## MEDUSA Symposium 2016 Program

**Thursday March 3rd, 2016**

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**Boundaries of the Human and the Animal**

**Re-Presenting Urban Space**

**Women and the Politicized Body**
# MEDUSA Symposium 2016 Program

**Friday March 4\(^{th}\), 2016**

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<td>The role of visual representations of ‘FGM’ in the (re)production of</td>
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Keynote Address
Thursday, March 3 at 4pm, AP246

Dr. Andy Roddick, McMaster University
Unfixing Archaeology”: The Habitual, the Itinerant, and the Juxtaposed

In recent years, archaeologists have been working to shed the shackles of static, bounded models. Whether through new methodologies, a plethora of theoretical frameworks, or through new understandings of what constitutes the archaeological record itself, scholars are increasingly shifting our very understanding of previously stable phenomenon. In this talk I draw on three of my ongoing projects to explore models of how these shifts in archaeology and beyond are transforming the way we think about social process and material practices in the highlands of Andean South America."

Abstracts

Nickson Museka Bondo, PhD Candidate, Global Studies, University of Leipzig, Germany
The Regional Security Complex Theory and the security interdependence in Africa’s Great Lakes Region

The security dynamics and interdependence observed at common borders between countries of the Great Lakes region make this part of Africa what Barry Buzan has described a Regional Security Complex. In his Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), Barry Buzan defines a Regional Security Complex as a group of states whose national security is interdependent and interlinked to a point that the security of one state depends on, or is linked to the security of another state in a geographically limited region (Buzan, 1998; Buzan and Waever, 2003). Against this backdrop, Buzan’s RSCT is discussed in this paper as a theoretical framework to explain how the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) addresses peace and security issues at common borders between its member states. The paper argues that the security complex and dynamics observed at common borders between Great Lakes countries undermine the capacity of national security organs of individual states to effectively secure their territories in isolation with other neighbouring countries. The geographic proximity and the porous nature of borders between Great Lakes countries make it easier for enmity and insecurity to be driven from one country into neighbouring countries. It is based on this assumption that the ICGLR has put in place a number of security cooperation mechanisms to address security issues at common borders between its member states. Thus, using the RSCT, this paper explores these security cooperation mechanisms and assesses their impacts on sustainable peace and security in the Great Lakes region.
Lyota Bonyeme, MA Student, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, Canada
Training the medical eye: The role of visual representations of ‘FGM’ in the (re)production of biomedical knowledge on female genital cutting

The aim of this study was to analyze a set of recent publications designed to instruct Western medical practitioners on the care and clinical assessment of women who have undergone customary genital cutting procedures, referred principally as ‘female genital mutilation’ (FGM). Of particular interest was the publications’ use of illustrations to train the medical eye to discern altered genital characteristics during clinical assessment and the referential role these play in the (re)production of Western biomedical knowledge on ‘FGM.’ Previous literature on the role of visual images in medical literature similarly suggests that visual aids in medicine play a pervasive function in the creation, circulation and mobilization of medical knowledge. Here, I explored how visual representations of circumcised vulvas contribute to this knowledge and what, if any, are the repercussions of these representations. A total of 24 publications, approx. 158 images, released by scholars, governmental organizations and local and/or international NGOs between the mid-1990s and 2014, were found. Using Law and Lynch’s concept of the literary language game, I argue that the presence of these images paired with descriptive language served to constitute dichotomous imaginary subjects which either embodied the norm or were located outside of it. The circulation of these representations also reflects an underlying cohesive discourse of national, normative bodies vs. foreign/racialized, aberrant anatomies in western biomedicine. I suggest that further research should investigate the intersectional and relational processes through which this discourse of differentiation is produced and secured in the (re)production of biomedical knowledge on immigrant/refugee women.

Jessica Cook, PhD Student, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, Canada


The general objective of this paper will examine the decolonization of imagination and reexamination of Indigenous inclusion in urban spaces — particularly through the participation of Indigenous women and Indigenous young people. The outcome of this paper will attempt to communicate an understanding and are attempting to reimagine how Indigenous communities are formed, portray a sense of belonging and reexamine what the future can or could look like in the future. I will particularly expand on my previous research on/with/in the Indigenous community here in Tkaronto.

Ketaki Kiran Deshpande, PhD Student, Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies, University of Arkansas, USA

India’s collective emotional purges after Gang Rapes: Cultural Representations of Nirbhaya case

According to the National Crime Records Bureau of India, a total number of 24,915 rape cases against women were reported in the year 2012 alone (Bureau, 2012). And yet, the Delhi gang rape that took place in December of 2012 remains the most-discussed and prolific rape case in the recent history of crime in India. The case not only garnered a lot of media attention nationwide, but also worldwide. This changed the national identity of India, as more discourse was generated about the status of women in India. Terms such as gang rape, honor killings, acid attacks, etc. became somewhat synonymous with India within international cultural politics, reducing India to a backward and regressive ‘other’. This paper attempts to study how a culture, in this case India, dealt with a public tragedy such as the ‘Nirbhaya’ gang rape. The first aspect of negotiating with the incident emerged in the way global
and national media portrayed the tragedy. While the western media ‘Orientalized’ India by reducing it to a backward and misogynist caricature of itself, the Indian media focused its backlash towards the rapists. Secondly, I will study how the public dealt with the tragedy by being more vocal about their dissent towards the status of women in India. I will look particularly at the public reaction which came in forms of burning effigies of the rapists, canceling festive events to mourn Jyoti’s death and other public actions as an act of redirecting fury and unresolved feelings towards the criminals and the tragedy. Finally, I will examine the media’s act of renaming the victim, whose identity was protected, as “Nirbhaya” by elevating her status from a girl next door to a fearless and brave goddess.

Steven Dorland, PhD Candidate, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, Canada

Practicing Informal Apprenticeship: a study of learning landscapes in 15th Century Great Lakes potting communities

Vessels that are produced by younger community members are highly effective avenues for addressing learning structures and social interactions that took place in Great Lakes potting groups. Yet, learner vessels are often isolated from adult vessels in the belief that variation is random and does not follow similar stylistic and manufacturing practices of more well-made vessels. Furthermore, traditional belief portrays pottery learning as passive transmission of knowledge, an interpretation that hinders understanding of potting interactions and removes the role of children in cultural production. The paper discusses the application of a proposed methodological framework to address learner vessels. Pottery vessels from the A.D 15th Century villages of Garoga, Kloch, and Smith-Pagerie in Upstate New York were assessed to systematically identify the relation between adult vessels and learner vessels. Rather than grounding indicators of skill in decorative aesthetics, the author evaluates shaping and modification methods and fine motor-skill execution. The paper argues Great Lakes potters participated in active forms of informal apprenticeship to acquire the needed knowledge to maintain the longstanding potting traditions. The results demonstrate that patterns are apparent when the potters themselves, the tools, and the developed material interactions become the central focus for addressing learning, and when continuity is considered between learners and skilled potters. The findings suggest that children were not part of a passive process of learning transmission in which unidirectional learning took place. Rather children were part of informal apprenticeships that allowed active participation and material engagement. Great Lakes potters followed an open learning environment that allowed for more artistic freedom, however, certain cultural traditions mediated learning practices. The vessel shapes, the preference for banded linear geometric symmetry patterns, and rules that determine spatial organization strategies of decorative elements were three elements that potters recognized as cultural tradition parameters, and learning markers. The paper argues the practices of informal apprenticeship demonstrate heterarchy in practice, a fundamental ontological belief that mediated Great Lakes lifeways. Changing our perception of learning provides an opportunity to delve into research questions that focus on children and younger members as active cultural producers that are not disconnected by broader cultural traditions that were maintained by Great Lakes potting groups.

Zeinab Farokhi, MA Student, Women and Gender Studies, University of Toronto, Canada
The Body as Frontier: The Veiling of Women’s Bodies by Iran

This paper attempts to examine the role of the state in controlling women’s bodies by the enforcement or forceful prohibition of the hijab. More specifically, this essay will analyze how the nation of Iran uses “hijab” as a tool to subdue women. I argue that the suppression of women's right to choose is a necessary tool of state control. In other words, the intense focus that has been placed on the veil has worked to distract women away from other political, social, and economic issues. Furthermore, the rhetoric of the veil serves to divert public attention away from other problematic state policies. This paper posits that the repression of women's bodies is part of a much larger strategy—one that is aimed at obscuring its own violences. I would like to examine in depth how the female body has become a site of violence in the post-revolutionary Iran and how the state acts as a biopolitical in rendering it. Through this paper, I suggest that for the regime of Iran women’s body is a frontier, the site on which constant violence is perpetrated with impunity. Considered as a threat to society if given freedom, the women’s body must be violated if the border between civilization and savagery is to be maintained. The woman’s body in Iran falls into a zone of exception where the law deliberately ceases to exist for her, both in public and private spheres. The private sphere is itself a zone where law declares its own absence. As a zone to which women belong, full civil rights do not obtain in the private sphere. The paper tries to look into the memorialization of power on the woman's body both in public and private sphere.

Camila Guarim Figueiredo, PhD Candidate, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, Canada

Travelling along the Tapajó Regional System, Lower Amazon, Brazil

From the 10th until the 18th century, the Tapajó Indians inhabited the present city of Santarém and the surrounding region. The material culture associated with this group is distributed between the Trombetas and Xingu rivers - west/east - and Almeirim until the middle Tapajós Rivers – north/south. Archaeological and ethnographic data demonstrate that the Tapajó produced the elaborate and intricate Santarém pottery, which is part of the Incised and Punctate tradition. This particular region characterizes by a rich and varied archaeological modified landscape consisting of trail networks, inland wells (far from rivers), and the presence of Amazonian Dark Earth. In 2014, for the first time an archaeological survey was conducted in parts of the National Forest of the Tapajós, located 65 km from Santarém. During this field season, 14 sites were discovered. Landscape modifications, such as Amazonian Dark Eark, Anthropogenic forest, well, earth mounds and paths were also encountered and mapped. In most of the sites, Santarém style ceramic was found. However, in some sites it is possible to perceive the influence of other ceramic styles, such as the Konduri. For this presentation, GIS spatial analysis will be used to suggest how the settlements in the peripheral area of the National Forest of the Tapajós were integrated and connected in terms of pathways and river networks with the main settlement in Santarém.

Belinda Ha, PhD Candidate, Policy Studies, Ryerson University, Canada
Belonging and Identity among Second-Generation Youth in Canada

On January 12th, 2007, the Globe and Mail published a front-page story entitled “How Canadian Are You?” (Jiménez 2007). Based on Reitz and Banerjee’s analysis of 2002 Statistics Canada data involving more than 40,000 respondents in the Ethnic Diversity Survey (EDS), 60.7 per cent of visible-minority immigrants expressed a meaningful sense of belonging to Canada, whereas only 44.1 per cent of second-generation visible-minority immigrants expressed the same (Chariandy 2007, 818). That story broke in the midst of Canadian media reports about disproportionately high rates of school drop-outs among some ethnic groups, ethnic youth gangs, and the arrests of alleged “home-grown” terror suspects in Toronto, further adding immediacy to the question of just how far children of immigrants have integrated in Canadian society (Ali 2008, 89).

A climate of fear and/or uncertainty is embodied in Gregg’s magazine article entitled “Identity Crisis” and subtitled “Multiculturalism: A Twentieth-Century Dream Becomes a Twenty-First-Century Conundrum” (Gregg 2006). The Canadian journalist explicitly connects the “crisis” of Canadian multiculturalism to the emergence of a particular demographic besides that of the visible-minority immigrant. Arguing that the London bombings and French riots of 2005 were rooted in disenfranchised second-generation youth with “little fealty to their adopted state,” he expresses growing concern about a similar sense of alienation developing among the same class of people in Canada (Gregg 2006). The very fact that Gregg considers visible minorities born in Canada to be living in an “adopted state” may itself suggest why some second-generation visible minorities find it difficult to wholeheartedly feel a strong sense of belonging to Canada. There appears to be a considerable irony then, considering the existence of a multiculturalism policy that has been celebrated as a unique success by Canadians and touted across the world as Canada’s ideological model for less enlightened liberal democracies (Chariandy, p.818).

Candis Haak, PhD Candidate, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, Canada
Centralizing the Generative Forces of Frontier Spaces: Ritual Movements and Cognition in Medieval Indian Sacred Geography at Vijayanagara

To date, very little exploration of medieval Hindu architecture, town planning, or landscape design has been done in terms of experience. Past researchers have, however, discussed elite strategies manifested in South Asian landscapes to assert ideas of kingship and ideologies through the use of space, references to mythology, and city planning. To explore this analytical void I examine the built environment of the imperial capital city of Vijayanagara (Bellary District, Karnataka, India) that was at once a ritual central place for kings, elites and the military. Vijayangara behaved as a liminal space for personal transformation as a pilgrimage center while also being geographically situated on the fringes of imperial space at the conceptual division between the south and north of the subcontinent. This paper will examine how imperial subjects and devotees engaged and were transformed through sacred space experience and imaginings engineered by elite agendas. Analysis is based on the use of space of religious features within the ritually charge landscape of Vijayanagara. Due to the excellent preservation of the city and its near abandonment in 1565, a structural analysis of many of the original temple complexes is possible. What is revealed is that the manipulation of darshan – the sacred act of beholding – played an integral role in organizing the landscape in terms of manipulating social space and environmental cognition. Such patterns are traced through the
Andrew Harris, PhD Student, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, Canada

A Preliminary Study of Thai Influence on the Early Theravada Buddhist Archaeology and Urban Infrastructure at Angkor Thom

History, and modern political considerations, have often depicted the Cambodian Khmer Empire (c. 802-1431) as an insular state with little foreign influence adopted within its political and religious systems following early 1st millennium CE religious diasporas from South Asia. As an empire traditionally ruled by despotic monarchs “reincarnated” as Shiva or Mahayana Buddhist bodhisattvas, their sudden conversion to the more localized, decentralized, sect of Theravada Buddhism at the end of the 13th century CE not only curious but also underwhelmingly undocumented. It is therefore necessary to look to the peripheries of the Khmer Empire for answers, and it becomes very clear from brief observation of the Buddhist infrastructure and architecture elsewhere that religious and cultural interaction with Thai city-states was likely a prime facilitator of this religious transition. Using recently-gathered evidence from the Khmer capital city of Angkor Thom indicating the construction of Theravada monastic complexes between the 13th-15th centuries, as well as creating cross-regional comparisons between the use and construction of Theravada ritual spaces at the 13th-15th century Thai capital of Sukhothai, this paper argues the unpopular belief that Khmer Theravada Buddhism was originally a frontier movement which came to Cambodia via an established Buddhist infrastructure in contemporary Thailand.

Anne O'Connor, PhD Student, Cultural Studies, University of California—Davis, USA

Traversing Prophylactic Frontiers: Sex and the Zika Virus across Human and Insect Bodies

The rapid spread of the Zika virus in South America, and the technologies employed to combat it, have drawn together regimes of prophylaxis operating at both human and insect levels. I propose here to operate across boundaries of sexual regulation to understand both the spread and control of the Zika virus at a new level: that of the transgenic animal. OX513A is a strain of transgenic aedes aegypti mosquito produced by the British company Oxitec which has been tested and used in Brazil, Malaysia and the Cayman Islands and is likely to be employed in the Florida Keys, which recently saw its first documented case of the virus. Marketed as a “prophylactic insect,” transgenic male mosquitoes, when released into the population, produce offspring which do not live to sexual maturity. The Zika virus, and concerns over its methods of transmission and implications for pregnant women, has brought together scales of human and insect prophylaxis into a complex web of sexual engineering which lays bare the physical imbrications of human and insect bodies and sexualities. As climate change continues to expand the habitats of Zika and aedes aegypti, its significance to human reproduction is likely to increase. In traversing biological frontiers, prophylaxis entails regulation of both the reproduction of aegis aegyptae and human sexuality. As it moves between human and insect scales, the virus calls for a re-thinking of regulatory networks bringing together the health and sexualities of different scales of life, and calls into question distinctions we make between them.
The Harmony of Laboratory Illusions

The rubber hand illusion is a famous and widely used technique for extending and testing boundaries of bodily proprioception, visualization, and integration in the neurosciences. It is an example of one of many illusions used by neuroscientists to reveal something ontological about the brain, body and being. But what does it reveal and what might it also conceal? In this paper, I explore the use and discussion of neuroscientific illusions during my ethnographic participation and observation in a neuroscience laboratory. Using illusions as a starting point, I explore the different ontological assertions that these scientists make about the boundaries of our world, their porosity, and how this might have bearing on neuroscience’s claim to our personhood, which, as Joseph Dumit has suggested, is our “form of life” (2004). I argue that with illusions, like the rubber hand illusion, neuroscientists introduce a rubber reality. Much attention has been paid to the notion of plasticity in neurological being with the uptake of neuroplasticity as a concept in the neurosciences (Malabou 2008, Pitts-Taylor 2010, Rees 2010, Papadopoulos 2011); I use rubber instead to think of how notions of elasticity and flexibility might be more resistant than expected or than plasticity lets on. How do neuroscientists decide that some illusions are tenable, while others are not? Why are some ontological claims allowed, and other not? In exploring these issues, I wish to get at some of the operations and elusions used in this scientific practice.

Malcolm Ramsay, MSc Student, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, Canada
Road Ecology of Mouse Lemurs (Microcebus spp.)

Road ecology is an underutilized line of inquiry within primate conservation biology. While roads are often assumed to be dispersal barriers in primates there is little empirical testing of this assumption. We tested the hypothesis that Route National #4, a paved highway, was a dispersal barrier for two species of mouse lemurs (Microcebus murinus and M. ravelobensis) in Ankafantsika National Park in NW Madagascar. We conducted a capture-mark-recapture experiment from June to August 2015 in which we established three sites with pairs of parallel transects 25m apart; two sites adjacent to Route National #4 and one within intact forest without a dispersal barrier. After 2294 trap nights we caught 123 individual mouse lemurs 1054 times. We detected 18 crossings from 9 individuals on highway transects, compared with 157 crossings from 27 individuals within the intact forest. Only male M. ravelobensis were captured on both sides of the highway and only in the vicinity of an arboreal crossing, such as two trees on either side of the highway with a canopy connection. No females of either species crossed the highway during our study period. One identified M. ravelobensis was killed by a vehicle in an apparent attempt to cross the highway. M. ravelobensis were inhibited in their movements across the highway, but dispersal was still possible across this potential barrier. Our study presents some of the first results on the effects of roads in Malagasy primates and showcases species-and-sex-biased effects of roads as dispersal barriers.

Anne Sophie Roussel, MA Student, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, Canada
“Not Part of the Ghetto”: Moralizing Mobility and Linguistic Practices in Quebec’s Heartland
This presentation will look at the linguistic and ideological implications of immigration to the periphery, using the case of the Canadian Province of Quebec. The Quebec government has long encouraged initiatives to incite immigrants to settle outside of Montreal both out of concern that migrants to the city will not learn French and, thus, fail to integrate into the société Québécoise, but also to bolster the dwindling population of peripheral area that are constructed as being the pure ‘heart’ of the Quebec nation. Drawing upon fieldwork conducted in Eastern Quebec between May-August 2015, I illustrate how immigration to the periphery can, at times, be painted by immigrants as part of a rejection of certain representations of ‘bad’ migrants—in other words, as part of specific set of moral discourses guiding their own life-making and practices of the self. Indeed, distancing oneself from the perceived linguistic, cultural and ethnic ‘ghettos,’ understood as existing in Montreal, is put forward as a strategy to “achieve success”. This orientation is one where language practices are made salient and are prone to evaluation, and which influences the linguistic practices of immigrants living in Quebec’s heartland. Thus, immigrants’ linguistic practices need to be understood inside larger projects aiming to achieve a specific type of subjectivity or a certain envisioned future. This presentation illustrates the need for mobility studies to place greater attention to the ways in which representations of space, such as center-periphery dynamics and nationalist ideologies, influence both mobility and of dwelling.

Sardar Saadi, PhD Candidate, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, Canada

Ethnography from Balcony: Reflections on the Kurdish Uprising in Diyarbakir, Turkey, and Limits of Participant Observation

In the summer of 2015, the Kurdish region of Turkey experienced another wave of uprising following a bombing attack that targeted a group of Kurdish and Turkish students and activists who were preparing to go to Kobane (in Syrian Kurdish region) to show their solidarity with the Kurdish resistance there. The attack was claimed by the Islamic State (ISIS); however, given many precedents of the kind, the Kurds in Turkey were enraged by the Turkish state’s neutral stand against Islamic Jihadists and accusing it for supporting ISIS against the Kurds. Being in Diyarbakir during that time to conduct ethnographic fieldwork studies, I found myself in the midst of street clashes between Kurdish protesters and the Turkish police but only from the balcony of the apartment I was staying knowing the serious consequences of joining the demonstrators on the streets that would bring to myself as well as my work as an anthropologist in Diyarbakir. While shedding light on some important limits and challenges of participant observation within communities of political resistance, this paper is an “ethnographic” witness account of those days of uprising in Diyarbakir in relation to urban development, poverty, and displacement as the outcomes of decades long Kurdish conflict in Turkey.

Yadesha Satheaswaran, MA Student, Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, Canada

“Disabling” the Abortion Debate: An analysis of (ab)normality and techno-violence in modern-day choice politics
On May 31st 2009, American physician, George Tiller, was murdered with a fatal gunshot wound to the head. At the time of his death, Tiller had gained national attention for his work as the medical director of Women’s Health Care Services, one of three clinics to provide late-term abortions in the United States. Tiller’s assassination has been one of the most visible acts of violence to stem from the “abortion debate” in recent years. As protestors flooded the streets, his case emphasized the predominance of the “pro-life” versus “pro-choice” paradigm in our present-day discussions about abortion. What remained unanalyzed, however, was the fact that physicians, like Tiller, only provided late(r)-term abortions to fetuses with supposedly “severe developmental disabilities.” The acquisition of abortion rights has been an important accomplishment for the feminist movement but efforts must also be made to understand how a pro-choice rhetoric could propagate eugenic ideals in society. This paper attempts to introduce disability into conversations on reproduction so that we can critically interrogate why women may want to terminate certain pregnancies. I will elucidate the ableism that is embedded in popular discourses and practices, such as “informed consent,” in order to highlight the insidious governmentality pervading the “private” journey to motherhood. I ultimately argue that female bodies are at the frontier of new “normalizing” technologies with violent implications for both able-bodied/disabled women and their able-bodied/disabled fetuses – what McGuire calls the “violence of normalcy” and the “normalcy of violence.”

Males crossing group boundaries improve their mating success in wild \textit{L. catta} at Berenty Reserve: Benefits of mating season migration

Male mating success depends on intrinsic male qualities, but mating success can also be impacted by extrinsic factors. The operational sex ratio (OSR) is known to impact male mating success in several diverse species. I examined the relationship between OSR, dominance rank, and male mating success in four groups of ring-tailed lemur (\textit{Lemur catta}) at Berenty Reserve, Madagascar based on data collected over three mating seasons. I found significant relationships between the OSR during mating (calculated based on whether males were present and engaged in competition for the estrous female) and mount with thrust duration (Mann–Whitney U = 0.0001, n1 = 4 < n2 = 11, P < 0.001 two-tailed), as well as OSR and mating female rank (rS=-0.603, N=17, P=0.010). Incidence of ejaculation was shown to correlate with thrust duration (Mann–Whitney U = 3.5, P = 0.005 one-tailed). Alpha males copulated (mounts with thrusting) for longer durations than lower ranking group males (Mann–Whitney U = 0.0001, n1 = 5 > n2 = 4, P < 0.016 two-tailed). When non-alphas of the estrous female’s group were considered, extra group males were more likely to ejaculate than group males (Fisher’s exact test, p = 0.015). These findings show that variation in the OSR during a female’s estrous period impacts male mating success as presence of a greater number of males inhibits ejaculation and raise questions about the value of group membership for non-alpha males.