



Centre for Urban Schooling  
Centre de la Scolarité Urbaine

Communities  
Universities  
Schools



# Annual Report

## 2015 - 2017

### Our Mission

The Centre for Urban Schooling was established in 2005 to connect OISE to urban schools and communities. The Centre conducts research on and advocates for critical practice that is focused on how to better serve historically marginalized and racialized children and youth in public schools.

### Our Research Program

Our research program includes projects in the areas of critical practitioner research in urban schools as well as projects related to critical teacher education and professional development, critical literacy and media studies, and youth participatory action research.

### Current Research Projects

Performed Ethnography for Critical Teacher Education

2000 - Present

Tara Goldstein

Performed ethnography involves turning the findings of ethnographic research into a play script that can be read aloud by a group of participants or performed before audiences. The aim of this longitudinal, multi-decade research study is to examine what happens when I use one of my performed ethnographies in the teacher education courses I teach at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto and the workshops I facilitate at academic and education conferences.

Performed ethnographies under study include: *Hong Kong, Canada* (2000/2003) (research funded by SSHRC from 1996-1999); *Snakes and Ladders* (2004/2010) (research funded by

SSHRC from 2001-2004); *Zero Tolerance* (2008); *Harriet's House* (2010) and *Ana's Shadow* (2012) (research funded by SSHRC from 2011-2014); *Castor and Sylvie* (2016) and *Out of School* (2017) (research funded by SSHRC from 2016-2019).

Critical Practitioner Research Collaborative: A Research Link with Students and Faculty at the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania

2009 - Present

Rob Simon, Will Edwards

The Critical Practitioner Research Collaborative (CPRC) connects faculty, teachers, and graduate students at OISE with colleagues at the Graduate School of Education at University of Pennsylvania. Events this period included several video links that have allowed graduate students at the University of Pennsylvania and OISE share their research in progress and analyze data collaboratively, a panel presentation at AERA (2016), meet-ups at conferences such as the Ethnography in Education Research Forum and AERA, and a joint US and Canadian screening of the film "After Night" (2015; [www.afternightfilm.com](http://www.afternightfilm.com)).

The Toronto Writing Project at the Centre for Urban Schooling

2014 - Present

Rob Simon, Nicole West-Burns, Will Edwards, Ben Gallagher

The Toronto Writing Project (TWP) is based on the model of the National Writing Project, the largest research and professional development network by and for teachers in North America, which uses practitioner research as a vehicle for grassroots change efforts in classrooms, schools, and communities (<http://www.nwp.org/>). Funded by the Ruth and Alexander Dworkin Tolerance fund, TWP supports activist educators to address equity issues in their classrooms through writing and research by conducting inquiries into their own classroom practices and share knowledge with peers who may face related issues teaching diverse students in urban schools. Composed of teachers, activists, and researchers who view writing as a mechanism for addressing equity issues across subject matter, across core subjects, TWP encourages formal and informal research opportunities for youth and teachers working individually and collaboratively to address equity issues in their classrooms, schools, and communities. More information available at: <http://www.torontowritingproject.com>. This term, TWP officially formed an Advisory Board made up of critical educators in Toronto. In 2017, the Toronto Writing Project hosted its first Spring Institute for 75 participating teachers. Organized by Nicole West-Burns, the event included a plenary talk by Linda Christensen (Lewis and Clark College). Planning for the 2018 spring institute is underway, which will take place on June 2, including a plenary talk by Vivian Vasquez (American University).

## The Experiences of LGBTQ Families in Ontario Schools

2014 - 2020

Tara Goldstein, Pam Baer, Austen Koecher, benjamin lee hicks, Kate Reid

The goal of this research study is to examine the experiences of lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) families in public schools across Ontario and provide knowledge and strategies to counter discrimination and harassment LGBTQ families face in schools. Activities in 2015-2017 included conducting twenty video interviews in urban, suburban and rural communities in the Greater Toronto Area and the Greater Ottawa Area and posting these video interviews on our website: [lgtbqfamiliespeakout.ca](http://lgtbqfamiliespeakout.ca)

We also have completed the first script of the performed ethnography *Out at School* which is based on the interviews we have conducted.

Funded by SSHRC from 2016-2019.

## Youth Research Lab

2017 - Present

Rubén Gaztambide

The Youth Research Lab is a Hub of youth-oriented research with a particular commitment to participatory methods and to working with youth who experience marginalization within schools. Established in 2017, the lab brings together several projects with a focus on school-based youth participatory action research and supporting the work of adult facilitators and allies. Funded primarily through the Youth Solidarities Across Borders SSHRC Insight project, the project began as an outgrowth of Proyecto Latinx, a collaborative partnership with the Toronto District School Board that sought to provide Latinx youth with opportunities to create knowledge about their own experiences and ideas for how to improve Latinx student engagement in schools.

## University of Toronto Schools Youth Participatory Action Research

2015 - 2018

Rubén Gaztambide

UTS YPAR is an OISE and University of Toronto Schools project that engages the complexities of doing youth-led research and activism on social problems at in elite school environment, where social justice work takes on elitist meanings and where students enjoy relatively privileged educational opportunities. In 2017-2018, for example, UTS YPAR projects came together under the theme of community, exploring what it means to create more accountable communities in elite contexts. Our student-researchers explore how intersectionality, colonialism

and women of colour feminism impact how the student researchers think about and approach their research questions. These frameworks informed their research methodologies, the manner in which they collect their data and how they approach and define their actions pieces.

Funded by a grant from the Newton Foundation (March 2015).

### Addressing Injustices: Teachers and Adolescents Coauthoring Social Justice-Oriented Literacy Curriculum

2015 - Present

Rob Simon, Ty Walkland, benjamin lee hicks, Ben Gallagher, Pam Baer, Sarah Evis (TDSB)

Funded by an Early Researcher Award from the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation (March 2015), this project involves 150 students and 100 teacher candidates over five years as partners in co-creating arts-based projects and social justice curriculum for five young adult novels that explore issues of ethnic, racial, religious or gender identity, cultural, and the function of power in society. More information is available at [www.addressinginjustices.com](http://www.addressinginjustices.com).

Funded by the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation, 2015-2021.

## Other Initiatives from 2015-2017

### Queer @ OISE

Shawna Carroll (2017), benjamin lee hicks (2015-2016)

Queer at OISE, formerly 'Queer Space Chat', is a space is for LGBTQ2SI+ identifying OISE students to discuss queer issues and identities in schools. The group meets 1-2 times a month and each year the focus of the group differs, depending on the group's interests. In the 2017-2018 academic year, the Queer at OISE participants aim to create community, workshops for other OISE students, and education opportunities within the group. All OISE students that identify as LGBTQ2SI+ are welcome to join.

### Partnership with Facing History and Ourselves

CUS has developed a partnership with Facing History and Ourselves and co-sponsors initiatives including summer institutes directed by Facing History educators. These institutes support educators to critically address complex social, cultural, and historical issues in their classrooms, including teaching about genocide and the legacy of residential schools.

Stolen Lives: The Indigenous Peoples of Canada and the Indian Residential Schools

August 1-3, 2017

Facing History and Ourselves: Holocaust and Human Behavior

August 14-16, 2017

CHC2 Canadian History through a Facing History Lens

August 23-25, 2017

Facing History and Ourselves: Holocaust and Human Behavior

August 15-19, 2016

CHC2 Canadian History through a Facing History Lens

August 24-26, 2016

## CUS Research Brief

This seasonal publication shares ongoing research activities and initiatives supported, promoted, or conducted by the Centre for Urban Schooling. The 2016 issue profiled three current research projects that support both teacher and student equity work in schools. These include two youth participatory action research projects conducted by Professor Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández, CUS post-doctoral fellow Dr. Leila Angod, and Dr. Cristina Guerrero, and a brief profile of the Toronto Writing Project. (PDF of this issue can be found online: <http://cus.oise.utoronto.ca/UserFiles/File/CUS-Research-Brief-Summer2016-FINAL.pdf>)

## In:Cite

*in:cite* ([incitejournal.org](http://incitejournal.org)) is an online youth research journal led by youth researchers. *in:cite* is an online space and community for sharing and collecting knowledge by, for, and created with young people. We are guided by critical race, decolonial, feminist, queer, and intersectional approaches. *in:cite* seeks to animate the work that young people are doing within and across communities to re-imagine and re-fashion just worlds with educators, artists, activists, and scholars. *In:Cite* developed from YPAR collaborations between OISE and University of Toronto Schools. First issue is currently in review, with plans to publish in summer 2018.

## Events in 2016-2017

Indigenous Education Studies: A Writing Conference for Writers and Aspiring Writers

September 30, 2016

Other sponsors: *Curriculum Inquiry*, CTL

## What's in a label? The ideological baggage of Arab and/or Muslim social identity labels

November 2, 2016

Andre Mazawi, Prof, UBC

Hawa Y.Mire, Outburst! Director

Heba Elshreif, PhD candidate, OISE

Raja Khoury, Director, Canadian Arab Institute

Sameena Eidoo, Assistant Director of Education, Multi-faith Center U of T

## Gailey Road 10th Anniversary Celebration

January 22, 2017

This event celebrated the tenth anniversary of Tara Goldstein's Toronto-based independent theatre company Gailey Road Productions and included reading of excerpts from the performed ethnography *Out at School* based on the findings of Tara's SSHRC-funded research project The Experiences of LGBTQ Families in Ontario Schools. *Out at School* is written by Tara and five members of the research team: Pam Baer, Jenny Salisbury,, Austen Koecher, benjamin lee hicks, and Kate Reid.

Other sponsor: Gailey Road Productions

## Decolonizing the Curriculum

January 22, 2017

Other sponsors: *Curriculum Inquiry*, AERA Division B

## The Toronto Writing Project Spring Institute

May 6, 2017

The Toronto Writing Project's first Spring Institute brought together educators and community partners from across the Greater Toronto Area to explore the power of writing. The Institute was made possible through the generous support of the Ruth and Alexander Dworkin Tolerance Fund, which was established to promote collaborations and professional learning between the

Centre and local teachers and schools. We were fortunate to welcome a distinguished and internationally known speaker and writer, Linda Christensen, whose work has focused on issues of equity in education and building communities with teachers across urban sites. Details, including images and video of the plenary talk, are available at: [www.torontowritingproject.com](http://www.torontowritingproject.com).

## Scholarships

### William Waters Scholarship

2015-2016 Winners

Veronica Fredericks  
benjamin lee hicks  
Tyler Walkland

2016-2017 Winner

benjamin lee hicks

2017-2018 Winner

Francisco Eloi Fagundes Filho

### William Waters Graduate Awards in Teaching Education

2016-2017 Winners

Betty Ann Appiagyei  
Simreet Aulakh  
Rebecca Grace Wing-Yan Chui  
Rachel Fixman  
Jeff Nault  
Amentha Rajagobal  
Jung-Sun Song  
Khojestah Yasseen

### Miyumi Sasaki Initial Teacher Education Scholarship

2015-2016 Winners

Audrey Madsen  
Marlon Redley-Smith

2016-2017 Winner

Uthish Ganesh

## Post-Doctoral Fellowships

2015-2017

Gillian Parekh

A recent graduate from the doctoral program in Critical Disability Studies from York University and Research Coordinator at the Toronto District School Board, Gillian Parekh worked as a SSHRC postdoctoral fellow at the Centre for Urban Schooling with Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández. Gillian's research includes critical perspectives on special and inclusive education, social reproduction and structural organization of education institutions, and students' experiences of social citizenship, belonging and exclusion in school. Drawing on critical disability and citizenship theory, Gillian's work employs a framework of analysis that centralizes students' experience of inclusion, recognition, and shared power as an indicator of structural equity in schools. Her postdoctoral plans involve expanding her analysis across student demographic characteristics and program placements as well as explore why students' sense of social citizenship erodes over time, particularly as students approach graduation.

2015-2017

Leila Angod

Leila Angod's current project with the Centre for Urban Schooling is a youth participatory action research study of socioeconomic diversity at the University of Toronto Schools. Her other writing projects include the heteronormative impulse of the volunteer abroad encounter, We Day, and the One Laptop per Child program.

2016-2017

Lee Airton

Lee Airton's publications on gender and sexual diversity issues in education have appeared in Curriculum Inquiry and Sex Education. They also blog about gender-neutral pronoun usage, user support and non-binary gender identification at [theyismypronoun.com](http://theyismypronoun.com). Lee currently has served on the executive committees of the Canadian Association for Teacher Education and the Queer Studies in Education Special Interest Group of AERA. During their fellowship with the Centre for Urban Schooling Lee Airton was a sessional lecturer in the Master of Teaching program, and facilitated a workshop with Tara Goldstein's research team on the usefulness of affect theory in gender and sexuality education.