

The Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity in Society  
and First Nations Educational & Cultural Center present a  
**CRRES Speaker Series Lecture**



**“The River Is in Us: Fighting  
Toxics in a Mohawk Community”**

**Dr. Elizabeth Hoover**  
Manning Assistant Professor  
of American Studies,  
Brown University  
Tuesday, January 30, 4:00PM  
Maple Room, IMU



As a Native community downwind, downstream and down gradient from one federal and two New York State Superfund sites, Akwesasne Mohawks have experienced the impacts of contamination on the health of their bodies, culture, and environment. Akwesasne formerly relied on fishing and farming for its livelihood until it was discovered in the 1970s and 1980s that industries had released fluoride into the air and PCBs into the river that bisects the community. This discovery led Akwesasne community members to embark on a decade-long community based participatory research project (CBPR) with a large university to determine how the health of the community had been impacted by contamination. Based on ethnographic and archival research, this presentation discusses the benefits and challenges of CBPR for effective research in Native American communities; the collateral impacts of environmental contamination on Indigenous health, culture and food systems; and the inspiring ways in which this community is developing programs to ensure their own resiliency.