

# Socialist Solidarities in Times of Crisis

**Society for Socialist Studies Conference**

**May 30-June 4, 2021**

**Congress for the Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Online**

The call for individual papers is immediately below the announcement of our plenary sessions.

You must fill out the google form on the Society for Socialist Studies Congress 2021 website with information about your proposed paper, your contact etc.

You should indicate if you would like your paper assigned to an “open session” or one of the proposed thematic sessions, listed alphabetically below.

Please note the February 28, 2021 deadline for all individual papers. This deadline is firm.

From May 30-June 4, 2021, the online-only conference will be held at the following times (all listed in Mountain Standard Time, local hour of Edmonton, Alberta):

Concurrent sessions: 10h00-11h30

11h30-12h00 break

Concurrent sessions: 12h00-13h30

13h30-14h00 break

Plenary sessions: 14h00-15h30.

We are looking forward to a wonderful event! The list of thematic sessions in the “call for papers” is immediately below the announcement of our plenary sessions.

--May 30, 2021--

**Plenary I Session 2:00-3:30 pm Mountain Standard Time (Edmonton, Alberta)**

## **We Will Soon Achieve Indigenization: Indigenizing the Academy in the Time of Trump 'Rona.**

Today many post-secondary institutions on Turtle Island express commitments to reconciliation, decolonization and, sometimes, Indigenization. Even in the best of times there are many legitimate questions and concerns regarding what this means and who is responsible for making it happen. All too often, responsibilities have fallen on junior faculty members and contract instructors, who lack genuine support from the administration and who must deal with systemic racism and individual bigotry from colleagues and students, sometimes alongside “pretendians” who often serve to legitimize the colonial system. We are not, however, in the best of times. Tax cuts for the wealthy

and austerity for everyone else is increasing wealth and income inequalities. The 2020 American Presidential campaign saw far-right organizations openly supported and promoted by one candidate, symptomatic of vigorous White supremacist movements from which the academy is not immune. The current pandemic has caused an economic crisis that has radically unequal racialized, gendered consequences, and, in the academy, has meant lower enrollments and in many instances, budget restrictions. Where does this leave Indigenization? Join us at this roundtable to discuss this question and share ideas about supporting Indigenization in exceptional times.

Chair and Organizer, Daniel Sims (Tsek'ehne, University of Northern British Columbia)

Jennifer Adese (otipemisiwak/Métis/University of Toronto)

Clifford Atleo (Tsimshian/Nuu-chah-nulth/Simon Fraser University)

François Bastien (Wendat/University of Victoria)

Paulina Johnson (nehiyawak/Concordia - Edmonton)

Jérôme Melançon (Francophone settler/University of Regina)

Omeasoo Wahpisaw (nehiyawak/University of Prince Edward Island)

--May 31--

**Plenary II Session 2:00-3:30 pm -Mountain Standard Time (Edmonton, Alberta)**

**Harry Glasbeek: Winner of the 2018 Errol Sharpe Book Prize**

Harry Glasbeek is professor emeritus and senior scholar, Osgoode Hall Law School; author of *Wealth by Stealth* (2002) and *Capitalism: A Crime Story* (2018); and author or co-author of nine other books. His is the winner of the Errol Sharpe Book prize for *Class Privilege: How Law Shelters Shareholders and Coddles Capitalism* (Between the Lines Press 2017), which highlights one of capitalism's weak spots -- the perverting economic, political, and ethical roles played by the prime instrument of private wealth accumulation: the legal corporation. Once the corporate mask is ripped off, those who hide behind it become visible. Stripped of their protective garb, the capitalist class will be just as naked as the rest of us are when we face their corporations.

--June 1--

**Plenary III Session 2:00-3:30 pm Mountain Standard Time (Edmonton, Alberta)**

**Regime of Obstruction: Fossil Capitalism and the Challenge of Climate Justice**

This plenary session features contributors to *Regime of Obstruction: How Corporate Power Blocks Energy Democracy* (Athabasca University Press 2021). The session will be introduced and chaired by the book's editor, Bill Carroll. Panelists will describe the most

important strategies and initiatives for overcoming fossil capitalism in Canada, a settler colonial nation.

Chair and organizer: Bill Carroll, University of Victoria

Cliff Atleo, Simon Fraser University

Emilia Belliveau, Environmental Defense

Shannon Daub, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, British Columbia

Emily Eaton, University of Regina

Shane Gunster, Simon Fraser University

Mark Hudson, University of Manitoba

--June 2--

### **Plenary IV Session 2:00-3:30 pm Mountain Standard Time (Edmonton, Alberta)**

#### **Ingrid Waldron: Winner of the 2020 Erroll Sharpe Book Prize**

Ingrid Waldron, Ph.D. was born in Montreal to Trinidadian parents. She is a sociologist, an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Health at Dalhousie University. Her research, teaching, and community leadership and advocacy work in Nova Scotia are examining and addressing the health and mental health impacts of structural inequalities within health and mental health care, child welfare, and the environment in Indigenous, Black, immigrant, and refugee communities.

She won the Errol Sharpe book prize for *There's Something In The Water: Environmental Racism in Indigenous and Black Communities* (Fernwood Press 2018), which examines the legacy of environmental racism and its health impacts in Indigenous and Black communities in Canada, using Nova Scotia as a case study, and the grassroots resistance activities by Indigenous and Black communities against the pollution and poisoning of their communities.

--June 3--

### **Plenary V Session 2:00-3:30 pm Mountain Standard Time (Edmonton, Alberta)**

#### **Understanding and Engaging China from the Left: A Panel Discussion** **Geopolitical Economy Research Group (GERG) Panel**

Tensions between the US and China have been rising for the better part of a decade, if not longer with President Obama's executing his 'Pivot to Asia' and President Trump waging trade and technology wars and, amid the pandemic, a New Cold War against China. In this context, the left needs to understand and engage with China on the basis of a sophisticated understanding of its internal dynamics and international role. This panel of

left experts on China from Canada, the US and China is designed to spark off precisely that conversation.

Chair and Organizer: Professor Radhika Desai, Department of Political Studies, Director, Geopolitical Economy Research Group, University of Manitoba

- Professor Qi Bing, School of Marxism, Beijing Sports University and Chinese Studies Research Centre, Institute of Political Sciences, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
- Professor Mick Dunford, Emeritus at Sussex University, Department of Geography, Fellow of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, Editor, *Area Development and Policy*
- Dr Jenny Clegg, Senior Lecturer in International Studies and long-time China specialist, at the University of Central Lancashire, author of *China's Global Strategy*
- John Ross, formerly Director of Economic and Business Policy for the Mayor of London, Senior Fellow, Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Renmin University of China.
- Martin Jacques, former editor, *Marxism Today* and author of *When China Rules the World*.

--June 4--

**Interdisciplinary Session with the Environmental Studies Association of Canada  
09h30-10h45 (overlaps 45 minutes into concurrent sessions beginning at 10h00).**

**Pikopayin – It is Broken: Film Screening and Discussion with the Producer Angele Alook and Sheena Wilson**

For the past three years, Dr. Angele Alook has been working with a team of storytellers at Just Powers to film and interview traditional land users, environmental activists, and elders to begin telling the story of land-based culture and inequitable land rights in Treaty 8 territory. The documentary is entitled *Pikopayiw – It is broken*, which came from elders repeatedly making the statement in Cree that the Earth was “broken” due to the resource extraction industry. In the film, elders and traditional land users discuss their hopes for the future of the land, future relationships with the land, and the future of energy in Alberta. During this interdisciplinary session we will play the film (35 minutes), and then hold a moderated discussion with the Producer Dr. Alook, Chaired by Dr. Sheena Wilson (who has also been involved in the project).

**Plenary VI Session 2:00-3:30 pm Mountain Standard Time (Edmonton, Alberta)**

**Winner of the 2021 Errol Sharpe Book Prize: Announcement + General Assembly**

We will announce the winner of the 2021 Errol Sharpe Book Prize.

This will be followed by the General Assembly of the Society for Socialist Studies.

All are welcome, including new members: learn about our peer-reviewed journal, local chapters, and bring your ideas for how to support scholarly and activist socialist solidarities to a world badly in need of them!

### **Call for Individual or Co-authored Papers!**

**We are very pleased to invite individual or co-authored papers for submissions. The deadline is February 28, 2021 at midnight EST.**

Please note that all papers must be submitted through the Society for Socialist Studies Congress 2021 webpage: this is a “google form.”

If you have a general inquiry, please contact: [SSSCongress2021@gmail.com](mailto:SSSCongress2021@gmail.com)

### **Open Sessions: Call for Papers**

The Society for Socialist Studies is pleased to accept papers on “socialist, feminist, anti-racist and ecological points of view, regarding history, political science, political economy, sociology, and other academic subjects”. In particular, we welcome papers related to this year’s Congress theme, Socialist Solidarities in Times of Crisis:

- socialism and solidarities
- ecological crisis and climate change
- carceral capitalism, border imperialisms, neoliberal urbanization
- capitalism during the pandemic
- class struggles against inequities, exploitation and oppression, right-wing populisms, white supremacy and all racisms
- feminist socialisms, Black Marxisms, Indigenous anti-capitalisms, queer socialisms
- 1492 Land Back, Black Lives Matter, Wet’suwet’en solidarity, No Pride in Policing Coalition
- and other explorations of socialist solidarities and liberation struggles, as well as analyses of contemporary capitalism, colonialisms, right-wing populisms, wealth and income inequalities, exploitation and oppression.

### **Thematic Sessions (alphabetical order by title): Call for Papers**

#### **Feminist Disability Studies and Intersectionality: New Challenges and Opportunities**

Organizer: Tiffany Boulton, University of Calgary

Inquiries: [tiffany.boulton@ucalgary.ca](mailto:tiffany.boulton@ucalgary.ca)

May be cross-listed with another association (TBA)

Thirty years ago, Susan Wendell (1989) proposed the need for a “feminist theory of disability.” Since then, scholarship and research from within feminist disability studies has highlighted that disability is indeed a feminist issue. Feminists have been instrumental in challenging dominant assumptions about ab/normal bodies, disability, and impairment. In addition, feminist disability studies scholars have highlighted the importance of taking into account personal and embodied experiences of impairment and disability, thus making the personal political. The new and ongoing challenges we currently face, require us to look for opportunities to act in solidarity through our academic research and community work to fight against ableism and sexism and other intersecting systems of oppression. This session invites papers that explore new frontiers for feminist disability studies. In particular, presenters are encouraged to submit papers that examine the possibilities of enriching feminist disability studies by incorporating an intersectionality lens, including papers that explore gender and disability in relation to racism, heterosexism, transphobia, classism, and/or ageism. Theoretical and conceptual papers as well as papers based on original research that adopts a feminist disability studies framework are welcomed.

### **Feminist, Socialist Perspectives on Genocide as an Extreme Form of Racism**

Co-organizers: Sima Aprahamian, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University  
Karin Doerr, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, and Indira Prahst,  
Langara College

Inquiries: [sima.aprahamian@concordia.ca](mailto:sima.aprahamian@concordia.ca)

The proposed session calls for papers on socialist, feminist studies of literary, artistic expressions, narratives, responses to and of Genocide. Genocide as extreme form of racism still with us in the 21st century in spite human rights activism and international laws against its prevention. We are looking specially for papers that bring an intersectional approach.

### **Harm Reduction: Pre-Figuring Anti-Capitalist Futures**

Organizer: Jamie-Lynn Magnusson, University of Toronto

Inquiries: [jamielynn.magnusson@utoronto.ca](mailto:jamielynn.magnusson@utoronto.ca)

In this session we will examine Harm Reduction praxis in terms of its radical potential to prefigure anti-capitalist futures. A central idea organizing our discussions is that global racial capitalism produces Black and Indigenous and People of Colour lives as criminalized, disposable, dislocated and historically exteriorized vis a vis proletarian production. The material basis for this necro-political logic is rooted in the role that so-called primitive accumulation plays as constitutive of capitalism and its reproduction and ongoing expansion. Citing Coulthard (2014), our analysis changes the story arc of how we narrate capitalism, centring the role that genocide, slavery, dispossession, debt peonage, rape and indentured labour play in the ongoing reproduction of capitalism. Following Bain (2019), against these necro-politics, harm reduction praxis insists on the

'liveability' of lives produced as disposable, and nurtures self-determination in relation to innovative genres of collective life characterized by a radical caring consciousness. These politics, Bain argues, have always been a core feature of Queer Black feminist anti-capitalist organizing. Our discussion will talk across harm reduction sites, focusing on the collective organizing of queer/trans BIPOC sex workers, migrant and undocumented queer/trans and women-identified workers, and queer/trans BIPOC youth. The discussion will be informed by harm reduction practice and solidarity building in pandemic times. References Coulthard, G. (2014). *Red skins, white masks: Rejecting the colonial politics of recognition*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press. Bain, B. (2019). *The practice of care as radical consciousness*. Contributed to *Violence and the Dispossessed Revolutionary Subject*, a panel organized by Khosla, P., Bain, B., and Magnusson, J., for the National Women's Studies Association held in San Francisco.

#### References

Coulthard, G. (2014). *Red skins, white masks: Rejecting the colonial politics of recognition*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Bain, B. (2019). *The practice of care as radical consciousness*. Contributed to *Violence and the Dispossessed Revolutionary Subject*, a panel organized by Khosla, P., Bain, B., and Magnusson, J., for the National Women's Studies Association held in San Francisco.

#### **Is there Still Hope for Public-Serving Universities in Canada?**

Organizer: Claire Polster, University of Regina

Inquiries: [claire.polster@uregina.ca](mailto:claire.polster@uregina.ca)

Joint Interdisciplinary Session with the Canadian Sociological Association

Since the 1980s, and with added urgency since the advent of COVID-19, researchers and others have been documenting, warning us about, and urging us to oppose the progressive corporatization of Canada's universities and its many harmful implications for the public's - and the planet's - interests. Despite the thousands of books and papers written, numerous conferences held, and countless small and large-scale acts of resistance, the corporatization process proceeds apace, and opposition to it remains fragmented, sporadic, and largely ineffective. This session aims to open space for frank and serious discussion about whether broad-based, sustained, and effective opposition to the corporatization of Canada's public universities can still be mounted or if the battle to reclaim our universities as public-serving institutions is all but lost. If it IS still possible to oppose corporatization, how can this be achieved concretely? If this is not possible, what alternatives to the corporate university exist or can be built? Papers in this panel, whether historical, analytical, or theoretical, should NOT simply critique corporatization. Rather, they should focus on ideas for, and/or descriptions of, projects that seek to move forward from corporatization by transforming the social relations that make it possible.

## **Queer/Trans Feminist Anti-Capitalist Response to COVID-19 and Crises**

Co-organizers: Ian Liuji Tian, University of Toronto and Sabra Rezaei, independent scholar

Inquiries: liujia.tian@mail.utoronto.ca

This is the time imbued with the potential for transformation on one hand, and unspeakable trauma, violence and death on the other. Covid-19 is more than a glitch or disruption in capitalist production, circulation and consumption. It intensifies violence already present in marginalized communities, demonstrated by the struggle of BLM in the Anglophone world. A queer, feminist and anti-capitalist response to the ongoing pandemic of racism and COVID-19 requires careful examinations of the converging and diverging movement of capital, affect, culture, raced bodies, sexualities and animal-human relations. How does the pandemic tell us about the environmental catastrophes induced by racial capitalism everywhere? How do activists respond to these continuing crises? What kinds of ethical questions does queer feminist anti-capitalism pose regarding the intensified geopolitical tensions? How are such tensions saturated by/global financial capital? How do we map new formations of racial biopolitics and necropolitics? In this session, we invite contributions from across geographies to discuss these pressing issues include but are not limited to: Mutual aid and Queer Reproduction in times of crises Relocating Blackness in Queer/Trans feminist Marxism Marxist Feminism, Whiteness and the Racial Politics of Knowledge Queer and Trans of Color and Diaspora critique and anti-capitalism Risks, borders and sexuality Biopolitics and Necropolitics Geopolitics, Cold War and sexualities Queer development, neoliberalism and militarized violence

## **Rethinking Left Economics**

Organizer: Ingo Schmidt, Athabasca University

Inquiries : ingos@athabascau.ca

May be cross-listed with another association (TBA)

In the 1980s, during a time of retreat, many on the left declared the days of grand narratives over. At the same time, the grandest narrative ever, neoliberal economics, gripped ruling elites and masses alike. A few decades later, a series of economic crises and deepening social polarization undermined the power of neoliberal ideology. A new right filled the ensuing 'narrative vacuum' while the left, notwithstanding occasional mass mobilizations, remains splintered. Against this background, this session invites papers speaking to the following questions:

- What can the left learn from neoliberalism's past success in rallying diverse constituencies behind a unifying program?
- What can today's left learn from past engagements of the left with economic ideas, notably Marxism and left Keynesianism?
- Which role does the critique of various strands of economic thinking play in developing alternative policies?

- What is required to advance a left economic narrative around which collective identities and capacities might be built?

### **Running Different Races: Challenging Meritocracy and Practicing Solidarity**

Organizer : Rui Pinto, Demokratie Cafe Reutlingen

Inquiries: [bencao.rui@sapo.pt](mailto:bencao.rui@sapo.pt)

After the end of colonialism in Angola, Africa, my family and I moved to Portugal and began a new life. My own life story is bound up with African class struggles against whiteness and colonial ideologies of power. As Manning Marable (2001) stresses, when we talk about race, we do not mean a biological or genetic category, but rather, a way of interpreting differences between people which creates or reinforces inequalities among them. Racism means that we are not in a meritocratic race, since some runners are disadvantaged. The difficult political and moral challenge is to create a movement that has the capacity to transform the real structure of racial power in society, which also means uprooting racism in human consciousness. This panel invites papers that challenge meritocratic rhetorics and think through histories of racisms, as well as the possibilities for practicing solidarity so that all runners can finally be on the same starting line.

### **Strategizing Resistance: Achieving an Intersectional Politics Against the Right**

Co-organizers: Kaitlin Peters, York University and Hena Mehta, York University

Inquiries: [ktln.peters@gmail.com](mailto:ktln.peters@gmail.com)

The xenophobic scapegoating of Othered populations that has led to the rise of the alt-right and Trump in America, the allure of Johnson's Brexit, and Modi's apartheid-style policies in India are all demonstrations of a politics that uses the condemnation of red herrings to make promises about revitalizing a nostalgized past that no longer exists under globalized capitalism. To combat the right, many among the Left have focused on political tactics that will foster solidarity with the white working-class, who are often viewed as vulnerable to right-wing rhetoric. This type of political strategizing can lead to the perpetuation of the same racist, xenophobic and misogynistic rhetoric in Leftist spaces that is proudly claimed by the right today. This session aims to explore solutions to the problem of an atomized working-class against the political right by examining strategies that account for and ameliorate the uniquely violent experiences of racialized, colonized, and gendered people in what are purported to be liberatory spaces and politics. To this end, this panel will focus on interrogating strategies that facilitate the achievement of a historically-rooted, materialist working-class politics that open up avenues for the creation of radical solidarities between diverse working-class populations and between workers in the Global North and South. Accordingly, this panel intends to explore strategies that do not demand marginalized groups sacrifice their safety in Leftist spaces. In achieving this, this panel intends to demonstrate that neither whiteness nor masculinity need

remain hegemonic in Left political spaces in order to foster solidarity with the white working-class and those who are considered vulnerable to right politics.

### **Social Orders as Identity Politics**

Organizer: Abraham Weizfeld, Galerie Fôkus

Inquiries: saalaha@fokus.name

The nature of cultural identity has not been considered to be a social force of any consequence while class identity has been proposed as the driving force of historical developments, even though it has failed to demonstrate such vitality, in spite of the cyclical contradictions of capitalist economics. The particular conditions that prevail are the combination of national identity with a class sectoral position that arrives at a relative double oppression of both exploitation and national colonization. This dynamic is evident in the post WWII anti-colonial revolutions and which is now operative in the metropolis as the Black Lives Matter revolt. Another instance of such a parallel construction is the nature of gender differentiation whereby women of national minorities suffer from a triple oppression due to the patriarchal domination that replicates the class oppression hierarchy. Such is the rooted-in nature of womyn's oppression under the patriarchal hierarchy that this social caste is entrenched within all the classes of society. Such is the case with the Jewish nationality as well which faces national subjugation as such apart from any class condition. This form of oppression is the nature of social orders in the given civil society. While this conception of social oppression is taken up in the classical writings of Karl Marx it has not been incorporated into the doctrine of classical Marxism. This session invites papers on these themes, especially from a Jewish Bundist perspective which has an extensive and repressed history that has a particular significance when considered in any other national identity context, such as Black Americans or First Nations struggles.