



# FIGS NEWS

A SEMI-REGULAR UPDATE FROM THE FEMINIST  
INTERSECTIONAL SOLIDARITY STUDY GROUP OF THE CAG



## WELCOME FROM NEW FIGS CO-CHAIRS

BY SHAWNA LEWKOWITZ & MARTINA  
PALOHEIMO

WE WANTED TO INTRODUCE OURSELVES AND LET YOU KNOW WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO A GREAT YEAR AHEAD WITH ALL OF YOU. WE HOPE TO MEET MANY OF YOU THROUGH FIGS ACTIVITIES AND CAG EVENTS. PLEASE REACH OUT TO US WITH ANY IDEAS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS YOU MAY HAVE.

I AM **SHAWNA LEWKOWITZ, PHD STUDENT** IN THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENTS ANALYSIS LAB IN GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT AT WESTERN UNIVERSITY. I COME TO MY PHD AFTER DECADES IN COMMUNITY/NONPROFIT WORK RELATED TO FEMINISM, URBAN ISSUES AND SOCIAL JUSTICE. MY RESEARCH IS RELATED TO GENDERED PUBLIC SPACES. I AM BASED OUT OF LONDON ONTARIO WHERE I LIVE WITH MY PARTNER AND TWO TEENAGE DAUGHTERS.

I AM **MARTINA PALOHEIMO, A PHD CANDIDATE** IN THE HUMAN, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES LAB IN THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AT QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY. AFTER COMPLETING MY MASTERS IN INTERNATIONAL PEACE STUDIES IN 2012, I HAVE WORKED AS A MEDIATOR, INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANT, AND PEACEBUILDER UP UNTIL STARTING MY PHD IN 2019. MARTINA'S RESEARCH IS FOCUSED ON PRESERVING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND TERRITORY WITH THE SHUAR IN THE ECUADORIAN AMAZON WHERE I AM DOING COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED WORK.

## WELCOME FROM NEW CO-CHAIRS

## PAST CHAIR'S EXIT LETTER

## CAG EDI UPDATE

## FIGS IN PUBLICATIONS & NEWS

# Past Chair's Exit Letter

by Zoë A. Meletis

My Chair's letters over the last few years have often started with song lyrics. This time, I'm being greedy—I'm focusing on 115 songs: **Caring Jams:**

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5AH3OOG0e8beNmUh2Y8iVm?si=1e4e535ca3cc48fe>. This playlist was curated from crowdsourced suggestions, by Araby Smyth, Alkim Karaagac, Nasya Razavi, and Leah Coppella. The playlist is represented by an image of a bright pink cloud in a blue sky, and it's a fabulous list of feminist songs shared for a Caring Jams workshop at the recent **Fem Geog or International Feminist Geography conference (Pushing Boundaries), hosted in June 2022. BIG SHOUT OUT FOR THAT AMAZING GATHERING!!!** It did SO many things that conference organizers often deem "impossible," like effectively connecting us across continents, languages, and time zones, creating an online closeness of feminist scholars). The Caring Jams playlist includes classics, mainstream hits, alternative and folk entries, and music from haunting to inspiring, in multiple languages—it was woven together with care and shared during the session. The session was a workshop that emphasized care of all kinds and invited us all to all to stop, and to introspect, to reflect, to share, and to create in feminist community. It was a special place and opportunity among more conventional sessions. I'd bet that most session participants noticed how different it felt, and how it lingers in our bellies (shared recipes), and our memories.

Caring Jams is emblematic of what I'll remember most about being FIGS Chair from August 2018 to June 2022. **With the help of many amazing FIGS Executive members past and present, including Ebru Ustundag, Kate Parizeau, Lawrence Simard, Illy Diaz, Nasya Razavi, Rosemary Collard, Brittany Davey, Leah Coppella, Mantha Katsikana, Monika Krzywania, Alkim Karaagac, Shawna Lewkowitz, and Martina Paloheimo, as well as many other members, friends, and supporters, we did much more than keep FIGS afloat during a few difficult years (aka COVID times).** We improved our Study Group's documentation, transparency, accounting, archiving, social media, and more. And, we kept up longstanding pressure for an improved CAG (thank you petition signers!), particularly with respect to governance, equity, and TRUE inclusion. We did all of this, and I'm grateful for the careful work contributed, and those who value FIGS. But, what I appreciated most of all is that we tried to care for each other during difficult times, across the kilometres, and in spite of many barriers and challenges to staying connected. We met, we shared, we wrote, we supported, we zined (is that a verb?), we gathered, we nominated, we awarded, we listened, we learned, and we took action, in community. Everyone from students to lifetime senior faculty members made careful and enriching contributions. Individual and group struggles reminded us to centre care in FIGS, and we did.

2022-JANUARY 2023

As feminist geographers and others remind us-- centring care is quite improbable and unlikely in the neoliberal academy and society more broadly, but--- it is essential for survival and mutual support.

And so-- I hope that you experienced FIGS care in some form over the last few years and beyond (thank you CWAG legacy!). **I hope that you saw us, heard us, and/or read us reaching out to you.** I hope that our notes, images, meetings, updates, and/or campaigns touched you in some way and reminded you that FIGS values care in geography and the academy.

**Caring Jams also represents how much of FIGS' work is led by students and post-docs.** They bring thoughtful care into many FIGS-related moments, experiences, activities, and outputs (what an awful word, but my pre-holiday brain can't think of a better one). So—I thank you all deeply for everything that you have given and all that you have taught me and others over the past 4 years. I hope that I have not been vampiric---and that you can see evidence of care in what I leave behind at FIGS. I also hope to carry some with me...

We are definitely not a perfect organization, and we certainly don't have all of the answers. We still have a lot of work to do, and we certainly continue to make mistakes, including excluding folks. But—we continue striving to care for one another and for you, whether you're a member or FIGS or not. We also care about the future of geography, particularly who its decisions are made and who it tends to celebrate and reward vs. who it tends to leave out, intentions aside. **I should also add that we are always genuinely looking for feedback (even when it's tough to hear) and additional volunteers, so please email [figscag@gmail.com](mailto:figscag@gmail.com) or contact any exec. member directly if you have questions, concerns, comments, and/or want to get involved. \*\* We could particularly use some communications/socials/students \*\***

I am proud and honoured that FIGS now has two student Co-Chairs leading us—involving more student leaders seems like a genuine way to bolster CAG relevance and vitality. I can't wait to experience where Shawna and Martina take us.

As part of a longstanding culture of care at FIGS/CWAG, I am happy to stay on until next summer as Past Chair (aka as a resource and support), like Ebru did for me (thanks again Ebru!). And-- I know which playlist I'll be hearing in the background: Caring Jams.

**To anyone that I did not thank directly, I hope that I have previously found time to thank you or that I will reserve future time to make my thanks clear. I have learned so much and experienced so much care for intersectional feminism, geography, and the larger world via FIGS over the last few years. I hope to see you at the CAG Annual Meeting in Montreal this May (8-12). Cheers! Merci! Mussi!**

# 2023 Suzanne Mackenzie Memorial Lecture

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT WE ARE EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE DR. SHARLENE MOLLETT FOR THE 2023 SUZANNE MACKENZIE MEMORIAL LECTURE THIS YEAR FOR THE CAG ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 8-12 IN MONTRÉAL!

**TITLE: RACIAL GEOGRAPHIES OF LAND AND DOMESTIC SERVICE IN PANAMA**

**DATE: MAY 9, 2023**

EVERY SECOND YEAR FIGS SPONSORS THE SUZANNE MACKENZIE LECTURE, WHICH IS DELIVERED BY SCHOLARS WHO HAVE MADE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO FEMINIST GEOGRAPHY.

SUZANNE MACKENZIE WAS A MUCH BELOVED MEMBER OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL COMMUNITY, BOTH IN CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD. A PIONEER IN FEMINIST URBAN GEOGRAPHY, SHE CONTRIBUTED ACTIVELY TO DISCUSSIONS AND RESEARCH ABOUT WOMEN AND GEOGRAPHY AND CONTINUES TO BE REMEMBERED FOR HER COURAGE, HER COMMITMENT TO FEMINISM, HER DEEP SENSE OF CARING FOR FRIENDS, FAMILY AND STUDENTS, HER SENSE OF JUSTICE AND HER IRREPRESSIBLE HUMOUR

THIS YEAR, THE FIGS MEMORIAL LECTURE COMMITTEE RECEIVED SEVERAL NOMINATIONS OF SCHOLARS IN ALL STAGES OF THEIR CAREERS, WHOSE INSPIRING WORK IN GEOGRAPHY AND BEYOND BEARS SIGNIFICANT CORRESPONDENCE WITH SUZANNE'S INTERESTS AND PASSIONS. BASED ON THESE THOUGHTFUL NOMINATIONS AND AFTER AN EXCITING SELECTION PROCESS, THE COMMITTEE IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT DR. SHARLENE MOLLETT HAS AGREED TO PRESENT THE 12TH LECTURE AT THE UPCOMING CAG ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN MONTREAL. THE LECTURE IS SCHEDULED, WITH A RECEPTION TO FOLLOW THE PLENARY ON TUESDAY, MAY 9TH.

**CONGRATULATIONS DR. MOLLETT!**



**Dr. Sharlene Mollett is an Associate Professor and Distinguished Professor in Feminist Cultural Geography, Nature and Society, Departments of Human Geography and Global Development Studies, University of Toronto Scarborough, Canada.**

## Abstract

Foreign land control and Afro-Panamanian women domestics are mutually constituted and embedded in tourism development in Panama. In this article, I center 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. My approach blends 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. To begin, I briefly trace the contemporary context of tourism induced land dispossession and the growing tenure insecurities for Afro-Panamanian communities living on the shores of the Panamanian Caribbean. Here I show how residential tourism development reproduces settler colonial landscapes. Further, I place in conversation the concepts of postcolonial intersectionality and cuerpo-territorio (Cabnal 2015) to illustrate how land control and domestic service are interconnected, punctuating how land is not the only site of colonial governance. Following, I historicize tourism in Panama through tracing the discursive narratives of imperial formations in the early period of US Empire and the construction of the Panama Canal. I trace elite travel narratives, newspapers and memoirs to link the racialized labor regimes of the Canal to the domestic spaces of the Canal zone. Finally, I argue that foreign land acquisitions and domestic service are inextricably entangled in tourism development across time and space in Panama.



## Publications and Announcements to share

**New Article publish by Leah Coppella:** Coppella, L. I., Flicker, S., & Goldstein, A. (2022). "Make sure I hear snoring": Adolescent girls, trans, and non-binary youth using sound for sexual wellbeing boundary-making at home during COVID-19. Wellbeing, Space and Society.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wss.2022.100117>  
EISSN: 2666-5581 DOI: 10.1016/j.wss.2022.100117

**New Article Published by Araby Smyth:** "Proceeding through Colonial Past-presents in Fieldwork: Methodological Lessons on Accountability, Refusal, and Autonomy" in Antipode  
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/anti.12885>

### **Congratulations FIGS member Dr. Damaris Rose who is 1 of 4 women to ever receive the U of T Geographical imaginaries award in its more than 25 years of history!**

Damaris Rose's essay "Reflections on a Career of Minor and Repeated Border Crossings" is published in Our Geographical Worlds: Celebrating Award-Winning Geography at the University of Toronto from 1995 to 2018, an edited collection which puts together essays written by the Distinguished Alumni Awardees of the University of Toronto Association of Geography Alumni (UTAGA)

#### **Read the Essay here:**

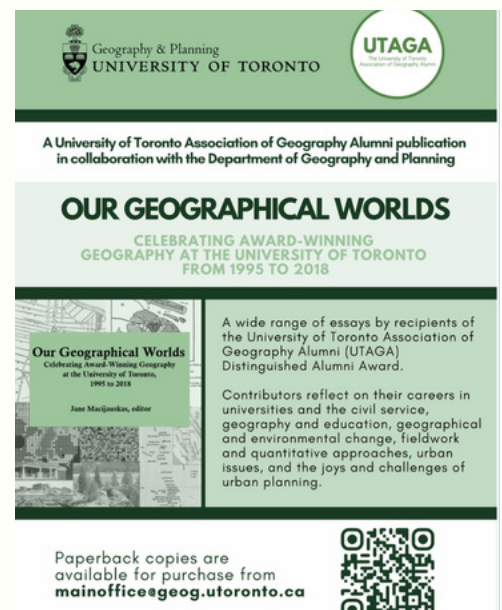
<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/rose/FMfcgzGrcFgKTvWPwgHptZdbJwPbPmJH?compose=XBcJlDMmGwjXXdmqCnWQPtnwnwmbtMnhJBttxtXxKTGzTmWHkvqjTJJqVzRJWmMLkGhKTBXjVTTjhCtv&projector=1&messagePartId=0.1>

## RENEW YOUR FIGS MEMBERSHIP!

Visit <https://www.cag-acg.ca/join-renew>. When you renew your CAG membership, select Feminist Intersectional Solidarity Group from the Study Group dropdown menu. FIGS student membership is free!

## STAY CONNECTED

Join the Feminist Intersectional Solidarity Group on Facebook. Follow @FIGSgeo on Twitter for all the latest FIGS events & activities!



### **Figs Caring Jam's Playlist**

#### **Caring Jams playlist on Spotify:**

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5AH3OOG0e8beNmUh2Y8iVm?si=18c67a18a71245a8>

**On youtube:** [https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLP--zTrQeUpY6vAm\\_tZxZnqp09lEOOisX](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLP--zTrQeUpY6vAm_tZxZnqp09lEOOisX)

#### **A favorite playlist to listen/write/relax and work to from Martina FIGS Co-Chair:**

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/6tUKMD1xkFoXH3pkMhavsZ?si=555771992c4f4729>



# Publications Cont'd

## New research announcement from Alkim Karaagac:

As a group of feminist geographers based at the University of Waterloo, we began a new study on the housing experiences of international student families in Waterloo Region and beyond.

**Make a Home** project seeks to learn from international student families about their experiences of off-campus housing, stories of homemaking and caregiving in transience, and what it means to be a student-parent-newcomer in Canada. To learn more about this research and connect with the research team, please visit:

<https://www.makeahome.ca/>

## Event: Spatial Analytics and Abolitionist Futures

Araby Smyth helped organize a hybrid event with the Making Abolition in Geography working group! Spatial Analytics and Abolitionist Futures watch the live event here:

<https://vimeo.com/768188213>

## Stay Tuned for the Beyond Esri Resource Guide!

## FIGS SOLIDARITY STATEMENT TO IRANIAN WOMEN



**FIGS is expressing solidarity to Iranian women and all the individuals who are protesting the death of Mahsa Amini, 22, against police brutality, systemic gendered violence and authoritarian regimes. In this difficult time, acknowledging that the international coverage of the protests can lead to expressions of Islamophobia, FIGS condemns such stereotyping and expressions of hate-speech. FIGS also condemns the institutional violence expressed in the various bans of womens' religious practices in "the West". FIGS supports the right to freedom of expression, bodily autonomy and the agency of oppressed women and feminized subjects across the world.**



# FIGS Activism



## In 2022 through our online petition we recommended that the CAG Executive:

- 1) Review its own governance documents and processes in order to ensure close alignment between its stated mission, objectives, the website-posted "Statement on Collegial Conduct and Respectful Exchange", and the way it is carrying out its duties and conducts its relationships.
- 2) Spend time considering, improving, and documenting efforts to improve communication with its members and Study Groups. Some topics to consider are: response and information sharing protocols, and collegial/respectful language. It should be noted here that the absence of a response and the absence of details should be considered in this as well.
- 3) Build greater clarity and transparency into the CAG Application for Funding of Study Group Activities and its process. The CAG Executive should clearly and publicly share: 1) the total annual funding amount for such events/applications in any given year; 2) the total possible funding amount per application, and if or how this amount changes when multiple groups collaborate on a single application; and 3) the assessment criteria that will be used, and 4) how appropriate feedback will be returned.
- 4) Require, invest in, and receive Equity, Diversity and Inclusion training soon, and on an ongoing and long-term basis. This should not be training delivered internally, but rather training provided by established BIPOC consultants with a proven track record of EDI training delivery. This should include how to create a positive workplace culture, how to mentor in equitable ways and with an appreciation for intersectional identities, as well as how to properly compensate folks.
- 5) Educate its sitting members on fair compensation for students. Executive members should, for example, be presented with statistics on tuition costs and student debt loads for both domestic and international students at all levels of study. Information on the cost of living and related challenges should be shared and discussed as well.

# Update from CAG on EDI & FIGS Petition

**We want to give special thanks to Dr. Sinead Earley who has been an advocate for FIGS with CAG during this time!**

The CAG EDI ad hoc committee's Bakau Consulting focus group is MOVED to 12-1pm (PST) on February 28th to increase participation. We are looking for 10-12 participants from diverse backgrounds to engage in respectful, open, and anonymized dialogue to help the CAG establish EDI values and objectives. If interested, please email Amrita Aggarwal (amrita@bakauconsulting.com) with the following:

- 1) Identity-based information, so we can ensure group diversity;
- 2) Your relationship to the CAG (i.e., as student, faculty, staff, professional, etc.);
- 3) Reasons you'd like to participate.

To help the inclusion and equity spirit flourish, all participants will receive a \$15 gift certificate from Between the Lines press to compensate them for their time!

The CAG Executive appreciates the recent work that FIGS has done to draw attention to recent issues in trying to work with and communicate with the CAG Executive:

"We take your concerns seriously, it was an imperfect process and we are addressing your concerns. We are interested to know better FIGS work and we invite the chair to our next Fall meeting to meet with us."

The CAG Executive's EDI committee agreed that an EDI-related cultural/workplace audit of the CAG is a good idea. They are currently working with Bakau Consulting (Note: partially speaks to motion #4 below) to look at CAG Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion - Call for Focus Group Participation.

The CAG Executive also recognized the need for greater attention to student compensation (speakers were not mentioned), and noted that:

"Considerations for student's remunerations have been heard and understood and we will shortly provide guidelines for that." (Note: partially speaks to motion #5)

**Like current CAG leadership, the FIGS Executive remains optimistic about the future of the CAG and about improved relations between the CAG Executive, Study Groups, and Members.**

## Congratulations to FIGS Student Paper Award Winners!

### FIGS Undergraduate Student Paper Award Winner

2020-2021/2021-2022

Jessica's paper was written for professor Tannis Reynold's course, WMST 306: Indigenous Women Perspectives at the University of Northern BC. Drawing on Indigenous scholarship, the paper "explores the moontime rituals of Indigenous cultures across Turtle Island (specifically, Anishinabek, Algonquin and Ojibwe, Cree, Métis, and Hupa)." Jessica self-describes as "a fourth-year Human Geography student at UNBC. I am incredibly passionate about communities, ecosystems, and health, and how each of these contribute to each other. I love knitted sweaters, strong coffee, and rainy days (in that order). When my nose isn't in a book, you can find me frolicking in the forest or riding my horse, Bravito!"

Congratulations, Jessica!

**"The Moon and Her Tides: Indigenous Women and Menstruation"**  
by Jessica Froese, UNBC



### FIGS Graduate Student Paper Award Winner

2020-2021/2021-2022

**"Towards Affective-Emotional-Moody Geographies of Menstrual Bodies"**  
by Sophie Rowson, PhD, York University



Sophie's paper was originally written as her MSc Human Geography dissertation at the University of Bristol. The research presented in the paper brings together theoretical currents from feminist and more-than-representational geographies to examine menstruation as a fundamentally bodily experience, exploring how menstruation shapes how bodies feel and what bodies can do. Empirically, the research develops a creative method of 'body-mapping' in combination with interviews and focus groups by way of individual and collective 'storytelling' of menstrual experience. Sophie is currently further developing her interests in the body and materiality as part of her PhD research into protective work clothing at the University of York. Congratulations, Sophie!

Check out our Linktree for all things FIGS

Linktree\*

[https://linktr.ee/figsgeog?utm\\_source=linktree\\_profile\\_share&tsid=99da6b87-3cee-496a-b751-5074285ae6c5](https://linktr.ee/figsgeog?utm_source=linktree_profile_share&tsid=99da6b87-3cee-496a-b751-5074285ae6c5)