



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

**Centre for Diaspora &
Transnational Studies**

Annual Report 2022-2023



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Message from the Interim Director

Following the far too long Covid-19 lockdown, academic year 2022-2023 featured our return to classrooms, to the office, and to the hallways. Despite the related challenges, our communities returned with enthusiasm and more resilience than ever before. From wonderful lectures to panel discussions to thought-provoking workshops, our events have served as beacons of knowledge and inspiration and have provided a platform for engaging dialogues and forging new connections within our vibrant communities. This year featured a return to campus that will be forever inscribed in our memories.

Throughout this period, we had the privilege of hosting esteemed scholars, visionary artists, and passionate activists who shared their expertise and insights on a wide range of topics related to diasporic and transnational formations. We express our heartfelt gratitude to all of those who contributed to these remarkable events: thank you to our students for your remarkable resilience and adaptability. As always, you have been willing to learn against all odds and your unwavering commitment has been the driving force behind what we have created together at CDTS. Thank you to our faculty for your invaluable courses which empower learners with profound insights and encourage critical thinking. Through engaging lectures, interactive discussions, and collaborative projects, you have enabled our students to engage in transformative journeys of intellectual growth and personal development. Thank you to our staff, you are the essential ingredients that enable new possibilities, and we are appreciative of your remarkable commitment to our unit.

Thanks to you all, CDTS continues to move well beyond the university. By fostering valuable collaborations that expand our reach and impact, we have forged partnerships with leading institutions, both locally and globally. We have fostered interdisciplinary exchanges, enabling us to cultivate strong networks of scholars, practitioners, and community members who share our vision and are engaging in co-education with us. We are immensely proud of the communities we have built together.

As my interim directorship comes to an end, I am excited about what lies ahead for us all. With your continued support and enthusiasm, CDTS will continue to be a leading center of diasporic and transnational studies, one that nurtures critical thinking and fosters dialogue in a complexly challenging world. In the fall, we will welcome new students, new faculty, new staff, new visiting scholars and new synergies and we await what is to come with, armed with the pursuit of knowledge and the will to create new possibilities in the world within which we live. Thank you for your support and we look forward to our future together.

Warm regards,
Kamari Maxine Clarke
Professor and Interim Director of the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies



About CDTS

The Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies is an incubator for interdisciplinary transnational and diasporic research across the humanities and social sciences. Located in the world's most diverse city, the Centre is ideally situated for its innovative and urgent research on the experiences of migration.

The Centre serves as a connective tissue between departments and schools while also supporting original research and engaged teaching. In addition to the Centre's comparative, qualitative and historically-driven work, it provides policy insights on pertinent issues in the world today.



Founded by University Professor Ato Quayson, the Centre continues its remarkable growth under the leadership of Professor Kevin Lewis O'Neill, Director, Professor Kamari Clarke, Interim Director and Dr. Antonela Arhin, Associate Director.

Founded in
2005

188
Undergraduate
Students

10
appointed
faculty

50+
Graduate
Students

Monthly lectures,
conferences, seminars,
works-in-progress
workshops, community-
based collaborations,
concerts and spoken word
events

CDTS Faculty



Andrea S. Allen is an Assistant Professor at the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies and the Department of Anthropology at the University of Toronto. Her research has addressed matters of race, sexuality, gender, violence, and religion in Brazil and the African Diaspora.



Angelica Pesarini is an Assistant Professor at The Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies and Italian Studies at the University of Toronto. Her work seeks to expand the field of Black Italia focusing on dynamics of race, gender, identity, and citizenship.



Anna Shternshis holds the position of AI and Malka Green Professor of Yiddish studies and the director of the Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto. She is the author of over 20 articles and multiple books on the Soviet Jews during World War II, Russian Jewish culture and post-Soviet Jewish diaspora.



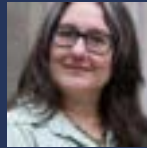
Kamari Maxine Clarke is a Distinguished Professor at the University of Toronto and Interim Director for CDTS (22-23). For more than twenty years, she has conducted research on issues related to legal institutions, human rights and international law, religious nationalism and the politics of race and globalization.



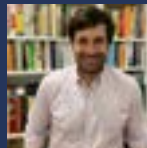
Kenneth MacDonald teaches in the Department of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto. He is also core faculty in two interdisciplinary programs: the Centre for Critical Development Studies and CDTS. Most of his research is ethnographically grounded and he has ongoing research interests in a number of areas that seek to understand the role of transnational processes in the reproduction of cultural formations.



Kevin Lewis O'Neill is the Director of the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies (on leave 22-23) and Professor in the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto. His work, deeply ethnographic, focuses on the moral dimensions of contemporary political practice in Latin America.



Naomi Seidman is the Jackman Humanities Professor at the University of Toronto, in the Department for the Study of Religion and the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies. A 2016 Guggenheim Fellow, Professor Seidman is presently completing a study of the Hebrew and Yiddish translations of Freud's writings during his lifetime.



Padraic X. Scanlan is an Assistant Professor at the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies and the Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources at the University of Toronto. He is also a Research Associate at the Centre for History and Economics at the University of Cambridge and Harvard University. He is a historian of slavery, emancipation and economic life in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.



Sumayya Kassamali is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology and the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies at the University of Toronto. Kassamali's research addresses the transformation of gender, race, religion, and language in the context of transnational migration.



Ted Sammons is an Assistant Professor (CLTA) at the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies at the University of Toronto. His research focuses on everyday intersections of racial formation, national sovereignty, and capitalist globalization, with particular attention to perspectives on related topics that resonate in the contemporary Caribbean.

CDTS Staff, Junior Fellow & Visiting Lecturers

Staff



Dr. Antonela Arhin is the Associate Director and a Sessional Lecturer at the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies at the University of Toronto where she teaches courses on human trafficking, diaspora and transnationalism. She brings over 20 years of experience in higher education, government, NGOs and consulting.



Katharine Bell is the Communications and Program Officer at the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies at the University of Toronto. She brings over five years of experience in assisting students achieve their academic goals and developing communications strategies.

Junior Fellow



Sophia Omokanye is a theologian whose community-based research centers on Christianity in the African diaspora, focusing on mobility and contemporary social issues. Her Ph.D. research, grounded in Religion, Identities, and Movements studies, investigates the intersection between global African Pentecostalism and migration. She holds her degree in Intercultural Theology from the University of Salzburg in Austria and is currently a Visiting Junior Fellow at CDTS.

Visiting Lecturers



Kamel Riahi is an author, activist, critic, broadcaster and guest lecturer at the University of Toronto's Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies and Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations. He initiated and founded Beit al-Riwaya (Centre for the Novel) and is behind the Beit al-Khayal (House of Fiction) salon and creative-writing lab.



Dr. Miriam Chorley-Schulz is the Ray D. Wolfe Postdoctoral Fellow at the Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies and the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies at the University of Toronto. Her monograph will provide an intellectual history of Soviet Yiddish culture from the 1920s to the 1980s and retrieves the legacy of antifascist thought and activism as a constitutive element throughout its existence.

2022-2023 Courses

Undergraduate

DTS200Y1 - Introduction to Diaspora and Transnational Studies

This introductory course examines the historical and contemporary movements of peoples and the complex issues of identity and experience to which these processes give rise as well as the creative possibilities that flow from movement and being moved. The area of study is comparative and interdisciplinary, drawing from the social sciences, history, the arts and humanities. Accordingly, this course provides the background to the subject area from diverse perspectives and introduces students to a range of key debates in the field, with particular attention to questions of history, globalization, cultural production and the creative imagination.

DTS300H1 - Qualitative and Quantitative Reasoning

Focuses on research design and training in methods from history, geography, anthropology, literary and cultural studies, and other disciplines appropriate to Diaspora and Transnational Studies. Prepares students to undertake primary research required in senior seminars.

DTS311H1 - Fun in Diaspora

From parkour to “Baby Shark” remixes, concepts and practices surrounding fun, entertainment, and pleasure transcend cultural boundaries, reveal the reach of globalization, and help facilitate the maintenance of transnational communities through shared activities. This course will examine these relationships with fun, and we will also assess cases where concepts of fun diverge and clash in intercultural contexts. Additionally, the class will consider the relationship between entertainment practices and politics, marketing, and social movements.

DTS314H1 - Citizenship and Multiculturalism

This course examines approaches to belonging and distinction that accompany different models of citizenship. Areas of emphasis will vary, but may include topics such as authenticity and assimilation; ethno-nationalism; immigration and naturalization policy; indigeneity; insurgency; legacies of colonialism; mass media and popular culture; policing and surveillance; racial stratification; transnational markets; and xenophobia.

DTS390H1/Y1 - Independent Study

A scholarly project chosen by the student, approved by the Department, and supervised by one of its instructors. Consult with the Diaspora and Transnational Studies Program Office for more information.

DTS401H1 - Advanced Topics in Diaspora Studies: The Art of the Diary: Questions of Form and Issues of Content

This seminar seeks to examine the “art of writing about the self” (from autobiographies, to memoirs, to auto portraits) as an art form that has been practiced across cultures and as an individual practice within and outside the literary establishment. The course introduces students to the diary as a literary art form, including its development and philosophies both as a matter of theory and of practice. We will learn about the genre’s luminaries (such as Anne Frank, Franz Kafka, José Saramago, Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Plath, Frida Kahlo) and the main themes they have written about during war and peace: the world of war, trade, sex, illness, writing, violence, racism, religion, politics, and creativity.

DTS402H1 - Advanced Topics in Diaspora Studies: Becoming Refugees

Even though (forced) migration is an age-old phenomenon, being a ‘refugee’ is not a natural category. The refugee is a ‘historically contingent relational category’ (Robin D.G. Kelley). In contrast to demonizing or celebrating the ‘refugee’, this course critically interrogates what kind of world would bring this category into being and divide people on the move into categories to be managed, politicized, criminalized. This will be done with the help of case studies from the 19th, 20th, and 21st century, among them Black American refugees in the American Civil War, Armenian refugees in the interwar period, Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany and later on from the Soviet Union during and immediately after the Cold War, as well as current refugee experiences and migration regimes worldwide.

2022-2023 Courses

DTS405H1 - Advanced Topics in Diaspora Studies: Superman and Other Migrants

From the 1938 debut of Superman until the spate of recent autobiographical graphic novels by immigrants and children of immigrants, the development of the comic and graphic novel form has been intricately bound up with the diaspora experience. In this course, we will explore the emergence of the superhero from the immigrant experience; trace the depiction of migrants, immigrants and refugees in recent graphic novels; and study visual strategies for representing migration and displacement.

DTS411H1 - Transnational Justice

This course explores notions of justice as they are being invoked and mobilized in transnational spaces – from social mobilization movements, to refugee claims, to international courts and to various domestic spaces, the course explores the meanings of justice, its principles and core tenets as well as the institutions and politics that make its claims viable.

DTS412H1 - The Diasporic Imagination

This course focuses on echoes of diasporic and transnational life in artistic work, and on the significance of aesthetic production to the formation of diasporic and transnational worlds. Areas of emphasis will vary but may spotlight particular historical and geographic contexts, and may foreground one or more form, including film, poetry, fiction, music, and dance.

DTS413H1 - Global Sexualities

Sexuality is a complex interplay of desires, attractions, interests, and modes of behavior and has diverse meanings in different societies and cultures. In this course, we will examine the notion of sexuality as well as gender identity and expression from an interdisciplinary perspective that is rooted in ethnography. A cross-cultural study of sexuality and gender identity within global and transnational contexts will provide students with an understanding of how the intersections of culture, community, as well as social and political factors affect individuals' sexual choices and understandings of gender. A particular focus in this course will be experiences of sexuality and gender within diasporic communities.

Graduate

DTS1000H1 - Comparative Research Methods in DTS

This seminar will introduce students to a range of theories to do with diaspora and transnationalism from the humanities and the social sciences. Core questions will include the methodological differences between diaspora and its many synonyms, such as migrant communities, exile, refugee, etc. The different emphases and overlaps between Migration Studies, Urban Studies, and Diaspora and Transnational Studies will also be pursued.

DTS2001H1 - Grad Topics in DTS: Transnational Ethnography

As anthropologists, sociologists, and cultural studies scholars continue to grapple with the changing approaches to studying local phenomena, this course covers transformations in approaches to making sense of locality in transnational, global and diasporic arenas. By addressing theoretical problems connected to transnational and diasporic circulations, students in the course will explore “transnationalism” and “globalization” as conceptual frameworks and will explore how various contemporary ethnographies might provide possibilities for understanding such complexities. Drawing on a range of ideas, from poststructuralist approaches to cultural processes, to materialist and rhizomatic theories, and that of the study of diasporic formations, students will explore the rapid transformation of what constitutes new fields of study and the implications for addressing questions of scale and complexity.

DTS2002H1 - Grad Topics in DTS: Rethinking Diaspora: Cultures, Futures, Homes

This graduate-level class considers the meaning of “diaspora” in the 21st century. What has happened to earlier divisions between place of origin and place of arrival in the context of ever-faster media technologies, shifts in national demographics due to increased migration and displacement, and new political calls to reckon with diversity and representation? Sitting in Toronto, how can we think together about the collapsing of space and time, nation and difference, arrival and departure, origin and identity? Drawing on examples rooted in contemporary global political conditions (war, migration, economic disparity, racial hierarchy, and more), we will build conceptual vocabularies to rethink “diaspora” beyond an earlier paradigm focused on hyphenated identity, multiculturalism, and intergenerational conflict.

Calendar of Events

CDTS Guest Lecture Series

The Transnational Business, Racial Politics, and Diplomacy of Japanese Border Crossing in North America

Professor Hidetaka Hirota
University of California, Berkeley
October 27th, 2022

Recreational racism and friendly sexism: corporate culture and racial minorities in Latin America

Professor Adilson Moreira
Mackenzie Presbyterian University
November 29th, 2022

"Only Horizons": A Genealogy of Border Criminality in Algeria, 1848 to present

Professor Sarah Ghabrial
Concordia University
January 19th, 2023



Passport for Cecil and Other Stories: Citizenship, Migrant Geographies and (Dis)connected Histories in South and Southeast Asia, 1945 - 1965

Professor Kalyani Ramnath
University of Georgia
February 2nd, 2023

Mastering the World: Black Performance and European Empire

Professor Kristin Moriah
Queen's University
March 2nd, 2023

Contesting Race and Citizenship: Youth Politics in the Black Mediterranean

Professor Camilla Hawthorne
University of California, Santa Cruz
March 23rd, 2023

Calendar of Events

CDTS Lectures

A World To Win: Soviet Yiddishkayt, Transnational Solidarity and Holocaust Memory in the Age of Decolonization

Miriam Chorley - Schulz

Ray D. Wolfe Postdoctoral Fellow at the Anne Tanenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies and the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies, University of Toronto

September 29th, 2022

From the margins to International Recognition: Mouhamed Choukri - An Underground Writer Case

Kamel Riahi

Guest Lecturer in the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies, University of Toronto

January 26th, 2023

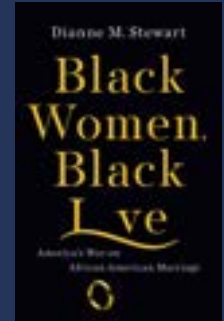


Black Women, Black Love: America's War on African American Marriage

Professor Dianne Stewart

Emory University

March 9th, 2023



UofT Events

Fall Campus Day

October 22nd, 2022

Program Exploration Day

February 16th, 2023



Calendar of Events

CDTS Social Events

Welcome Reception

September 15th, 2022

Holiday Party

December 7th, 2022

Year End Celebration

May 4th, 2023



Collaborative Events

Book Launch and Concert with Amir Issaa

In collaboration with the Department of Italian Studies, Instituto Italiano de Cultura and Victoria College

February 2nd, 2023

1834 Global Summit

In collaboration with Operation Black Vote Canada and 1834 Global

March 17th - 19th, 2023

Challenges of Democratic Politics

In collaboration with the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE), the Black Research Network, Diverse Solidarity Economies (DiSE) Collective, and the Centre for Leadership and Diversity

May 11th, 2023



Calendar of Events

Works in Progress Series

The Works in Progress Series was organized by Sophia Omokanye, a Visiting Junior Fellow at the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies and theologian whose community-based research centers on Christianity in the African diaspora, focusing on mobility and contemporary social issues.

Lamyerda as Tropical Flirtation: Navigating Tondo and its Queer Archipelago

Ferdinand Lopez

PhD student at the Women and Gender Studies Institute, University of Toronto

February 3rd, 2023

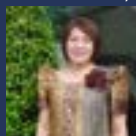
Controlling news circulation: French media colonial practices in Francophone Africa

Lyn Kouadio

PhD candidate in the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge

Controlling news circulation

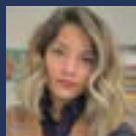
March 3rd, 2023



Ferdinand
Lopez



Lyn
Kouadio



Sabeen
Kazmi



Pablo D.
Herrera Veitia



The Two Tales of Urban Development in Karachi: Sindh's Katchi Abadi Act v.s the people of Qayyumabad

Sabeen Kazmi

PhD Candidate at the Centre for Criminology and Socio-legal Studies, University of Toronto and Board Member to CrimSL Research Cluster for the Study of Racism and Inequality

March 17th, 2023

Caliban's Return: Afro-Cuban Cosmopolitics Between Politesse and Multiculturalism

Pablo D. Herrera Veitia

Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Afrosonic Innovation Lab. Department of Arts, Culture and Media, University of Toronto Scarborough

March 31st, 2023

Calendar of Events

Diaspora and Transnational Studies Union Events

DTSU Orientation

September 23rd, 2023

Pub Night

November 27th, 2022

**TED Talks Academic Seminar
(with Professor Ted Sammons)**

December 1st, 2022



Kamari's Korner Academic Seminar (with Professor Kamari Clarke)

March 7th, 2023

ThirdSpace Journal Launch

March 31st, 2023

Undergrad Breakfast

April 5th, 2023

2023 Annual Ato Quayson Lecture

This annual, year-end event is named after Professor Ato Quayson. University Professor and the Centre's founding director, Professor Quayson's bold research set the Centre's agenda for more than a decade. This lecture now serves as an opportunity for students and scholars to participate in the futures that this intellectual labour made possible.

Diaspora and Modernity

Professor Lisa Lowe

Yale University

March 16th, 2023

Lisa Lowe is a Samuel Knight Professor of American Studies at Yale University, and an affiliate faculty in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and in Ethnicity, Race, and Migration. An interdisciplinary scholar whose work is concerned with the analysis of race, immigration, capitalism, and colonialism, she is the author of *Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms* (Cornell University Press, 1991), *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Duke UP, 1996), and *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Duke UP, 2015), and the co-editor of *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital* (Duke UP, 1997). She is currently working on a book titled *A Colonial History of the Present*.



CDTS News

Professors Kevin O'Neill and Kamari Clarke receive Mellon Foundation Award

Professors O'Neill and Clarke secured this prestigious grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, which provides up to \$225,000 USD for a year of programming. The theme of the awarded Sawyer Seminar is “Evasion: Thinking the Underside of Surveillance.”

Professor Naomi Seidman Launched Podcast "Heretic in the House"

On Heretic in the House, a limited podcast series from the Hartman Institute, CDTS Professor Naomi Seidman takes us on a deeply moving journey with believers and heretics to uncover their hidden stories and how they grapple with Jewish identity, religion in the public square, and pluralism.

Professor Kamari Clarke awarded 12-month Jackman Humanities Institute Faculty Fellowship for 2023-2024 for her project entitled "The Elusive Work of Visibility: Toward a Theory of Absence"

The Elusive Work of Visibility, a book project grounded in several years of ethnographic research in northern Nigeria, Mexico, The Netherlands, and the United States, develops a new theory of the “presence of absence” through the interpretation of data about how new geospatial technologies are being used to locate human remains. Drawing on dozens of interviews and years of ethnographic fieldwork in sites of extreme ethnic, religious, and political violence, this project delves into the contestations around meaning, visibility, and power related to the process of gathering, interpreting, and leveraging data about human remains.

Hire of Full-time Communications and Program Officer

The Centre hired a second full time staff member, Katharine Bell in the role of Communications and Program Officer.

Professor Anna Shternshis Co-authors Book "Jews in the Soviet Union: A History War, Conquest, and Catastrophe, 1939–1945, Volume 3"

Volume 3 explores how the Soviet Union's changing relations with Nazi Germany between the signing of a nonaggression pact in August 1939 and the Soviet victory over German forces in World War II affected the lives of some five million Jews who lived under Soviet rule at the beginning of that period. Nearly three million of those Jews perished; those who remained constituted a drastically diminished group, which represented a truncated but still numerically significant postwar Soviet Jewish community.

Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies
Room 230, Jackman Humanities Building
170 St. George Street, Toronto, Ontario M5R 2M8

E-mail: cdts.admin@utoronto.ca
Phone: 416-946-7177



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