

RESISTING SETTLER COLONIALISM

NYU Review of Law and Social Change
2022 Colloquium

Join organizers, legal practitioners, and activist scholars to unpack the status of the United States as a settler colonial state and explore the ways in which settler colonialism manifests itself in its laws, policies and practices.

February 9

PANEL 1: WHAT IS SETTLER COLONIALISM?

4:30 – 6:00PM EST

Discuss the theoretical concept and history of settler colonialism generally, and the ways in which U.S. law and culture maintains settler colonialism.

Moderated by Natsu Taylor Saito with Panelists Noura Erakat, Avigail Aviles, Erika Pinheiro, and Regan de Loggans

PANEL 2: LANDLESSNESS, DISPLACEMENT & MIGRATION

6:30 – 8:00PM EST

Discuss the ways in which settler colonialism manifests as displacement, landlessness, and exploitation of migrants. Potential topics include: gentrification, migrant & refugee defense, climate displacement, and citizenship removals like that of Haitians in the DR.

Moderated by Azadeh Shahsahani with Panelists Haddy Gassama, Yves Tong Nguyen, Morning Star Gali, and Katherine Perez

February 10

PANEL 3: RECLAIMING DECOLONIAL SOVEREIGNTY

4:30 – 6:00PM EST

Discuss current fights for Indigenous sovereignty over lands with a large population of settlers and U.S based advocacy in defense of Indigenous people. Topics include: Resistance by the peoples Indigenous to what is currently known as the United States, Palestinian Liberation, and land trusts and reclamation efforts.

Moderated by Nadia Ben-Youssef with Panelists Radhika Sainath, Jamaica Osorio, Boris Santos, Corrina Gould, and Marie Cruz Soto

PANEL 4: RESISTING SETTLER COLONIALISM IN OCCUPIED LENAPEHOKING (NEW YORK CITY)

6:30 – 8:00PM EST

Resistance isn't a distant concept. NY advocates, attorneys, and organizers engaged in resisting settler colonialism in all of its forms will have an opportunity to discuss their work and how people can become engaged.

Moderated by Jason D. Williamson with Panelists John Jamil Kallas, Vanessa Thill, Samantha A. Bernardine, and Crystal Hans & Amin Husain

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Schedule

PANEL 1: WHAT IS SETTLER COLONIALISM?

Natsu Taylor Saito (she/her) (moderator), J.D. Yale, 1987, is a Regents Professor at Georgia State University's College of Law in Atlanta, where she teaches international law and international human rights; race, ethnicity and the law; and professional responsibility. She is a faculty affiliate of Georgia State's Center for Access to Justice and its Department of African American Studies, and also a Distinguished Senior Fellow with the Rutgers Law School Center for Security, Race and Rights.

Natsu's scholarship focuses on questions of race, citizenship, and the rights of indigenous peoples; national security and political repression; and international human rights remedies for race-based injustices. She is the author of several dozen law review articles as well as three books, including *Settler Colonialism, Race, and the Law: Why Structural Racism Persists* (NYU Press, 2020). A member of the State Bar of Georgia, Natsu has served on the Committee on the Involvement of Women & Minorities in the Profession and the Georgia Supreme Court's Commission on Racial and Ethnic Bias in the Courts. She was the founding president of the Georgia chapter of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, a co-director of the Human Rights Research Fund, and an expert consultant to the UN Human Rights Council's Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism.

Noura Erakat (she/her) is a human rights attorney, Associate Professor of Africana Studies and the Program of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University, and non-resident fellow of the Religious Literacy Project at Harvard Divinity School. Noura is the author of *Justice for Some: Law and the Question of Palestine* (Stanford University Press, 2019), which received the Palestine Book Award and the Bronze Medal for the Independent Publishers Book Award in Current Events/Foreign Affairs. She is co-founding editor of *Jadaliyya* and editorial board member of the *Journal of Palestine Studies*. She has served as Legal Counsel for a Congressional Subcommittee in the US House of Representatives, as Legal Advocate for the Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Refugee and Residency Rights, and as national organizer of the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation. Noura has also produced video documentaries, including "Gaza In Context" and "Black Palestinian Solidarity." She has appeared on CBS News, CNN, Fox News, and NPR, among others.

Avigail Aviles (ella/she/her) is a brown badass organizer from Corona, Queens. She comes from an immigrant working-class family. Her family fled poverty from Xicotlan, Mexico and in this country her family has been displaced multiple times due to landlord greed and lack of laws that protect tenants. Her lived experiences led her to get involved in organizing to create collective power in her community. For the last 6 years, Avigail has organized CUNY students, street vendors, tenants, faith leaders, and with immigrant families against ICE raids, police abuse, and displacement. She is dedicated to uprooting the systems that seek to evict, abuse, and let her community die. Avigail is actively creating a world she wants to live in that centers human needs through coordinating the Undocu Mami Mutual Aid network.

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PANEL 1: WHAT IS SETTLER COLONIALISM?

Erika Pinheiro (she/her/ella) As Litigation and Policy Director of the direct legal services non-profit Al Otro Lado, Erika Pinheiro leads her organization's efforts in filing class action lawsuits challenging the US government's attacks on the US asylum system, as well as slave labor practices and severe medical neglect in immigration detention facilities. Her team has reunified dozens of separated families, including parents who were deported without their children, and has freed dozens of asylum seekers detained at the border. Before joining Al Otro Lado, Pinheiro administered one of the largest DACA programs in California, as well as representation programs for Unaccompanied Children. She also oversaw high-volume Legal Orientation Programs for adults and children detained in immigration prisons.

Regan de Loggans (they/them) is an Indigiqueer agitator, art historian, curator, and educator based in Brooklyn on Canarsee land. Their work relates to decolonizing, Indigenizing, and queering institutions and curatorial practices. They are member of the Indigenous Kinship Collective: NYC.

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PANEL 2: LANDLESSNESS, DISPLACEMENT & MIGRATION

Azadeh Shahsahani (she/her) (moderator) is the Legal & Advocacy Director of Project South. Azadeh has worked for a number of years in the U.S. South to protect and defend immigrants and Muslim, Middle Eastern, and South Asian communities. She previously served as president of the National Lawyers Guild and as National Security/Immigrants' Rights Project Director with the ACLU of Georgia. Azadeh serves on the Advisory Council of the American Association of Jurists and on the Board of Directors of Defending Rights and Dissent. Azadeh has served as a trial monitor in Turkey, an election monitor in Venezuela and Honduras, and as a member of the jury in people's tribunals on Mexico, the Philippines, and Brazil. She has also participated in international fact-finding delegations to post-revolutionary Tunisia and Egypt as well as a delegation focused on the situation of Palestinian political prisoners. She is the author or editor of several human rights reports, including a 2017 report titled "Imprisoned Justice: Inside Two Georgia Immigrant Detention Centers," as well as law review articles and book chapters focused on racial profiling, immigrants' rights, and surveillance of Muslim-Americans. Her writings have appeared in the Guardian, the Nation, MSNBC, USA Today, Aljazeera, and HuffPost, among others.

Azadeh received her JD from the University of Michigan Law School where she was Article Editor for The Michigan Journal of International Law. She also has a Master's in Modern Middle Eastern and North African Studies from the University of Michigan. Azadeh is the recipient of the Shanara M. Gilbert Human Rights Award from the Society of American Law Teachers, the National Lawyers Guild Ernie Goodman Award, the Emory Law School Outstanding Leadership in the Public Interest Award, the Emory University MLK Jr. Community Service Award, the US Human Rights Network Human Rights Movement Builder Award, the American Immigration Lawyers Association Advocacy Award, the Distinguished Leader Award from the Fulton County Daily Report, and the University of Georgia Law School Equal Justice Foundation Public Interest Practitioner Award, among several others.

She has also been recognized as an Abolitionist by the Antiracist Research and Policy Center at American University & the Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives, and as one of Atlanta's 500 Most Powerful Leaders by Atlanta Magazine. In 2016, Azadeh was chosen by the Mundo Hispanico Newspaper as an Outstanding Person of the Year for defending the rights of immigrants in Georgia. In 2017, she was chosen by Georgia Trend Magazine as one of the 40 under 40 notable Georgians.

Haddy Gassama (she/her) is the National Director of Policy & Advocacy for the UndocuBlack Network. She was also recently on loan with the We Are Home campaign as their Legislative Strategy Manager. Haddy is from The Gambia and immigrated to the U.S. in 2000 with her family. She holds a Bachelors degree in Political Science, a Masters in International Affairs, and a Juris Doctor degree. Haddy is licensed to practice law in Washington D.C. She has years of experience in the fields of international human rights and immigration law and policy. She has previously worked at the National Immigrant Justice Center, where she advocated for policies that enhanced Congressional oversight on the immigration detention system. She also represented survivors of torture from Sub-Saharan African countries, in their asylum proceedings before U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. When she is not doing advocacy work, Haddy is also an accomplished writer who has published several essays and articles on a range of topics including gender equity, international politics, and pop culture.

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PANEL 2: LANDLESSNESS, DISPLACEMENT & MIGRATION CONT.

Morning Star Gali (she/her/we/our) is the Project Director of Restoring Justice for Indigenous Peoples. Morning Star Gali is a member of the Ajumawi band of the Pit River Tribe located in Northeastern California. She serves as Project Director for Restoring Justice for Indigenous Peoples (RJIP) and as the California Tribal and Community Liaison for the International Indian Treaty Council, working for the Sovereignty and Self Determination of Indigenous Peoples and the recognition and protection of Indigenous Rights, Treaties, Traditional Cultures and Sacred Lands. She's also the Tribal water/policy organizer for Save California Salmon. Dedicated to raising awareness and visibility within the unique climate of California's urban and rural Native communities, Ms. Gali coordinates support of Indigenous-led organizing efforts. Ms. Gali continues to lead large-scale actions while coordinating Native cultural, spiritual, scholarly, and political gatherings throughout California. She is deeply committed to advocating for Indigenous sovereignty issues such as missing and murdered Indigenous women (MMIW), climate justice, gender justice, and sacred sites protection on behalf of the tribal and inter-tribal communities in which she was raised.

Prior to returning to her ancestral homelands and working for her Tribe, she served as a volunteer and advocate on behalf of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated Indigenous peoples in California, working with a number of Indigenous-led grassroots organizations in the Bay Area for over two decades. Morning Star serves as a board member for the California Indian Heritage Center Foundation, American Indian Cultural District of San Francisco and Women's Health Specialists of California. She serves on a number of advisory committees that advocate for the sovereignty and self-determination of California's Indigenous peoples and sacred landscapes.

Katherine Perez (she/her) is the inaugural director of The Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy and Innovation and a visiting professor of law at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles since 2018. She received the American Association for People with Disabilities Hearne Leadership Award in 2017 for her work in founding the National Coalition for Latinxs with Disabilities. Katherine has a JD from UCLA Law School and is a PhD Candidate in Disability Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She sits on the board for Disability Rights California and Mental Health Advocacy Services. Katherine identifies a disabled queer Latina whose grandparents migrated from Mexico in the 1960s.

Yves Tong Nguyen (they/she/he) is a queer and disabled Viet cultural worker and sex worker whose organizing home is with Survived & Punished NY, Red Canary Song, and Free Them All 4 Public Health. Yves is here representing Red Canary Song, a grassroots collective of Asian and migrant sex workers centering basebuilding with migrant workers through a labor rights framework and mutual aid. Red Canary Song believes that decriminalization is necessary for labor organizing and anti-trafficking.

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Nadia Ben-Youssef (she/her) (moderator) is the Advocacy Director of the Center for Constitutional Rights. She is the granddaughter of artists, refugees, and revolutionaries. Her ancestors have taught her to imagine a different world, to root the future in our past, and to trust that we are everything we need. Nadia is a storyteller who believes in the power of aesthetic force to awaken, disrupt, and inspire transformation. A human rights lawyer by training, Nadia currently serves as the Advocacy Director at the Center for Constitutional Rights, a radical legal and advocacy organization working with social movements to dismantle racism, cisheteropatriarchy, economic oppression and abusive state practices. Her work often centers at the intersection of art and advocacy, and she curates exhibits and artistic programming that document key human rights concerns, celebrate social movements, and allow creatives the space to chart the future.

Central to Nadia's lifework is a commitment to the liberation of Palestine, and she is a proud co-founder of the Adalah Justice Project. Nadia is happiest when she is dreaming and building with co-conspirators towards horizons of abolition, decolonization, and collective flourishing. Together with her family, Nadia is currently documenting the life and vision of her grandfather Salah Ben Youssef, a Third World revolutionary and freedom fighter of Tunisia's independence movement who was assassinated in 1961.

Radhika Sainath (she/her) is a senior staff attorney at Palestine Legal, where she oversees the organization's casework defending the rights of Palestine activists. Prior to attending law school, Radhika organized workers across the U.S. and Canada with UNITE-HERE and organized civil disobedience actions in Palestine with the International Solidarity Movement. Her writing has appeared in The Nation, Boston Review of Books, Jacobin and Literary Hub.

Dr. Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio ('Oia / she / her) is the Assistant Professor of Indigenous and Native Hawaiian Politics, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Dr. Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio is a Kanaka Maoli wahine artist / activist / scholar / storyteller born and raised in Pālolo Valley to parents Jonathan and Mary Osorio. Jamaica earned her PhD in English (Hawaiian literature) in 2018 from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Currently, Jamaica is an Assistant Professor of Indigenous and Native Hawaiian Politics at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Jamaica is a three-time national poetry champion, poetry mentor and a published author. In 2020 her poetry and activism were the subject of an award-winning film, This is the Way we Rise (directed by Ciara Lacey), which was featured in Vogue.com and at Sundance Film Festival. She is a proud past Kaiāpuni student, Ford fellow, and a graduate of Kamehameha, Stanford University (BA) and New York University (MA). Her book Remembering our Intimacies: Mo'olelo, Aloha 'Āina, and Ea was published in 2021 by The University of Minnesota Press. She believes that aloha 'āina can save the world.

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Corrina Gould (she/her) is the tribal spokesperson for the Confederated Villages of Lisjan. Born and raised in her ancestral homeland, the Ohlone territory of Huchiun, Corrina has worked on preserving and protecting the ancient burial sites of her ancestors throughout the Bay Area for decades. She has developed an extensive network of partnerships and collaborations within intertribal Indigenous communities and across a broad spectrum of ethnic and community groups and organizations. A lead organizer in the campaign to Save the West Berkeley Shellmound, Corrina has won historic victories in the ongoing struggle to protect Indigenous sacred sites. Corrina is the Co-Founder/Co-Director of the Sogorea Te' Land Trust, the first Indigenous women led urban land trust in the country. She has helped to bring the work of repatriation into public consciousness.

Marie Cruz Soto (she/her) is a historian interested in imperial/colonial processes of becoming and in those struggles to un-become upon which survival sometimes hinges. Her work focuses on the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico, and on how militarized colonialism has shaped the makings of the Viequense community. She explores how the long history of violent displacements and dispossessions in the island has ensured a vulnerable and unruly population. Her most recent publications have dealt with reproductive rights and militarized colonialism (Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism) and with unruly indigeneity (Op.Cit.: Revista del Centro de Investigaciones Históricas) in Vieques.

Boris Santos (he/him) is an early childhood educator, former legislative staffer at the NYC Council and NYS Senate, and currently the Treasurer of the East New York Community Land Trust (ENYCLT). ENYCLT works to protect, stabilize and expand the stock of affordable homes, locally-owned small businesses and green spaces in East New York and Brownsville for the benefit of low- to moderate- income, black and brown residents. The CLT exerts control over the built, social and natural environment through community organizing, education, and property ownership.

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Jason D. Williamson (he/him) (moderator) is executive director of the Center on Race, Inequality, and the Law at NYU Law School. Prior to assuming his current role in June 2021, Jason spent more than 10 years as a staff attorney and deputy director with the ACLU's Criminal Law Reform Project, where he focused primarily on Fourth Amendment, police practices, and public defense reform litigation. Prior to joining the ACLU, Jason worked as a litigation associate at the law firm of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP in New York, and served as a law clerk for Judge Sterling Johnson, Jr. in the Eastern District of New York from 2007-2008. He began his legal career in New Orleans in the months following Hurricane Katrina, first as a staff attorney for the Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana, and later as a staff attorney and founding member of Juvenile Regional Services (now called the Louisiana Center for Children's Rights), which provides legal representation for indigent youth in Orleans Parish Juvenile Court. Jason also serves as an adjunct clinical professor at New York University School of Law. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Harvard University in 1998, and his J.D. from NYU Law in 2006.

John Jamil Kallas (he/him) is a Syrian-American student, writer, and organizer based in New York City. An undergraduate senior at New York University and aspiring scholar of the Middle East, his research interests include political economy, geography, and the underdevelopment of the Global South. Kallas is the Assistant Managing Editor of the e-zine Jadaliyya, publishing critical pedagogy and analysis on historical and contemporary developments in the Middle East and North Africa. Since 2020, he has been a member of Within Our Lifetime: United for Palestine, a Bay-Ridge based community organization dedicated to ending settler-colonialism and advancing Palestinian liberation. In 2020, Kallas was named a Gallatin Global Human Rights Fellow. He is currently writing his undergraduate Honors Thesis, tentatively titled "Housing and National Development: Transitioning Political Economies of Scale in Syria". You can follow Kallas and his work on twitter @johnjamilkallas.

Vanessa Thill (she/her) Based in Manhattan's Chinatown and Lower East Side, Art Against Displacement (AAD) is a coalition of artists and arts workers that seeks to amplify the demands of those whose lives and livelihoods are placed at risk by predatory development and resettlement, and to work in solidarity with grassroots organizations toward community-led rezoning. The group affirms that gentrification is not an inevitable effect of urban development, and refuses to let the work of cultural producers be instrumentalized towards the displacement of long-term residents and businesses. AAD is a member of the Coalition to Protect Chinatown & the Lower East Side. Visit our website at aad.nyc

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PANEL 4: RESISTING SETTLER COLONIALISM IN OCCUPIED LENAPEHOKING (NEW YORK CITY) CONT.

Amin Husain (he/him) and Crystal Hans (she/her) Decolonize this Place (DTP) is an action-oriented movement and decolonial formation in New York City. Facilitated by MTL+, DTP consists of over 30 collaborators, consisting of grassroots groups and art collectives that seek to resist, unsettle, and reclaim the city. The organizing and action bring together many strands of analysis and traditions of resistance: Indigenous insurgency, Black liberation, free Palestine, free Puerto Rico, the struggles of workers and debtors, de-gentrification, migrant justice, dismantling patriarchy, and more. Amin and Crystal are two of the founding members of MTL+ collective, and both previously attended law school. Amin received his JD from Indiana University-Bloomington, then his LLM from Columbia University, and practiced law for several years before leaving and beginning to study photography. Crystal received her JD at NYU and now works in tenant's rights.

Samantha A. Bernardine (she/her) is a native Brooklynite, whose parents are from the island of Grenada, known as Spice Island. She does not shy away from her Caribbean heritage, and when need be will get "spicy". She is a tenacious and loving mother that actively fights for the voice of minority youth. She received her bachelor degree in Marketing from Franklin Pierce College in 1998, and a masters degree in Information Technology Management from Polytechnic University in 2008. For over 16 years, she has held multi-faced leadership positions in the non-for-profit industry, ranging from directing supportive housing programs for individuals and families with health challenges, to director for the Manhattan-Staten Island Area Health Education Center, that created a pipeline for historically underrepresented youth to become health professionals in undeserved communities addressing the disparities health care.

Seven years ago, Ms. Bernardine made a career change from social service to education, becoming a high school special education and history teacher at the High School for Youth and Community Development in the historic Brooklyn campus Erasmus Hall. She currently attends Northcentral University to complete her masters in Education. Outside of her professional career, Ms. Bernardine has held a number of leadership roles in the community and volunteers for multiple causes. She believes in the power of standing up for justice and injustice wherever she can. Through her role as an educator she has developed programs that support students in their development as advocates for themselves and their communities.

Tricia Olayinka Ben-Davies (she/her) is a Descendent Community Advocate and supports the Community Engagement, Arts, Media, and Strategy teams for the Flatbush African Burial Ground Coalition. She is the youngest daughter of two Sierra Leonian Krio parents who immigrated to Brooklyn in the early 1970s. Olayinka is a child of God, healing circle facilitator, philanthropist and community organizer. Olayinka is the creator of Flatbush Mixtape, a grassroots mutual aid organization that aims to establish a community-based platform for restorative healing justice through storytelling, media, art, and community-led activism.

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