



FIGS NEWS



**A semi-regular update from the Feminist Intersectional Solidarity
Group of the Canadian Association of Geographers
FALL 2023**

Fall 2023 Newsletter

[Letter from the co-chairs](#)

[Suzanne Mackenzie Memorial
Lecture 2023](#)

[Resources on Palestine](#)

[Publications from the FIGS
community](#)

[CAGONT Conference 2023](#)

[FIGS Student Paper Awards](#)

[FIGS Podcast](#)

[Call for feminist geographers!](#)

[Art from the FIGS Community](#)



Hello feminist friends and colleagues,

As we head into the end of another year, we want to thank you for all you do as geographers, teachers, feminists and people of the world. At a time when the world is particularly unstable with wars including Palestine and Israel, Ukraine, Sudan, Haiti and more; the climate crisis continues to escalate; and economic instability for so many is of deep concern; our work in geography contributes to pathways for change that are so desperately needed for the planet and people. It also becomes more important than ever to find solidarity in communities like FIGS to nurture and support one another for activism, community building, teaching and scholarship. If you haven't attended one of our monthly meetings recently and would like to be involved this winter, please reach out to slewkwow@uwo.ca or martinapaloheimo@gmail.com and we will warmly welcome you. This newsletter brings together stories and resources that make up the work of FIGS members over the past many months. We want to proudly share your successes so please be sure to check out the new publications and conference presentation section.

If we missed anything, send us your work so we can be sure to include it in our Spring newsletter. In this edition we provide some recaps of the CAG conference in Montreal and the Ontario division that took place in October. Other CAG division conferences will be happening in the new year, so send us your stories and photos for spring. We are also very excited to be launching our podcast series in the new year. Check out the article below to find out more information and how to get involved.

As Co-Chairs we are very grateful for the FIGS members who do so much of the planning, writing, hosting and accounting behind the scenes. A special thank you to Mantha Katsikana for developing and designing this newsletter and for being the creator of the upcoming podcast series.

Take good care of yourselves and each other feminist friends. We are sending solidarity and wishes of peace to all of you and the global community for the new year.

Warmly,
Shawna Lewkowitz and Martina
Paloheimo
Co-Chairs FIGS

Suzanne Mackenzie Memorial Lecture (SMML) 2023



Every two years, FIGS hosts the [Suzanne Mackenzie Memorial Lecture \(SMML\)](#) as part of an Annual Meeting of the CAG. This lecture is a privilege and honour bestowed on a feminist geographer identified by FIGS. They are invited to speak because they embody interests, influences, or characteristics shared with Suzanne Mackenzie, a beloved feminist geographer who left this world far too young, at age 48, in 1998.

We were honoured to have Dr. Sharlene Mollett to present this year's Suzanne Mackenzie Memorial Lecture. The lecture took place on the 9th of May, in Montreal during the CAG Annual Meeting as a banner event of the conference. The title of Dr. Mollett's presentation was *Racial Geographies of Land and Domestic Service in Panama*. It was such a powerful and inspiring talk, which led to a fruitful discussion through Q&A at the end. There were around 75 attendees, and the reception following the lecture created a lovely atmosphere for participants to enjoy each other's company and share ideas.



Sharlene Mollett is an Associate Professor in the Centre for Critical Development Studies and the Department of Human Geography, and a Distinguished Professor in Feminist Cultural Geography, Nature and Society at the University of Toronto Scarborough. As a feminist political ecologist and cultural geographer, Sharlene's work interrogates multiple forms of power shaping land conflicts in Latin America.

In her talk, Dr. Mollett centered the racial and patriarchal logics of dispossession informing land control, a process that connects 21st century residential tourism development to 20th century US Imperial formations in the making of the Panama Canal. Her approach blended ethnographic research with historical data collection, newspapers and development related policy documents drawn across a variety of research sites in Panama, Spain and North America. The presentation traced elite travel narratives, newspapers and memoirs to link the racialized labor regimes of the Canal to the domestic spaces of the Canal zone. Dr. Mollett revealed how foreign land control and Afro-Panamanian women domestics are mutually constituted and embedded in tourism development in Panama and argued that foreign land acquisitions and domestic service are inextricably entangled in tourism development across time and space in Panama.

Resources on Palestine

[Birzeit University](#) in Palestine calls “upon international academic institutions to take concrete action to stop the genocidal war on the Palestinian people and to end Israeli settler colonialism.” Here we link to resources to help you take concrete actions such as attending demonstrations, hosting teach-ins, organizing forums, and writing and circulating letters in support of Palestine. Many people who study and work at universities in Canada and the USA are [risking institutional retaliation](#) for expressing support for Palestine, including [the suppression of Palestinian voices](#), [suspension of student groups](#), [threats to rescind the recognition of student unions](#), [job offers withdrawn](#), and [doxing attacks](#). The FIGS Executive supports those speaking out in the midst of administrative clampdowns and reprisal, and we echo [David McNally](#) referencing [Angela Davis](#) saying that “any real commitment to diversity and equity is underpinned by justice.”

Academic Aunties podcast by Ethel Tungohan: Academic Freedom and Palestine
<https://www.academicaunties.com/episodes/academic-freedom-and-palestine/>
Al-Haq: Defending Human Rights
<https://www.alhaq.org/>
Al-Shabaka: The Palestinian Policy Network <https://al-shabaka.org/en/>
Black Feminists in Defense of Sarah Jama and Palestinian Human Rights by Robyn Maynard, Nisrin Elamin, and Alissa Trotz
https://www.thestar.com/opinion/columnists/black-feminists-in-defence-of-sarah-jama-and-palestinian-human-rights/article_1de90080-c685-5891-ba4d-87412bc23591.html
Black Women Radicals recording of Black Feminist Writers and Palestine
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fl71PMBneAs>
Corporate Enablers of Israel’s War on Gaza by LittleSis of the Public Accountability Initiative
<https://news.littlesis.org/2023/10/26/corporate-enablers-of-israels-war-on-gaza/>
Decolonize Palestine
<https://decolonizepalestine.com/>

Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space, Critical Nature/Society Relations in Palestine/Israel: A Virtual Special Issue
https://journals.sagepub.com/topic/collections-ene/ene-1-critical_nature_society_relations/ene
Geographers in Solidarity with Palestine by Race, Culture and Equality Working Group of the RGS-IBG
<https://raceingeography.org/2023/11/02/geographers-in-solidarity-with-palestine/>
Jadaliyya ezine produced by the Arab Studies Institute
<https://www.jadaliyya.com/>
Jewish Currents
<https://jewishcurrents.org/magazine>
Jewish Voice for Peace
<https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/>
Labour for Palestine Canada
<https://actionnetwork.org/groups/labour-4-palestine>
Mohammed El-Kurd
<https://www.mohammedelkurd.com/writings>
Open Letter from Birzeit University in Palestine to International Academic Institutions
https://www.birzeit.edu/sites/default/files/upload/open_letter_from_birzeit_university_-_final.pdf
Palestinian Feminist Collective
<https://palestinianfeministcollective.org/>
Palestine Legal
<https://palestinelegal.org/>
Society and Space statement and virtual issues on Palestine and Israel
<https://www.societyandspace.org/posts/society-and-space-statement-and-virtual-issue-on-palestine-and-israel>
Solidarity with Palestine - A Radical Black Feminist Mandate: A Reading List
<https://www.blackwomenradicals.com/blog-feed/black-feminist-perspectives-on-palestine-a-reading-list>
Third World Approaches to International Law Review public statement
<https://twailr.com/public-statement-scholars-warn-of-potential-genocide-in-gaza/>
Third World Approaches to International Law Review Decolonise Palestine Teach-In Recordings
<https://twailr.com/decolonise-palestine-teach-in-videos/>
Visualizing Palestine
<https://visualizingpalestine.org/>



Publications from the FIGS community

Meletis, Z. A., A.L. Booth, L. Pike, and A. Riceman. (2023). Outside of the box: Inspiring Women Among Us (IWAU) as public pedagogy on gender and inclusion via learning in community. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, Volume 55, issue 2. (September 2023). <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02660830.2023.2249599>

Pumphrey, A. and Meletis, Z.A. (2023). Roadside bear viewing in Kananaskis Country: Visitor perceptions of bear jams and related management strategies. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, Volume 43 (September 2023). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jort.2023.100657>

Pumphrey, A., and Meletis, Z.A. (2023). Kananaskis country’s road to coexistence: exploring expert perceptions of roadside bear viewing and management strategies. *Frontiers in Conservation Science*, Volume 4 (July 2023). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcosc.2023.1165314>

Would you like your recent publications and work to be included in our newsletter? Email us at figscag@gmail.com

CAGONT 2023

CAGONT was held at Toronto Metropolitan University on October 27 and 28th and some of our FIGS members were able to meet at the opening keynote and reception on the Friday night. The keynote was presented by Ian Williams who is the Director, of Information Management at Toronto Police Service and his topic was “Geography’s Staying Power”.

Saturday was the paper and poster presentations and three of our FIGS members presented papers.

Mantha Katsikana, a PhD Candidate from York University presented “Social reproduction, dispossession and the urban palimpsest: countertopographies of care and survival in Athens and the Balkans, beyond the grassroots ‘laboratory’” as part of a Special Session in Urban Geography. In a later session on Urban Geography, Dr. Alkim Karaagac from the University of Waterloo co-presented with her colleagues Dr. Nancy Worth, Saif Malhas and Matthew Gajewski a paper on “International ‘student-family’ housing: understanding challenges, addressing needs”. As part of the Cities, People and Public Spaces Session, Shawna Lewkowicz, PhD Candidate from Western University presented her paper on “Public Toilets, Gender and the UN Framework on Sanitation – A Systematic Review”.

The conference was a success and well attended by many students and faculty from across Ontario. Thank you to the organizers at TMU who put together a fantastic two days.



FIGS Student Paper Awards

Undergraduate student paper award

“The Sisterhood of the Travelling Patterns: A cross-sectional analysis of travel patterns among women and men in Montréal based on data from the 2018 Montréal Origin-Destination Survey” by Emma Melis

Emma’s paper asks the question: are there differences in the travel patterns of males and female on the Island of Montréal, and do these patterns differ based on socioeconomic variables?

Her research contributes to existing analyses and assessments of gender differences in urban travel patterns, especially based on origin-destination survey data globally. In particular, it is expanding the gender travel patterns research within Montréal and would contribute to research about women’s daily mobility patterns in Canada.

Emma is a recent McGill University graduate from the Arts & Science faculty with an Honours in Sustainability, Science & Society, with her undergraduate thesis completed under the supervision of Dr. Kevin Manaugh. Based out of Montréal, she is passionate about GIS, especially its applications towards environmental sustainability, gender, and mobility, and works on Québécois and Canadian community basemapping at Esri Canada. Emma is a lifelong environmentalist and also enjoys being active in nature, travelling, and watercolour painting (especially painting her travels!).

Graduate student paper award

“Muslim women’s geographies of Islamic practice as a response to anti-Muslim violence in India” by Wajiha Mehdi

Hindu Nationalism manifesting in the form of lynching, communal violence, procedural erosion of citizenship and anti-Hijab laws is mapping the geographies of violence altering how Muslims conceptualise their everyday geographies in India. One way in which violence takes place at the intersection of gender and sexuality is through multiscalar modes of spatial displacement through Hindu nationalist violence. This paper explores how Muslim women are not only connected to the landscapes through erasures central to Hindutva but also have a stake in the production of space through physical, imagined and spiritual geographies placed within Islamic ethos (Djebar 1994; Mahmood 2005; Kahf 2016; Zayzafoon 2005).

Wajiha Mehdi is a PhD Candidate at Institute of Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice at University of British Columbia. Her research interests include Islamophobia, nationalism, geographies of violence and struggles of Muslim women in India. Her work exists at the intersection of postcolonial, critical Muslim studies, intersectional feminist work to develop an understanding of how ideas of belonging and citizenship are reinscribed spatially during violent nationalist moments.

FIGS PODCAST

Podcasts have gained popularity during the last few years, with scholars producing their own, in and outside of academia, discussing knowledge production, academic labor and organizing, community engagement and activism, discussing books and other publications, hosting panels and interviews. At the same time, using podcasts as a collaborative knowledge production process and as a method has been gaining ground in various disciplines including human geography.

Inspired by the work of feminist scholar and activist podcasts, FIGS is putting together a new podcast series, that we aspire will be a platform for showcasing activist work and scholarship

produced within its community and beyond, share practices of care, the challenges of academic labor and discuss any other issues that we are all trying to cope with.

This is an effort to bring our community closer but also connect to other groups, individuals, and communities in academia and beyond. What are the issues you would like to hear discussed on the FIGS Podcast? What are the scholars you would love to hear being interviewed? Any activist communities or collectives whose work you find important?

We welcome requests from the FIGS community in order to build our podcast agenda collaboratively!

Calling all feminist geographers!

CFP: Feminist and Queer Spatialities Conference, Dublin, Ireland 21-22 Aug 2024, School of Geography, University College Dublin

We invite papers that will explore the focal theme or engage broadly with areas of feminist/queer geographies. These themes are intended to extend the legacies of the subdiscipline or offer new areas for exploration and analyses. Whilst Geographers have led in the explorations of spatialities, insights from scholars in broader humanities and social sciences are also key and we invite participation from all with an interest in the area. Our conference is open to all who might take a spatial, environmental, place-based or otherwise spatial/geographical approach to issues of gender, sex, and sexualities.

In opting for this open approach, we envisage new synergies, alliances, and insights that develop praxis within and beyond the discipline of Geography.

Paper abstracts can be submitted to the open call via the [form for abstract submissions](https://forms.gle/6S3Nq2KEHJGSU2BU9) until 1 February 2024. We look forward to receiving your abstract (<https://forms.gle/6S3Nq2KEHJGSU2BU9>)!

Registration fees Standard: 150 euros, Students/low waged: 75 euros

AAG Queering Feminist Geographies

The Queering Feminist Geographies Group in the AAG is very active as well. Currently they are daily writing groups, all are welcome and encouraged to join via the AAG or feel free to email Eden Kinkaid: kinkaid@arizona.edu

FIGS website:

<https://www.cag-acg.ca/figs>

Email us:

figscag@gmail.com

Follow FIGS on social media to get our news, share information or reach out!

Facebook private group: [Feminist Intersectional Solidarity Group \(formerly CWAG\)](#)

X (formerly Twitter): [@FIGSgeo](#)

Instagram: [@figscag](#)

Art from the FIGS Community

Emma Melis shared her art piece titled "The Sisterhood of the Travelling Patterns" (that accompanies her paper)



Namrata Narendra shared her poetry

Slow Steps

Breaking out of the everyday ennui

Sun, thaw the icicles
forming around my wrists
Let my urge to make and speak,
devour this fatigue,

I fear my words will remain tied
to my uvula, swelling like
wood in a summer storm
cracking after the last downpour,

my words like seeds
bursting open from within,
directionless, looking for spaces
to grow into, birds to hang onto
rivers to fall into.

I look at the stream I'm studying,
silted up in thoughts of yesterday
I can hear their ebbing as they sink
and are lost to me.