health and the Environment (ISCHE) and an affiliate member of the UBC Social Exposome Cluster.

Organized by
The LaMarsh Centre for Child and Youth Research



March 28, 2022 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM EDT

The African Diaspora and Climate Change: New Global Scholarship

with Marcondes Coelho, Chrislain Eric Kenfack and Balikisu Osman

Organized by The Harriet Tubman Institute for Research on Africa and its Diasporas

Children in a Changing Climate

Organized by the LaMarsh Centre for Child and Youth Research

Dr. Kam Sripada is a neuroscientist at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) and currently manages the Centre for Digital Life Norway, a national biotechnology innovation centre. Dr. Sripada has studied how social and environmental factors influence child brain development and can contribute to global health inequalities. Dr. Sripada's research, science communication, and advocacy seek to strengthen international collaborations that promote healthy brain development starting in early life. Dr. Sripada' is a member of the International Society for Children's Health and the Environment (ISCHE), an affiliate member of the University of British Columbia's Social Exposome Cluster, and previously Research Fellow at UNICEF.

Speaking at the LaMarsh Centre for Child and Youth Research Dr. Sripada explained that "children are uniquely vulnerable to climate change." Childhood is a time of rapid brain development and growth, which means that trauma experienced during early childhood can have permanent, life-long consequences for brain development and health. Climate change creates sudden, traumatic events, including flooding, heat waves and wildfires, and slower-onset impacts like rising sea levels, water scarcity, and the spread of vector-borne diseases. This has immediate, negative impacts on families and, for children, the effects may last into adulthood. When water and food is scarce, children suffer from undernourishment. Vector-borne diseases experienced in childhood lead to worse health outcomes for these children as they grow into adulthood. There are other, less direct impacts of climate change for children. Confronted with decreased access to food and water, families may withdraw their children from schools to place them in paid employment or, for girls, into marriage. In these ways, climate change has far-reaching consequences for children, both in the immediate and for the adults that they will become. Risks from climate change are compounded by early life exposures to air pollution, toxic chemicals, and other contaminants that are harmful to children's health and brain development, said Dr. Sripada.

New actions are being taken to mitigate and to adapt to climate change in ways that protect children. Internationally, the United Nations Child Fund (UNICEF) has recently broadened its health focus to include the impact of climate change on children. Dr. Sripada co-led the creation of the new UNICEF program, Healthy Environments for Healthy Children, which launched in 2021 and directs stronger actions by the organization to protect children from environmental threats including climate change. In addition, the new UNICEF Children's Climate Risk Index seeks to measure the impact of climate change for children. In 2021, UNICEF estimated that one billion children worldwide are at extreme risk due to climate change, in particular through greater exposure to heat waves, cyclones, and riverine and coastal flooding. Fifty per cent of victims of such "natural" disasters, caused or exacerbated by climate change, are children (Save the Children, 2007). For some, the trauma created by experiencing disaster and displacement can lead to lasting mental health problems into adulthood.

Locally, nationally, and internationally, children are acting to call attention to climate change on their own terms and in their own voices. Eric Njuguna, a climate change justice advocate from Kenya, is speaking out to challenge white saviourism and ensure that the children most immediately affected by climate change in the Global South have a voice and are heard. Around the world, Fridays for Futures climate change strikes by children remind both children and adults of the urgency of taking action to mitigate climate change, despite a difficult present and challenging futures.

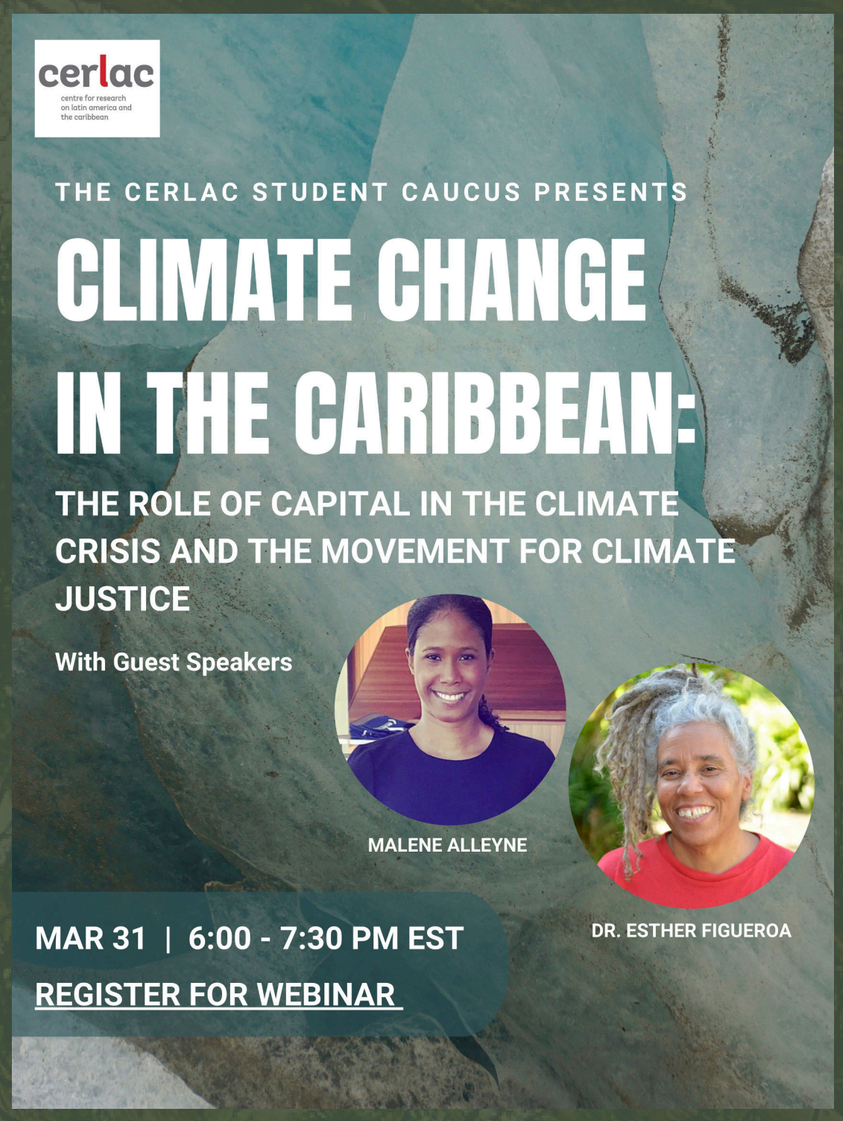
Dr. Sripada concluded that it is critical to engage the next generation about climate change. She observes that children are taking up the challenge, all the way up to high-level United Nations meetings where they are demanding that governments do more to protect them and their right to healthy futures. "We are at a moment when the decisions we make to mitigate and adapt to climate change can aggravate risks, creating greater inequality," Dr. Sripada warned. "Or we can join with activists like Eric to protect children's well-being now and into the future."

Written by Elaine Coburn

March 31, 2022 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM EDT

Climate Change in the Caribbean: The Role of Capital in the Climate Crisis and the Movement for Climate Justice with Malene Alleyne & Dr. Esther Figueroa

The CERLAC Student Caucus is pleased to present Malene Alleyne and Dr. Esther Figueroa to discuss Climate Change in the Caribbean. Join us for an important and timely presentation that will discuss the role that capital plays in the Climate Crisis and the movement towards Climate Justice in the Caribbean.



MALENE ALLEYNE is a Jamaican human rights lawyer and founder of Freedom Imaginaries, an organization that uses human rights law to tackle legacies of slavery and colonialism. She holds a Master of Laws degree from Harvard Law School and a Master of Advanced Studies degree from the Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva. She is qualified to practice law in Guyana and Jamaica.

ESTHER FIGUEROA, Ph.D., is a Jamaican independent filmmaker, writer, educator and linguist with over 35 years of media productions including television programming, documentaries, educational videos, multimedia and feature films. Her activist filmmaking gives voice to those outside of mainstream media and focuses on the perpetuation of local and Indigenous knowledge and cultures, the environment, social injustice, and community empowerment. Figueroa's films are screened and televised all over the world and taught at numerous universities. They include *Jamaica for Sale* (2009), the award-winning feature documentary about tourism and unsustainable development. Her latest feature documentary *Fly Me To The Moon* (2019) is about modernity and the global aluminum industry. She recently created and co-hosted GEFF 2020, the first online film festival focused on global extraction. In 2013, Figueroa was Distinguished Writer in Residence at University of Hawai'i English Department.Her environmental novel *Limbo* (2013) was a finalist in the 2014 National Indie Excellence Awards for Multi-cultural Fiction.

Organized by the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean

Climate Change in the Caribbean: The Role of Capital in the Climate Crisis and the Movement for Climate Justice

Organized by the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean

Organized by the CERLAC student caucus and hosted by York University doctoral students Natasha Sofia Martinez and Alex Moldovan.

Malene Alleyne is a Jamaican human rights lawyer and founder of Freedom Imaginaries, an organization that uses human rights law to tackle legacies of slavery and colonialism. She holds a Master of Laws degree from Harvard Law School and a Master of Advanced Studies degree from the Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva. She is qualified to practice law in Guyana and Jamaica.

Esther Figueroa, PhD is a Jamaican independent filmmaker, writer, educator and linguist with over thirty-five years of media productions including television programming, documentaries, educational videos, multimedia and feature films. Her activist film-making gives voice to those outside of mainstream media and focuses on the perpetuation of local and Indigenous knowledge and cultures, the environment, social injustice, and community empowerment. Figueroa's films include *Jamaica for Sale* (2009), *Fly Me To The Moon* (2019). In 2013, Figueroa was Distinguished Writer in Residence at University of Hawai'i English Department. Her environmental novel *Limbo* (2014) was a finalist in the 2015 National Indie Excellence Awards for Multi-cultural Fiction.

When you think of the Caribbean, it is likely that you think of the region as a victim of climate "injustice,"

Dr. Figueroa observes. “Certainly, in their calls for reparations, Caribbean governments stress the innocence of the region. But Caribbean governments promote extractivist models of development, whereby tourism, plantation agriculture and forestry, industrial fisheries, the extraction of hydrocarbons, metals and minerals, car-centric development and urbanized built environments are the engines of their growth economies.” This is in keeping with the role of Caribbean peoples as the early industrial modernizers in and through sugar plantations, leaders within a world system of colonialism and capitalism. In their scale and complexity, the sugar plantations anticipated later industrial developments in Britain and Europe, Dr. Figueroa argues, creating enormous profits for British colonial owners and funding the expansion of British empire, which at one time included a quarter of humanity. In short, through the plantation system, the Caribbean was central to world processes of industrial modernity, empire, and global capitalism.

This matters for the contemporary climate crisis here and now, Dr. Figueroa insists, because the age of European imperialist expansion accelerated what some call the Anthropocene, an era in which human presence has irrevocably transformed the natural world. European imperialisms were marked by the genocide of tens of millions of Indigenous peoples, the theft of their lands and waters, and the repurposing of them as natural resources. “A more accurate conceptualization of the Anthropocene is therefore the Plantationocene," Dr. Figueroa observes, “a patriarchal, colonial, racist capitalist world political economy that began in the late 15th century in the Americas and in the Caribbean, rooted in the genocide of Indigenous peoples, the enslavement of Africans, and the profitable destruction of the natural world.” The Caribbean’s history of extractivism continues today in Guyana, as Dr. Figueroa describes:

“Guyana is now positioned to become the largest oil producer in the world transforming from a carbon sink, whereby its immense intact forests hold carbon and supply oxygen, to a carbon bomb, with 10 billion barrels of oil slated to be extracted. It is estimated that burning that oil could release over 4 billion tons of greenhouse gases. And in keeping with the Caribbean’s extractivist tradition, the agreement between the government of Guyana, Exxon, and other multinational oil corporations, saddles Guyana with debt and liability while enriching the oil companies. Yet the Guyana government portrays their new role as the largest oil producer as one that will catapult Guyanese society into great wealth and prosperity.”

Caribbean leaders beholden to billion-dollar corporations and wealthy oligarchs adjust to a violent, racist, capitalist world by selling off the last of the Caribbean’s so-called natural resources. “The Caribbean is not innocent,” Dr. Figueroa concludes, “despite its calls for reparations given climate injustice.” What is required is a fundamental transformation beyond the global plantation economy that carries so much violence against human beings, especially Indigenous peoples and the natural world.

“The climate crisis is the logical consequence of a racial capitalist system, which normalizes resource plundering, Indigenous dispossession, and the relegation of former colonies to sacrificial zones of extraction,” Malene Alleyne observes. Communities are becoming uninhabitable due to extreme weather events linked with climate change. In Bahamas, people are still recovering from Hurricane Dorian, which in 2019 caused loss of life and massive displacement, with many living today in what were originally conceived as temporary, emergency housing. In Trinidad and Tobago, wildlife and fishing are threatened by oil spills, while in Jamaica, bauxite mining is contaminating water sources and destroying agricultural lands in Cockpit Country. “What I am describing is a system of global racial inequality,” Alleyne continues, “in which Caribbean nations remain trapped in a cycle of dependency on extraction and climate vulnerability.” Migrants, Indigenous people, and Afro-descendent rural people are marginalized within the Caribbean and, when faced with natural disasters created and exacerbated by climate change, they are most likely to suffer death and displacement.

A rights-based decolonial approach to justice demands a transformative approach that shifts power to these communities, Alleyne emphasizes, so that they can defend their way of life and environment against unsustainable development. This human rights-based approach to climate justice includes the following three pillars:

- environmental rights, such as the right to access climate information, participate in climate decision-making processes, and access remedies in cases of harm
- a racial equality framework based on international treaties that prohibit racial discrimination, including with respect to climate change
- climate reparations, including just economic and social systems enabling a postcolonial future

This is much more than a matter of financial reparations. Since a racist world capitalist system engenders climate change, Alleyne argues, challenging climate change requires that we dismantle that system and join together to build a more socially, economically and racially just world.

Written by Elaine Coburn

"THE EXISTENTIAL THREAT OF CLIMATE CHANGE REQUIRES US TO DRAW UPON ALL THE WAYS WE KNOW OURSELVES AND OUR RELATIONSHIPS TO THE NATURAL WORLD, FROM THE SCIENCES, ARTS, AND HUMANITIES. THE CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH MONTH BRINGS TOGETHER YORK UNIVERSITY AND BROADER PUBLICS TO LEARN, TO REFLECT AND TO INSPIRE OURSELVES TO ACT."

- Elaine Coburn, Centre for Feminist Research

To participate in Climate Change Month 2023 please get in touch with Dr. Elaine Coburn at ecoburn@glendon.yorku.ca

Click Here to Visit the Climate Change Month Website