

December 2024

INSTITUTE FOR TECHNOSCIENCE & SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



Credit: Zoran Svilar

Acknowledgements

We recognize that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships with the territories upon which York University campuses are located that precede the establishment of York University. York University acknowledges its presence on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto has been care taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Huron-Wendat. It is now home to many First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities. We acknowledge the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region

December 2024

Message from Director

It's been a busy time at ITS since I came back as Director after my sabbatical.

We have a new Executive Committee, who you can find [here](#). A big thanks to everyone who sat on it over the last two years and to those who've agreed to sit on it this year and next.

We held our first Annual Research Workshop virtually in December, after postponing it due to the CUPE strike earlier in 2024. Another big thank you to the organizers, presenters, keynote speakers, and everyone who came to hear about each other's research. You can find more about the event on the website and watch the keynote on our [new YouTube channel](#).

We have our first collaborative project idea emerge from the Annual Research Workshop, centred on the idea of "toxic techno-cultures" – ranging from toxic gaming culture through to the influence of 'tech bros' on technoscientific change. We're planning to develop this idea in the coming year as a collaborative research grant of some sort; please get in touch if you're interested in getting involved. Another big thanks to Kelly Bergstrom, our interim Deputy Director, for suggesting the topic and everyone else for their productive discussions during the Workshop.

Finally, we welcome another [Visiting Scholar](#) this term. Professor [Michael Richardson](#) will be visiting ITS between February and August 2025. He works at the University of New South Wales, Australia, where he co-directs the [Media Futures Hub and the Autonomous Media Lab](#), and is an Associate Investigator with the [ARC Centre of Excellence on Automated Decision-Making + Society](#) (ADM+S). His research examines technology, power, witnessing, trauma, and affect in contexts of war, security, and surveillance. We will hold a seminar in the coming months for him to present his research but do get in touch with myself or Hazel if you'd like to connect with Michael. If you're interested in sponsoring a Visiting Scholar or Visiting Student, then please also get in touch with me or Hazel.

Have a great 2025!

Kean Birch

INSTITUTE FOR TECHNOSCIENCE & SOCIETY SEMINAR SERIES

Oct 9

11:00 AM EDT
In Person @
York University

Koray Caliskan

Parsons School of
Design, The New School,
United States



Nov 6

10:30 AM EDT
via Zoom



Barbara Prainsack

Center for the Study of
Contemporary Solidarity,
University of Vienna, Austria

Jan 29

11:00 AM EDT
via Zoom

Kristin Asdal

TIK Center for Technology,
Innovation and Culture,
University of Oslo, Norway



Feb 12

11:00 AM EDT
via Zoom



Fabian Muniesa

Centre de Sociologie de
l'Innovation, Mines Paris,
France

Mar 26

11:00 AM EDT
via Zoom

Cecilia Rikap

Institute for Innovation
and Public Purpose, UCL,
United Kingdom



FUNDED BY ONTARIO RESEARCH CHAIR IN SCIENCE POLICY



THE 7th ANNUAL PrivaCI SYMPOSIUM

The 7th annual PrivaCI Symposium, which will be held on **19 and 20 May 2025**, in Brussels, Belgium. The symposium is hosted by [imec-SMIT, Vrije Universiteit](#)

[Brussel](#) and the [Brussels Privacy Hub](#).

The aim of the symposium is to foster interaction among diverse communities of research and practice using Contextual Integrity to reason about privacy, and to design and evaluate, craft regulation, and generate formal logics for privacy.

As the symposium makes its debut in Europe, the 7th Annual PrivaCI Symposium will focus on how the Contextual Integrity framework can address pressing issues in the European landscape of privacy and data protection. The symposium aims to provide a platform for exploring the application of Contextual Integrity in various legal contexts, including specific challenges such as compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the evolving European Digital Strategy (which encompasses the Data Governance Act, the Data Act, the AI Act, the Digital Services Act, and the Digital Markets Act), and the broader implications of living in increasingly digital societies. More information: <https://privaci.info/symposium/2025/cfp.html>

IMPORTANT DATES

All deadlines are AoE (anywhere on Earth).

- Register an intent/abstract: 7 February 2025
- Submissions Due: 14 February 2025
- Notifications: 21 March 2025
- Symposium dates: **19 and 20 May 2025**

HOW TO SUBMIT

Please make submissions using [the submission site](#).

Reflections from the 2024 STS Nord/North Summer School

My name is Elif Memis, and I am a second-year PhD student in the York University Science and Technology Studies Graduate Program. This summer I had the amazing opportunity to attend the first annual STS Nord/North Summer School at CIRST, UQAM in Montreal, Quebec. Initiated by Canada-based STS scholars such as Dr. Florence Millerand, Dr. Norma Mollers, and Dr. Kean Birch, this summer school aims to foster a Canadian STS community with PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, and professors. I am so glad I participated in several hands-on workshops, seminars, and field trips during the three-day summer school. Attending multiple seminars on navigating academic careers where experienced professors offered insights on publishing, teaching, and researching was highly valuable, especially for PhD students.

I met over twenty STS scholars during this summer school, and we had networking sessions over coffee and lunch breaks. Meeting all these attendees from all over Canada was extremely intellectually stimulating because I had the opportunity to chat with STS scholars at different stages of their careers about their research interests, also just about themselves. Talking about our current projects in small groups based on similar research areas helped us discuss different theories and methodologies to approach our research questions. The program included Dr. Jane Calvert's keynote lecture where she introduced some major thematic takeaways from her new book: [*Place for Science and Technology Studies*](#) (MIT Press, 2024).

Every participant co-facilitated a Q&A session with their peers for a designated seminar or field trip, which created a hands-on collaboration environment among peers.

We visited different research centers where applied scientists and artists work together to create different technologies. I had visited Montreal several times in the past and saw the Society for Arts and Technology (SAT) while wandering around the city but never had the chance to check out the interior or watch the short films projected inside the dome. I was fascinated by watching award-winning short films inside the dome, hearing sounds, and seeing visuals from various angles. Talking with SAT engineers, artists, and project directors about the different auditory and visual technologies they utilize to create and play movies in such a cinematic atmosphere was the highlight for me. I'd suggest interested STS scholars apply to the 2026 summer school to experience all these workshops firsthand.

Elif Memis

News

Upcoming events

See flyer for the [2024-2025 ITS Seminar Series](#) on page 3.

We regularly update the website, please check it out [here](#).

Past events

ITS held three Seminars this Fall: two in the [ITS Seminar Series](#) (see p.3) and one in the [Technoableism Seminar Series](#), which had been delayed from earlier in the year. See [here](#) for more information.

ITS is running a monthly [Postdoc Seminar Series](#) this academic year. The Series enables ITS Postdocs to come together with their supervisors to showcase their research, to get feedback, and to build a social and intellectual community. Annetta and Sileshi both presented their research in the Fall term (see pp.6-8 for more information about the research being done by Postdocs at ITS).

ITS held two [Research Support Workshops](#) this Summer and Fall. Organized by Kean Birch, one addressed the SSHRC Insight Grant scheme on 26 August 2024 and another addressed the SSHRC Insight Development Grant scheme on 16 December 2024. Both were for ITS members who are working on their draft applications. We will hold more in the

future; please make suggestions for other Research Support Workshops you'd like to see us organize.

ITS ran an [ECR Research Careers Workshop](#) for postdoctoral and other members interested in applying for academic jobs.

Finally, ITS held its [1st Annual ITS Research Workshop](#) on 5 and 6 December 2024. Our Annual Research Workshop included presenters from all ITS Research Clusters and a keynote presentation by Vass Bednar & Denise Hearn, authors "[The Big Fix: How Companies Capture Markets and Harm Canadians](#)" Click [here](#) for more information and [here](#) for a video of the keynote on our new YouTube channel – please do subscribe!

Postdocs

ITS would like to introduce our Postdocs to our other members in this newsletter.

Sileshi Hirko



Sileshi Hirko holds a PhD in Law from University Ottawa, an LLM from Harvard Law School, and another LLM in IP and Competition Law from the MIPLC, Germany. Sileshi is an Adjunct

Professor at Osgoode Hall Law School and a Connected Mind's Postdoctoral Fellow affiliated with Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies at York University. For his postdoc research project, he is working with Profs. Teshager Dagne & Laleh Seyyed-Kalamantari from York University and Prof. Bitu Amani from Queen's University. Focused on the governance of emerging digital technologies, his postdoctoral research project explores approaches to inclusive and equitable regulation of AI-enabled health devices in Canadian healthcare. He has published books & scholarly works in reputable national and international journals.

video games—a concept that remains insufficiently defined. Through an online survey and interviews with self-identified toxic players across different game genres, she will draw out categories and terms that elucidate how these players explain their toxic behaviors and how these behaviors connect with game mechanics, objectives, and genre-specific features. Ibrahim seeks to identify strategies that players believe could deter their toxic behavior and to propose genre-specific definitions of toxicity. Ultimately, her research aims to inform game developers and reveal how genre and non-representational features may inadvertently foster toxic tendencies.

Mai Ibrahim



Mai Ibrahim holds a PhD in Communication, Rhetoric, and Digital Media from North Carolina State University, USA, and is a recipient of

the LA&PS Postdoctoral Fellowship (2024-2025). She is collaborating with Professor Kelly Bergstrom, an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and Media Studies and Interim Deputy Director of the Institute for Technoscience and Society.

Mai's project, *A Genre-Based Approach to Toxicity in Online Gaming*, aims to advance the understanding of toxicity in

Kennedy Opande



Kennedy Opande completed his PhD at the Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies, University of

Nairobi, Kenya. Kennedy's Postdoctoral project is titled, "An ethnographic study of neuro-technology flows in East Africa". Kennedy's findings from this study will be helpful in designing 'culturally relevant' neurological interventions in Kenya and East Africa, as well as understanding global flows of biotechnologies, and inequities between the North and South. The

findings will also contribute to recommendations on how to improve care and treatment for populations with neurological conditions. Kennedy's research falls under a LA&PS initiative Championing Emerging Black Scholars. Kennedy is working with his supervisor, Denielle Elliott, a Professor in the Departments of Anthropology and Social Science. Professor Elliott holds a York Research Chair in Injured Minds and is the Deputy Director of the Institute for Technoscience and Society.

Lina Beatriz Pinto Garcia



As an ethnographer of science, medicine, and the environment, Lina Beatriz Pinto Garcia is

particularly interested in how armed violence and its historical legacies shape health outcomes and influence the understanding and management of diseases in Latin America, with a focus on neglected tropical diseases and neurodegenerative conditions in Colombia. As part of the Connected Minds program at York University, her current project investigates how emerging pharmaceutical technologies for Alzheimer's prevention intersect with the preservation of personal, familial, and collective memory in post-

conflict Colombia, particularly in Yarumal, Antioquia.

Anetta Proskurovska



Anetta Proskurovska is a Postdoctoral Visitor at Institute for Technoscience & Society and a course director in the

Development Studies Graduate Program at York University. She is working with Kean Birch on a SSHRC-funded project titled "Digital Data Value Paradox". Before moving to Canada, she led the ABTALS project, a public-private collaboration at the Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER), investigating the re-making of property and financial markets through blockchain and its socio-economic impact. Her interests focus on FinTech, emerging trends in digital data valuation, the tokenization of property rights, and broader information infrastructure shaping these processes.

Recent Publications

Books

Lightman, B. and Sera-Shriar, E. (eds) (2024) *Victorian Interdisciplinarity and the Sciences*. University of Pittsburgh Press.

Pinto-García, L. (2025) *Maraña: War and Disease in the Colombian Jungle*. University of Chicago Press, [here](#).

Journal Articles

Birch, K., Marquis, S. and Silva, G.C. (2024) [Understanding data valuation: Valuing Google's data assets](#), *IEEE Transactions on Technology & Society* 5(2): 183-190. [Open Access]

Birch, K. (2024) [Assetization as a mode of techno-economic governance: Knowledge, education, and personal data in the UN's System of National Accounts](#), *Economy & Society* 53(1): 15-38. [Open Access]

Corrin, T., Cairney, P. and Kennedy, E.B. (2024) The Production and Utility of Evidence Synthesis During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Canada: Perspectives of Evidence Synthesis Producers, *Evidence & Policy*, [here](#)

Desai, S., Mutsuddi, R. and Astell, A. (2024) Enhancing Prompt Perception in Dementia: A Comparative Study of Mixed Reality Cue Modalities, *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living* 6: 1419263. [here](#)

Douglas, C. M. and Grunebaum, S. (2024) Lessons learned from the Canadian Fabry Disease Initiative for future risk-sharing and managed access agreements for pharmaceutical and advanced therapies in Canada, *Health Policy* 143: 105044, [here](#)

El Morr, C. (2024). The Need for a Feminist Approach to Artificial Intelligence, *Proceedings of the AAAI Symposium Series* 4(1): 332-333, [here](#)

Gebresselassie, M. (2024) Labor issues from the perspective of drivers on the Uber and Lyft apps and the impact on riders who use wheelchairs, *Travel Behavior and Society*, [here](#).

Gebresselassie, M. (2024) Why app-hailed transportation remains inadequately accessible to wheelchair users, *Disability & Society*, [here](#).

Han, Y. (2024) Interrogating Safeguards Under the Mental Health Act in Ontario: Towards a Postmodernist Relational Understanding of Disability, *Studies in Social Justice* 18(3): 481-498, [here](#).

Hassan, Y. (2024) The Politics of Memory: NLP Models as Liberating Artifacts, *Science, Technology and Society*, [here](#).

Howson, P., Rosales, A., Jutel, O., Gloerich, I., Llorens, M. G., de Vries, A., Crandall, J. and Dolan, P. (2024) Crypto/Space: Computational parasitism, virtual land grabs, and the production of Web3 Exit zones, *Political Geography*, 103210. [here](#)

Laywine, N. (2024) All that glitters: extraction as communication in international voluntourism practice, *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 1–20. [here](#)

Laywine, N., Simon V. and Sinnreich, A. (2024) Laughing to Keep From [User Input Undefined]: ChatGPT, Jewish Humor, and Cultural Erasure, *First Monday* 29(7), [here](#)

MacDonald, M.E., Burton, N., Aseffa, F., and Toole, J. (2024) Equity in Care: Midwifery in Ontario during the COVID-19 Pandemic, *Canadian Journal of Midwifery Research and Practice* 23(1): 89-103, [here](#)

Ott, M., Murphy, N., Lingard, L., Slessarov, M., ... and Weijer, C. (2024) Sowing “seeds of trust”: How trust in normothermic regional perfusion is built in a continuum of care, *American Journal of Transplantation*, [here](#)

Book Chapters

Gehl, R.W. and Lawson, S. (2024) Automated Masspersonal Social Engineering. In *The De Gruyter Handbook of Robots in Society and Culture*, edited by Leopoldina Fortunati and Autumn Edwards (eds), pp.119–32. De Gruyter, [here](#).

Hassan, Y. (2024) Machine Learning as a State-building Experiment: AI and Development in Africa. In *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Machine Learning*, edited by C. Borch & J. P. Pardo-Guerra (eds). Oxford University Press, [here](#).

Kroker, K. (2025) Health and the Body. In, *A Cultural History of Sleep and Dreaming in the Age of Revolutions*,

edited by Benjamin Reiss and Ann Plane (eds). Bloomsbury.

Steigerwald, J. (2024) Experiments in Becoming. In *Art, Nature, and Self-formation in the Age of Goethe*, edited by C. Flodin, G. Gentry and M. Pirholt (eds), pp.245-67. De Gruyter.

Steigerwald, J. (2024) Kant and Organic Life. In *Kant and the Feeling of Life*, edited by J.Mensch (ed.), pp.293-318. SUNY.

Research grants

Connected Minds

“Between Alzheimer's and War: The Struggle for Intimate and Social Memory in Yarumal, Colombia” was awarded a Connected Minds Seed Grant, with Denielle Elliott as PI and Shayna Rosenbaum and Lina Pinto García as Co-Investigators.

Open Research Area 8

“Between Economy and Democracy: Reorganizing Research Evaluation through Metadata in the Digital Era” (\$492,000) was awarded to Kean Birch who is collaborating with researchers in the UK, Germany, and France on this international and interdisciplinary project examining the impacts of commercial and open metadata on research evaluation in universities. Funding for the project across the four countries totals around \$2,400,000.

Member Profiles

IT regularly welcomes new members, and we want to introduce them and existing members to everyone through this newsletter.

Technoscientific Economies & Technoscientific Injustices

Elif Memis, Graduate Fellow



Elif Memis is a doctoral student in the York University Science & Technology Studies graduate program with a BSc (Hons) background in computer and educational technologies. Elif's research interests revolve around social justice and civic engagement, grounded in critical digital literacies and feminist media studies. Her current research analyzes how educational video games inform youths' civic knowledge and democratic behavior in Canada.

Technoscientific Injustices & Bodies & Minds

Dr. Jeff Nagy, Fellow



Dr. Jeff Nagy is an Assistant

Professor of AI and Critical Data Studies at York University. He is a historian of

computing and AI focused on the intersection between AI development, the psy- sciences, and disability. He holds a PhD from Stanford University and was a DISCO Network Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Michigan from 2022-2024.

Technoscientific Pasts and Futures

Dr. Elisha Lim, Fellow



Dr. Elisha Lim (they/them) is an Assistant Professor of the Technological Humanities at York University and

researches the intersection of social media platforms, theology and critical race theory. Lim is currently working on a book called *Pious* about how corporate algorithms drive vigilant conduct.

Job Opportunities

The Department of Sociology at the University of Central Florida (UCF) in the College of Sciences (COS) invites applications for a full-time, 9-month, tenure-earning assistant professor anticipated to begin August 2025. More information about the opportunity is available here: [University of Central Florida](#).