

Speaker Biographies

Ahmed Al-Rawi

Ahmed Al-Rawi is an Assistant Professor of News, Social Media, and Public Communication at the School of Communication at Simon Fraser University, Canada. He is the Director of the Disinformation Project that empirically examines fake news discourses in Canada on social media and news media. His research expertise is related to social media, global communication, news, and the Middle East with emphasis on critical theory.

S. Harris Ali

S Harris Ali is a Full Professor of Sociology at York University. Dr. Ali's research focuses on the intersection of health, disasters, and the environment. As a principal investigator in the Ebola Project, he has researched misinformation during outbreaks. He has published on the SARS outbreak and racism, and his current research on racism during the Covid pandemic (with Fuyuki Kurasawa) will be an important contribution to the symposium.

Nadia Caidi

Nadia Caidi has published extensively in top refereed journals on the topics of race, diversity, media, Diaspora, and transcultural studies in relation to human information behaviour and information policy. She has received several research grants from SSHRC and other agencies for her research projects on the information practices of vulnerable communities, including newcomers and Aboriginal communities in remote and isolated communities in Ontario. Caidi was President of the Canadian Association for Information Science from 2010-11 and the 2016 President of the International Association for Information Science and Technology. With Caidi's research expertise and professional experience, she will provide solid foundation and insights to the event from the information studies perspective.

Yemisi Dina

Recently appointed as the chief Law Librarian at Osgoode, Yemisi Dina has both law and library science degrees and many years experience in law librarianship. She is also the newly elected Vice President of the Canadian Association of Law Librarians and has for years been actively involved in various professional associations. She has published a book *Law Librarianship in Academic Libraries: best practices* in 2015. Being a

racialized woman in the profession, Yemisi has a profound understanding of the challenges faced by minority women and also has a strong interests in issues faced by information patrons with diverse background. She has well spoken at many national and international conferences so far on a wide range of topics in relation to law librarianship.

Sheila Embleton

Professor Embleton is a distinguished scholar, a respected administrator and a tireless advocate. She has published articles in many interrelated fields and has an excellent grasp of emerging themes and issues in higher education. Professor Embleton's abilities to facilitate conversation are well-known and she will be an excellent moderator for the keynote and a discussant at the roundtable sessions.

Jane M Heffernan

Professor Heffernan published several on-point articles about COVID-19 and the impact of media reporting on people's beliefs and behaviours in Canada. She brings up-to-the-minute research findings to the symposium and offers the important perspective of a scientist who has mathematics as a specialty. Professor Heffernan is a full professor at York University.

Carl James

Dr. Carl James is a Professor in the Faculty of Education and Graduate Program in Sociology at York University. He is also the Jean Augustine Chair in Education, Community & Diaspora and York's Senior Advisor in Equity and Representation. Dr. James is widely recognized for his research contributions in the areas of intersectionality of race with ethnicity, gender, class and citizenship as they shape identification/identity. He recently partnered with Dr. Allen Upton, Professor of Paediatrics at the University of Toronto and Endowed Chair at SickKids Hospital in a study which examines immunity to COVID-19. Together, they will work with President of the Jamaican Canadian Association, Adaoma Patterson, to collect race-based data and measure the impact of COVID-19 on Black people.

Suzanne Johnson

Suzanne Johnson graduated from Osgoode Hall Law School and returned to work as the director of Osgoode's Community & Legal Aid Services Program. With education background in both law and social work, Suzanne is passionate for education and social justice. Suzanne's extensive work at the clinic spanning criminal law, education

law, family law, immigration law, and civil litigation involving the police has allowed her to build wealth of knowledge in these areas and offered her firsthand perspectives of how law affects venerable communities.

Eric Kennedy

SSHRC is supporting Professor Kennedy's work to understand the societal impact of COVID-19. He and his team of researchers and collaborators are tackling questions that are intimately connected to the themes of the symposium. The scope of the project includes answering these questions: "Who do they trust for information? How are they adapting their behaviours? Is their perception of risk changing? The research will help better understand the social dimensions of the COVID-19 outbreak and inform response efforts." We anticipate that Professor Kennedy will be able to report on their findings at the symposium.

Nazilla Khanlou

As the Chair of the Office of Women's Health in Mental Health, Professor Khanlou has an extensive research record that has led to numerous publications in refereed journal articles and book chapters in the areas of women's mental health, especially immigrant mothers. Professor Khanlou is also a recipient of various research grants from SSHRC and CIHR. The most recent of those grants is a knowledge synthesis on "COVID-19 pandemic guidelines for mental health support of racialized women at risk of gender-based violence" and "The impact of COVID-19 on the mental health and wellbeing of caregivers and families living with Autism". Professor Khanlou's contribution to this project on racialized women at risk of Gender Based Violence during the COVID-19 pandemic will be of great value as it highlights challenges faced by this group in accessing mental health information and supports during lockdowns.

Fuyuki Kurasawa

Fuyuki Kurasawa is Associate Professor in York University's Sociology Department. He also serves as Director of the Global Digital Citizenship Lab, whose community of researchers analyze digital cultures, the use of digital technologies and social media platforms through a social justice lens. Kurasawa's expertise in digital culture and the online community and current research on racism during the Covid pandemic will be an important contribution to the symposium

Jack Leong

Jack Leong has provided leadership in building the largest research collection on Hong Kong and Chinese Canadian studies in North America. He is an established scholar and researcher in the areas of international and community engagement, access to resources, Chinese Canadian studies and intercultural studies. He has extensive experience stewarding major research collections and leading collaborative digital initiatives that heightened the visibility and impact of these research collections through open access platforms. Leong is also well known for his community-building accomplishments and international leadership. He is the Secretary for the Board of Directors of the Asian Heritage Month in Ontario and past Chair of the IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) Standing Committee on Library Services for Multicultural Populations, and Executive of the Canadian Comparative Literature Association.

Thumeka Mgwigwi

Thumeka Mgwigwi is a Teaching and Learning Librarian at York University. Her research interests are information literacy, equitable access to information, disability studies, equity and diversity issues and Black mental health. She has previously received awards as a co-applicant for the following projects: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Connection Grant: “Navigating Information and Race in the Era of COVID-19”; Canadian Institutes of Health Research - Operating Grant: “Knowledge Synthesis: COVID-19 in Mental Health and Substance Use”; Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council - Insight Development Grant: “Disability Wikibase: Modelling and Implementing an Intelligent Bilingual Knowledge Network, through Mapping Disability Advocacy Data Needs Scaled to Local, National, and International Policy Interventions”.

Obiora Okafor

Prof. Okafor has very strong teaching and research experience in international and transnational legal studies. He is also an influential scholar internationally, being widely recognized as an expert in human rights law. He has served as an SSRC-MacArthur Foundation Visiting Scholar at Harvard Law School’s Human Rights Program; a Canada-US Fulbright Scholar at MIT; a Visiting Professor at the International Institute of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France; a Visiting Professor at the St. Augustine International University, Kampala, Uganda; and as the Gani Fawehinmi Distinguished Chair of Human Rights Law at the Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies.

Justin Poy

Justin Poy is the President and Creative Director of The Justin Poy Agency based in Toronto, Canada. He is very active in charity and community efforts establishing him as a leader and role model in the Chinese Canadian community. He sits on a number of Boards and participates in many philanthropic causes, such as the SickKids Foundation, Trillium Gift of Life (TGLN) and the Ontario Media Development Corporation (OMDC). He was honoured with the Canadian Youth Business Foundation's first ever Entrepreneurship Champion Award for his service to helping young entrepreneurs in Canada, and was presented with the Queen's Golden and Diamond Jubilee Medals and the Chinese Canadian Legend Award, for his community service and philanthropy. Poy is well positioned to organize and present in the panel on the role of media and equitable dissemination of news during the pandemic.

Geoffrey Reaume

Professor Reaume has engaged in extensive research in the areas of disability studies and as a professor in the Critical Disability Studies program, he brings to this project issues of health inequity faced by those in the minority including people with disabilities. These issues have long existed in societies and in pandemics before COVID-19 and Professor Reaume investigate the history of how society has responded discriminately towards people in the minority groups during pandemic outbreaks.

Jeffrey Squire

Professor Squire is a social justice advocate who incorporates anti-oppression, advocacy as well as equity principles in his research and teaching.

Leah F Vosko

Professor Vosko has made it her mission to understand the corroding effect of precarious employment on people and societies. She has studied many aspects of precarious work, most especially its impact on women and migrant workers and has published numerous articles and Canada Research Chair in the Political Economy of Gender & Work (Tier 1). Professor Vosko will bring to light how COVID-19 has further marginalized migrant workers in Canada's agricultural sector. In many cases the justification for increased marginalization was misinformation.

Teresa Woo-Paw

Teresa Woo-Paw has dedicated her career to promoting active civic engagement and volunteerism, social inclusion, cross-cultural understanding and antidiscrimination awareness. She has founded seven organizations including the Asian Heritage Foundation, the Action Chinese Canadian Together Foundation, the Ethno-Cultural Council of Calgary (Action Dignity) and the Calgary Chinese Community Services Association as well as served on over 30 committees and boards at local, provincial and national levels. Her community service has earned Ms. Woo-Paw an Immigrant of Distinction Award, YWCA's Woman of Distinction Award, the Chinese Canadian Legend Award, the Queen's Jubilee Award for Multiculturalism and Community Services, the Canada 125th Commemorative Award for Community Services and the Queen Elizabeth's 60 th Jubilee Award. Ms. Woo-Paw is the first female Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta and Cabinet Minister of Asian Canadian descent (2008-2015).

Cary Wu

Cary Wu is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at York University. He is also affiliated with the York Centre for Asian Research (YCAR) and is a member of the Association for Canadian Studies's COVID-19 SOCIAL IMPACTS NETWORK expert advisory committee. His research related to the mental health impact of COVID is of significance to the symposium.