

Canada Through American Eyes

Jennifer Andrews - Keynote Speaker

Dalhousie University

As the conference title signals, Bridges and Barriers are a critical part of my work because of its comparative approach, one that focuses on examining and describing Canadian and American literature, art, culture and politics through a comparative lens. Throughout my career, I have engaged in comparative and transnational work that explores the Canada-US relations in a fundamentally dynamic context—what are the key relationships and influences that have shaped Canada and the US as physical neighbours who share in some instances, particular values, beliefs and practices? What makes Canada unique and distinct from the all too often overwhelming shadow of the United States as an empire with a long history of colonial practices? How does Canada participate in and distinguish itself from its neighbour in ways that are both highly virtuous and deeply fraught? Given the US' claim to be an exceptional nation, how might we understand and engage with the increasingly recognized idea that Canada too likes to think of itself as exceptional, a claim based in part on its comparative virtuosity? Given that, what might we learn about Canada from Americans who look over the border—and take stock of Canada? Using examples from my latest book, *Canada Through American Eyes: Literature and Canadian Exceptionalism* (2023), in this plenary talk, I explore these central questions.

Bio: Professor Jennifer Andrews is Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Professor of English at Dalhousie University.

Her teaching interests include Canadian and American literature in English, Indigenous literatures of Turtle Island, literary theory, and cultural studies.

She is the author of three monographs that deal with Canada-US relations: her third book, titled *Canada Through American Eyes: Literature and Canadian Exceptionalism*, is forthcoming from Palgrave Macmillan.

Ponts de restes : *poétique des restes* et voix invisibles de la Nouvelle-France

Alessandra Ferraro – Keynote Speaker
Università di Udine

Cette conférence prend pour point de départ l'œuvre de Monique Régimbald-Zeiber, artiste québécoise contemporaine, dont la *poétique des restes* transforme les fragments effacés de la mémoire féminine en matière vivante.

À travers cette approche, on relit les écrits de Marie de l'Incarnation, Catherine de Saint-Augustin et Marguerite Bourgeoys, trois missionnaires qui ont bâti, par leurs lettres, journaux et écrits spirituels, de véritables ponts de traduction, de soin et de savoir dans la Nouvelle-France du XVII^e siècle. Leurs paroles, d'abord au cœur d'un proket de connexion interculturelle et communautaire, ont été progressivement fragmentées, sacralisées ou dépolitisées par la tradition religieuse et historiographique. Régimbald-Zeiber, avec *Les dessous de l'Histoire: Marguerite Bourgeoys*, réactive ces voix par la copie, le montage et la peau de la peinture, offrant un modèle de lecture incarnée et relationnelle qui éclaire aussi les écrits de Marie et Catherine. *La peau de l'archive* devient un espace de contact où les restes se reconstituent en ponts sensibles entre voix, matière et mémoire. Relire les missionnaires avec Régimbald-Zeiber revient à leur redonner un rôle d'infrastructures féminines de connexion dans l'histoire du Canada, et à penser, à partir de leurs restes, une contre contre-histoire des liens et des appartenances.

Bio: Alessandra Ferraro enseigne la littérature française et les littératures francophones à l'Université d'Udine. Elle dirige le Centro di Cultura Canadese ainsi que la revue *Oltreoceano. Rivista sulle migrazioni* (classée A pas Anvur).

Spécialiste de Nouvelle-France et de littérature québécoise, elle est l'auteure du volume *Una voce attraverso il velo. L'alterità del linguaggio mistico e missionario di Marie de l'Incarnation* (La Toletta, Venise, 2014) et de l'édition de *La Relation de 1654 de cette moniale* (Boréal, Montréal, 2016). Elle dirige un projet national PRIN 2022 sur l'écriture conventuelle féminine au XVII^e siècle.

Connexions et déconnexions dans la diaspora italo-canadienne : Impala de Carole David

Tania Abisso
Université d'Udine

Cette communication se propose d'analyser Impala de Carole David à la lumière du thème du colloque — ponts et barrières — en explorant comment l'autrice met en scène la tension entre connexion et déconnexion dans l'expérience diasporique italo-canadienne.

À travers les destins entrecroisés de trois générations de femmes, Angelina, Connie et Louisa, David met en évidence la fragilité des liens identitaires, les fractures mémorielles et les frontières, à la fois géographiques, linguistiques et affectives, qui marquent la migration féminine.

L'analyse, fondée sur la sémiotique de l'espace (Bachelard, Collot, Foucault, Westphal), montre comment les espaces domestiques et urbains deviennent des territoires de négociation et de résistance, où se tissent et se rompent les fils de l'appartenance. Ces lieux, à la fois refuges et prisons symboliques, incarnent la tension entre le désir de continuité et la réalité du déracinement, entre ponts fragiles et barrières invisibles.

D'origine italienne par sa mère, Carole David interroge la double appartenance culturelle et la mémoire de la migration à travers une écriture où l'espace devient un outil de médiation identitaire et de reconfiguration de la mémoire collective. Impala se présente ainsi comme une réflexion sur les conditions de possibilité de la connexion dans un contexte de post-migration, où les identités féminines demeurent en mouvement, suspendues entre passé et présent, appartenance et aliénation.

Bio: Tania Abbisso a obtenu la maîtrise en Langues et Littératures Européennes et Extraeuropéennes à l'Université d'Udine. Son mémoire, consacré à l'œuvre de Carole David, a été dirigé par la professeure Alessandra Ferraro. Elle a fait un séjour d'études à l'Université de Montréal. Pendant son séjour, elle a interviewé Carole David et Antonio D'Alfonso. En 2025, elle a reçu le « Premio America Giovani » pour l'excellence académique qui récompense les meilleurs jeunes diplômés italiens. Membre du Centre de Culture Canadienne, elle est actuellement doctorante au Département de Langues et Littératures, Communication, Formation et Société de l'Université d'Udine. Elle s'intéresse principalement à la littérature française et francophone, avec un accent particulier sur l'exil, la migration et la post-migration, et s'est également penchée sur les domaines de l'enseignement interculturel, inclusif et numérique.

Borderline Narratives: Constructing the US-Canada divide in 2025

Jacqueline Aiello

University of Salerno

In 2025, the US-Canada border drew renewed attention. Long seen by disillusioned Americans as a gateway to a political and social-welfare sanctuary, its allure surged among progressives stunned by Donald Trump's reconfirmation. Although the 3,500-mile frontier has largely avoided the barbed-wire and steel-slab rhetoric of the US-Mexico border (Lybecker, 2016), President Trump's high-profile remarks about his northern neighbor reignited debates over national identity, solidarity, and sovereignty.

Drawing on the Narrative Policy Framework (Jones, 2024), this study examines how US-Canada border discourses were (re)constructed and contested in the first half of 2025 across two analytical strata. At the macro level, it analyzes the development of border-centered grand policy narratives issued and advanced by Canadian and US federal administrations, with heed to core structural policy narrative elements. At the micro level, selected Reddit posts and discussions are analyzed to assess how these overarching narratives are received by individuals and shape perceptions and decision-making. By triangulating top-down rhetoric with grassroots exchanges, this research shows how ideological and risk narratives are invoked and/or resisted in the social construction of the US-Canada border, and how these narratives drive both policy trajectories and everyday imaginaries of safety, belonging, and mobility.

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Bio: Jacqueline Aiello is Assistant Professor in the Department of Political and Communication Sciences at the University of Salerno. She earned her doctorate in Multilingual and Multicultural Studies from NYU and is the recipient of a Fulbright ETA grant and two NYU Global Research Initiative Fellowships. She is the author of *Negotiating Englishes and English-speaking Identities* (2018, Routledge), winner of the 2019 AIA Junior Book Prize, and *The Discursive Construction of the Modern Political Self* (2023, Routledge). She is also an Associate Investigator of the PRIN 2022 PNRR project “Acceptability strategies through variations of ELF in multicultural and multimodal discourse types.”

Narrating the Pain of Others: Cross-Ethnic Traumatic Memories in Japanese Canadian and Indigenous literature

Mattia Arioli
Università di Bologna

The Canadian Government gave formal apologies and/or compensation as a form of reparation to survivors of historical injustices. Namely, some of the injustices, perpetrated by the Canadian Government, include the internment of Japanese Canadians during WWII and Indian Residential Schools. Truth telling narratives were/are often used as a rhetorical tool by reparations movements, which aim to uncover and reveal a formerly denied or ignored part of history. These narratives are often expected to produce coherent and linear testimony, despite the fact that a considerable body of trauma theory argues that survivor narratives are, instead, fragmented, incoherent, and contain “holes”. Even though many stories accounting traumatic events are valued for their testimonial values and/or the “thick relations” (Margalit, 2000) that link the author to the event through affiliative projections, determined by blood, generating post-memorial narratives, this paper explores the power of texts to create and explore a sense of kinship across ethnicities, also through projections and imagination. I will focus on five narratives — Sterling’s *My Name is Seepeetza* (1992), King’s “Coyote and the Enemy Aliens” (2005), Kobayashi’s “Wind” (1998) Kogawa’s *Itsuka* (1993) and Marie Clements’ play *Burning Vision* (2003)— that display form of “thin relations” (cf. Margalit, 2000). Indeed, these texts delve or evoke, even if just for a brief moment, the pain of others. Hence, these texts can be considered “transgressive,” according to Fishkin’s definition, as they challenge many contemporary “essentialist paradigms” by having Japanese Canadians and Indigenous peoples performing forms of cross-ethnic solidarity.

Bio: Mattia Arioli is adjunct professor at the University of Bologna. He holds a PhD degree in Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures from the University of Bologna; his doctoral project focused on the remembrance of the Vietnam War in graphic narratives. His research interests include Cultural Memory Studies, Comics Studies, Asian American Studies, Indigenous Studies, and Visual Culture. He authored several essays on the relationship between comics and cultural trauma, and a book, *Buone, sporche e dimenticate. Guerre a stelle e strisce* (2023), on American War Comics. In 2022, his doctoral dissertation was awarded an Agostino Lombardo Award Honorable Mention. He also received a 2023 John A. Lent Award Honorable Mention for his project “Clément Baloup’s *Memoires de Viet Kieu*: Exploring the Legacy and History of the Vietnamese Diaspora(s)”.

Bridges and Barriers: U.S. Influence and the Shaping of Canadian Political Identity

Elena Baldassarri

Independent scholar

This paper argues that, over the years, Canadian political identity has also been shaped by a dialectical tension between “bridges” and “barriers” in Canada-U.S. relations—between pressures for continental integration and impulses toward national distinction. From the nineteenth century to the present, moments of crisis have simultaneously deepened economic, military, and resource ties with the United States while reinforcing political, cultural, and diplomatic boundaries.

Through historical analysis of key junctures from Confederation onward, the paper traces how this recurring pattern—economic cooperation alongside sovereignty assertion—has defined Canada’s evolving political self-conception. The argument culminates in an examination of contemporary critical minerals development as a particularly urgent and complex iteration of this dynamic.

As the United States seeks to secure access to Canadian lithium, rare earths, and cobalt to reduce dependence on China, Canada aims to leverage these resources to assert sovereignty, promote value-added industry, and meet environmental and social obligations. Indigenous nations have sought to reshape this dynamic by asserting forms of sovereignty that predate and transcend both Canadian and American state frameworks. Their demands for free, prior, and informed consent, along with governance models grounded in traditional knowledge, challenge extractive paradigms.

In this new context—marked by Trump’s return to power, renewed great-power confrontation, and the erosion of multilateral norms—Indigenous-led approaches risk being sidelined as politically unfeasible or idealistic. For a middle power like Canada, this shift demands a strategic recalibration: navigating a global order increasingly shaped by unilateralism and hard power, while managing its enduring relationship of both union and antithesis with the United States.

Bio: Elena Baldassarri is a scholar of Canadian history who has taught North American History at Roma Tre University and the University of Cagliari. Her research focuses on the historical evolution of Canadian political identity, particularly the interplay between domestic developments and Canada's relations with the United States. She is the author of *Canada e Quebec: Un problema di identità nazionale (1947–1970)* (Viella, 2009), and of *The Northwest Passage: Myth, Environment and Resources*, a project funded by the Rachel Carson Center for Environment & Society in Munich.

Canadian (Anti-)Fascism, the Great Depression and Their Post-Memory Representations

Anna Branach-Kallas

Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

The paper offers an overview of fascist and antifascist movements in the 1930s in Canada and their post-memory representations. During the Great Depression, conservatism and liberalism failed to provide viable solutions to the economic crisis in Canada, which triggered the rapid development of activism and social movements. Two very different options were proposed by fascism and communism. Eleven fascist organizations were active in Canada during the mid-1930s, including the Canadian Nationalist Party, based in Winnipeg and led by William Whittaker, the Canadian Union of Fascists which supported the English Fascist Oswald Mosley, and the *Parti National Social Chrétien* (PNSC), originating from Quebec and led by Adrien Arcand, which enjoyed the largest support. In the 1930s Ontario and the Prairies also saw the emergence of Ku Klux Klan chapters. While pro-fascist organizations were rarely harassed in Canada, the Canadian government was determined to suppress communist movements and members of the Communist Party were often arrested and imprisoned under the anti-sedition Section 98 of the Canadian Criminal Code. The Canadian antifascists, classified by the government as communist agitators, were most often motivated by hostility to capitalism and a bitter resentment of fascism as a threat to democracy worldwide. Many were among the 1,700 who volunteered for the Spanish Civil War. The paper examines the fascist construction of bare life in Canada and the multiple forms of resistance – political, ethical and aesthetic – to precarity. It engages with the connections and disconnections with the (anti-)fascist past, as represented in the last two decades by contemporary Canadian novelists from English and French Canada. The methodological framework brings together historical findings, memory studies and critical biopolitical studies.

Bio: Anna Branach-Kallas is a full professor at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland. Her research interests include postcolonial literatures in English and French, the representation of trauma and war, health humanities and memory studies. She has published several books, including, most recently, *Decolonizing the Memory of the First World War: The Poetics and Politics of Centenary Interventions* (Routledge 2024). Her earlier monograph in Polish, *Uraz przetrwania [The Trauma of Survival: The (De)Construction of the Myth of the Great War in the Canadian Novel]* (NCU Press, 2014), was awarded a Pierre Savard Award by the International Council for Canadian Studies. She currently serves as Head of the Doctoral School of Humanities, Theology and Arts and Nicolaus Copernicus University and President of the International Council for Canadian Studies.

Ponts : de nouvelles structures de la pensée critique de Hédi Bouraoui

Angela Buono
Università di Napoli *l'Orientale*

Hédi Bouraoui, écrivain franco-ontarien d'origine tunisienne, promoteur du transculturalisme dont il s'est inspiré pour l'élaboration de sa *transpoétique*, emploie volontiers la métaphore du pont pour illustrer sa mission : « connaître sa culture et la transcender en même temps pour s'ouvrir à d'autres, créer des ponts de tolérance et des faits d'interchange, de manière à élaborer une nouvelle esthétique » (Dotoli, *Culture et littérature canadiennes de langue française*, 2003, 55). Les ponts dont il est question ne concernent pas que le niveau socio-culturel, où la rencontre avec la différence se révèle toujours un enrichissement identitaire, mais ils constituent surtout la structure véritable de l'œuvre entière de Hédi Bouraoui, sur le plan autant du style que du contenu. Cette communication envisage en particulier sa notion de *créativité-critique*, fondée sur la déconstruction des catégories traditionnelles pour entamer un parcours d'interprétation du « texte poétique [...] dans le cadre précis de ses propres ressorts créatifs » (Bouraoui, *Mutante, la poésie*, 2015, 31). Ce pont établi entre la critique et la création renverse la vision de la critique en tant que superposition de catégories d'analyse au texte littéraire, qui devient lui-même le point de départ de toute lecture critique. Cette approche vise à fournir les nouvelles littératures francophones d'un outil plus proche de formes d'expression nées du mélange des cultures et des codes linguistiques : un système d'interprétation sorti du même mélange qui a produit le texte, une nouvelle notion de *structure* littéraire, évoquant la dynamique de passages, transitions et connexions que la métaphore du pont bien représente.

Bio: Angela Buono enseigne les littératures francophones à l'Université de Naples "L'Orientale". Spécialiste de la littérature franco-canadienne et québécoise, elle a fait partie du Conseil de Direction de l'Association Italienne d'Études Canadiennes (AISC) et elle est secrétaire du Centre d'Études Canadiennes « Sociétés et Territoires » de l'Université « L'Orientale ». Elle a écrit de nombreux articles et prononcé plusieurs communications sur l'œuvre de Hédi Bouraoui, de Marie-Claire Blais et sur les écritures migrantes et multiculturelles. Ses intérêts de recherche actuels portent sur les littératures des Premières Nations du Québec et sur les nouvelles approches critiques des littératures émergentes.

Where the Waters Meet: A Multimodal CDA of the Ta'n a'sikatikl sipu'l / Confluence Exhibition at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax

Mirko Casagrande
University of Calabria

Since the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in 2015 and the introduction of Bill C-15, “An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”, in 2021, several Canadian institutions have actively engaged in a process of redefinition of their relationships with Indigenous peoples in an attempt to move away from obsolete colonial models of governance towards a more inclusive recognition of rights, respect, and partnership (de Costa 2017; Madden 2019; Poitras and Gladue 2022).

Among them, many museums and art galleries across the country have introduced a more collaborative and community-driven approach into their curatorial programmes (Feld 2022 and 2025; Gordon-Walker 2018; Krmpotich 2024; Milton and Reynaud 2019). A good case in point is the ongoing exhibition at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, entitled Ta'n a'sikatikl sipu'l / Confluence, which displays a selection of works by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis artists. The trilingual (Mi'kmaq, English, and French) project stems from the belief that, although rivers may separate territories and communities, when they meet at their confluence point, their waters mix and turn into a powerful symbol of life and connection.

By applying a multimodal critical discourse analysis approach to museum and heritage discourse (Machin 2013; Mayr 2016; Roderick 2018; van Leeuwen 2014; Wu and Hou 2015), this presentation aims to analyse the discursive strategies employed in the Ta'n a'sikatikl sipu'l / Confluence exhibition material, from the introductions to each section to artwork labels and the digital paratextual elements on the Art Gallery website. Particular attention will be paid to the Mi'kma'ki Artists' Spotlight section, where local Indigenous artists actively contribute to languaging cultural diversity, redefining the modes of artistic production, and reshaping the notions of connection and separation in Canada today.

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Bio: Mirko Casagrande (PhD) is Associate Professor of English Linguistics and Translation Studies at the University of Calabria. His areas of interest include onomastics, critical discourse analysis, postcolonial studies, and translation studies. He has published articles on gender and translation, ecocritical discourse analysis, multiculturalism and multilingualism in Canada, place and trade names. He has edited the volume *Names and Naming in the Postcolonial English-Speaking World* (2018) and authored the books *Traduzione e codeswitching come strategie discorsive del plurlinguismo canadese* (2010) and *Strategie di naming nel paesaggio linguistico canadese* (2013).

Anthropocene Perspectives on Canadian Forests

Carmen Concilio

Università di Torino

The *Golden Spruce* (2005) and the *Fire Weather* (2023) are two ways of looking at Canadian Forests enacted by John Vaillant. Climate change looms large on both narratives, though with different scales of urgency and drama. The aim of this paper – as a response to the call’s entry on “climate fiction, environmental justice and indigenous perspectives” – is to read Vaillant’s works through the lens of Environmental Humanities and particularly through some of the reflections presented by John Thieme in his *Anthropocene Realism. Fiction in the Age of Climate Change* (2023). The latter essay engages a dialogue with Amitav Ghosh’ *The Great Derangement* and with his criticism to realist fiction. Vaillant’s works will further be read in contrast with figurative artworks by Edward Burtynsky or James Balog and other Filmmakers and Documentary directors, whose aim is conscience raising and call to action. Similarly, the documentary series of “films as warning”, promoted by Alexa Weik Von Mossner will be taken into consideration as a cornerstone pilot project of sensitizing public opinion on climate change and its various effects.

Bio: Carmen Concilio is Full professor of English and Postcolonial Anglophone Literatures at the University of Torino, Italy. She is recipient of the Canada-Italy Innovation Award 2021. She is former President of the Italian Association of Postcolonial Studies (AISCLI). She is part of the Scientific Board of the Centre for research in Digital Humanities (DISH), of the Centre for South Asian Studies (ISA), and of the Turin Interdepartmental Group for Environmental Humanities Research (TIGEHR) at UniTo. She is a member of the board of the National Association of Anglistics (ANDA) and currently participates to the didactic board of the Schools of Superior Studies “Ferdinando Rossi” of the University of Torino. Her research concerns postcolonial studies, migration studies, environmental studies and ecocriticism, digital humanities, Alzheimer’s and ageing studies. Curator of *Imagining Ageing, Representations of Age and Ageing in Anglophone Literatures* (Transcript 2018), *Covid-19 & Us. Seniors’ Letters to the Future* (Nuova Trauben 2019) in cooperation with AICW Canada; co-editor of *Trees in Literature and The Arts* (Lexington 2021) and *Antroposcenari. Storie, paesaggi, ecologie* (2018), and Guest editor of *Italian Canadiana* vol. 37.1 (spring 2023) in cooperation with Konrad Eisenbichler, Frank Iacobucci Centre, University of Toronto.

Rencontres transculturelles dans le roman *Le Sourire de la petite juive (Hutchison Street)* chez Abia Farhoud

Dervila Cooke
Dublin City University

Abia Farhoud (1945-2021), dramaturge et romancière montréalaise d'origine libanaise, est reconnue pour son œuvre humaniste en littérature. Ses écrits ont trouvé particulièrement bon public dans les milieux universitaires italiens. Elle a participé au mouvement de la « transculture » dans les années 1980 et 1990 au Québec. Ce mouvement largement mené par des immigrants italiens, dont Fulvio Caccia, visait à briser des barrières en mettant en avant les notions de porosité et de réciprocité en interaction culturelle. Si Farhoud célébrait le caractère plurilingue et multiculturel de Montréal, elle ne s'est jamais vraiment sentie acceptée comme Québécoise, bien qu'elle y ait vécu la majeure partie de sa vie et malgré son adoption du français. Ayant grandi dans un environnement patriarcal au sein d'une famille d'immigrants libanais, elle mettait souvent en avant des personnages en marge de la société, que ce soit des femmes opprimées et socialement marginalisées, des personnes atteintes de maladie mentale, ou des juifs hassidiques. La lecture (en français) a été vitale pour Farhoud, qui se trouvait socialement isolée en tant que jeune femme à Montréal. La lecture deviendra un pont et un catalyseur de rencontres transculturelles dans les années 2000 pour son personnage Hinda Rochel Hertog, yiddishophone mais capable de lire en français, dans le roman expérimental de 2011 : *Le Sourire de la petite juive*. Cet exposé se concentrera principalement sur deux aspects principaux de ce roman : (1) comment la lecture dans une langue étrangère permet des rencontres transculturelles ; et (2) comment le caractère dynamique d'un environnement urbain culturellement mixte peut encourager des interactions humaines positives et un apprentissage culturel réciproque.

Bio: Dervila Cooke est actuellement présidente d'ACSI (Association of Canadian Studies in Ireland). Elle est chercheuse et enseignante à Dublin City University en Irlande. Ses recherches portent principalement sur la production culturelle créative très contemporaine, essentiellement pour la France et le Québec, avec des réflexions post-coloniales. Elle a dirigé le numéro thématique de *Comparative Literature and Culture* de 2016, consacré à la représentation de l'immigration dans l'écriture contemporaine en France, au Québec et en Irlande. Depuis, elle a publié deux monographies chez Palgrave Macmillan, toutes deux en 2024, sur les récits autobiographiques d'auteurs qui sont culturellement mixtes. La première de ces monographies s'appelle *Indigenous and Transcultural Narratives in Québec : Ways of Belonging*, et la deuxième s'intitule *Life Writing and Transcultural Youth in Contemporary France : Azouz Begag, Maryam Madjidi, and Laura Alcoba*. Ses premières recherches ont porté sur Patrick Modiano, pour les idées d'auto-bio-fiction et de témoignage, la post-mémoire, l'histoire de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, la mémoire personnelle traumatisée et le rapport problématique à la francité et à une identité juive mixte. Ses principaux ouvrages sur Modiano sont sa monographie *Present Pasts* de 2005 et le numéro spécial de *French Cultural Studies* qu'elle a dirigé en 2012 : *Modiano et l'image*. Elle s'intéresse également aux flâneurs et aux flâneuses, y compris dans la sphère culturelle contemporaine.

Resistance through Connection: Indigenous Digital Sovereignty in Canada

Valentina De Brasi

Università di Napoli L'Orientale

Social media platforms are spaces where connection and disconnection continually manifest. Indigenous digital creators in Canada are transforming social media, using them as tools for cultural resurgence and self-determination. This presentation examines how Inuk Shina Novalinga (@ShinaNova) and Cree James Jones (@NotoriousCree) - the two most recognized Indigenous influ-activists (Murru, Pedroni and Tosoni, 2024) - use multimodal Indigenous storytelling (Simpson, 2011) to enact forms of digital sovereignty (Russo Carroll, Duarte, and Liboiron, 2024) on TikTok, a digital platform built upon and guided by colonial logics.

Through Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008) and Multimodal Discourse Analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Machin & Mayr, 2012), the study explores how language, sounds and platform-specific visual aesthetics construct discourses of resistance, relationality, and belonging that challenge the Indigenous erasure perpetuated by mainstream narratives.

At the same time, the paper acknowledges areas of concerns surrounding Indigenous visibility online, especially regarding the commercialization and co-optation of Indigenous Knowledge (Young, 2024; Wemigwans, 2018). Despite these criticalities, the two Indigenous influ-activists demonstrate the vitality of Indigenous digital presence, and how Indigenous presence online repurposes algorithmic environments to reaffirm Indigenous digital sovereignty and cultural identity.

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Bio: Valentina De Brasi is a second-year PhD student in International Studies at the University of Napoli “L’Orientale.” Her doctoral research, *Narratives of Resistance: A Corpus-Based Critical Discourse and Multimodal Analysis of Indigenous Influencer-Activists on Social Media*, explores Indigenous resistance and social media discourse. She has also contributed to the UNITE Project, investigating the use of AI-powered chatbots for practicing English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Tra fedelta' alle tradizioni ancestrali e suggestioni della modernita' nelle culture autoctone contemporanee

Ylenia De Luca

Università degli Studi di Bari "Aldo Moro"

L'occidentalizzazione sta portando gli Indiani nordamericani verso il caso peggiore di postmodernità mai diagnosticato. Qualunque cosa sia rimasta del loro passato si presenta sotto forma di frammenti spezzati o di briciole sconnesse. Molti antropologi hanno quindi trascurato la contemporaneità a favore del passato, quando gli Indiani erano "autentici" e incontaminati dalla cultura coloniale dei Bianchi. Questi studiosi rinunciano a pronunciarsi sulle dinamiche culturali odierne.

Questo intervento si propone di analizzare il processo e i problemi di rappresentazione che emergono dall'ossessione antropologica per il passato. Si tenterà di proporre una visione antropologica nuova che potrebbe collegare l'interesse etnologico per il passato con i tentativi indiani di rivitalizzare le loro culture. Ovviamente, ci si distaccherà dal modo classico di rappresentare gli Indiani: si descriverà il modo con il quale due popoli, gli Irochesi e gli Apache jicarilla, sono stati rappresentati nella letteratura occidentale e la reazione critica che essa ha suscitato tra gli intellettuali indiani.

Bio: Ylenia De Luca è Professore Associato di Letteratura Francese presso l'Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro. Insegna Letteratura Francese e Lingua Francese nei corsi di Scienze della Comunicazione. È Coordinatore del Corso di Studi in Scienze della Comunicazione Pubblica, Sociale e d'impresa. È Direttore della rivista: "Echo. Rivista interdisciplinare di Comunicazione. Linguaggi, Culture, Società". Si interessa di poesia canadese di lingua francese tra il XX e il XXI secolo e di poesia francese del XX secolo, oltre che di letteratura francofona contemporanea. Su questi temi ha pubblicato quattro volumi e numerosi saggi in riviste nazionali ed internazionali.

Gatekeeping the Nation: Italian Migration and Canada's Immigration Reforms, 1950s–1970s

Guido D'Elia
York University

This paper examines how post-World War II Italian immigration to Canada navigated a shifting landscape of state policy, public perception, and economic demand between the 1950s and 1970s. It explores the dual role of Canadian immigration policy as both a bridge and a barrier: fostering population growth and labour market development on one hand, while maintaining selective, often discriminatory criteria on the other. Drawing on archival documents, government reports, and secondary literature, the study highlights key policy developments—including bilateral agreements, the bulk-order labour schemes, and the 1967 introduction of the points-based system—that shaped Italian migration experiences and strategies.

The paper situates Italian immigration within broader debates on national identity, multiculturalism, and socio-economic transformation. It reveals how Italian migrants, initially perceived as unskilled labourers, used kinship networks and family sponsorship provisions to overcome structural obstacles, effectively reshaping Canadian urban centres such as Toronto. Yet, these same networks became targets of policy restrictions as the government sought to control the flow of migrants deemed less economically advantageous. The transition from ethnically biased selection to a system nominally based on human capital marked both a progressive step and a new form of exclusion. This shift redefined the criteria of desirability, embedding socio-economic status and educational attainment as new gatekeeping mechanisms within immigration policy. The paper traces how these evolving criteria of inclusion and exclusion shaped both the lived experiences of Italian migrants and the broader structures of Canadian society, illuminating the tensions between connection and separation that continue to define the nation's approach to immigration.

Bio: Guido D'Elia is a PhD student in the Department of History at York University in Toronto, Canada. He holds a master's degree in history from the University of Roma Tre in Rome, Italy. His research focuses on Italian migration between Italy and Canada, with particular attention to return migration in the post-World War II period. In 2024, he published a paper titled "Insights into 21st-Century Italian Migration Patterns in Canada," which explores contemporary Italian mobility to Canada. Drawing on recent academic literature and original survey data, the study analyses how current migration trends intersect with Canadian immigration policy. His broader interests include oral history, transnationalism, and the history of contemporary Italy.

Flowing Resistance: Rivers, Extraction, and Ecological Justice in the Works of Warren Cariou and Rita Wong

Daniela Fargione
University of Torino

In the context of ongoing ecological disruption and settler-colonial development in Canada, rivers emerge as powerful sites of both connection and separation, exploitation and resistance. In their works, Warren Cariou and Rita Wong engage rivers not only as physical entities, but as political and cultural lifelines that challenge dominant narratives of resource extraction, infrastructure, and national identity (Carter 2014; LeMenager 2014; Simpson 2017; Szeman 2019; Wilson et al. 2017).

Cariou, a Métis writer and filmmaker, documents the devastating environmental impact of the Alberta tar sands on Indigenous land and water systems. Through works such as *Petrography* (2014) and his writings on bitumen and storytelling, Cariou positions rivers as contaminated witnesses to colonial violence and capitalist expansion. His engagement with river ecologies reflects a land-based ethics grounded in Indigenous knowledge, memory, and mourning. Rita Wong, by contrast, approaches rivers through poetic activism and water justice. In *undercurrent* (2015) a lyrical meditation on her journey along the Bow River, and *beholden* (with Fred Wah), a visual-poetic mapping of the Columbia River watershed, Wong frames rivers as relational, sacred, and endangered. Her poetry critiques the politics of hydroelectric development, water commodification, and the erasure of Indigenous sovereignties, calling for a radical reconnection with water as a living entity (Karpinski 2021).

By placing Cariou and Wong in conversation, I will examine how rivers function as connective tissue between environmental degradation, colonial history, and cultural resurgence. Rivers, in short, are not passive resources, but agentic spaces where questions of belonging, justice, and futurity converge.

Bio: Daniela Fargione research interests include: environmental humanities (climate change, plants, food, migrations); the interconnections of contemporary American literatures and the other arts; theory and practice of literary translation. She has been recipient of numerous scholarships and visiting fellowships (Bogliasco Foundation, 2018, 2021; EIT FOOD, 2019; IASH, U of Edinburgh, 2018; CEMS, NYU, 2016; Fulbright Scholarship. U of Massachusetts, 1993–99; Fulbright Distinguished Lecturer–Chair. U of Pittsburgh, PA. 2023). Among her many publications: *Contaminazioni ecologiche. Cibi, nature e culture* (Led Edizioni, 2015 with S. Iovino); *Antroposcenari. Storie, paesaggi, ecologie* (Il Mulino, 2018 with C. Concilio) and *Trees in Literatures and the Arts. HumanArboreal Perspectives in the Anthropocene* (Lexington Books, 2021).

The Sound Bridge in Sara Polley's Films

Sabrina Francesconi

Università di Trento

This presentation explores the technique of the sound bridge in audiovisual discourse, with specific attention to four films by the Canadian actress, director and screenwriter Sarah Polley, i.e., *Away from Her* (2006), *Take This Waltz* (2011), *Stories We Tell* (2013) and *Women Talking* (2022).

In films, series or documentaries, the audio transition of the sound bridge is adopted to introduce the beginning of sound of an audiovisual unit before the scene actually cuts or fades in (Bordwell, Thompson, Smith, 2020; Giannetti, 2021). This 'bridging' effect can be achieved through speech (either voice-in or voice-over), music, sound effects, or a combination of these. It may create multiple semiotic and stylistic effects, including mystery and dramatic tension, as well as emotional and cognitive engagement with the audience (Bednarek, 2018; Kozloff, 1988, 2000). Through a multimodal lens (van Leeuwen, 1999), a sound bridge configures an aural connection while marking visual disconnection, thereby generating intersemiotic tension. From a narrative perspective, it links two scenes while signalling the diegetic divide. From an epistemic standpoint, it reveals and challenges separation and distance.

Integrating methodological tools from applied linguistics, narrative and film studies, this presentation will focus on the formal and functional cinematic use of the sound bridge technique in Polley's films, as well as on its socio-cultural and political implicatures.

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Bio: Associate Professor of English Linguistics at the University of Trento and International Relations Delegate of the Department of Humanities at the same University, Sabrina Francesconi is a Scientific Board Member of the Italian Association of Canadian Studies. Her research interests include tourism, heritage and business discourses, adaptation studies, humour studies, multimodal analysis, genre analysis and stylistics.

From Ottawa to Warsaw: The Freedom Convoy as a Transnational Bridge of Contention

Marcin Gabryś
Jagiellonian University

The 2022 Freedom Convoy was not confined to the streets of Ottawa; it transgressed national borders, becoming a powerful transnational symbol that built new, contentious bridges of political solidarity while erecting new barriers within the global diaspora. This paper analyzes the significant resonance of the Convoy in Poland and within the Polish-Canadian community, arguing that this phenomenon reveals Canada's complex role in the world – not just as an exporter of policy models, but as an unwitting laboratory for global populist movements.

Drawing on an analysis of Polish media coverage and diaspora debates, this paper uses a three-dimensional framework to deconstruct this transnational connection and disconnection:

1. **Barrier-building:** The paper first demonstrates how the Convoy created new barriers, both within the Polish diaspora in Canada and in the polarized media landscape in Poland. The event became a catalyst that deepened existing political fractures, forcing individuals and media outlets to take a side.
2. **Bridge-building:** Secondly, it analyzes how the protest built new, transnational bridges of solidarity. It created a "bridge of resentment" connecting Canadian protestors with right-wing populist sympathizers in Poland through shared anti-establishment, anti-globalist, and anti-vax narratives.
3. **Contested connections:** Finally, the paper explores the profound ambiguity in the interpretation of the Convoy's symbols. The use of Polish flags and references to the "Solidarność" movement became a site of contested connection: for some, a noble fight for freedom; for others, an embarrassing co-optation of a sacred historical legacy.

This analysis reveals how Canada's domestic crises can be exported and re-appropriated, becoming fuel for political conflicts elsewhere.

Bio: Marcin Gabryś - holds a Ph.D. in political science from the Jagiellonian University. He works as an associate professor at the Department of Canadian Studies of the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland. His academic interests focus on Canadian politics, including foreign policy and Arctic issues.

Building Bridges between the Indigenous and the Japanese Canadian Communities: Thomas King's 'Coyote and the Enemy Aliens' (2005)

Teresa Gibert

UNED (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia)

The enforced evacuation of 21,700 Japanese Canadians from their Pacific Coast homes during World War II, the confiscation and sale of their property, their relocation in camps and the ultimate dispersal of their once cohesive community are topics which have inspired numerous literary works written by North American authors of Japanese ancestry. However, with a few exceptions, these events have drawn little attention from creative writers outside their ethnic group. One of such exceptions is "Coyote and the Enemy Aliens," the short story with which the California-born Canadian author Thomas King contributed to the volume entitled *Our Story: Aboriginal Voices on Canada's Past* (2005). He was requested to select a particular episode of Canada's past and interpret it from an "Aboriginal" perspective, given his strong engagement with Indigenous issues, his Cherokee roots, and the ten years he spent teaching in the Native Studies Department at the University of Lethbridge while developing a deep relationship with the Blackfoot people of Alberta. In a "Contributor's Note" prefixed to his short story, King explained that he chose to address this shameful chapter of Canadian history because "the treatment the Canadian government afforded Japanese people during the Second World War is strikingly similar to the treatment that the Canadian government has always afforded Native people."

"Coyote and the Enemy Aliens" embodies King's definition of his fictional works: "Tragedy is my topic. Comedy is my strategy." In this short story, his subversive humor is a powerful tool both for political satire and for building bridges between those who share comparable traumatic experiences.

Bio: Teresa Gibert is Professor Emerita of English at the UNED (Madrid), where she teaches American and Canadian literature. She contributed to *The Cambridge History of Canadian Literature* (Cambridge UP, 2009) with the chapter "'Ghost Stories': Fictions of History and Myth." Her essays on Thomas King were published in *Telling Stories: Postcolonial Short Fiction in English* (Rodopi, 2001), *Journal of the Short Story in English* (2006), *Postcolonial Ghosts* (PULM, 2009), *Stories Through Theories / Theories Through Stories* (Michigan State UP, 2009), and *Le jardin et ses mythes aux Etats-Unis et en Grande-Bretagne* (PUR, 2017).

More information on Prof. Gibert's website:

<https://www.uned.es/universidad/docentes/filologia/maria-teresa-gibert-maceda.html>

On Côte-des-Neiges Road: Multilingualism, Identity, and the Fragile Dream of Belonging in 1960s Montreal

Connie Guzzo-McParland

Writer

Set during Canada's centennial and the international Expo 67 fair, *On Côte-des-Neiges Road* is a novel-in-progress that explores the tensions between connection and disconnection in a rapidly changing Quebec. Through the lens of a young Italian immigrant working in a hairstyling salon in Montreal's Côte-des-Neiges neighborhood, the narrative captures the personal and political upheavals of 1966–67. The salon becomes a microcosm of the multicultural city, where dreams of integration clash with the realities of separatist violence and shifting national identities.

The protagonist's brother and two clients form a trilingual musical band—performing in English, French, and Italian—that earns a spot at the Canadian pavilion of Expo 67. Their multilingual repertoire symbolizes a hopeful bridge between founding nations and new arrivals. Yet, tragedy strikes, the band dissolves, and their vision of unity is shattered.

This presentation will examine how the novel reflects the complexities of the historical moment while resonating with contemporary debates on multiculturalism, minority representation, and linguistic politics in Quebec. With the province's independence movement still active and language controversies ongoing, the story offers a poignant reflection on the enduring struggle for belonging and recognition. By weaving personal growth with national transformation, the novel invites a rethinking of what it means to connect—or disconnect—in a pluralistic society.

Bio: Connie Guzzo McParland, Co-director, of Guernica Editions, holds a BA in Italian Literature and a Master's degree in Creative Writing from Concordia University. She is the author of two novels, *The Girls of Piazza D'amore*, (2013) *The Women of Saturn* (2017) translated into Italian as *Le Donne di Saturno* (2019), a biography, *An opera in 3 Acts* translated into French and the translation of *La Dodicesima Stanza* into English as *The Twelfth Room*. Her works have received various awards, including the 2008 Concordia David McKeen Award in creative writing and finalist recognition for the Quebec Writer's Federation First Book Award

Between and Beyond Colonial Languages: Translating Indigenous Stories

Sarah Henzi
Simon Fraser University

To Translate is To Betray.¹

In his introduction to *Stories of Our People* (2008), Darren Préfontaine writes “The difficulty is to tell the stories without deviating from their original intent... In an Indigenous context, it is vital to show respect for the storytellers and stories themselves and not deviate from the original intent or appropriate voice” (v). Although Préfontaine is referring to the translation from word to image, I find these cautionary words applicable to the art of translation itself, and specifically when working in between colonial languages. In 2004, when Maurizio Gatti published the first edition of his anthology of Indigenous literatures in French, he purposefully did not include the works of An Antane Kapeshe, despite her being the first Indigenous woman to publish a book in French (and in Innu; bilingual edition): “To read *Je suis une maudite sauvagesse* in French is to read An Antane Kapeshe through the translator José Mailhot... linguistic adaptations and changes are inevitable” (18-19).

As the English translator of Kapeshe, twenty years later, I still think about Gatti’s position and decision. However, the study of Indigenous literatures has been for too long separated/segregated into the colonial linguistic niches of production. These need to be transcended and addressed, as do the particular contextual histories of colonialism that are not one and the same across the country, but distinctly and significantly different. Translation, I argue, is a pedagogical and conversational tool that has the potential to allow for more meaningful conversations between communities, as well as offer a more expansive understanding of how literature has mapped and territorialized the interdisciplinary fields of study in which we work. In this presentation, I would like to share both theory and story on translating An Antane Kapeshe’s *Je suis une maudite sauvagesse* and Greg Younging’s *Elements of Indigenous Style*. In doing so, I hope to offer both methodological and practical considerations for an ethical translation and reading practice, as well as an invitation to think about the responsibility that translation carries, both aesthetically and politically.

¹ From the Italian expression, “Traduttore, traditore” (Niccolò Franco, 1539)

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¹ From the Italian expression, “Traduttore, traditore” (Niccolò Franco, 1539)

Bio: Sarah Henzi is a settler scholar and Assistant Professor of Indigenous Literatures in the Department of French and the Department of Indigenous Studies at Simon Fraser University. Her research focuses on Indigenous literatures, popular culture, and new media, in both English and in French. Her translation of An Antane Kapeshe's two works - *Eukuan nin matshi-manitu innushkueu / Je suis une maudite sauvagesse* (1976) and *Tanite nene etutamin nitassi? / Qu'as-tu fait de mon pays?* (1979) - published in 2020 with Wilfrid Laurier University Press, was awarded the Québec Writers' Federation Cole Foundation Award for Translation in 2021. She has contributed to the *Oxford Handbook on Indigenous American Literatures* (2014), the *Routledge Companion to Native American Literature* (2015) and *Learn, Teach, Challenge: Approaching Indigenous Literatures* (2016), and has publications in several peer-reviewed journals. Her translation of Greg Younging's *Elements of Indigenous Style: A Guide for Writing By and About Indigenous Peoples* (2nd ed.) is currently under contract with U Ottawa Press and slated for publication in 2026.

L'amerindianité et la québécoité vues par Jacques Ferron et Naomi Fontaine

Petr Kysloušek

Université Masaryk, Brno, Tchéquie

Les conflictualités et les tensions culturelles, sociales, ethniques, identitaires ou autres que les sociétés traversent à l'heure actuelle ont leurs antécédents et relèvent souvent de tendances de longue durée. Tout aussi importantes sont les tentatives de dépassement et de médiation où la littérature a toujours trouvé sa place. La dialectique des barrières et des ponts connaît-elle une évolution ou une transformation à travers le temps ? Comment est-elle vue de part et d'autre des lignes de séparation que les barrières et les ponts représentent ? Nous proposons, en guise d'échantillons indiciels, la comparaison de deux auteurs : d'une part la thématization de l'amerindianité que Jacques Ferron inscrit dans sa conception intégratrice de la québécoité (*Le Ciel de Québec, La Tête du roi, Les Grands Soleils, Historiettes*), d'autre part l'identité autochtone envisagée et discutée par Naomi Fontaine en rapport avec la québécoité et la canadienité (notamment dans *Shuni, ce que tu dois savoir, Julie*, mais aussi *Kuessipan : À toi et Manikanetish*). Les regards croisés de Soi et de l'Autre à distance d'un demi-siècle sont certes asymétriques, mais leurs approches médiatrices permettent d'autant mieux de dégager les constantes ou plutôt les persistances des problèmes auxquels la culture et la société québécoise font face. La méthodologie convoquée s'appuie sur plusieurs domaines : le concept d'« ensauvagement » de la littérature québécoise (Voldřichová Beránková), la modélisation identitaire (Bouchard, Kysloušek) et l'intégration de l'hétéronomie extralittéraire par la fonction esthétique et la fiction (Mukařovský, Jankovič).

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Bio: Petr Kysloušek est professeur à l'Institut de langues et littératures romanes de l'Université Masaryk, Brno, République Tchèque.

Monographies : *Histoire de la littérature canadienne-française et québécoise* (2005), *Imaginaire du roman québécois contemporain* (2006), *Nous-Eux-Moi: La quête de l'identité dans la littérature et le cinéma canadiens* (2009), *Centers and Peripheries in Romance Language Literatures in the Americas and Africa* (2024).

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Voci dal ghiaccio che si scioglie.

Cambiamento climatico, giustizia ambientale e diritti indigeni nell'Artico canadese

Agostina Latino
Università di Camerino

Nel silenzio bianco dell'Artico, il ghiaccio non è solo paesaggio: è lingua, casa, cultura. Ma questo ghiaccio oggi si scioglie come memoria che evapora e, con esso, le fondamenta stesse delle civiltà indigene che lo abitano. Il cambiamento climatico, alimentato da emissioni industriali e negligenze istituzionali, ha colpito in modo sproporzionato le popolazioni Inuit e Athabaska del Canada, trasformando la crisi ambientale in una crisi di giustizia.

In questo scenario si innestano due ricorsi avanzati presso la Commissione Interamericana dei Diritti Umani, di cui, nell'intervento che si propone, si darà conto, ossia, da un lato, la petizione presentata dalla presidente Inuit, Sheila Watt-Cloutier, nel dicembre del 2005, in cui si sosteneva che l'inazione degli Stati Uniti sul riscaldamento globale violasse i diritti umani fondamentali degli Inuit, dall'altro, la denuncia avanzata dal popolo Athabaska secondo il quale il governo canadese era da ritenersi responsabile per l'inquinamento da black carbon che stava avvelenando l'aria, la terra e l'acqua della loro patria ancestrale.

Queste azioni legali, metaforiche fiaccole accese nel buio polare, rappresentano una resistenza giuridica e culturale, un appello a riconoscere il cambiamento climatico come una questione di diritti umani in un approccio one health. Le prospettive indigene non offrono infatti solo testimonianze di perdita, ma visioni alternative di equilibrio tra esseri umani e ambiente, radicate nella reciprocità e nella cura: un sapere antico che il mondo non può più permettersi di ignorare.

Bio: Agostina Latino, Ph. D., è docente di Diritto internazionale e Tutela dei diritti umani, nonché di Diritto delle migrazioni presso l'Università di Camerino, nella quale è anche Coordinatrice del Corso di Laurea Magistrale in "Gestione dei fenomeni migratori e politiche di integrazione dell'Unione europea". Ha insegnato Diritto internazionale presso la Luiss-Guido Carli, Diritto internazionale dell'economia presso l'Università di Roma 3, Diritto internazionale privato e processuale alla Scuola di specializzazione delle professioni legali dell'Università di Teramo, oltre ad aver tenuto lezioni, seminari e corsi in varie università italiane e all'estero in qualità di visiting professor, nonché in Master e Corsi di Alta Formazione, soprattutto a favore degli Ufficiali delle Forze Armate, nel quadro delle attività della Croce Rossa per la diffusione del diritto internazionale umanitario. Oltre a essere Senior Associate Research Fellow dell'Ispi, è autrice di numerose pubblicazioni sui temi dei diritti della persona umana, del diritto internazionale dell'economia, del diritto dello spazio e del diritto dell'ambiente.

From Sanremo to CHIN Radio: The Transnational Roots of Canadian Multicultural Media

Abril Liberatori
York University

This paper explores how Italian song festivals helped shape CHIN Radio, Toronto's first foreignlanguage radio station, and how this tradition influenced the development of Canadian ethnocultural media policy in a distinctly transnational direction. It aligns closely with your Cfp's themes of "Immigration, multiculturalism, and social integration" and "cultural production and artistic expressions of belonging and alienation."

Beginning in the 1950s, Italian-Canadian entrepreneur Johnny Lombardi drew inspiration from popular music festivals such as Piedigrotta, Sanremo, and the Festival of Neapolitan Song—events celebrated both in Italy and abroad via RAI broadcasts. Lombardi regularly attended Sanremo, forging ties with performers and recruiting them for Toronto-based concerts. His annual festivals at Massey Hall brought Italian stars like Aurelio Fierro and Sergio Bruni to the Golden Horseshoe, while also featuring genres such as South American rock, American jazz, and traditional Italian music. These events reflected Toronto's evolving cultural landscape and reached beyond Italian diasporic audiences.

The founding of CHIN Radio AM 1540 in 1966 marked a turning point. Broadcasting in over thirty languages by 1967, CHIN demonstrated the demand for multilingual programming and laid the groundwork for the expansion of ethnocultural media well before Canada's official multiculturalism policy. Lombardi's efforts abroad—particularly his adaptation of the Italian festival model—shaped how multicultural content would be conceptualized and delivered in Canada.

Bio: Abril Liberatori is an Assistant Professor in the Department of History and the Mariano A. Elia Chair in Italian-Canadian Studies at York University (Toronto, Canada). She also serves as President of the Italian-Canadian Archives Project (ICAP) and Vice-Chair of the Canadian Committee on Migration, Ethnicity, and Transnationalism (CCMET). Her research and publications primarily focus on identity formation and the cultural life of postwar Italians in the Americas.

«Striking to Be Canadians»

Immigrant Workers and the Question of Belonging in Postwar Toronto (1950s–1960s)

Elisa Lucente
Università di Pavia

The labor strikes of immigrant construction workers in 1950s and 1960s Toronto illuminate a complex intersection of migration history, labor activism, and the evolving concept of Canadianness. As the *Toronto Daily Star* proclaimed in 1960, these protests “prove them to be no longer immigrants or new Canadians but Canadians”, capturing how immigrant workers not only demanded economic justice but actively redefined their social belonging through collective action. This study pushes beyond conventional accounts that isolate immigrant labor within fixed ethnic enclaves by adopting a transnational, global microhistorical perspective. By situating these struggles within the broader currents of postwar European migration and the settler colonial framework of Canada, the research explores a crucial tension: immigrant workers faced systemic discrimination yet also occupied a unique positionality shaped by their European origins and the emerging multicultural state policies. How did this dual experience shape their forms of solidarity and identity? Did transnational European solidarities—whether regional or class-based—travel across the Atlantic, influencing labor relations in Toronto? To what extent did multiculturalism as a state project reshape their role and belonging within Canadian society?

Drawing on diverse archival materials, including oral histories, and memoirs, this paper argues that immigrant labor activism constituted a vibrant arena where notions of citizenship, belonging, and Canadianness were actively contested and reimagined. Far from passive recipients of opportunity, immigrant workers were crucial agents in forging new social bonds and redefining national identity during a transformative era of postwar Canada.

Bio: Elisa Lucente is a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Pavia, Italy, where she completed her PhD on the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada (1945–1991). Her research explores migration history and urban cultural history in Canada, focusing on how migration shapes urban environments and experiences of belonging. Currently, she investigates housing policies and residential experiences of European migrants in postwar Toronto and Halifax. Utilizing digital tools, her work analyzes historical settlement patterns and urban transformations, offering new insights into the intersections of migration, space, and community formation in Canadian cities.

Bridging Divides and Reinforcing Differences in the Canadian-American Relationship: Due South, 1994-99

Greg Marquis

University of New Brunswick Saint John

Due South was a television comedy/drama that paired an earnest and excessively polite Canadian Mountie with a street-wise American detective in an imagined Chicago. The series, which premiered on CBS in the United States and CTV in Canada, was revived in 1997 with the support of the BBC. It enjoyed a certain appeal in Britain because of its quirky setting and characters. The show was a good-natured portrayal of American stereotypes of Canada as exemplified by a low-key, resourceful and modest member of the RCMP and by Canadian stereotypes of Americans personified in a brash street cop who bent the rules to get the job done. Character Constable Benton Fraser paid tribute to past Hollywood portrayals of Mounted Police in an imaginary North. Detective Ray Vecchio was a pastiche of the aggressive 'ethnic' cop of gritty American police dramas. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, initially suspicious of the show's premise, soon realized that Due South, despite its fanciful plots, promoted positive images of the force. This analysis of the program's themes argues that Due South's romanticized version of a unified Canadian identity was based on not only opposition to American culture characterized by violence, individualism, inequality and emotion but also traditional Canadian nationalist themes of the common good, nature, the North and surviving off the land. The program also promoted Canadian songwriters and musicians of the 1970s and 1980s, which furthered its nationalist credentials.

Bio: Professor, Canadian History, Department of History and Politics, University of New Brunswick. Research interests: Criminal justice history; history of alcohol and drugs; urban history; popular culture history.

“Telling Italian-Canadian Oral Histories from Montreal's Backyards and Schoolyards”

Cassandra Marsillo

Concordia University

Between 1950 and 1977, Italian immigrants and their children were rejected from many of Montreal's French schools. However, the official historical narrative emphasizes that post-WWII immigrants in the city, including Italians, chose English schools for their children because it was regarded as the language of opportunity. The story of these rejections, then, became a myth, and was even forgotten or outright negated as these children became subsumed within the English-speaking community. In 1977, once Québec's Bill 101 (Charter of the French Language) was accepted as law, it required children to be educated in French, with few exceptions. This legislative change helped to further sweep the testimonies of Italian-Canadian students under the rug. This presentation will bring together oral histories from six narrators, which I recorded in 2017-2019, regarding their rejections from French schools, as well as an analysis of the current push for an apology from Québec's government for these rejections. This campaign is being led by Ralph Mastromonaco, an Italian-Canadian lawyer who lived the same experience as a child. This is not an anglophone vs. francophone story. Yet, like many in Québec, it has become “easy” to tell it that way. This continues to make possible the erasure and dismissal of individual and collective stories of exclusion, rejection, and discrimination that do not easily fit into this comfortable categorization. This presentation seeks to look beyond the “bilingual and bicultural” divide in order to tease out the tensions that continue to reverberate from this history.

Bio: Cassandra is an oral and public historian, artist, and writer, based in Tiohtià:ke (Montreal), telling and listening to stories about immigration, identity, collective memory, food, and folklore, particularly in relation to the Italian-Canadian experience and traditions from her family's region, Molise. In 2019, she completed her Master's in Public History at Carleton University (Ottawa). Her research project, *The Yellow Line: Italo-Canadian Oral Histories from Montreal's Backyards and Schoolyards*, was an archival photo, installation, and oral history pop-up exhibit, presented at the Casa d'Italia (Montreal) in March 2019. Currently, she is pursuing her PhD at Concordia University (Montreal) on the development of Italian-Canadian cuisine and food identity in Montreal

Canada: problematici ponti reali (con USA) e virtuale (Artico)?

René G. Maury
Università di Napoli L'Orientale

Dai ponti sull'artificiale confine con USA (sud e ovest) alla non più barriera naturale in parte scongelata (nord), il Canada è sempre più coinvolto, attore passivo e attivo, nella dinamica geo-economico-politica da recente accentuata (mire USA; attività russo-cinesi in Artico...).

Bio: René G. Maury, già docente di Geografia umana e regionale (America) all'Università "L'Orientale" di Napoli.

Indigenous-Led Conservation: Indigenous Sovereignty as a Guide for Settler-Canadian Relationships to Place

Heléna Mauti
Trent University

Land is our common connection – in so-called Canada, we all hold relationships to the waters, landscapes, and more-than-human beings of the places we live. When we think about the differing ideologies, worldviews and paradigms that influence how we relate to the Land, we begin to see where disconnections emerge. Histories, systems, and structures of settler colonialism largely inform this connection/disconnection. From its close bonds to capitalism, extractivism, white supremacy, and heteropatriarchy, enacted consciously or not, settler colonial paradigms and worldviews towards the Land are often ones of domination, dispossession and violence. Critically examining the settler colonial history of Conservation reveals the bridges created for settlers to access ‘Nature’ and ‘Wilderness’ required creating barriers for Indigenous People to access their territories. This paper explores how Indigenous-Led Conservation (ILC) provides an opportunity to repair the rupture, dispossession and disconnection, and serve as a bridge between multiple worldviews and their relationships to Place. ILC presents a shift for settler society to relate to the Land through kinship, reciprocity, and responsibility, led by Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing (IWKBD). Utilizing Ethical Space and Knowledge Equity, this paper illustrates how Settler-Canadians can unlearn settler colonial relationships to place and relearn them through Indigenous sovereignty and an anti-colonial worldview. Ultimately asserting a radical transformation of the conservation sector and relationships to place, led by IWKBD, will create more just and sovereign futures for Indigenous Peoples, which inherently aid in the creation of sustainable, healthy futures for the Earth.

Bio: Heléna Mauti is an anti-colonial land-based educator and Sessional Faculty Member in the Indigenous Environmental Studies and Sciences (IESS) program at Trent University. Heléna is a Settler (Italian, Scottish, Austrian-German ancestry) living in relational accountability to Anishinaabe sovereignty and Nibi/Water at the Headwaters in what is colonially known as Ontario, Canada. She has a BA in Equity Studies and Diaspora and Transnational Studies from the University of Toronto and a MA in Sustainability Studies from Trent University, where her research envisioned the boundlessness of Indigenous-Led Conservation to advance place-based Indigenous Sovereignty and Land Back.

A Century of Women's Leadership in Montreal's Italian Community

Margherita M. Morsella

Lawyer, Activist, Author, Justice Pro-Bono

The paper explores the evolution of women's leadership within Montreal's Italian immigrant community over the past century, highlighting the foundational role of grassroots organizing, feminist activism, and labour-based mobilization. Spanning from the creation of women's lodges in 1923 to contemporary initiatives such as the Donne d'Acciaio ("Women of Steel") project (2021) and commemorative mural (2023), the study traces a continuum of gendered engagement in the shaping of cultural, social, and political life in Quebec. Particular attention is given to the formation of the Centro Donne Italiane di Montreal in 1978—Canada's only autonomous Italian women's centre—and to the critical, yet often overlooked, contributions of Italian immigrant women employed in the city's textile and garment industries. The paper situates these developments within broader debates on diasporic memory, institutional innovation, and feminist historiography. It interrogates the persistent marginalization of Italian Canadian women in dominant historical narratives, especially in relation to key events such as the 1940s internment period and postwar labour struggles. Drawing on archival materials, oral histories, and recent heritage activism, the study identifies individuals and organizations that have worked to preserve and reclaim these women's legacies. Ultimately, the analysis underscores how gendered immigrant experiences have generated unique forms of community resilience and leadership. By foregrounding women's roles in both historical and contemporary contexts, the paper contributes to a more inclusive understanding of Italian diasporic history in Canada and the gendered dynamics that shape collective memory.

Bio: Margherita M. Morsella, B.A., L.L.B., a Canadian lawyer and activist, specializes in family, health care law and private international law. Advocating for immigrant women's rights, she co-founded the Centre des Femmes Solidaires et Engagées and Le Collectif des Femmes Immigrantes. Honored with the Justice Pro-Bono Paris-Québec Prize (2020), she spearheaded the Women of Steel project and mural, celebrating immigrant women's resilience and contributions to Montreal.

Say the Names: an inquiry into nominal place

David Newland
Trent University

This paper considers the influence of toponymy, or place-naming, on the way place may be contested in Canada. Comprising preliminary findings from my PhD research at Trent University, this paper responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action #79, on commemoration, considering place-naming as both a barrier, and a bridge.

I begin by describing a failed attempt to change the name of Cobourg, Ontario's Langevin Pier in response to the TRC. This effort revealed what Nichole Grant and Timothy Stanley refer to as "the wallpaper of dominance". Toponymy, like statuary and other EuroCanadian forms of commemoration, tends to hide in plain sight for settlers—until threatened.

I introduce the term nominal place to describe how place-naming imposes a sense of place, using Cobourg as an example. Drawing on notions of place and story encountered during my MA in English (Public Texts), and my doctoral research to date, I suggest a reading of the place names of Cobourg as a text, noting how nominal place may operate to enhance some stories—and to erase, or obscure others. Inspired by Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's notion of coming to know, and James Raffan's analysis of land-based learning, I consider the confluence of toponymic, narrative, experiential and numinous ways of knowing Cobourg. I conclude by considering nominal place as a potentially powerful tool to enhance right relations, in Cobourg, Canada, and beyond.

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Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action. Truth and Reconciliation

Bio: David Newland is a writer, musician, expedition host, and scholar, currently in the PhD program in Canadian Studies at Trent University. David earned an MA in English (Public Texts) from Trent, and a BFA in Photography from Concordia University. He is a past recipient of the John Wadland Scholarship in Canadian Studies. David was awarded the 2023 prize for Best MA in Canadian Studies from the Canadian Studies Network. In 2022, he was awarded a Cobourg Civic Award for Distinguished Arts and Culture. Since 2015, David has been a Fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society.

Constructing Canadian Identity and Values through Political Discourse: A Genre Analysis of Election-Night Speeches (2025)

Martina Podboj
University of Rijeka

Given their typified structure, communicative purpose, and ideological implications, election-night speeches represent a salient genre of political discourse (Malkmus 2013). These speeches are the conventionalized peak of election-night media coverage, and their delivery marks the official endpoint of the electoral process. Whether performing victory or concession, their discursive structure and performance significantly shapes the ideological positioning of politicians, their parties, and other stakeholders in the post-election context. This study analyzes the election-night speeches from the 2025 Canadian federal election, delivered by Mike Carney (Liberal Party, election winner and consequent Canadian Prime Minister) and Piere Poilievre (Conservative Party of Canada, opposition leader and election loser). By following the tenets of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1989) and genre analysis (Cap & Okulska 2013) this study pursues two main objectives. First, by comparing and contextualizing the two speeches, it aims to outline the defining features of election-night speeches as a salient genre within the context of Canadian political discourse. Second, it aims to examine the linguistic strategies (e.g., pronominal use, lexical choice, metonymy) used by both politicians to construct relational values and identity positioning. In particular, the study explores how Carney and Poilievre utilize linguistic devices to position themselves as winner and loser, respectively, and how they relate their political positions to broader narratives they construct about Canadian identity and values in the context of global political crisis and fraught relations with the USA.

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Bio: Martina Podboj is an Assistant Professor at the University of Rijeka (Croatia), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, where she teaches courses in linguistics and discourse analysis at the Department of English Studies. She holds a PhD in Linguistics from the University of Zagreb (2019), during which she conducted research at the University of Alberta (2017-2018). Her work explores various aspects of language in social use, focusing on the interconnectedness of language, identity, and migration, as well as discourse representation of marginalized groups. She combines approaches such as critical discourse analysis, narrative analysis and digital discourse analysis.

Translating The Unplugging (Disconnessione): Challenges and Potentials of Indigenous Theatre in European Contexts

Sara Riccetti Selim
Independent Scholar

This paper reflects on the translation and cultural adaptation of *The Unplugging* by Algonquin playwright Yvette Nolan into Italian as *Disconnessione*, exploring the challenges and possibilities of staging Indigenous theatre for European audiences. As a post-apocalyptic narrative grounded in Indigenous feminist resurgence, *The Unplugging* imagines disconnection—from technology, community, and modernity—not as collapse but as the beginning of reconnection with traditional knowledge systems, land-based ethics, and relational modes of survival.

Through the lens of Nolan's own philosophy of directing—as a relational, reciprocal, and non-hierarchical practice rooted in community care—this paper investigates how both translation and staging can serve as acts of cultural mediation rather than appropriation. Translation, in this context, is not merely linguistic, but epistemological: it entails engaging with oral tradition, intergenerational memory, and Indigenous worldviews while resisting simplification for European consumption. Similarly, directing *Disconnessione* becomes a practice of “holding space,” as Nolan defines it—one guided by humility, shared responsibility, and respect for story.

The paper argues that Indigenous dramaturgies and methodologies offer urgent lessons for European theatre-making, particularly in relation to ethics, collectivity, and decolonial practice. When approached with accountability and care, translation and performance can become spaces of encounter across cultural difference—where disconnection gives way to deeper forms of connection, and where theatre enables not only representation, but transformation.

Bio: Sara Riccetti Selim is a scholar, translator, and theatre director. She holds a Ph.D. in English Literatures, Language and Translation from Sapienza University of Rome and the University of Silesia in Katowice (Poland), as well as an M.A. in Opera Directing from the Conservatorio L. Refice (Frosinone, Italy). She trained in acting and directing in Italy and the United Kingdom. Her academic and artistic research lies at the intersection of performance studies, translation, and cultural analysis. She is a member of the International American Studies Association (IASA), the Italian Association of North American Studies (AISNA), and the Italian Association of Canadian Studies (AISC)

Between the Bridge and the Barricade: Reframing Canadian Belonging in Robyn Maynard's *Policing Black Lives*

Alice Salion
University of Padova

Feminist scholar and social activist Robyn Maynard's 2017 award-winning national bestseller *Policing Black Lives* serves as a fundamental contribution to the Canadian socio-political debate by exposing the historical and current processes through which Black communities have been systematically criminalized.

Maynard debunks the long-standing myth of Canadian exceptionalism and benevolent multiculturalism by framing state violence against Black people in a historical continuum stretching from transatlantic slavery to modern policing, immigration controls, and welfare regulations. Thanks to its intersectional approach, the work showcases how Black women, trans people, migrants, and those living in poverty are disproportionately affected by systemic violence, painting a powerful portrait of the divisive forces within the country. Concurrently, it sets forth a vision of transformative justice that draws on abolitionism and Black feminist resistance, and positions Black activism as a critical bridge toward a more equitable and inclusive future.

Praised by Black Lives Matter Toronto and figures such as Angela Davis and Sylvia Hamilton, Maynard is now a leading voice across fields ranging from criminal justice and gender studies to Black Canadian scholarship, decolonial theory, and abolitionist discourses.

The paper will explore how her work brings to light both the overt and covert barriers to full Black citizenship in Canada, while also foregrounding the emancipatory potential of Black-led resistance, joining the pivotal ongoing debate on nationality, belonging, and justice in Canada today.

Bio: Adjunct professor and PhD student in Literary Studies at the University of Padova. My dissertation focuses on a decolonial feminist investigation of memoirs and novels by BIWOC authors in contemporary Anglophone Canadian literature. My research interests are Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies and Literature, Ecofeminism and Indigenous Studies and Literature. My works on Indigenous women authors were published in *FES – From The European South, a Transdisciplinary Journal of Postcolonial Humanities*.

When Seals Left: Rethinking Indigenous Disconnection in Colonial Canada

Sabrina Schettino

Università del Piemonte Orientale

This paper examines the historical entanglement between the Nuuchah-nulth of Vancouver Island and the pelagic sealing industry (the hunting in sea of fur seals) in the North Pacific from the 1860's to the 1910's, with a focus on environmental history, labour history, Indigenous as well as non-human agency. While previous scholarship has emphasized economic motives or framed Indigenous labour as marginal, this study highlights a more complex and locally situated engagement with marine hunting. Fur seals, rapidly depleted by overexploitation, were not only economic assets but ecological co-protagonists whose disappearance disrupted traditional practices and reshaped coastal livelihoods. Through archival sources and Indigenous oral histories, the research uncovers diverse motivations for boarding sealing schooners - ranging from spiritual practices and community prestige to ecological pressures and aspirations for autonomy. The 1911 North Pacific Fur Seal Treaty, which restricted sealing to Indigenous "subsistence" practices, reinforced colonial imaginaries of the "Ecological Indian" and denied modern technology. As a result, Indigenous hunters were excluded from both economic opportunity and cultural continuity. The paper situates these historical disconnections within broader conversations on environmental justice and Indigenous sovereignty, arguing that marine animals must be considered active historical agents. It contributes to rethinking Canada's role as a space of connection and disconnection.

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Bio: Sabrina Schettino is a PhD student at the University of Eastern Piedmont in Vercelli, Italy. Her research focuses on environmental history, Indigenous communities of the Pacific Northwest, and colonial labour regimes. In 2025, she will conduct archival and community-based research at the University of Victoria (Canada) as part of a Mitacs Globalink Award project on the historical entanglements between the Nuu-chah-nulth and fur seals during the pelagic sealing era. Her work aims to bridge environmental and Indigenous histories, centering non-human agency and cultural memory in the analysis of colonial extractivism and resistance. She has won the International Council of Canadian Studies Graduate Student Scholarship in 2025.

The Inconvenient Indian: Writing and Re-righting the Shaped and Re-shaped Indigenous Peoples' History

Kamelia Talebian Sedehi
Sapienza University of Rome

Thomas King's *The Inconvenient Indian* was published in 2012 which is a collection of personal anecdotes, statistics, political, and historical retellings. The humorous tone of the book engages the reader even more when King discusses massacres, Pocahontas, Crazy Horse and the Wounded Knee. In 2020, Michelle Latimer directed a documentary based on King's book and kept its title as well. He kept its humorous tone and featured King in some scenes while talking and reading excerpts from his book. For the current paper, I intend to focus on Latimer's documentary, *The Inconvenient Indian*, as the visual image adds another dimension to the understanding of Indigenous peoples' history. Throughout the years, indigenous peoples' image has been shape-shifted based on settlers' attitude and point of views. Indigenous peoples that one sees in the drawings, movies, or books are not the ones one may find in real life and as Francis mentions "Indian as we think we know them, do not exist. In fact, there may well be no such thing as an Indian" (4) ... "Indian is the invention of European" (5). The purpose of this article is to apply Jacqueline Garrick's concept of humor to the selected documentary to emphasize the mitigating effect of humor on the intensity of traumatic stress. The authentic history, rituals, and culture of Indigenous peoples have been erased and were shaped and reshaped by settlers and the selected documentary is an attempt to set the Indigenous' rights back by writing their authentic history. "Humor does not minimize the significance of a terrible event but it does allow the survivors to see how they can cope and thrive in their environment" (Garrick 169). The humorous tone gives courage to Indigenous peoples to ask for their rights. Moreover, the term post-truth will be applied to the selected documentary in order to emphasize settlers' attempts, through cinema, art, literature, and various other media, to make people believe in what has not been true about the Indigenous peoples. The documentary intends to clarify some points about Indigenous peoples' history and culture.

Bio: Kamelia Talebian Sedehi is an adjunct lecturer at Sapienza University of Rome, Italy and Mount Allison University in Sackville, Canada. Currently, she is a postdoctoral fellow researcher at Sapienza University of Rome. She is the author of *Subjectivity Gained, Subjectivity Lost in Melancholic Female Eunuchs in Alice Walker's Selected Novels* (Aracne, 2021), and *Uncovering History through Testimony. A Traumatic Account of Aboriginal Peoples in Canadian Residential Schools* (Aracne, 2022). She edited one essay collection on utopian and dystopian literature entitled *Role of Religion in Shaping and Reshaping of Inclusive/ Exclusive Communities* (Cambridge Scholars, 2023). She co(authored) academic papers on trauma, melancholia, Indigenous studies, and American literature.

Narrating Queer Indigenous Condition in Settler Colonial Canada: (Non)Belonging, Hope and Care in Joshua Whitehead's Jonny Appleseed and Billy-Ray Belcourt's A Minor Chorus

Julia Marta Siepak

'Guglielmo Marconi' University of Rome

Queer Indigenous persons in Canada experience alienation both within their original communities (a legacy of colonialism) and in the mainstream Canadian society. The term Two-Spirit was coined in the 1990s to encompass all the non-heteronormative Indigenous gender identities in order to emphasize the contrasting and divergent experiences of Indigenous queer persons as opposed to the mainstream settler LGBTQ+ community in settler nation-states. The effort to theorize and narrate Indigenous queer condition works against their radical and deep-rooted marginalization, sexualization, and exoticization. This paper engages with the barriers to Two-Spirit inclusion in contemporary Canada as represented in two novels penned by Indigiqueer writers: Joshua Whitehead's (Peguis First Nation) *Jonny Appleseed* and Billy-Ray Belcourt's (Driftpile Cree Nation) *A Minor Chorus*. I explore how Whitehead and Belcourt represent and (re)imagine queer experience in their novels with the special attention given to the issue of (non)belonging. The paper offers reflection on the ways that *Jonny Appleseed* and *A Minor Chorus* mobilize affective realities of Indigenous queer persons foregrounding the salience of hope and care for better and healthier Indigenous and queer futures. Finally, this paper attempts to identify the poetics of queer resurgence as offered by Whitehead and Belcourt, inquiring into the potential and limitations of novel as a genre, and literary expression at large, to engage into building bridges between Indigenous and settler queer communities, as well as more broadly into the politics of reconciliation and decolonization.

Bio: Julia Siepak is an assistant professor in tenure track (ricercatrice rtt) at the Guglielmo Marconi University of Rome, Italy. She graduated with a PhD in Anglophone literature from Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland, in 2024. She has been the principal investigator in the National Science Center, Poland, Preludium grant project entitled "Towards an Alternative Poetics of Space: Intersections of the Feminine and the Environmental in Recent North American Indigenous Fiction in English." Julia's research interests include North American Indigenous women's writing, Indigenous feminism and queer studies, and Indigenous Futurism.

Migrant memories and cultural reproduction: the role of Spanish-speaking women in the Canadian context

Concetta Maria Sigona
Università di Burgos

This research sets out to analyse, firstly, oral and written testimonies relating to migration from the Hispanic world to Canada, with the aim of investigating the active role of migrant women in a context that is new to them. In particular, we explore how they contribute to the reproduction of national ideology both within the domestic space and abroad. Migrant narratives reveal the social practices implemented by these networks to transmit Hispanic moral and cultural codes in the Canadian context. Secondly, the research examines contemporary literary representations of these dynamics and their impact on the personal and social development of emigrant protagonists, highlighting the intersections between memory, identity and belonging. Overall, the study clarifies the modes of social and family organisation adopted by Spanish-speaking communities upon arrival in Canada and in their adaptation process. The results offer new perspectives on the origins and transformations of the relationship between the Hispanic world and Canada. On the literary level, the research contributes to the understanding of contemporary Hispanic-Canadian production related to the theme of migration. From a gendered perspective, the work provides useful tools for analysing the social, political, economic and moral dimensions that have shaped the experience of Spanish-speaking migrant women, active in the family context of the new land.

Bio: Concetta Maria Sigona è docente presso l'Università di Burgos, in Spagna. La sua ricerca si centra sulla letteratura italo-canadese in inglese e sugli studi interculturali nonché sulle strategie di intervento nell'insegnamento e nell'apprendimento della lingua inglese (EFL). Altre aree di interesse sono: l'uso delle Tecnologie nel processo di apprendimento dell'inglese (EFL); Formazione degli insegnanti di lingua e cultura inglese. È membro del gruppo di ricerca, ICCLAS, e del gruppo LILADI, dell'Università di Burgos. Ha pubblicato su riviste internazionali e contribuito a volumi collettivi. Ha presentato le sue ricerche a convegni internazionali. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9813-9398>

Beyond Typologies and Archival Objects: Nadia Myre and Visual Lexicons in Flux

So Yin Dilys Tam

University of Chicago

This paper examines the artwork of Nadia Myre (Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg), who galvanises archival materials and legal documentation as both medium and subject in critiquing Canadian juridical histories. Employing visual analysis, material culture studies, and exhibition history, I consider how Myre's projects, *Decolonial Gestures or Doing it Wrong?* (2016) and *Code Switching* (2017), transform institutional records into sites of critical intervention, drawing on Paula Amad's counter-archive theory to foreground a material, flux-oriented approach to visual jurisprudence.

Decolonial Gestures documents Myre's attempts to reconstruct Indigenous-style crafts using colonial-era instructions, with the process captured in video, audio, and photography. The resulting unfinished objects visually enact the erasure and distortion of Indigenous traditions under Westphalian legal frameworks. In *Code Switching*, Myre reassembles clay pipe fragments from the Thames, its overlaid beadwork patterns blurring the distinction between colonial trade objects and Indigenous material culture and exposes coercive systems of cultural knowledge production.

Supplementing this perspective are *Contact in Monochrome* (Toile de Jouy) (2018) and *Tell Me of Your Boats and Your Waters—Where Do They Come From, Where Do They Go?* (2022), in which Myre extends her counter-archival practice by visually engaging with Indigenous sovereignty and the institutional archive's affective gaps. In this, Myre exposes the instability and performativity of material archives and articulates a broader challenge to the dominance of typological visual lexicons in the emerging field of visual jurisprudence, instead proposing an understanding of law that is malleable and continuously (re)negotiated.

Bio: So Yin Dilys Tam is currently reading history of art at the University of Oxford, having previously completed two degrees in politics and law at The University of Hong Kong. Her interdisciplinary scholarship is situated at the intersection of art history, legal studies, and creative practice. She is interested in how visual culture functions as a socio-legal medium within their discursivity nodes of interpretation and how material objects mediate knowledge systems and power relations. Her forthcoming book chapter in the *Research Handbook of Corporate Sustainability, Law and Society* considers how contemporary artists galvanise the law as an artistic medium in articulating self-reflexive systemic critique of property ownership systems, and how contractual paradigms can serve as ethical scaffolding for relational aesthetics. In addition to her academic work, Tam's practice-based research, showcased in her short story *The Story of A Sign*, delves into legal semiotics, individual agency, societal influence, and the pursuit of identity and purpose in a politically charged environment, reflecting her creative commitment to exploring the lived experience of social justice and law as a literary art form. Tam's broader research interests include how material culture and legal frameworks mediate questions of embodiment and change, situated at the nexus of medical humanities, private international law, and cross-cultural understandings of mortality and the body. She is a Joseph Glasco Distinguished Young Scholar and is a judging panellist in the Art History and Theory category of the Global Undergraduate Awards.

Narrating Displacement: Alias Grace and the Foundations of Multicultural Canada

Gertrud Szamosi

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In 1996, Margaret Atwood published *Alias Grace*, a novel that reimagines a historical figure, Grace Marks, and offers a fictionalised account grounded in archival sources, about a young Irish immigrant who in 1843 was convicted of killing her employer and spent several years in prison. This paper analyses Atwood's novel as an example of biofiction, the genre of which, according to Michael Lackey, depicts real-life characters to provide contemporary readers with new ways of understanding the past.

Grace Marks's story sheds light on the early immigrant experience in Canada, particularly those who left Ireland during the Great Famine era. Her struggles to assimilate and find acceptance in a new land show the many challenges immigrants faced amid societal prejudices. The novel also represents the early foundations of Canadian multiculturalism and the tensions arising from the coexistence of cultural diversity.

A biofictional reading of Atwood's novel offers a new perspective on the connections and disconnections that have shaped Canada from its early days to the present. This analysis is particularly relevant to the conference theme, as it sheds light on how history continues to influence present-day Canada, regarding its cultural, social, economic, and gender relations.

Bio: Gertrud Szamosi is a senior lecturer at the Institute of English Studies of the University of Pécs, Hungary. She has taught and published in Canadian, Scottish, Postcolonial, Diaspora, and Transnational literatures. Her publications on Canadian literature include works by Margaret Laurence, Alistair Macleod, Rohinton Mistry, Alice Munro, Jane Urquhart, Shauna Singh Baldwin, Tamas Dobozsy, and others.

« Mettons fin au déclin de notre français » : les médias sociaux comme reflet du débat linguistique dans le discours politique francophone au Québec

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Cette étude veut examiner la diffusion des représentations sociales dans les discours numériques du scénario politicoculturel québécois contemporain. En tant que formes de savoir socialement élaborées, historiquement construites et transmises (Jodelet, 1989), les représentations sociales se sont frayé un chemin dans les médias sociaux, qui contribuent à la propagation de toutes formes d'idéologies linguistiques influençant la construction de l'identité de groupes définis (Vessey, 2016). La crainte d'une possible anglicisation du Québec, enracinée depuis la cession de l'ancienne colonie du Canada à l'Angleterre au milieu du XVIII^e siècle par le Traité de Paris, envenimerait la connivence entre les Deux Solitudes, dont les différences culturelles et linguistiques animent des idéologies sulfureuses qui serpentent dans l'imaginaire collectif de la société québécoise, où le concept d'identité est indissolublement lié à son caractère francophone (Oakes & Warren, 2007; Mercier et al. 2017; Bigot, 2021). Dès lors, cette étude s'intéresse plus particulièrement au rôle des représentations sociales dans la prolifération d'attitudes antagonistes dans le débat linguistique de la Province, qui auraient tendance à diaboliser l'Autre (anglophone, non-francophone) et à lui attribuer la responsabilité d'une crise menaçant l'existence de la collectivité québécoise. Pour ce faire, nous avons cerné un corpus de tweets, publiés durant la période 2020-2024, issus des comptes vérifiés du Parti Québécois – le parti indépendantiste et nationaliste par excellence – et de Paul Saint-Pierre Plamondon, chef du parti depuis le 9 octobre 2020. Les discours extraits font l'objet d'une analyse quantitative et qualitative et contiennent au moins l'un des mots-clés suivants: langue, français, anglais. Les résultats préliminaires montrent l'exhibition de formes de militantisme plus ou moins affirmées, afin de contrer le soi-disant déclin du français et l'anglicisation de la Province.

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Bio: Eros Traficante est actuellement inscrit au doctorat de recherche au sein du Département d'Études Littéraires, Linguistiques et Comparées de l'Université de Naples "L'Orientale". Ses recherches portent sur l'analyse du discours et la terminologie, la sociolinguistique appliquée au contexte de la francophonie, l'étude des idéologies linguistiques et des représentations sociales au Québec, la biodiversité et l'écilinguistique.

Toronto Reimagined: Cinematic Space and Emotional Disconnection in *Take This Waltz* (2011)

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University of Zaragoza

This paper explores the emotional and spatial dynamics of disconnection in Sarah Polley's *Take This Waltz* (2011), situating the film within broader discourses on belonging, intimacy, and national identity in contemporary Canada. Against the backdrop of Toronto—a city often celebrated as a model of multicultural connectivity—the film stages a quiet but powerful drama of emotional drift and spatial unease. Through a close analysis of how urban environments mediate psychological states, this paper argues that *Take This Waltz* challenges dominant narratives of Canadian inclusion by revealing the fragile infrastructures of intimacy in everyday life.

Drawing on Henri Lefebvre's (1991) notion of "lived space," alongside Mark Shiel's (2012) concept of "narrative space" and Barbara Mennel's (2008) engagement with heterotopia and cinematic mobility, the analysis focuses on the film's interplay between domestic confinement and urban openness. While the protagonist's home becomes a site of stagnation and emotional inertia, public and liminal spaces—such as parks, streetcars, and amusement rides—offer fleeting experiences of freedom, ambiguity, and desire.

The film's spatial strategies exemplify what Rhodes and Gorfinkel (2011) term "taking place," turning Toronto into a representational space where personal and national imaginaries collide. By foregrounding the emotional costs of stability, the film maps a deeply gendered experience of urban dislocation, complicating celebratory visions of multicultural harmony. In doing so, *Take This Waltz* offers a nuanced reflection on what it means to feel unmoored—geographically and emotionally—in a nation often defined by its commitment to connection.

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Bio: Elena Velilla is a first-year PhD student in English Studies at the University of Zaragoza, Spain. Her research focuses on spatial representations of identity in contemporary cinema, with a particular interest in how Canadian urban spaces are depicted in film. Her current work examines Toronto as a cinematic and emotional landscape in Canadian films, exploring how urban environments intersect with questions of migration, intimacy, and cultural identity. She has a background in audiovisual literacy and English teaching, and she is particularly interested in interdisciplinary approaches to film, space, and cultural theory.

Ukiyo versus Borneo: Images of the Floating World from Japan to Canada

A Reading of Alice Munro's "Floating Bridge"

Héliane Ventura

Université de Toulouse-Jean Jaurès

In "Floating Bridge," a story from her collection *Hateship Loveship Friendship Courtship Marriage* (2001), Munro provides a picture of a floating bridge over the Borneo swamp in Ontario where a 17-year-old waiter kisses a bald 42-year-old woman just out from chemotherapy under a starry sky. I would like to read that scene as a sketch painted with words which takes its inspiration from a Japanese style of woodblock prints that captured the glamour of "the floating world" or Ukiyo. Called Ukiyo-e, this Japanese style featured beautiful women, Kabuki actors, war heroes, landscape sceneries, erotic prints, and all things popular.

In her Canadian revisitation of "the floating world," Munro secretly borrows from Japan's Edo period (1615–1868) the evocation of an imagined universe of wit, stylishness, and extravagance with overtones of naughtiness, hedonism, and transgression while explicitly making references to Canaletto's depictions of Westminster Bridge with, more specifically, the representation of the "Lord Mayor's Day on the Thames."

This paper will highlight Munro's imagistic aesthetics based on ironic counterpoints. It will argue that she composes her own extended haiku in the form of a short story which not only revisits an Eastern style but also rewrites the literary and pictorial Western canon as exemplified by William Wordsworth's poem entitled "Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802" and Claude Monet's series of Japanese Bridges over a pond of water lilies in Giverny.

Bio: Héliane Ventura is Professor Emerita of contemporary and Canadian literatures at the University of Toulouse-Jean Jaurès. Her area of specialization is the contemporary short story in the anglophone world with special emphasis on the rewriting of the canon, intermedial relationships and the emergence of transatlantic literatures. She has contributed four monographs on Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro and Sarah Orne Jewett, directed more than twenty collective volumes and published extensively in Belgium, Canada, France, Great Britain, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and the United States, principally on women short story writers from Britain, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, the United States as well as on Aboriginal writers.

Narratives of belonging and alienation: Madeleine Thien, *Simple Recipes*

Éva Zsizsmann

MATE (Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences)

My paper deals with narrative techniques, the way focalization renders the precarious balance between belonging and alienation in Madeleine Thien's first collection of short stories, *Simple Recipes*. These finely crafted, sensuous and concrete stories reveal conflict within the self, internal struggle and uncertainty about maintaining bonds or severing them.

If previous generations of Asian-Canadian writers emphasized the portrait of racialised enclaves, Thien seems more concerned with issues of social mobility, the loosening of family ties in various ethnocultural groups, mostly urbanites in Vancouver. She develops an aesthetics of the everyday, ordinary family tragedy.

I will therefore focus on displacement and relocation as experiences that shake family structures and show that these narratives deploy a complicated intersection of times, unfolding their spaces between the Canadian 'here' and the nebulous, pre-immigration 'there'.

Bio: Éva Zsizsmann teaches English for Special Purposes and Translation techniques at the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Her field of research covers Postcolonial studies, Canadian literature as well as place and memory in contemporary Canadian fiction. In 2012 and 2013 she was a doctoral research fellow at the Wirth Institute, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada. She is the 2024 recipient of the CEACS Certificate of Merit.