

Congrès 2014 / Congress 2014 - Brock University  
24 mai- 27 mai 2014 / May 24 – May 27 2014

*Société canadienne pour l'étude de la religion*  
*Canadian Society for the Study of Religion*

**Please pay careful attention to the room locations in this final version of the program. Room numbers have changed!**

NOTE: The following meeting rooms have been reserved for each day of the conference as a social space. Feel free to use them at your leisure:

Saturday May 24th - Thistle 254 (1pm-5pm)

Sunday May 25th - MCC300 (all day)

Monday May 26th - MCC404 (all day)

Tuesday May 27th - MCD404\*\* (all day) - \*\*note this is a different room than May 26

## Saturday May 24

TIME	EVENT	BUILDING – ROOM #
9am – noon	Executive Meeting	Thistle 254
2pm – 4pm	Annual General Meeting	Thistle 241
6pm – 7pm	President's Reception (including announcement of book prizes and essay winners). Introduce International Speaker and Keynote Speaker	Alphie's Trough
7pm – 10pm	Film Presentation: <i>Travelling Guru</i> (see details below)	Thistle 248

### “TRAVELLING GURU”

Traveling Guru is a road trip into the sacred heart of India – land of spirituality and birthplace of most the world's major religions. It is a pilgrimage of discovery, both an outer and inner journey that plumbs the rich and diverse repositories of India's ancient and modern sacred cultures in their many and varied forms. The documentary follows fifteen North Americans as they immerse themselves in India's religious communities, opening themselves to new worlds that both inspire and challenge them. Their guide and traveling guru is interfaith educator, Dr. Darrol Bryant. He brings people together for what he calls “living encounter,” a post-modern approach that sees direct human communication as a vital first step for peaceful co-existence. The focus is on relationships, understanding and trust – the new capital needed to build a strong interconnected world. In the emerging clashes between globalism and rising local tensions, Traveling Guru speaks to all cultures and models a startlingly simple road map for the peaceful future of our shared planet through the transformative power of conversation.

(Note: *The film does not necessarily reflect the views of CSSR or its members*)

Notes:

1. Projector for laptop is default throughout, other special requirements are indicated as required.
2. An alphabetized list of presenters and abstracts is included at the end of the schedule.

**SUNDAY MAY 25**  
**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**  
**10:00 AM - 12:00 PM**  
**Thistle 245**

Zaleha Kamaruddin, Rector and Law Professor, International Islamic University Malaysia

*Islamic Legal System in Malaysia as it Affects Women and the Quest for Transformation*

This presentation highlights some ambiguities in the current Islamic legal system in Malaysia with respect to Muslim women and proposes a plan of action to transform it. The transformation surpasses the concept of harmonization between the Malaysian Shar'ia law and the civil law.

This paper is the result of an extensive research project, involving more than ten agencies, on the question of the Islamic legal system in Malaysia. The challenges faced by these agencies to push forward efforts to transform the Islamic legal system are closely examined. The combined efforts of these ten agencies are vital to the success of any action plan to initiate the transformation of the Islamic legal system in the Malaysian society. Transformation in this context involves resolving issues through the various processes of renewal, reform, revision, change, migration, and evaluation. All these approaches should be made through the process of consultation and research-driven strategies. It is hoped that the set of proposals put forward through this study will serve as a catalyst to transform the Islamic legal system in Malaysia, especially towards women, while at the same time improving the entire legal system.

Chair: Ahmad Yousif, Director, International Institute of Wasatiyyah (Moderation), IIUM, Malaysia  
Discussants: Morny Joy, University of Calgary and Earle Waugh, University of Alberta

**SUNDAY MAY 25  
MORNING SESSIONS**

PLACE (all rooms to be confirmed)	9am – 10:30am	10:45am – 12:15pm
MCC301	<b>RELIGION AND FOOD</b>  Presider: Justin Jaron Lewis, University of Manitoba  <i>Modernity and Matzo Balls: Changes in Food Practices in a Reform Jewish Community</i> (Rose Tekel, St. Francis Xavier University)  <i>Eat your Valuables</i> (Aldea Mulhern, University of Toronto)	<b>EASTERN CHRISTIANITY</b>  Presider: Justin Jaron Lewis, University of Manitoba  <i>Ukrainian Orthodox Church Website Designs As a Way to Transcend Boundaries in Communication</i> (Iaroslav Pankovskyi, University of Alberta)  <i>Secularization or Vernacularization in Macedonian-Bulgarian Churches</i> (Mariana Mastagar, Trinity College, University of Toronto)
MCC303	<b>BUDDHISM I</b>  Presider: Marybeth White, Wilfrid Laurier University  <i>Fragments and Phylogenetics of the Old Tibetan Version of the Avaivartikacakrastra from Dunhuang</i> (James Apple, University of Calgary)  <i>Powerful Chants for Spiritual Practice in Buddhism</i> (Harold Coward, University of Victoria)	<b>BUDDHISM II</b>  Presider:  <i>Indian Buddhist Etiquette and the Emergence of Ascetic Civility</i> (Christopher Handy, McMaster University)
MCC304	<b>RELIGION &amp; EDUCATION</b>  Presider: Heather Shipley, University of Ottawa  <i>Toronto, Montreal, and Modesto, CA: religious literacy and boundless religious based bullying</i> (Alice Chan, McGill University)  <i>The Role of Religious Literacy in the Context of State Neutrality</i> (Arzina Zaver, McGill University and Alim Fakirani, Religious Educator for Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Board)  <i>The Effects of Visits “Back home” on Shi’i Muslim Arabic-Canadian Females’ Understanding of Justice</i> (May Al_Fartousi, Brock University)	<b>CHURCH LEADERSHIP</b>  Presider: Leah McKeen, Wilfrid Laurier University  <i>Judaism before Jesus: Rhetorical Constructions of the Proto-Christian Other in Evangelicalisms</i> (Rebekka King, Middle Tennessee State University)
MCC400	<b>PANEL: MUSIC AND RELIGION</b>  Chair: David Feltmate, Auburn University at Montgomery <b>(audio needed)</b>	<b>PANEL: RELIGION, MUSIC and POLITICS</b>  Chair: David Feltmate, Auburn University at Montgomery <b>(audio needed)</b>

	<i>Word, Sound and Power: Marley and the Gospel According to Rastafari</i> (Christopher Duncanson-Hales, Saint Paul University)	<p><i>"Prayers In A Song": Indigenous Hip Hop in Canada</i> (Pamela Andrew, Wilfrid Laurier)</p> <p><i>Fire on Babylon: Sinead O'Connor's Performance of Rastafari</i> (Brent Hagerman, Wilfrid Laurier University)</p> <p><i>"Please Resist, It May Be All There Is:" The Secularization Debate in the Punk Rock Subculture</i> (Nicholas Shrubsole, University of Waterloo and Katie Green, Trent University)</p>
MCC401	<p><b>HINDUISM, GENDER AND SEXUALITY</b></p> <p>Presider: Adela Sandness, St. Francis Xavier University</p> <p><i>The Argumentative Women: Swarchalā and Sulabhā's Debates in the Mahābhārata</i> (Pushpa Acharya, University of Alberta)</p> <p><i>New Contexts: Hindu Widowhood in the Canadian Diaspora</i> (Caitlin Russell, Memorial University of Newfoundland)</p>	<p><b>WOMEN AND VIOLENCE</b></p> <p>Presider: Amarnath Amarasingam, York University</p> <p><i>Trauma, Memory and Gendered Religious Practice Among Sikh Widows in New Delhi's "Widow Colony"</i> (Kamal Arora, University of British Columbia)</p>

<p><b>Graduate Luncheon</b>  <b>Alphie's Trough</b>  <b>12:30pm-2:00pm</b></p>
<p><b><i>Taming the Beast of Research Design:</i></b>  <b><i>A Roundtable Discussion on Ethics and Research Design in Religious Studies</i></b></p> <p>Are you a graduate student feeling the strain of research design? Do you lose sleep parsing out the differing values of quantitative and qualitative research? Are you entangled in the conflicting feelings of excitement for an inspired research topic, but terror in face of the labyrinth that is research and ethics? Cold sweat? Dry mouth? Well fret no longer, we have the solution for you! Come to this year's graduate student's Lunch &amp; Learn for free food and a helpful conversation with our invited speakers on ethics and research design in Religious Studies. Our invited speakers will be sharing their experiences in both qualitative and quantitative research design, in addition to having a representative from Brock's Office of Research Services.</p> <p>This event is co-hosted by the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion/Société canadienne pour l'étude de la religion (CSSR/SCÉR) and the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion/Corporation canadienne des sciences religieuses (CCSR).</p>

**SUNDAY MAY 25**

## AFTERNOON SESSIONS

PLACE	1:45pm – 3:15pm	3:30pm – 5pm
MCC301	<b>FEMINISM/GENDER STUDIES</b>  Presider: Leah McKeen, Wilfrid Laurier University  <i>Christian Conversion: Oedipal Submission or Melancholic Compromise?</i> (Samantha Samantha Semper, Institute for Psychoanalytic Training and Research)  <i>S/M and Goddess Worship</i> (Lilian Marshall, University of Manitoba)  <i>Ludicrous Tragedy, Christian Authenticity, and Sexual Politics: Tammy Faye Bakker's Campy Fans</i> (Denis Bekkering, University of Waterloo)	<b>CHARLES TAYLOR ON SECULARIZATION</b>  Presider: Aldea Mulhern, University of Toronto  <i>Secularization and Social Change in Charles Taylor</i> (Germain McKenzie, Catholic University of America)
MCC303	<b>SCIENCE &amp; RELIGION I</b>  Presider: Neil George, York University  <i>Scanners, Electroencephalography and Brain Waves: Mystical Experiences in the Age of Neurosciences</i> (Michel Gardaz, University of Ottawa)  <i>"It Was Like That When I Came In:" David Sloan Wilson's Use of the Category 'Religion'</i> (Nathan Colborne, Nipissing University)	<b>SCIENCE &amp; RELIGION II</b>  Presider: Michel Gardaz, University of Ottawa  <i>Binding Religion: The Contexts of Science and Religion in Late-Victorian Britain</i> (Neil George, York University)  <i>A Historical Approach to Religion and Science in 19th and 20th Century Europe</i> (Heather Penner, University of Manitoba)
MCC304	<b>PANEL: OUTSIDE THE BOX: REIMAGINING SUFISM IN NORTH AMERICA</b>  Chair: Julianne Hazen, World Life Institute, Medina, NY  <i>Die Before You Die: Liminality in the Cultural and Religious Identities of the Alami Tariqa</i> (Ibrahim Shakoor, University Charlotte, West Virginia)  <i>Caretaker or Companion? Shifting Models of Authority in North American Sufism</i> (William Rory Dickson, South Dakota State University, Brookings)  <i>At the Grave of Bawa: Sufi Spaces and the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship in North America</i> (Merin Shobhana Xavier, Wilfrid Laurier and University of Waterloo)	<b>PANEL: HOW HUMAN ARE THE GODS? EMBODIMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND DIVINITY IN SELECT HINDU TEXTUAL TRADITIONS</b>  Chair: Noel Salmond, Carleton University  <i>The Personal and the Impersonal: On Sacred Embodiment in the Rg-Veda</i> (Adela Sandness, St. Francis Xavier University)  <i>When Kali becomes Krishna: gender and divinity in the Mahabhatava Purana</i> (Patricia Dold, Memorial University of Newfoundland)  <i>The Rites of Skanda-Karttikeya</i> (Richard Mann, Carleton University)
MCC400	<b>PANEL: MUSIC, THEORY and METHODS</b>	<b>ROUNDTABLE: ON THE USE OF POPULAR MUSIC TO TEACH</b>

	<p>Chair: Shamma Boyarin, University of Victoria. <b>(audio needed)</b></p> <p><i>L'Évangile selon le Billboard: musique, religion et globalisation</i> (Alain Bouchard, Collège de Sainte-Foy et Université Laval)</p> <p><i>Sacred Reverberations: Dead Celebrity Fandom</i> (Kathleen Riddell, University of Waterloo)</p> <p><i>"Metal Epiphanies and Liberation Theology in Vinyl:" Theorizing Religion with Heavy Metal</i> (David Feltmate, Auburn University at Montgomery)</p>	<p><b>UNDERGRADUATE COURSES IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES</b></p> <p>Chair: Shamma Boyarin, University of Victoria.</p> <p><i>What Can Religious Studies Students Learn from Bob Marley, John Lennon and Pussy Riot?</i> (Brent Hagerman, Wilfrid Laurier University)</p> <p><i>Using Musical Performance to Think Through Ritual and Performativity</i> (Chris Klassen, Wilfrid Laurier University)</p> <p><i>The Question I Have Never Been Able to Ask: Teaching About Popular Music, Culture, and Religion</i> (David Feltmate, Auburn University at Montgomery)</p> <p><i>Am I trying too hard to be popular: using popular music as material for teaching</i> (Shamma Boyarin, University of Victoria)</p>
<p><b>MCC401</b></p>	<p><b>CONTEMPORARY BUDDHISM I</b></p> <p>Presider: Amarnath Amarasingam, York University</p> <p><i>Social, religious, and 'spirit-based' capital within Ontario Cambodian and Lao Buddhist communities</i> (Janet McLellan and Marybeth White, Wilfrid Laurier University)</p> <p><i>You May Call it a Miracle, but That's Nembutsu Doing Everything</i> (Ryan Anningson, Wilfrid Laurier University)</p> <p><i>Mindful Sex: Adapting Buddhism to New Cultural Desires</i> (Jeff Wilson, Renison University College, University of Waterloo)</p>	<p><b>CONTEMPORARY BUDDHISM II</b></p> <p>Presider: Marybeth White, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>Present Peace, Future Freedom: Children's Meditation Manuals in Two Tibetan Buddhist Organizations</i> (Christopher Emory-Moore, University of Waterloo)</p> <p><i>Religion "is Not" Ethnicity: Conflict About and In Burma, via Critical Theory</i> (Alexandra Granke, University of Manitoba)</p>

**SUNDAY EVENING MAY 25 -- INTERNATIONAL SPEAKER**

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM, South Block 203

## INTERNATIONAL SPEAKER

Dr. Ronald L. Grimes, Visiting Professor of Religious Studies at Charles University, Prague

### *Celebrative Ritual and Fictive Religion: Prague's Velvet Carnival*

Some say that festivals are a new form of religion. If so, what kind? And what sort of rituals do they imply? Working with the Velvet Carnival of Prague as an example, this multimedia presentation teases out problems that nag new festivals: Who is an insider and who is an outsider? How determinative of meaning are the space and time in which an event occurs? How ironic, satirical, reflexive, or indeterminate can a symbol be and still be understood by participants and spectators? Who decides what means what?

Ronald L. Grimes is author of several books on ritual, including *The Craft of Ritual Studies* (Oxford University Press, 2014). Among the positions he has held recently are: Visiting Professor of Religious Studies at Charles University, Prague, in the Czech Republic; Senior Researcher and Senior Lecturer at Yale University; Chair of Ritual Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen in the Netherlands. Grimes resides in Waterloo, Ontario, where he is Director of Ritual Studies International and Professor Emeritus of Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Jointly sponsored by CSBS, CSPA and CTS, with funding support from the Federation.

**MONDAY May 26**  
**Morning Sessions**

PLACE	9am – 10:30am	10:45am – 12:15pm
<b>MCC400</b>	<p><b>PHILOSOPHY &amp; THEOLOGY</b></p> <p>Presider: Arlene Macdonald, University of Texas Medical Branch</p> <p><i>Meaning and Violation: On the Exclusive Character of Narratives of Loss and Redemption</i> (Sarah Lynn Kleeb, University of Toronto)</p> <p><i>Free Gift, State Secularism, and Chaos Theory</i> (Hannelore Daniel-Poncelet, Université de Sherbrooke)</p>	<p><b>ROUNDTABLE:</b> <b>THE ROLE OF CHURCHES IN IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION IN CANADA</b></p> <p>Presider: Joel Thiessen, Ambrose University College Respondent: Paul Bramadat, University of Victoria</p> <p><i>Immigrant Settlement and Integration: Introducing a National Research Partnership</i> (Rich Janzen, Centre for Community Based Research)</p> <p><i>Diverse Approaches to Immigrant Settlement and Integration Among Churches in Greater Toronto</i> (Mark Chapman, Tyndale University College &amp; Seminary)</p> <p><i>The Immigrant Settlement Work of Christian Churches in Atlantic Canada</i> (Sam Reimer, Crandall University)</p> <p><i>The Role of Churches in Immigrant Settlement and Integration: The Case of Refugees in Vancouver, BC</i> (Michael Wilkinson, Trinity Western University)</p>
<b>MCC401</b>	<p><b>PANEL:</b> <b>SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION IN CANADA</b></p> <p>Chair: Sam Reimer, Crandall University</p> <p><i>The Historical Development of the Sociology of Religion in English-Speaking Canada</i> (Michael Wilkinson, Trinity Western University)</p> <p><i>Religion and the Social Ecology of Terrorism: The Ever-Present but Missing Variable</i> (Lorne Dawson, University of Waterloo)</p> <p><i>Religious Nones in Canada: A Qualitative Exploration</i> (Joel Thiessen, Ambrose University College)</p>	<p><b>MODERN JUDAISM</b></p> <p>Presider: Rose Tekel, St. Francis Xavier University</p> <p><i>On the Boundaries of Jewish/Christian Identities</i> (Leah McKeen, Wilfrid Laurier University)</p> <p><i>Jewish Krishnas: Dancing on the Border</i> (Justin Jaron Lewis, University of Manitoba)</p>
<b>MCC207</b>	<p><b>STUDIES IN MYTH-BUILDING</b></p> <p>Presider: Thomas Parkhill, St. Thomas University</p> <p><i>A Historiographical Analysis of the Study of Superheroes and Religion</i> (Nathan Gibbard, McGill University)</p> <p><i>Sacred Shooting: Gun Ownership as Civil Religion in the United States</i> (Elizabeth Rigotti, Wilfrid Laurier University)</p>	<p><b>POLITICS &amp; DEMOCRACY</b></p> <p>Presider: David Seljak, St. Jerome's University</p> <p><i>Rethinking Theology and Political Theory to Meet the Challenge of Religion in Politics</i> (Alison Colpitts, University of Toronto)</p> <p><i>Religion and the Occupy Movement</i> (Peter J. Smith, Athabasca University)</p>

<p><b>MCC304</b></p>		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>METHOD &amp; THEORY</b></p> <p>Presider: Catherine Holtmann, University of New Brunswick</p> <p><i>Post-Paper Pedagogies: Digital Storytelling in the Method and Theory Classroom</i> (Ken Derry, University of Toronto)</p> <p><i>Imagining Religious Agency in the Classroom</i> (Jack Laughlin and Kornel Zathureczky, University of Sudbury)</p> <p><i>Locating God in the Anthropology of Pentecostalism</i> (Jared Epp, University of Ottawa)</p>
<p><b>MCC308</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RELIGION &amp; ECOLOGY I</b></p> <p>Presider: Sarah King, Grand Valley State University</p> <p><i>A Convergence of Agendas? Natural Parenting in a Francophone Context</i> (Florence Pasche Guignard, University of Toronto and York University)</p> <p><i>Wondering about Wonder: An Exploration of this Human Emotion as a Gateway to Intimacy with the Large</i> (Simon Appolloni, University of Toronto)</p> <p><i>A Christocentric Anthropocosmic Approach to Ecological Crisis</i> (Lyman Kulathungam, Masters College &amp; Seminary)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RELIGION &amp; ECOLOGY II</b></p> <p>Presider: Sarah King, Grand Valley State University</p> <p><i>Mind the Gap: The Borders and Boundaries Between Religion, Immigrant Communities and the Environment</i> (Mary Hale, Saint Mary's University)</p> <p><i>The Environmental Costs of Conversion, of What Happens When Native Leaders are Reduced to "Shamans"</i> (Erich Fox Tree, Wilfrid Laurier University)</p>

**MONDAY May 26**  
**Afternoon Session**

PLACE	1:45pm – 3:15pm	3:30pm – 5:00pm
<b>MCC400</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PANEL:</b> <b>SHIFTING RELIGION IDENTITIES IN CANADIAN EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONS</b></p> <p>Chair: Joel Thiessen, Ambrose University College</p> <p><i>Changing the Ethos of Evangelical Congregations: Missional Churches in Canada</i> (Sam Reimer, Crandall University)</p> <p><i>Liquid Religious Identity Among Canadian Pentecostals</i> (Adam Stewart, University of Western Ontario)</p> <p><i>Megachurches, Growth Imperatives, and Congregational Identity: A Canadian Megachurch Case Study</i> (Peter Schuurman, University of Waterloo)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>WAR &amp; PEACE</b></p> <p>Presider:</p> <p><i>Bifocal Optics for Border- transcending Aspirations in the Hebrew Bible</i> (Daniel Timmer, University of Sudbury)</p> <p><i>The Enmity of the Different and the Ambivalence of the Same: Religion and Bullying</i> (Cameron Thomson, University of Edinburgh)</p>
<b>MCC401</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PANEL:</b> <b>NEW MUSLIM PUBLIC SPHERES IN THE DIGITAL AGE: IDENTITY, COMMUNITY, DIVERSITY AND AUTHORITY IN CANADA</b></p> <p>Chair: Sami Helewa, Campion College at The University of Regina</p> <p><i>Framing Research on Transformations of Canadian Muslim Perceptions of Identity, Community, Diversity and Authority in the Internet Age</i> (Franz Volker Greifenhagen, Luther College, University of Regina)</p> <p><i>Who are You? Digital Dialogue with The Other</i> (A. Brenda Anderson, Luther College)</p> <p><i>Best Approaches to Examining the Use of Digital Technology and Identity Formation Amongst Muslim Youth</i> (Rubina Ramji, Cape Breton University)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RELIGION &amp; IMMIGRATION</b></p> <p>Presider: Mary Hale, St. Mary's University</p> <p><i>Muslim Women's Social Networks: Crossing Multiple Boundaries</i> (Catherine Holtmann, University of New Brunswick)</p> <p><i>Make This Your Home: Khoja Nizari Isma'ilis and Acculturation in Canada</i> (Salima Versi, University of Alberta)</p> <p><i>Belief not Religion: Youth Negotiations of Religious Identity in Canada</i> (Heather Shipley, University of Ottawa)</p>
<b>MCC207</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RELIGION &amp; ECOLOGY JOINT PANEL WITH CTS</b></p> <p>Presider:</p> <p><i>"...that reconnection to the unseen life": Earth, Religion and Community in Mi'kmaq activism</i> (Sarah King, Grand Valley State University)</p> <p><i>Expanding the Boundaries of Human Subjectivity: The Need for Ecological Conversion</i> (Cristina Vanin, St. Jerome's University, Waterloo, Ontario)</p> <p><i>Rescuing the Imago Dei: Relationality and Theocentricity</i> (Allison Covey, Regis</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RITUALS AT HOME AND AWAY</b></p> <p>Presider: Pamela Andrews, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>"Spiritually, I'm Always in Lourdes": Fluid Meanings of Home and Destination among Serial Pilgrims</i> (Michael Agnew, McMaster University)</p> <p><i>Initiatory rites of passage through the lens of sümnet töreni in northern Cyprus</i> (Thomas Parkhill, St. Thomas University)</p> <p><i>A Pill is Rarely Just a Pill: The "Social Lives" of South Asian Medicines among Hindus in Canada</i> (Yasaman Samīksā Munro, Wilfrid Laurier</p>

	College)	University–University of Waterloo)
MCC304	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>AMERINDIAN RELIGIONS</b></p> <p>Presider: Pamela Andrews, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>The Politics of Colonial Comparative Religion: The Ghost Dance Religion of 1890 and Mormonism</i> (Booker Alston, University of Cape Town)</p> <p><i>Walking Forward: Social and Political Mobility in the Journey of Nishiyuu</i> (Meaghan Weatherdon, University of Toronto)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ROUNDTABLE: WHEN TWO RIGHTS MAKE A WRONG: REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION IN LIGHT OF THE YORK UNIVERSITY INCIDENT</b></p> <p>Chair: Laura Stemp–Morlock, University of Waterloo</p> <p><i>Canada and the Limits of Accommodation and Rights Discourse</i> (Meena Sharify–Funk, Wilfrid Laurier University)</p> <p><i>Competing Human Rights at York University</i> (David Seljak, University of Waterloo)</p> <p><i>The Augsburg Interim of 1548: Religious accommodation before the Age of Reason</i> (Johannes Wolfart, Carleton University)</p> <p><i>A Woman's Right to Choose: Women, Religion, and Rights in Canada</i> (Laura Stemp–Morlock, University of Waterloo)</p>
MCC308	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RELIGION &amp; SECULARIZATION</b></p> <p>Presider: Amarnath Amarasingam, York University</p> <p><i>Refugees, Religion and the Social Good in Canada</i> (Paul Bramadat, University of Victoria, Centre for Studies in Religion and Society)</p> <p><i>Making “The Mosaic”: Identity Formation in a Multicultural State</i> (Bethany Berard, University of Winnipeg and University of Manitoba)</p> <p><i>The Search for a Catholic Modernity: Quebec, Religion and Nationalism</i> (David Seljak, St. Jerome's University)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BORDERS OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY</b></p> <p>Presider: Leah McKeen, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>Ostentatious Objects: Borderline Religion and Secular Magic in Montréal</i> (Ian Alexander Cuthbertson, Queen's University)</p> <p><i>Canadian Horsemen: Haitian Vodou at the Canadian Museum of History</i> (Patricia MacAulay, Wilfrid Laurier University)</p> <p><i>Shari'ah, Identity, and Muslim Borders: The Case of Ijtihad in North America</i> (Ali Albarghouthi, University of Saskatchewan)</p>

**TUESDAY MAY 27**  
**Morning Sessions**

PLACE	9am – 10:30am	10:45am – 12:15pm
<b>MCD308</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE</b></p> <p>Presider: Marybeth White, Wilfrid Laurier University</p> <p><i>A bridge between health and religion: perspective of a Ghanaian context</i> (Sami Helewa, Campion College, University of Regina)</p> <p><i>Bridging as a Result of Marginalization: Feminist Interreligious Dialogical Activism</i> (A. Brenda Anderson, Luther College, University of Regina)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ROUNDTABLE:</b>  <b>PLAYING CONSERVATISM: THE PERFORMANCE OF  EVANGELICAL CULTURE AND FORMATION OF YOUTH  IDENTITIES</b></p> <p>Chair: Michael Wilkinson, Trinity Western University</p> <p><i>In Search of the "Serviceable Life": Christianity and Chinese Immigrant Youth in North America</i> (Helen Mo, University of Toronto)</p> <p><i>"Have you been to TC?": Religious Hype, Ethnic Identity, and Chinese-Canadian Experience in Toronto</i> (Scott Wall, University of Waterloo)</p> <p><i>Reclaiming the Canadian Landscape: The Performance of Catholic Evangelization amongst Youth</i> (Paul Gareau, University of Ottawa)</p> <p><i>"Darkness Has a Name": Performative Religiosity and the Language of American Evangelical Hell Houses</i> (Saliha Chattoo, University of Toronto)</p>

## INDIVIDUAL PAPERS

Pushpa Acharya, University of Alberta

The Argumentative Women: Suvarchalā and Sulabhā's Debates in the Mahābhārata

Multiple male narrators glorify the masculine valor and patriarchal roles in the Sanskrit epic, the Mahābhārata, where women's voices are present but marginalized. My paper is a study of the representation of women's voices in the Mahābhārata, where several women characters, ranging from queens to commoners, challenge the male authority in the familial, social-political, and philosophical contexts. In particular, I focus on two women orators: Sulabhā and Suvarchalā, whose philosophical argumentation with two authoritative men, Janaka and Śvetaketu, centers on the relationship between word and meaning, and imply that language itself provides the speaker of any gender an authority to speak and debate. I will also contend that these women speakers' tactics of argumentation and rhetoric are similar to that of the Upaniṣadic woman sage, Gārgī. They prove that the gendered borders of the text are permeable, and thus permutable.

Ali Albarghouthi, University of Saskatchewan

Shari'ah, Identity, and Muslim Borders: The Case of Ijtihad in North America

It is not uncommon whenever controversy surrounds Islam and Muslims in North American headlines to hear prompt calls for reforms of Islamic law. Conceived of as the cause of Muslim "otherness," critics argue that Muslim modernization and minority integration hinge on the complete overhaul of a rigid Shari'ah that is at odds with the ideals of liberal democracies. In response, many point to the principle of ijtihad in Shari'ah as proof of its flexibility and inherent ability to adapt to any culture. Based on interviews with Muslim intellectuals and community leaders in the US and Canada, this paper charts the potential and limitations of ijtihad as an agent of integration. In particular, it surveys the different understandings of ijtihad, analyzes the role the North American context plays in conditioning ijtihad, and explores how ijtihad is employed to redraw the borders of religious authority and identity in North America.

Michael Agnew, McMaster University

"Spiritually, I'm Always in Lourdes": Fluid Meanings of Home and Destination among Serial Pilgrims

Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted with pilgrimages from England to the Marian shrine of Lourdes, this paper focuses on the experience of serial pilgrims, those that have made the journey to Lourdes repeatedly for several years. Since the first organized pilgrimage from England to Lourdes in 1883, the French shrine has been the premiere destination for English Catholic pilgrims, with several diocesan pilgrimages, religious travel companies, and charitable organizations facilitating the journey each year. I argue that for many serial pilgrims, Lourdes constitutes a 'home away from home,' a place that has become intimately familiar, safe, and sacred over several pilgrimages. For young pilgrims particularly, those 'raised in Lourdes,' it is a formative site that is integral to their religious identity and sense of belonging. By exploring the rich narratives of serial pilgrims, this paper serves to highlight the fluid boundary between home and destination within the context of contemporary pilgrimage.

May Al Fartousi, Brock University

The Effects of Visits "Back home" on Shi'i Muslim Arabic-Canadian Females' Understanding of Justice

This qualitative case study explored 10 young female Shi'i Muslim Arabic-Canadian students' experiences within their home, community, and school environments. The study integrated several bodies of scholarly theories (identity and feminist theories, and critical race theory) in order to examine the data under a set of comprehensive lenses that more fully articulates the diversity of Shi'i Muslim females' experiences. The methods used to collect the data were 10 semi-structured in-depth interviews, 2 focus-group meetings, and the incorporation of the researcher's fieldnotes. Some of the themes garnered from the data included: (a) martyrdom and self-sacrifice as a means for social justice; (b) the impact of the historical female exemplary role model on the participants' experiences with wearing the Hijab; (c) intersectionality between culture, religion, and gender; and (d) effects of visits to shrines. Recommendations are made to integrate Shi'i Muslim females' identity within the context of Islam and the West.

Ali Albarghouthi, University of Saskatchewan

Shari'ah, Identity, and Muslim Borders: The Case of Ijtihad in North America

It is not uncommon whenever controversy surrounds Islam and Muslims in North American headlines to hear prompt calls for reforms of Islamic law. Conceived of as the cause of Muslim "otherness," critics argue that Muslim modernization and minority integration hinge on the complete overhaul of a rigid Shari'ah that is at odds with the ideals of liberal democracies. In response, many point to the principle of ijtihad in Shari'ah as proof of its flexibility and inherent ability to adapt to any culture. Based on interviews with Muslim intellectuals and community leaders in the US and Canada, this paper charts the potential and limitations of ijtihad as an agent of integration. In particular, it surveys the different understandings of ijtihad, analyzes the role the North American context plays in conditioning ijtihad, and explores how ijtihad is employed to redraw the borders of religious authority and identity in North

America.

Booker Alston, University of Cape Town

The Politics of Colonial Comparative Religion: The Ghost Dance Religion of 1890 and Mormonism

Nineteenth-century contributors to comparative religion utilized political strategies when producing, authenticating, and circulating knowledge about religion, religions, and the religious in order to further the colonial aspirations of the government and society to which they pledged their allegiance. This paper is an examination of the politics employed by comparativists involved in the circulation of knowledge about two uncontrolled religions on America's Western frontier—the Ghost Dance Religion of 1890 and late nineteenth-century Mormonism—and as such provides a critical lens for scholars and students of the history of religions to reflect on the use of the comparative method within their discipline. By filtering the source material through David Chidester's methodological system, the politics of congruence, classification, and absence emerge as the residue requiring further analysis in this comparative compounding of two distinct American religions.

A. Brenda Anderson, Luther College at The University of Regina

Bridging as a Result of Marginalization: Feminist Interreligious Dialogical Activism

Formal Muslim-Christian dialogue has been largely orchestrated by men with significant levels of social or ecclesial power. Only certain motivations, processes and religious identities are conceptualized and practiced, while the majority of Muslims and Christians remain underrepresented, marginalized and even silenced. Women share this experience of the colonization of minds and bodies because masculinized religious agendas define the world without their input. These common patterns of alterity between Muslim and Christian feminists place them in a unique role to critique dialogical processes. I argue that feminist discourse theory creates new dialogical methods that better illustrate and bridge our diverse identities and narratives. A shift in understanding religion and self brings new considerations and methods to the dialogical table, including: appreciating hybrid identities; understanding justice to mean universal well-being; employing conversationalist epistemology/embodied dialogue, and countering violence against women through social activism. I name this emerging trend feminist interreligious dialogical activism.

Pamela Andrews, Wilfrid Laurier University

"Prayers In A Song": Indigenous Hip Hop in Canada

The relationship of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples to hip hop is profound. Indigenous youth are increasingly involved not only in the consumption, but in the production of hip hop music and culture. From its inception, hip hop music and culture has embraced a variety of styles and cultural forms, from reggae and salsa, to jazz and heavy metal. Increasingly, this pastiche embraces traditional Indigenous forms of music making, dance, and visual culture. This blending of hip hop and traditional forms of artistic expression speaks to the Indigenous experience in contemporary Canada as a whole, one that is characterized both by liminality and duality. This presentation will discuss the nature of Indigenous hip hop in Canada, and will present some preliminary approaches to understanding the relationship between hip hop and contemporary Indigenous spirituality/religious practice.

Ryan Anningson, Wilfrid Laurier University

"You May Call it a Miracle, but That's Nembutsu Doing Everything"

Buddhism in North America is directly represented by the various Jōdo Shinshū organizations of the Nishi Hongwanji. The Buddhist Churches of Canada [BCC] are drastically understudied. By analyzing the biography of specific figures, scholars will have a more complete picture of the historical record of the implantation of Buddhism in Canada. Reverend Newton Ishiura transcends many of the normal dichotomous typologies engaged by scholars. Ishiura is Nisei and once wanted to be a Christian pastor. Instead, he matriculated at Ryukoku University and joined the Buddhist Churches of America [BCA]. Later, he moved his family to Canada in order to help organize the Toronto Buddhist Church. This study intends to complicate the normal divisions of analysis identifying the BCA as a "foreign-oriented" ethnic organization. Studying Ishiura complicates previous research on immigrant religious traditions. Ishiura relates to this years theme because he was able to transcend multiple boundaries throughout his life.

James Apple, University of Calgary

Fragments and Phylogenetics of the Avaivartikacakrasūtra from Dunhuang

The Avaivartikacakrasūtra is an important Mahāyāna sūtra preserved in three Chinese versions and a Tibetan version among extant Buddhist canonical collections. This paper discusses the results of analyzing an Old Tibetan fragment of the Avaivartikacakrasūtra from Dunhuang preserved in the Stein Collection (IOL Tib J 53). The paper details the results of restoring the proper order of the manuscript and compares the Buddhist terminology found in the fragment against the ninth century Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicon, the Mahāvvyutpatti. The paper identifies for the first time additional Tibetan fragments that belong to this manuscript from among unidentified Mahāyāna sūtra fragments preserved in the Stein collection. The paper concludes with a summary of the stemmatic relations that the fragment preserves compared against a collation of Tibetan exemplars based upon the results of philological study and phylogenetic analysis, a computer-based method derived from principles of evolutionary biology.

Simon Appolloni, University of Toronto

Wondering about Wonder: An Exploration of this Human Emotion as a Gateway to Intimacy with the Large

Wonder is an intriguing human emotion, evoking images of awe-inspiring reverence, and even fear to the primordial mystery of existence. As a shared human emotion, it traverses disciplinary boundaries, facilitating scientists and theologians alike to experience Earth more intimately, while also enabling them to learn about our planet, impelling them, as cultural historian Thomas Berry would put it, to regard Earth as sacred. Berry considers wonder as one of our main purposes for existence. If this is so, and if wonder is so integral to whom we are, then what has happened to this emotion that has so many humans treat Earth and its other-than-human inhabitants not as subject but as an object? Employing a critical examination of the works of various thinkers on the notion of wonder, this paper will explore the nature of wonder and offer an explanation why it has waned, and how we might re-ignite it.

Kamal Arora, University of British Columbia

Trauma, Memory and Gendered Religious Practice Among Sikh Widows in New Delhi's "Widow Colony."

This paper examines gendered Sikh practice, trauma and memory among Sikh women of the "Widow Colony" in Tilak Nagar, New Delhi. How are religious practices called upon to enforce memories of violence and rioting affecting Sikhs in 1984, effectively leading to a community of widows? How does the gurdwara intersect with religiosity and the continued trauma and violence experienced by Sikh women? How do women carve out a public space for belonging and informal community-building in a gendered landscape? Based on ethnographic research, I discuss the intersection between trauma, memory, religious practice and place. This paper contends that women's social interactions and religious practices show how sociopolitical community memory is enacted, regulated and enforced, and how the public sphere of the gurdwara is re-appropriated away from formal religious practice by Sikh women and functions as a space which enables the sometimes fragile exchange of local knowledges and viewpoints.

Denis Bekkering, University of Waterloo

Ludicrous Tragedy, Christian Authenticity, and Sexual Politics: Tammy Faye Bakker's Campy Fans

While sincere devotion is an oft-assumed link between religion and fandom, recent fan scholarship has demonstrated that fan relationships are often much messier, mixing genuine identification, ironic acclamation, and even extreme dislike. Drawing on interview data and a wide range of alternative and mainstream media, this paper offers a cultural history of "campy" fans of the American televangelist Tammy Faye Bakker. Beginning in the early-1980s, Bakker acquired a substantial fan base of gay men who filtered the televangelist through a camp sensibility that was simultaneously ironic and affectionate, playing with, and relating to, her tragicomic public suffering and perseverance. As will be demonstrated, while Bakker's campy fans would eventually enshrine her as a gay icon and exemplar of an authentic, compassionate Christianity, Bakker, who actively marketed herself to this unexpected fan demographic, also aligned herself with conservative religio-political forces that challenged the lifestyles of sexual minorities.

Bethany Berard, University of Winnipeg, University of Manitoba

Making "The Mosaic": Identity Formation in a Multicultural State

What is the role of the state in identity formation? As identity is conceptualized as a negotiable, fluid process, the constitutive forces must be considered. The discourse of multiculturalism is a key factor in the Canadian state's role in identity formation of citizens, used to create a 'one' out of 'many' that form Canadian society. However as ethical, cultural and religious norms are simultaneously subsumed under the category of multiculturalism, but not required for a "multicultural" position, one must ask what the category consists of. Following J.Z. Smith's call for scholars to define the categories they create and sustain, this paper is grounded in a systematic historical and social analysis of the category of multiculturalism. The political and social implications of the normalization of such a category are identified, with particular attention the effect of such discourse on contemporary religious identity within the Canadian context.

Alain Bouchard, Collège de Sainte-Foy et Université Laval

L'Évangile selon le Billboard : musique, religion et globalisation.

Sur les sites web d'hébergement de vidéos comme YouTube ou Dailymotion, on retrouve des reprises de grands succès musicaux commerciaux par des groupes religieux. C'est ainsi que la chanson Get Lucky de Daft Punk est utilisée pour exposer les principes de la fête de Rosh Hashanah, que Gangnam Style du chanteur coréen Psy devient Catho Style ou Jewish Style et que What Does the Fox Say du duo norvégien Ylvis sert à présenter les quakers. Pour certains théoriciens de la globalisation, ce phénomène est un exemple de déculturation et de détérioration du religieux (O. Roy). Serions-nous plutôt en présence d'une modulation religieuse de la globalisation (R. Inglehart)? À l'aide d'exemples tirés de quelques-unes de ces vidéos, nous réfléchissons sur ces questions.

Paul Bramadat, University of Victoria

Refugees, Religion and the Social Good in Canada

Canadian religious groups have been providing refugee settlement services for decades. Unfortunately, we know very little about the influence on these groups of powerful forms of

secularization, secularism, and what might be called the neo-liberal turn in our economy. Given how important these groups have been in delivering this important social good, this lacuna in research and policy knowledge is extremely problematic. In this presentation, I use ethnographic research among religiously affiliated settlement agencies in BC to tease out the complex effects of dominant discourses about religion and the state. Among other questions, I ask: What effects might secularism have on this sector? What effects might declining membership in some (especially “mainline” Christian) groups have on the government’s interest in such (mostly) volunteer labour? What broader lessons might we learn from what we witness in these groups?

Alice Chan, McGill University

Toronto, Montreal, and Modesto, CA: religious literacy and boundless religious based bullying

Since 2000, scholars and societal skeptics have scrutinized North America’s two mandatory religious literacy programs – the Grade 9 World Religions course (2000) in Modesto, California and the Ethics and Religious Culture program (2008) in Quebec. However, no discussion exists on the connection between religious literacy and religious based bullying in our public school classrooms. The first half of this presentation argues for religious literacy in Greater Toronto Area (GTA) public schools. The second half discusses progressing research on the connections of religious literacy and religious based bullying in Montreal and Modesto. By drawing on various narratives in these two communities, I seek teaching best practices to share with other pluralistic communities across North America. Abiding with this conference theme, this presentation argues that religious literacy is needed in our classrooms as public school boundaries and borders are continuously challenged and extended, and schools become a nexus for complex societal issues.

Nathan Colborne, Nipissing University

“It Was Like That When I Came In:” David Sloan Wilson’s Use of the Category ‘Religion’

David Sloan Wilson argues that religion has evolved in human beings as a group adaptation. Part of Wilson’s argument relies on an analysis of a randomized sample of religions that he selects from The Encyclopedia of Religion. One significant methodological problem with this strategy is that Wilson offloads the work of defining the boundaries of each religious tradition to the encyclopedia he uses and allows the category ‘religion’ to do the conceptual heavy lifting in his argument. An examination of the way this category is used by Wilson will demonstrate that an insufficient attentiveness to the use of the word ‘religion’ makes Wilson’s argument circular and invalid. Wilson’s argument would be strengthened by rejecting any causal role for the category ‘religion’ and examining specific practices, rituals, and other acts of identification for an adaptive advantage irrespective of their association with the category ‘religion.’

Alison Colpitts, University of Toronto

Rethinking Theology and Political Theory to Meet the Challenge of Religion in Politics

In "An Examined Faith," liberal theologian James Gustafson argues that Christian citizens should hold theological beliefs that yield to and account for the political history of democratic societies. This paper puts Gustafson’s theology in dialogue with political theory in order to re-imagine the place of religion in the public sphere. In *Democracy and Tradition*, Jeffrey Stout argues that democratic theory needs democracy and theology to be compatible. Democracies rely on the religious expression of their citizens, so theories of democracy should be subjected to theological scrutiny. I explore the intersection of theology and politics to argue for a new theoretical framework for scholars to interpret the place of the religion in politics. I suggest that scholars of religion, theology, and politics will better be able to address the legacy of Christianity in North American democratic politics and the anxiety about the inclusion of theological arguments in the public sphere.

Allison Covey, Regis College

Rescuing the Imago Dei: Relationality and Theocentricity

Christianity has been called the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen, consumed by a sense of entitlement fueled by the doctrine of the Imago Dei and the Creation stories of Genesis. Is the Imago Dei irredeemably anthropocentric, a dangerously outdated concept bound to become an ironic victim of evolution? In an attempt to reconcile the Imago Dei with evolutionary biology, some have proposed its extension to other species or to nature as an undifferentiated whole. They hold that such paradigm shattering reconsiderations are necessary if the Church is to take both theology and science seriously. Such proposals seem unnecessarily drastic, the result of the acceptance of a false dilemma--either humanity is discontinuously distinct from or humanity is essentially the same as all other animals. Relational understandings of the Imago Dei stand poised to rescue the doctrine from both distortion and extinction and restore the Scriptural nuances of its meaning.

Harold Coward, University of Victoria

Powerful Chants for Spiritual Practice in Buddhism

Buddhism has no revealed words or scripture, yet Buddhist life is lived from within Buddhist words and texts. Also, in their philosophy of language, Buddhists see words as useful for everyday transactions and scientific knowledge, but not for transcendental knowledge. How is it then that words come to function as mantras or powerful chants in Buddhist traditions such as Tibetan Buddhism or Japanese Jodo Shinshu with potential for spiritual transformation? This is the question this article attempts to answer through three case studies of Buddhist mantra

practice: 1) The Triple Refuge in Theravada; 2) the Om Mani Padme Hum of Tibetan Buddhism; and, 3) The Nembutsu of Pure Land Japanese Practice.

Ian Alexander Cuthbertson, Queen's University  
Ostentatious Objects: Borderline Religion and Secular Magic in Montréal

The question “can objects be religious?” is a crucial one in Québec where a bill has been tabled that would ban state employees from wearing “ostentatious” religious objects. Yet no formal means have been put forward for determining whether or not a given object is religious – or not. In this paper I explore the social classification of objects as religious or non-religious by examining ‘magical’ objects (e.g. good luck charms) in Montreal. Drawing on ongoing ethnographic research, I argue that the visibility of religious and ‘magical’ objects in Montreal reveals more about distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable religion than it does about acceptable or unacceptable religious objects. Specifically, I argue that religious objects have become a matter of contention in Québec because the public presence of these objects contradicts dominant conceptions of ‘religion’ that relegate religious practices, beliefs, and objects to the private sphere.

Hannelore Daniel-Poncelet, Université de Sherbrooke  
Free Gift, State Secularism and Chaos Theory

My objective is to articulate free gift and state secularism as an auto-organized process that begun five centuries ago and spanning two continents by using chaos theory, complexity and a historico-anthropological approach. Relationship amongst humans and between humans and nature requires the invention of rules of behavior. According to my intuition, the invention of these rules is a free gift to humanity. The concept of freedom of conscience and religion puts into question the supernatural and divine foundations of the power of emperors and kings. According to me, this new code of law since the Edict of Torda in the 16th Century is a free gift of human origins, not that of gods. Thus appears the separation of throne and altar in different forms known today as state secularism.

Ken Derry, University of Toronto  
Post-Paper Pedagogies: Digital Storytelling in the Method and Theory Classroom

As much research has shown, there are many pedagogical shortfalls to the use of both essays and exams. This session will focus on a recent attempt to move beyond the boundaries of traditional assessments through the use of digital technology. From January 2012 to December 2013, University of Toronto students enrolled in a course on method and theory in the study of religion were required to produce a ten-minute video as their major assignment. The video comprised an edited interview with a current scholar of religion, in relation to both their work generally and a recent or upcoming publication. This session will involve a frank discussion of some of the successes and failures of this innovative approach to teaching method and theory, illustrated with samples of videos produced by students in the course as well as excerpts from their own reflections on the project.

Christopher Duncanson-Hales, Saint Paul University  
Word, Sound and Power: Marley and the Gospel According to Rastafari.

Rastafari is a New World religion emerging from the crucible of oppression, poverty, and alienation, of 1930's Kingston, JA. Jürgen Moltmann identifies Rastafari as “one of the most interesting modern forms of expression of the 'religion of the oppressed.’” Through a hermeneutic of Word, Sound and Power, Rastafari has developed “a counter-culture to the culture of the white rulers,” that transforms the dominant language of the oppressor into a counter-language of liberation, and the dominant religious symbols that have oppressed into a subversive religion hope. An important vehicle that Rastafari has deployed to proclaim globally Word, Sound and Power is Reggae music, most famously by Rastafari superstar Bob Marley. Using Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic of the productive imagination; this paper explores the biblical signification of a selection of Bob Marley's corpus concluding that Marley's international concert tours are analogous to Paul's mission to the gentiles.

Christopher Emory-Moore, University of Waterloo  
Present Peace, Future Freedom: Children's Meditation Manuals in Two Tibetan Buddhist Organizations

Contemporary global Buddhism consists of a diversity of transplanted Asian traditions whose modern adaptations often include heightened emphases on both family and meditation. This essay will consider the nexus of these two themes in an examination of children's meditation instruction in two of the largest international Gelugpa Tibetan Buddhist networks, the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT) and the New Kadampa Tradition (NKT). Through a comparison of these organizations' recently published children's meditation manuals, the essay aims to produce a clearer picture of how children and their capacities for meditation are being conceptualized and cultivated in globalized Tibetan Buddhism. I argue that the texts of the FPMT and NKT adopt opposite approaches, modernist and traditionalist, to the representation of meditation's Buddhist context and to the this/other-worldly location of meditation's benefits and goals.

Jared Epp, University of Ottawa

#### Locating God in the Anthropology of Pentecostalism

There is a shift towards phenomenologically based approaches in the social scientific study of Pentecostalism with the goal to better understand believers as they embody and practice their faith. Yet it seems researchers still cannot take seriously enough the claim of their informants that God exists independent of human creation. Based on ethnographic fieldwork I carried out with Pentecostals in rural Costa Rica, I ask if we cannot chip away at this position. My informants hold with absolute conviction that God is real and pervasive in their daily lives. Can I keep their position alive in my analysis or does a critical academic approach require faith and religious practice to be understood as of human origin and agency? In this paper I ask if the boundary between researchers and religious practitioners can be made more permeable or is there an inherent border between religious faith and its study?

David Feltmate, Auburn University at Montgomery

#### “Metal Epiphanies and Liberation Theology in Vinyl:” Theorizing Religion with Heavy Metal

One of the frequent assertions in early heavy metal scholarship was that metal contains a deeply religious element. This raises significant questions for the scholar of religion: How do we determine what constitutes our data? How do we gather it? How do we interpret it? Furthermore, in a discipline shaped by the institutionalization of specific traditions as paradigmatic examples of religion, why is it important for scholars to take seriously claims such as these? How does the study of heavy metal music and culture as something arising from human beings in a specific context help us to understand the conceptual categories scholars use when crafting theories of religion? Drawing on Bellah’s, Berger’s, Bourdieu’s, and Christian Smith’s work and using examples from heavy metal culture(s) this paper will present preliminary answers to these questions.

Erich Fox Tree, Wilfrid Laurier University

#### The Environmental Costs of Conversion, or What Happens When Native Leaders are Reduced to “Shamans”

Missionaries of Catholic Action and evangelical Protestant sects in Guatemala are sometimes credited with having not only liberated Mayas from purportedly “heretical” Maya practices that had persisted beneath a veneer of colonial Christian symbols, but also with having helped Mayas economically, by encouraging a “rationalist” economic development. Yet drawing on the recollections of rural Mayas from the Department of Sololá, I argue that overzealous missionaries may have facilitated ecological degradation not only by opposing Native beliefs about the environment that were seen as contradictory to modern Christianity, but by weakening the authority of traditional leaders who had formerly served as practical guardians of sacred ecologies and arbitrators of land-use, while they also served as specialists in sacred rituals. What lessons can be drawn from Mayas’ former socio-spiritual systems of environmental management, and to what extent can contemporary Mayas restore them?

Michel Gardaz, University of Ottawa

#### Scanners, Electroencephalography, and Brain Waves: Mystical Experiences in the Age of Neurosciences

The paper will argue for a collaborative approach between Religious Studies, Neurosciences and Cognitive sciences of religion. Since the 1990’s, neurosciences have taken over a large portion of the research regarding mystical experiences. As a general rule, Religious Studies scholars and neuroscientists focus on different aspects: the former experiment on the brain, while scholars of religion focus on the cultural production of the brain. The neurological functioning of the brain is obviously not an object of inquiry in Religious Studies. Scholars do not have the pretention to know how the brain functions and how to use neuroscientist’s modern technology. We believe that Neurosciences, Cognitive sciences of religion and Religious Studies should combine their efforts in order to strength scholarship. Religious Studies scholars’ expertise on hermeneutical and cross-cultural problems (Comparative Mysticism) would greatly benefit neuroscientist’s epistemological understanding of mystical experiences.

Neil George, York University

#### Binding Religion: The Contexts of Science and Religion in Late-Victorian Britain

The trope “science and religion” became popular in the 1870s, although the available print materials from that time indicate that its meaning was far from stable. At stake in the rise of this new pairing of words were their highly contested meanings, because the ability to control the trope’s definition presented opportunities to shape and direct public opinion. This paper is concerned to analyze the discourses of science and religion within the late-Victorian periodical press, examining how the competing interests of geography, class, profession, politics, religion and economics in the struggle for discursive control play out in these partisan publications. It seems that throughout its period of popularization, the trope never took on a stable and agreed upon meaning. Instead it took on an array of interconnected meanings that allowed for the construction of a myth of stability that framed the highly novel language as self-evident.

Nathan Gibbard, McGill University

#### A Historiographical Analysis of the Study of Superheroes and Religion

While the study of superheroes in comics books and film has received increasing academic attention across disciplines, the dominant methodology within religious studies has been a theological one. Dominated by an essentialist interpretation of myth, superheroes have often been understood as representing certain archetypes within human culture. As archetypes, perceived or articulated as inherent, claims about superheroes and religion often rest on implicit assumptions about the nature of reality, rather than those of culture and history. My paper

attempts to examine the relatively brief history of the study of superheroes and religion to uncover the biases underlying this growing field of inquiry. The method is historiographical, examining the ways this field has developed and why. Exploring and uncovering the origin of certain biases in the study of superheroes will hopefully help to open up other models of approach, especially cultural and historical models of the use of religion within superhero stories.

Alexandra Granke, University of Manitoba

Religion “is Not” Ethnicity: Conflict About and In Burma, via Critical Theory

My presentation will be dedicated to a critical analysis of various human rights discourses, news reports, and anthropological works on the ongoing political, national and cultural conflicts in present-day Burma. Using Jonathan Z. Smith's problems of categorization in religious scholarship, Hans Kippenberg's history of religious scholarship, Arnal and McCutcheon's political commentary, and Masuzawa's world religion's paradigms, my presentation will contextualize how and why “religion” and “ethnicity” are used interchangeably depending on social and political motives. In other words, these terms are used interchangeably in light of various globalized perspectives that fail to take political motives, actualities of facts on the ground, and history into account. It is often the case that this is done in response to the upcoming 2015 elections, and how the country will be ruled in the future. Wider implications include the tools necessary to critically engage with conception assaulting material.

Brent Hagerman, Wilfrid Laurier University

Fire on Babylon: Sinead O'Connor's Performance of Rastafari

Sacred Rastafarian symbols such as Haile Selassie, dreadlocks, ganja and the African continent can allow for symbolic ambiguity or non-orthodox interpretations that encourage “oppressed people everywhere to articulate and resolve their grievances” (Yawney 1994, 79). On October 3, 1992 Sinead O'Connor mobilized some of these symbols when she shocked the western world by tearing up a picture of Pope John Paul II on live television while singing Bob Marley's anti-racism anthem “War” (itself based on a speech by Selassie) and holding a Rastafarian prayer cloth. In this paper I examine O'Connor's ongoing appropriation of Rastafari and reggae as productive tools of protest and resistance. I unpack the significance of the multiple boundaries of identity she negotiates—religion, gender, sexuality, race and nationality—as she adopts and adapts Rastafari as a means to articulate her critique of the Catholic Church and broader society.

Mary Hale, Saint Mary's University

Mind the Gap: Exploring the Borders and Boundaries Between Religion, Immigrant Communities and the Environment

Environmental movements (historically seen as white, middle-class endeavours), many with ties to Christian denominations, play key roles in providing environmental education to the broader community. It has been argued that, in Canada, this activism by Canadian Christians has its roots in the outdoor education movements of the 1950's and 1960's that were, in part, championed by various denominations. With issues of environmental degradation and climate change looming larger and larger in Canadian public discourse, it would be important to know if environmental movements are actively seeking to expand their activist base to incorporate new Canadians and their children. Using interviews with members of the Ecology Action Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia, new immigrants to Canada and other stakeholders, this study seeks to explore if (and if so, how, why and who) new immigrants to Canada are actively recruited and incorporated into outdoor education programs run by established environmental movements.

Christopher Handy, McMaster University

Indian Buddhist Etiquette and the Emergence of Ascetic Civility

The concept of etiquette for ancient Indian Buddhist monks and nuns is generally treated by academics as a subset of Buddhist ethical doctrine, with discussion limited to a few lines about the *śaikṣā* (“training”) rules of the Vinayas (monastic law codes). Drawing from research on disgust and linguistic politeness, I will demonstrate that etiquette appears throughout Indian Buddhist literature, as a cultural category distinct from but related to ethics. I consider etiquette as a special type of language concerned with preserving social class structures and guarding against shared notions of disgust and shame. In contrast to previous depictions of Buddhism as an entirely revolutionary force, I argue that much of the Buddhist understanding of etiquette in ancient India was consciously formulated to be attractive to mainstream Brahmin society, while also reshaping traditional Brahmanical ideals in ways that fit newly-developing attitudes toward the city as a model for culture.

Sami Helewa, Campion College, University of Regina

A bridge between health and religion: perspective of a Ghanaian context.

In this paper I will explore the religious motivation behind the establishment of welfare institutions in West Africa, such as the Shekhina clinic in Tamale in the north of Ghana. Shekhina is a non-government welfare institution that functions as a medical clinic, which provides medical care to very poor residents in Ghana. Its founder, David Abdulai, is a doctor in medicine and a native of Ghana. Upon his conversion to Christianity he opened his clinic under the advice of a Scott missionary. By the use of the method of theology-based praxis, this paper demonstrates that Shekhina socially functions in two capacities: building trust in western medicine which in the context of Africa is associated with colonial-related science, and embodying

social altruism at a time of extra vulnerability by illness. Shekhina is a human reality linking western medicine with the native identity of the poor in Ghana.

Catherine Holtmann, University of New Brunswick  
Muslim Women's Social Networks: Crossing Multiple Boundaries

Muslims are one of the fastest growing ethno-religious minority groups in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, provinces with low levels of ethno-religious diversity in comparison with the rest of Canada. This growth is due to immigration and the large numbers of international students attending the region's universities. A diversity of social networks is necessary in enabling newcomer Muslim women to access information about opportunities and services in the local context as well as facilitating friendships. This paper presents the findings of a qualitative study exploring social networks in the lives of 31 Muslim women from 15 different countries who have come to the region within the past decade and also includes the perspectives of community professionals who provide public services. The analysis employs an intersectional theoretical framework and considers the women's experiences of challenges and opportunities in light of contemporary literature on religion, gender, culture and globalization.

Sarah Lynn Kleeb, University of Toronto  
Meaning and Violation: On the Exclusive Character of Narratives of Loss and Redemption

Drawing on insights offered by moral anti-theodicy, and building on Lynne Arnault's critical analysis of the "will to happy endings," this paper suggests that the redemptive logic which motivates a narrative of development or growth via experiences of suffering may result in marginalization of those who are unable to find meaning in their sorrow. This has led to the establishment of norms which privilege responses to grief deemed socially appropriate, anticipating a conclusion in which individuals are invariably believed to benefit. Those incapable of following this trajectory are often resigned to the periphery, their expression of loss considered invalid, if entertained at all. This unintentional, but potent, form of exclusion can be found in forms of reasoning common to many Western theodicies, which often inform broader cultural attitudes toward mourning. In this way, genuine attempts at inclusivity may betray individuals who express suffering differently, obscuring those who remain inconsolable.

Rebekka King, Middle Tennessee State University  
Judaism before Jesus: Rhetorical Constructions of the Proto-Christian Other in Evangelicalisms

This paper investigates the rhetorical practices and politics of representation on the part of "Christian rabbi" Curt Landry and his organization, House of David Ministries. On the surface, Landry's ministry and theology bears resemblance to both Messianic Judaism and the Prosperity Gospel and his own individual charisma is derived from his self-proclaimed role as the "Jewish rabbi with an apostolic activation" to guide Christians. This paper offers an oversight into Landry's rhetoric drawing from his promotional material and from fieldwork conducted at one of his "apostolically anointed" churches in rural Tennessee. I look at the ways that Jewish identity is fetishized by evangelical and charismatic Christians (Elisha 2011) and argue that certain constructions of Judaism contribute to the creation of an imagined proto-Christian other. My interest lies specifically in the ways that the Hebrew language lends authenticity to Landry's charismatic prosperity gospel (c.f. Engelke 2007; Handeman 2011).

Sarah King, Grand Valley State University  
"...that reconnection to the unseen life": Earth, Religion and Community in Mi'kmaw activism.

At Burnt Church/Esgenoôpetitj N.B., Mi'kmaq community members participated in a prolonged and violent conflict with the Canadian government and their neighbours over access to a fishery, after the Supreme Court of Canada's 1999 Marshall decision. This paper explores the Mi'kmaq understanding of their relationships to "the ancestors..., the human relations and the non-human relations," as it was expressed by leaders and elders at Burnt Church. The significance of these traditional teachings and practices of relationship are explored in light of similar articulations across Mi'kmaq territory (Mi'kma'ki), such as those by Sable and Francis (2012), and by community members involved in more recent protests at Rexton/Elsipogtog. In light of these teachings and practices, movements for Mi'kmaq sovereignty can be seen not only as movements for political self-determination, but also as attempts to protect and support traditional Mi'kmaq environmental relatedness.

Lyman Kulathungam, Masters College & Seminary  
A Christocentric Anthropocosmic Approach to Ecological Crisis

Identifying human exploitation as causing the disaster confronting earth, ecologists are resorting to religions. An examination of religions indicates their high regard for earth and the vital role it plays in their salvific quest. But earth is still exploited. The breakdown stems from human default. Hence the solution has to commence at this grassroots level. Viewing the relationship between humans and earth differently tends to lead religions to be bio-centric or anthropocentric. God's universal redemptive plan, which includes both cosmos and humans, enables a strategy that is Christocentric yet anthropocosmic but is neither anthropocentric nor bio-centric. Participation in it calls for action that goes beyond stewardship of the earth; one that functions within Christocentric borders without making such borders restrictive boundaries. In presenting the Divine as wholly immanent, some Deep Ecologists overlook its transcendence. Such a stance limits the conversation to a bio-centric perspective and thereby restricts concerted action.

Jack Laughlin and Kornel Zathureczky, University of Sudbury  
Imagining Religious Agency in the Classroom

At a recent religious education conference, we interrogated literacy and pluralist discourses of religion. Based on our construal of the theory and method of religion we demonstrated fundamental inadequacies of these divergent instances of instrumentalisation of religious pluralism. Since our analysis was focused on the uses and abuses of agency as they relate to these two constellations of discourses we did not articulate a content-rich theoretical proposal. In arriving at such proposal our work have received a certain, negative, impetus by our encounter with the concept of the “imaginative insider’s perspective” which we understand as a kind of mimetic performative pluralism, an artificial fusion of the agencies of scholar and religious. In response, we propose a vision of historically conscious religious pedagogy based on the delineation of religious and scholarly agency which recognises the imaginative worlds of both: the instructor as arbiter constructs, and contests, the imaginings of religious agents. Institutional

Justin Jaron Lewis, University of Manitoba  
Jewish Krishnas: Dancing on the Border

This is an initial report from a study of the stories told by an intriguing group of people living beyond expected religious boundaries: Jewish members of the Hare Krishna movement. In the 1960s, many Jews were among Swami Prabhupada’s young followers, alarming their families and communities. While less in the public eye today, the Hare Krishna movement is alive and well and still has many Jewish members, including some 200 in Israel. Many identify as Jews, keep in touch with their Jewish families, and maintain some Jewish practices. My colleague, anthropologist Robert Phillips, and I see story as the key to understanding these border-crossing identities. We have begun listening to Jewish devotees’ personal stories, and the stories from Jewish and Vaishnava traditions that matter most to them. This paper will contextualize the situation of Jews in the Hare Krishna movement, and share stories gleaned from our initial interviews.

Patricia MacAulay, Wilfrid Laurier University  
Canadian Horsemen: Haitian Vodou at the Canadian Museum of History

The Canadian Museum of History’s recent “Vodou” exhibition, created in partnership with the Musée d’Ethnographie de Genève and the Tropenmuseum of Amsterdam, promised “Haitian Vodou, as you’ve never seen it before!” This exhibition presented an unusual combination of homeland and diaspora forms of Vodou by placing mainly Haitian artefacts alongside the stories and experiences of Canadian Vodouisants. This paper will examine the representation of Vodou in this exhibition via textual and visual analysis, with particular reference to the use of space and emphasis on the Canadian content; it will compare this exhibition to other popular representations of Vodou; and it will place the exhibition in the context of recent debates over Canadian religious diversity.

Lilian Marshall, University of Manitoba  
S/M and Goddess Worship

I present my research on S/M (a blanket term for Sadomasochistic eroticism, Doinant/Submission [D/S] practice, Bondage, etc.) and the Goddess Revival Movement. Often the term “Goddess” is used by women playing Dominant roles in S/M experiences, and within my research I wanted to explore if this title held any symbolism outside of power matrixes. I found that in a small number of cases Dominatrixes were both revered by their Submissives (similar or equal to “common” definitions of religious belief) and self-identifying as having spiritual power or authority: and that these beliefs and declarations were tied to beliefs and “history” generated by second wave feminist. Thus, Although the Goddess Revival Movement had problematic approaches in identifying past historical truths, in some circles, which include the S/M scene, it has created a new religious and spiritual movement.

Mariana Mastagar, Trinity College, University of Toronto  
Secularization or Vernacularization in Macedonian- Bulgarian churches

This study focuses on how the motivation of sustaining an ethnic community in diaspora setting affects the organization and functions of the Eastern Orthodox Macedono- Bulgarian churches in Toronto. By considering the roles of the priest, church board and members, this paper illustrates how the institutional changes and religious leadership are part of a new communal formation and arrangement. The intensity of lay involvement and hierarchical acquiescence to it in the new homeland pose the interrelated questions: is this an aspect of secularization or of vernacularization? The suggestion here is that the transformations identified are best considered as vernacularization.

Leah McKeen, Wilfrid Laurier University  
On the Boundaries of Jewish/Christian Identities

“A Portrait of Jewish Americans,” a recent report of the Pew Forum’s Religion & Public Life Project, garnered attention in large part because it found 22% of the self-identified American Jews surveyed described themselves as not religious. Further complicating Judaism as a discrete monotheistic religious identity, 34% of the respondents agreed that one can be Jewish and

believe that Jesus was the messiah—a belief traditionally understood as indicative of Christianity. This presentation delves into the boundaries of Jewish/Christian identity using this report as a starting point. I critically examine how the survey handled religious identities that meld Judaism and Christianity, such as Messianic Jews (e.g. Jews for Jesus) and Torah-observant Christians. Furthermore, I interrogate how secondary sources, such as news reports and blogs, presented the Pew Research Center's data on these Jewish/Christian identities.

Germain McKenzie, Catholic University of America  
Secularization and Social Change in Charles Taylor

Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age* presents a "revisionist" account of secularization in the West which proposes itself as a view that transcends the polarization between "orthodox" and "counter-orthodox" theorists while affirming that religious motivation per se has remained operative, giving birth to new religious forms in the secular West. In a novel turn in the debate, he finds that "exclusive humanism" and religiously-inspired versions of human fulfillment unavoidably fragilize each other today. Taylor vouches for a multi-causal approach to the social change involved in secularization, in which "material" and "non material" conditions are potentially independent variables that may influence each other and the course of life of society. This occurs through the construction of social imaginaries. Based on a comparative analysis, I claim Taylor also differs in this from "orthodox" and "counter-orthodox" theorists, providing through this approach with a better explanation of religious change in our days.

Janet McLellan and Marybeth White, Wilfrid Laurier University  
Social, religious, and 'spirit-based' capital within Ontario Cambodian and Lao Buddhist communities

This presentation introduces a new term 'spirit-based capital,' to demonstrate the important role that pneumatic religiosity continues to play in the lives of Cambodian and Lao Buddhist refugees who have resettled in Ontario. Access to and interaction with the spirit world by both monastics and lay people not only supports individual and community health well-being, but also provides significant compensation for newcomers who lack other forms of social and religious capital. Building upon the work of Orsi (1997), Stark and Finke (2000) and Chestnut (2003), the presentation argues for a greater scholarly acceptance of people's various interactions with the spirit realms, particularly as a 'rational' phenomenon that is entailed with the production of social goods involving numerous levels of obligation, reciprocity, reward, dependence, and manipulation.

Aldea Mulhern, University of Toronto  
Eat your valuables

Food has long been a medium for religious charity, but until recently the food itself (in its ubiquity or mundaneness) was seen as unimportant. Recently, food has become an object of increasing interest in itself, not just among scholars, but for religious persons and organizations. But food is not a neutral medium through which charity is administered: it is itself complicated. The kind of food deemed suitable to give may say something about giving and receiving, and paying attention to food that is given reveals points of tension in the discourses used to valorize certain food acts over others. Drawing from interviews and participant observation at food-related religious events held by a Jewish and a Muslim organization in Toronto, I trace some of the lines according to which religious food economies are being developed, and in turn are developing certain kinds of subjects of these religious food economies.

Yasaman Samīkṣā Munro, Wilfrid Laurier University-University of Waterloo  
A Pill is Rarely Just a Pill: The "Social Lives" of South Asian Medicines among Hindus in Canada

Drawing upon insights of Arjun Appadurai, medical anthropologists like Whyte, Van der Geest and Hardon (2002) among others have navigated the "Social Lives of Medicines"—ways in which we can study culture, identity and religion through the tangible medical substances and tools people draw upon in everyday life. This paper focuses on three facets of the social lives of South Asian traditional medicines used by Hindus living in the Waterloo Region of Canada. First, I explore how domestic practices and techniques for the maintenance of health and disease treatment illustrate how medical knowledge is transmitted, maintained and transformed between individuals and communities. Second, I examine ways that the particular substances and tools people use, where these materials are obtained, and who they are administered by, can reveal people's medical and religious worldviews. Finally, I suggest more avenues through which medicines can become embodied markers of national, ethnic and religious identity.

Iaroslav Pankovskiy, University of Alberta  
Ukrainian Orthodox Church Website Designs As a Way to Transcend Boundaries in Communication

This presentation is concerned with the communicative potential of religious website designs which are examined on the example of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Web designs are analyzed in this research with the help of the New Media Design framework (Martinec & Van Leeuwen, 2009) which is developed within systemic functional linguistics. The New Media Design framework has been improved and applied to the analysis of two major websites: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Ukraine. The improvements implemented to the framework, namely, the substitution of diagrammatic shapes for a table and the introduction of a two-dimensional system of coordinates have been shown to increase the accuracy of analysis. The results of the analysis suggest that the Churches do not use the potential of the Web to a full extent in designing their websites which may hinder effective communication with the existing or potential audiences.

Thomas Parkhill, St. Thomas University

Initiatory rites of passage through the lens of sünnet töreni in northern Cyprus

Gone are the days when many of us scholars of religion assumed that a rite of passage like circumcision universally involved a dramatic three-part process that changed a person's social status and more. A boy could become a man! While there have been many challenges to this assumption of universality -- by Bell, Grimes, Lincoln, Walker Bynum, and Crapanzano for example -- none replicate the challenge provided by the rite I am studying, Turkish Cypriot sünnet töreni (a boyhood circumcision rite). Even Crapanzano's work focusing on another Mediterranean (Moroccan) circumcision rite is different. Sünnet töreni in northern Cyprus offers a distinctive perspective on the ubiquity of the once-cherished model of initiatory ordeal. By reviewing the literature in this area in light of data from my first-hand research, I will detail the shape of this challenge and suggest some possible implications for the study of ritual.

Florence Pasche Guignard, University of Toronto and York University

A Convergence of Agendas? Natural Parenting in a Francophone Context

Natural parenting is a cluster of representations, discourses and practices situated at the confluence of mothering and environmentalism. The historically religious roots and motivations (in a North American context) of this alternative style of parenting, also known as "natural family living", are often played down or even suppressed in its contemporary reception within secularized contexts. When they are mentioned in contemporary French media, the religious aspects of natural parenting often are portrayed in a negative way (fanaticism, indoctrination, etc.). On the basis of material collected through cyber ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with francophone parents of Europe and Canada, this paper will critically examine the convergence and dissociations of religious and environmentalist discourses in the domain of parenting. It will also analyze uncommon conceptualizations of "purity" and "sacredness" in practical matters such as contraception, vaccine hesitancy, childbirth, and other non-normative choices about nutrition and health.

Heather Penner, University of Manitoba

A Historical Approach to Religion and Science in 19th and 20th Century Europe

My paper addresses Hans G. Kippenberg's thesis in *Discovering Religious History in the Modern Age* which states that religious scholarship developed in tandem with Europe's modernization. Kippenberg's analysis of religious studies in Europe focuses on how the process of modernization affected theories and conclusions made by scholars of religion during the 19th-20th centuries. My paper addresses specific scholars, such as E. B. Tylor (1832-1917), Émile Durkheim (1858-1917), and Max Weber (1864-190), who are also addressed by Kippenberg, with the purpose of paying specific attention to (i) how these scholars used past religions to understand modern society; and (ii) what contemporary factors influenced their work. Finally, (iii) using Kippenberg's claim that early scholars of religion, in fact, gave modernization itself a place in the history of religion, I will show how the history of religion still has a valuable role to play in modernity.

Kathleen Riddell, University of Waterloo

Sacred Reverberations: Dead Celebrity Fandom

Popular music, as a medium, lacks the visual content of film and television, yet evokes powerful affect in fans, producing cognitive, psychological and neurological effects (Blood and Zatorre 2001; Corrigan 2008; Gardner 2011 [1983]). Fans identify with the message and composition, but also with those who create and market this music: musicians and their celebrity image (Cavicchi 1998; Doss 1999). My research on dead celebrity fandom examines such fan responses to popular music and celebrity. This paper, in particular, addresses theoretical and methodological approaches to religion and popular music by considering how three dead celebrity musicians—John Lennon, Jimi Hendrix and Johnny Cash—perform religious work in the lives of fans: creating community, focusing desire (cf. Chidester 2005) and narratives of identification (cf. Lofton 2011), transcendence (cf. Cowan 2010) and nostalgia. Interviews Lennon, Hendrix and Cash fans supplements analysis of how popular music and celebrity structures and transforms their lives.

Elizabeth Rigotti, Wilfrid Laurier University

Sacred Shooting: Gun Ownership as Civil Religion in the United States

Some Americans continue to advocate for gun rights despite numerous gun-related crimes. Any attempts to tighten requirements for gun purchases are met with protests. This can be understood by recognizing that for some, guns and gun rights are part of an American civil religion. Guns are sacred symbols that orient individuals in a form of American civil religion in three ways: First, they are physical symbols that advocates use to place themselves within a sacred cosmological myth. Second, by carrying and owning guns, advocates situate themselves in public space and ensure the efficacy of their voices in society, thereby re-enacting the American origin myth. Finally, advocates sometimes believe that their right to own guns is God-given. They often become resistant to information that undermines gun-positive narratives. The myth and the physical symbolism of guns help advocates to understand the American experience in terms of an ultimate and universal reality.

Caitlin Russell, Memorial University of Newfoundland

New Contexts: Hindu Widowhood in the Canadian Diaspora

Widowhood in Hindu traditions has been a topic of interest for decades both in popular media and academia. Within both, sati has been disproportionately discussed, and virtually all scholarly research on Hindu widows has examined widows in India. This paper focuses instead on widowhood in the Hindu Canadian diaspora. Using interviews conducted with Hindu women, widowed and non-widowed, in St. John's, Newfoundland, I examine how Hindu women in Canada view and experience widowhood. This paper discusses the roles, practices, and relationships of widows in and out of the household, how Hindu women feel others perceive Hindu widowhood, and finally, the linking of independence with widowhood. While my paper will be a discussion of Hindu widowhood without the boundaries of the Indian context, it will also speak to the need for scholarship to examine Hindu widowhood comprehensively, and to understand the full range of Hindu widows' experiences.

David Seljak, St. Jerome's University

The Search for a Catholic Modernity: Quebec, Religion and Nationalism

Because of widely-held academic and popular beliefs about secularization and modernization, Quebec scholars, politicians, social activists, and an increasing portion of the population, interpreted the Quiet Revolution as the political modernization of Quebec. Those French Quebecers who defended the idea of a Roman Catholic political culture in Quebec were seen as representing pre-modern thinking. Since then, scholars have questioned the place of secularization in modernization theory, noting that many modernizing societies cling to their religious cultures for a variety of reasons, not least of which is resistance to what members of those societies see as neo-colonialism. Based on this critique, the paper challenges the traditional interpretation that saw all Catholic conservatives who opposed the Quiet Revolution as resisting modernization. One may disagree with their *projet de société* (the construction of a modern, industrial, democratic, and Catholic society), but is labeling them opponents of the political modernization of Quebec accurate?

Samantha Semper, Institute for Psychoanalytic Training and Research

Christian Conversion: Oedipal Submission or Melancholic Compromise?

In "A Religious Experience" (1928), Freud argues that the Christian conversion of a young doctor detailed in a letter sent to him represents a submission to an imaginary protective Father in response to the experience of helplessness and the return of oedipal strivings. Building on the work of Julia Kristeva, I argue that this conversion is not simply a turn to the illusion of a stronger oedipal father, a return of oedipal conflict, but instead is marked by a repetition of the process of primary identification after a destabilizing encounter with maternal abjection. This repetition allows for a 'transfusion' of the maternal semiotic displaced into the religious field and experienced as religious faith and a certainty in the felicity of God's Word. I suggest that this process is a melancholic compromise: the abject maternal is disavowed while the nourishing maternal aspect is devoured but displaced onto the imaginary Father God.

Heather Shipley, University of Ottawa

Belief not Religion: Youth Negotiations of Religious Identity in Canada

The role of religious beliefs and practices among youth has been an increasing area of research in the last decade. Youth is generally seen as a time of exploring religious identity and beginning to make one's own decisions in relation to religious practices. Further, issues specific to youth and religion arise such as questions about whether youth have sufficient maturity to make medical decisions for religious reasons, or how religion is or is not integrated into schooling. I will provide an overview of some recent studies that have been done on youth and religion in North America, nuancing perceptions of youth religion by including data from the Religion, Gender and Sexuality among Youth in Canada project. The Canadian project demonstrates what has been learned about youth religiosity, in particular around religious identity negotiation, translating religious teachings into values and practices and understanding what religion means to the survey respondents.

Nicholas Shrubsole, University of Waterloo and Katie Green, Trent University

"Please Resist, It May Be All There Is:" The Secularization Debate in the Punk Rock Subculture

Within the punk subculture, we find both confirmation and criticism of the religious narratives of Europe and the United States, resting at the centre of contemporary secularization debates. In Europe, close relationships between churches and states problematize the differentiation thesis, while in the United States the overwhelming religiosity of the populous challenges the doubtful periphery of secularization theory, the decline thesis. Within cultural theory, punk is widely understood as a "site of resistance" against political domination and the majority culture. With seemingly explicit connections between church and state in Europe and the continuing relevance of religion for many Americans, it should be of little surprise to see the academic debate on the truthfulness (or necessity) of secularization, appearing in the lyrics of well-known punk acts. In exploring this subject, we examine the recent Pussy Riot controversy and two of the most prolific American punk bands, Bad Religion and NOFX.

Peter J Smith, Political Science, Athabasca University

Religion and the Occupy Movement

All too often social science ignores religion as a progressive force against what is commonly termed "neoliberal globalization" or corporate globalization. This is particularly true of the transnational Occupy Movement which made headlines in 2011 and where, once again, the presence of religion (and importantly, spirituality) has not been given serious attention by

social scientists most of whom are strongly secular. This paper argues, on the other hand, that there was a significant relationship between religion, spirituality, and the Occupy Movement. I establish this relationship utilizing the following research methods: 1) Interviews – As a result of a summer fellowship on religion and social movements in 2012 awarded by Union Theological Seminary/Columbia University I was able to conduct extensive interviews with leading Christian and non-Christian religious activists engaged with the Occupy Movement in New York City. 2) Data analysis from websites including blogs, Facebook and Youtube. 3) Utilization of library sources and databases.

Rose Tekel, St. Francis Xavier University

Modernity and Matzo Balls: Changes in Food Practices in a Reform Jewish Community

Cooking and eating have until recently been primarily social, rather than individual, practices in western society. Various aspects of modern society, such as advances in technology and food production, changes in the family and the relationship between work and family – as well as uses of media in leisure time – have increasingly stripped food consumption of its social functions. Students in the field of religion and food have brought to our attention the significance of food for religious identity and the role it plays in maintain affiliation in religious communities. Food and rituals associated with food have been of great importance for the Jewish community throughout its history. In this paper we shall consider the path one Reform Jewish community in Cape Coral, Florida has followed as it negotiates modernity and its impact on maintaining Jewish food practices and rituals among its members.

Cameron Thomson, University of Edinburgh

The Enmity of the Different and the Ambivalence of the Same: Religion and Bullying

I explore the representation of the polis and its endangerment that is implicit in Jesus' claim that "a man's enemies shall be those of his own household" (Matt 10:36). This thesis, I argue, may be fruitfully taken as the point of departure for a particular critique of religion, one that belongs, not to "science," but to moral philosophy, broadly construed. I argue that Jesus does not advert to a novel situation, but lifts the veil on an archaic problem: the enmity of the different (the religiously differentiated "us" and "them") supervenes on the ambivalence of the same (the internecine rivalries and grudges that circulate within the body of the pious "many," who both love and hate one another). I characterize the predicament that emerges from this unveiling in terms both of the end of religion's capacity to bind and the explosion of bullying as an alternative form of community.

Daniel Timmer, University of Sudbury

Harmonious Otherness: Bifocal Optics for Border- transcending Aspirations in the Hebrew Bible

This paper unites the literary and historical analyses of religious studies with the insights of political theory in order to understand the nation-transcending utopian vision of a Hebrew Bible prophetic book. Adopting a heuristic definition of ancient Near Eastern nationhood as involving a self-defined, autonomous society with a common culture and homeland, it examines the two stages of the process that the Book of Zephaniah sees as culminating world history: the elimination of those who do not follow YHWH from Judah and from other nations, followed by the transformation of the remaining citizens of the nations and of Judah into a unified religious community that does not inhabit a common homeland. This ideal is then correlated with studies of utopian thinking in prophetic literature in the ancient world. The paper concludes with reflections on the benefit of integrating religious and political analyses of texts and phenomena past and present.

Cristina Vanin, St. Jerome's University

Expanding the Boundaries of Human Subjectivity: The Need for Ecological Conversion

Like many contemporary nature writers, Mark Cocker says, in *Crow Country*, that we share our lives with so many different species of birds and animals yet we tend to ignore them; they function as a mere backdrop to the human living that we think really matters. Such disregard of the nature world is part of the bias that contributes to ecological decline, a bias that needs to be overcome with ecological conversion. This presentation will utilize Bernard Lonergan's identification of three aspects of conversion — religious, moral and intellectual, and Robert Doran's notion of psychic conversion, to develop an explanatory account of the ecological conversion that is needed to meet the ecological crisis. It is this kind of personal and social transformation that can lead us to know fully who we are as human subjects and to be able to relate more intimately with all other-than-human subjects.

Salima Versi, University of Alberta

Make This Your Home: Khoja Nizari Isma'ilis and Acculturation in Canada

This paper examines the impact of religion on acculturation. Using rich, qualitative data from interviews, supplemented by primary and secondary source material, it focuses on a religious community, the Khoja Nizari Isma'ilis from East Africa, who have immigrated to a Canadian setting and appear to have acculturated quite successfully here. Findings demonstrate that religion, including community structures, social resources, and guidance from their Imam, have had a profound and positive impact on the acculturation of Khoja Nizari Isma'ilis from East Africa in Canada. This case helps to fill gaps in the existing body of research and encourages us to consider the impact that religion may have as a unique category when considering acculturation.

Meaghan Weatherdon, University of Toronto

Walking Forward: Social and Political Mobility in the Journey of Nishiyuu

In this paper I suggest that the Journey of Nishiyuu may be best understood as a spiritual quest, as a method of cultural revitalization, and lastly as a socio-political strategy that contests the regime of oppression that has traditionally shaped the relationship between First Nations and the government of Canada. To support this claim I draw on the findings of pilgrimage theory and ritual studies to interpret data gathered from participant observation and the Nishiyuu Walker's blogs and social media campaign. The personal, socio-political, and cultural concerns of the Nishiyuu Walkers are interwoven, interpenetrating, and deeply motivated by their spiritual beliefs and orientations. Ultimately, the act of walking is significant for the Nishiyuu Walkers because it is both a cultural practice that embodies their holistic worldview and is at the same time a performative act that defies conventional political and social boundaries.

Jeff Wilson, Renison University College, University of Waterloo

Mindful Sex: Adapting Buddhism to New Cultural Desires

By providing benefits desired by new host societies, religions may successfully cross cultural boundaries and become adapted to new situations; both the religious traditions and the host cultures are transformed in the process. In North America, Buddhist mindfulness practice has gone from the cultural property of celibate Asian monks to the property of laypeople applying it to many non-traditional purposes, from stress relief to weight loss. One particularly intriguing innovation is mindful sex, a popular movement that repurposes Buddhist ascetic practice in the pursuit of heightened intimacy and better orgasm. This paper examines the development of mindful sex as a useful case study for the processes of border crossing, cultural adaptation, and religious re-invention. The alleged borders between the religious and the secular, renunciation and pleasure, Western and non-Western, narcissism and the liberation of society are all called into question by such practices, allowing for fresh perspectives on contemporary religion.

Arzina Zaver, McGill University and Alim Fakirani, Religious Educator for Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Board

The Role of Religious Literacy in the Context of State Neutrality

Canadian society has become more plural with its various ethno-cultural, linguistic and religious communities. With this increase in diversity, issues have also emerged. Using Quebec as a case study, we will begin by first looking at the reasonable accommodations debates in 2008 to the more recent proposed Charter of Quebec Values. In response to these issues, Quebec instituted a religions and culture studies program in all primary and secondary schools. We suggest that such curriculums will become necessary for all Canadian students in their course of studies. With increasing diversity not just in Canada but throughout the world, the cultivation of religious literacy skills and the ability to foster dialogue will become increasingly important. We will argue that partnerships between religious studies and education will become increasingly important as we leverage expertise from both in order to create fair, balanced and representative curriculums on the religious lives of Canadians.

## PANELS

### 1. New Muslim Public Spheres in the Digital Age: Identity, Community, Diversity and Authority in Canada

What role does digital technology play in shaping Canadian Islam(s), and, at a time when going online and connecting new regional, national and global Muslim networks is so accessible, how are Canadian Muslims using the Internet and what are they accessing? This panel presents the methodological and theoretical approaches being employed in investigating the impact on, and integration of digital technologies by Canadian Muslims. The interviewing and survey work pays particular attention to women, youth and religious leaders. Four research areas have been identified: (a) religious identity: How is the digital landscape shaping Muslim religious identities? (b) sense of community: How is it (re)shaping Muslim communities? (c) religious diversity: How does it affect inter-religious and intra-religious relations? (d) religious authority: How does it confirm and/or transform religious authority for Muslims? Emerging trends from preliminary literature reviews will be highlighted and feedback from the audience will be welcomed.

Franz Volker Greifenhagen, Luther College, University of Regina

Framing Research on Transformations of Canadian Muslim Perceptions of Identity, Community, Diversity and Authority in the Internet Age.

What role does digital technology play in shaping Canadian Islam(s), and, at a time when going online and connecting new regional, national and global Muslim networks is so accessible, how are Canadian Muslims using the Internet and what are they accessing? This panel presents the methodological and theoretical approaches being employed in investigating the impact on, and integration of digital technologies by Canadian Muslims. The interviewing and survey work pays particular attention to women, youth and religious leaders. Four research areas have been identified: • religious identity: How is the digital landscape shaping Muslim religious identities? • sense of community: How is it (re)shaping Muslim communities? • religious

diversity: How does it affect inter-religious and intra-religious relations? • religious authority: How does it confirm and/or transform religious authority for Muslims? Emerging trends from preliminary literature reviews will be highlighted and feedback from the audience will be welcomed.

Rubina Ramji, Cape Breton University

New Muslim Public Spheres in the Digital Age: Identity, Community, Diversity and Authority in Canada

Religious authority: How does it confirm and/or transform religious authority for Muslims? Emerging trends from preliminary literature reviews will be highlighted and feedback from the audience will be welcomed.

A. Brenda Anderson, Luther College

Who are You? Digital Dialogue with The Other (A. Brenda Anderson, Luther College)

Religious institutions were among the first to understand and embrace the ability of the Internet to connect, teach, even proselytize. Today, digital communities are accessed in numerous ways - by Internet, Facebook, Twitter and so on - and thus the possibility of encountering differing religious views amongst Muslims and within interfaith discussions is but a few easy clicks away. This raises the question of whether or how digital dialogue impacts individual Muslim beliefs and practices. Is the terminology "online" and "offline" a relevant construct for the younger generation, and how might this blending of the virtual and the "real" impact notions of religiosity? This paper begins the theorizing process that will drive the interviewing, data collection and analysis of our four-year SSHRC-funded project, specifically in the area of digital inter and intra-religious dialogue as practiced by Canadian Muslims.

## 2. Outside the Box: Reimagining Sufism in North America

This panel seeks to better understand how Sufism in North America is moving within and beyond cultural, religious, and relational boundaries with insight from three studies. In light of the Sufi quest toward 'annihilation of the self,' the first study explores the liminal identities among members of the Islamic Alami Tariqa in New York, particularly their diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. The second study surveys ten different Sufi teachers in Canada and the United States who are negotiating classical models of leadership in Sufi communities while accommodating North American norms of democratic authority and individualism. The third uses the shrine of Sufi teacher Bawa Muhaiyaddeen in Pennsylvania to understand its significance to members of the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship and immigrant Muslims who use the sacred space to acquire blessings. These three studies move beyond and across real and imagined borders to investigate the boundaries of Sufism in North America. Presenter: Dr. Julianne Hazen

Ibrahim Shakoor, American Public University (Charlotte, West Virginia)

Die Before You Die: Liminality in the Cultural and Religious Identities of the Alami Tariqa

This research discusses the complexity of cultural and religious identity among members of one of the oldest Islamic Sufi orders in North America, the Alami Tariqa. National and cultural origins of members include South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, and North America. Members joined the Alami Tariqa from denominational backgrounds in the Jewish, Buddhist, Christian, and Muslim faiths. The boundaries between these national, cultural, and religious identities are explored from the community member's point of view. Emphasis is placed on the issue of liminal identity, in light of members' Islamic Sufi quest toward 'the annihilation of the self.' This presentation is based on the results of a field study conducted by the author in New York State in 2009. The study applied the theoretical lenses of Lived Religion and Phenomenology. The study also utilized the field methods of participant observation, semi-structured interviews and anonymous data surveys.

William Rory Dickson, South Dakota State University (Brookings, SD)

Caretaker or Companion? Shifting Models of Authority in North American Sufism

The traditional role of the Sufi teacher or shaykh crystallized within the Sufi tradition in the eleventh century. An increasing emphasis on the importance of a silsila, or chain of transmission connecting a teacher to the Prophet Muhammad, corresponded with the development of the ideal of the shaykh al-tarbiya (master of spiritual training). Later etiquette manuals prescribed a parental model of leadership. Although these ideals still inspire Sufi teaching, my semi-structured interviews with 10 Sufi teachers in North America reveal the ways in which traditional, patriarchal models of authority are shifting in Canada and the United States to accommodate democratic notions of leadership and psychologized, individualistic conceptions of the self. This shift can be framed as a move from a caretaker model of authority to a companionship model.

Merin Shobhana Xavier, Wilfrid Laurier and the University of Waterloo

At the Grave of Bawa: Sufi Spaces and the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship in North America

The purpose of my doctoral research is to illuminate the diversity of Sufism in North America through the exploration of the varied religious identities of the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen

Fellowship (BMF), a Sufi movement that attracts Muslims, Sufis, and non-Muslims. The BMF coalesced based on the teachings of Muhammad Raheem Bawa Muhaiyaddeen (d. 1986), or Bawa as his disciples call him, who was a South Indian Tamil Muslim teacher. He is buried in Chester County, Pennsylvania, in Amish farm country and his burial shrine (mazar) is the first of its kind in all of North America. Through the use of semi-structured interviews and participant observation I present narratives of Muslim pilgrims and Fellowship members who visit Bawa's shrine in Pennsylvania. I suggest that their accounts of metaphysical and transnational pilgrimages illuminates the creation of modern Islamic, Sufi and spiritual identities, especially in the context of North America.

### **3. Sociology of Religion in Canada: Past, Present, and Future**

This session focuses on the sociological study of religion in Canada. To set the context, this session includes an historical overview of the major theoretical and empirical debates and findings in the sociology of religion in English-speaking Canada to date. This is followed by research on two very distinct yet related subjects of growing interest in the sociology of religion: religious extremism and its links with terrorism, and religious nones – a group that many assert is growing rapidly, in part, as a backlash to religious extremism. With respect to the first subject, how have scholars correctly and incorrectly identified the relationship between religion and terrorism, what does the evidence reveal, and to what degree is religion invoked as a motivator for engaging in some terrorist acts? As for religious nones, what characterizes this group's core beliefs and worldviews regarding religion and its place in Canadian society? Presider: Sam Reimer, Crandall University

Michael Wilkinson, Trinity Western University

The Historical Development of the Sociology of Religion in English-speaking Canada

The historical development of the sociology of religion in English-speaking Canada largely reflects the overarching theoretical narratives in the discipline. The sociology of religion as a field of study is not uniform theoretically. However, the major developments in the discipline include debates about the nature of churches and sects, secularization, religious markets, religious diversity, and globalization. These major themes have also shaped the research interests and explanations for religion in Canada. Focusing on the literature from English-speaking Canada, this paper presents an overview of the sociology of religion in Canada showing how research reflects these larger themes.

Lorne Dawson, University of Waterloo

Religion and the Social Ecology of Terrorism: The Ever- Present but Missing Variable

Certain kinds of religious extremism are strongly identified with terrorism. Yet most of the research on terrorism is marked by a profound ambiguity in its treatment of religion as an inspiration for such violence. Both scholars of religion and secular social scientists with a limited grasp of religion are reluctant to draw a direct link between being religious and being a terrorist, though for diametrically opposed reasons. For the former "authentic religion" does not support such behaviour. For the latter religion merely serves as a post-hoc justification for other "real reasons" for violence. In both cases the scholars involved are allowing unwarranted assumptions they share with their primary audiences to pre-empt analysing the evidence before them adequately. This paper examines some of the ways this is happening in the research literature and comments, with reference to the Canadian context, on the implications for understanding terrorism.

Joel Thiessen, Ambrose University College

Religious Nones in Canada: A Qualitative Exploration

Religious nones, the term used for those who do not identify with any religion, are among the fastest growing "religious" groups in the modern Western world. They represent one-quarter of Canadian adults and one-third of Canadian teens today, yet little is known empirically about this group in Canada. Drawing on thirty interviews with religious nones, this paper summarizes their beliefs about the supernatural, the afterlife, meaning and purpose in life, morality, the benefits to not being overly religious, and the social/public place for religion in Canadian society. Amidst their varied views on the supernatural and the afterlife, most religious nones believe that they have meaning and purpose in life, humans do not need religion to be moral, they are free and open-minded relative to those who are deeply religious, and religion should not be forced on to others.

### **4. Shifting Religious Identities in Canadian Evangelical Congregations**

While congregations are the most common collective expression of religion in Canada, and religious institutional participation remains a leading voluntary activity in the country, research on Canadian congregations remains far behind the scope and intensity of American research. This panel features recent research on some of Canada's 11,000 evangelical congregations, highlighting the shifting structures and identities within them, including broad-based survey research, congregational case studies, and assessments of the general literature on congregational life in Canada. Presider: Peter Schuurman, University of Waterloo

Sam Reimer, Crandall University

Changing the Ethos of Evangelical Congregations: Missional Churches in Canada

In a study of over 500 evangelical churches in Canada, we found that many pastors were seeking to move their churches away from an internal, program-focus to an external, mission-focused ethos. "Missional" language was widely used, and the methods of outreach have moved toward more holistic or "incarnational" efforts, and away from evangelism-only strategies. While pastors used "missional" language, it is not clear that they understood the meaning of the term, as significant resources are still focused on internal programs. We speculate on whether or not this changing ethos softens evangelical subcultural boundaries, showing accommodation to the Canadian religious milieu.

Adam Stewart, University of Western Ontario

Liquid Religious Identity Among Canadian Pentecostals

Statistics Canada's Census of Population revealed that in 1991, 436,435 Canadians identified as Pentecostal. Ten years later, the same instrument recorded that only 369,475 Canadians identified with the tradition—a 15.3 percent decline. Most observers explained this change as an actual decline among Canadian Pentecostal adherents. Others argued that because this change was not reflected on the congregational level, it was more likely the result of a transformation of religious identity causing some adherents to—at least temporarily—report non-Pentecostal religious affiliations. I argue that the figures from Statistics Canada's 2011 National Household Survey—recording 478,705 Canadians identifying as Pentecostal—support this second hypothesis. These figures represent a return to relative 1991 levels of Pentecostal affiliation, hovering around 1.5 percent of the overall Canadian population. Recent fluctuations in Canadian Pentecostal affiliation appear to be more the result of the inability of statisticians to capture liquid religious identities than actual religious disaffiliation.

Peter Schuurman, University of Waterloo

Megachurches, Growth Imperatives, and Congregational Identity: A Canadian Megachurch Case Study

Large churches have dotted the genealogy of Christian history but the recent proliferation of megachurches across the globe has been cause for some academic interpretation. Some scholars contend these institutions are calculatingly fixated on growth (Maddox 2013), as they are resourced by evangelical growth consultants (Ellingson 2008) and draw on capitalist entrepreneurial practices and values. This paper draws on my ethnographic research of an "emerging-type" Ontario megachurch, specifically investigating its annual ritual of "Purge Sunday" in which attendees who are half-hearted in their commitment to the church are invited to find another congregation to attend. The meaning of this ritual, as understood by the leadership and various attendees, will be discussed in light of the research on "free-riders" and the contention that megachurches are "capitalism's cathedrals" (Maddox 2012). My assessment points beyond growth imperatives and towards issues of identity, commitment, and the blurring boundaries of congregational membership.

## 5. How Human are the Gods? Embodiment, Environment, and Divinity in Select Hindu Textual Traditions

Hindu traditions recognize humans as part of a sacred world where the realm of the gods and the realm of humans are united by the ritual act of offering, shared essences, or universal principles of order. In these parallel worlds, humans are reflected in the environment, and the behavior of the gods can sometimes mirror the morals, conflicts and crimes of the human realm. Enlightenment may be understood as realization of the non-difference between self and other, or the human and the divine, and narratives about the gods can sometimes make such differences hard to see. This panel explores embodiment, humans and gods in select Hindu textual traditions. Presider: Noel Salmond

Adela Sandness, St. Francis Xavier University

The Personal and the Impersonal: On Sacred Embodiment in the Rg-Veda

The Rg-Veda recognizes the environment as sacred. The sun, the rivers, the dawn, the night: the physical world is deified and personified in Rgvedic myth and ritual. The elements – the earth, water, fire and wind – are goddesses and gods that manifest in different forms in the different planes of the tripartite Vedic cosmos of the heaven, the earth and the space in-between. They are alive, animate and gendered. Their symbolic coming together as female and male in the preparation of the substances given in the ritual fire offering is what makes the fire offering both potent and life-giving. In this view, the individual human is but a part of this greater sacred world. Humans are composed of the elements like all things in the manifest world of form. By personifying the elements, the text impersonalizes the individual. This paper will explore the personal and the impersonal in the Rg-Veda.

Patricia Dold, Memorial University of Newfoundland

When Kali becomes Krishna: gender and divinity in the Mahabhatava Purana

The primary source for this paper is the Mahabhatava Purana, a Sanskrit text, from circa 1500, linked to popular Shakta traditions of Assam and Bengal. According to this text's narrative of Krishna, Devi agrees to take on male divine form, as Krishna, in response to Shiva's desire to become the goddess's female spouse and experience marriage with the "male" goddess. Embodied as Krishna, the goddess reveals herself as Kali especially at those moments when Krishna kills his enemies. Indeed, this Krishna-Kali's violence is bloody, unlike the deadly violence of Krishna in parallel episodes from Vaishnava texts like the Bhagavata Purana. Within the context of Shakta Hinduism, this paper explores the implications of the Mahabhatava's

treatment for the gendered character of divinity and for the nature and meaning of violence.

Richard Mann, Carleton University  
The Rites of Skanda-Karttikeya

This paper attempts to evaluate Michael Willis' argument for a link between the ritual to Skanda-Karttikeya found in the Skandayaga and the rites performed by Atharvavedic Purohitas that he suggests could be a nescient form of Kapalika (tantric) traditions (2009: 175-178). In the process, this essay explores the various textual accounts of rituals associated with Skanda-Karttikeya and their potential significance for the study of early Hinduism. The rites associated with the deity can be separated into three distinct categories in Sanskrit sources: thievery, where Skanda is the patron deity of thieves; medicine, particularly illnesses in children and pregnant women; and protection, primarily from a wide range of malevolent forces. The paper argues that what unites these diverse ritual traditions is their basis in what might best be described as tantric traditions in that all of the rites are orientated towards controlling and manipulating divine forces.

## ROUNDTABLES

### 1. On the use of Popular music to teach undergraduate courses in Religious Studies

Presenting critical questions and methodological issues pertaining to the use of popular music to teach in undergraduate Religious Studies courses. Each of the four presenters will draw from their classroom experiences, and will look at different issues they have encountered. This roundtable is intended as part of the special session on Religion and Popular culture proposed for the 2014 CSSR/SCER meeting, and aims to augment the theoretical issues raised by the other panels by suggesting some ways popular music can be used successfully in undergraduate courses. The idea is to build of our individual interests and experiences to provide stimulating teaching ideas (both abstract and concrete). Presider: Shamma Boyarin, University of Victoria

Brent Hagerman, Wilfrid Laurier University

What Can Religious Studies Students Learn from Bob Marley, John Lennon and Pussy Riot?

I often joke with my students that I can demonstrate any social theory using reggae. While that's probably not true, I do tend to use a wealth of popular music in my classes and have attempted to employ it with several pedagogical aims in mind. I use popular music as a device to demonstrate a theory: when Russian punk activists Pussy Riot sang their "Punk Prayer: Mother of God, Chase Putin Away" in a Moscow cathedral I used it as an example of Forbes' and Mahan's (2005) theory of religion and popular culture in dialogue. I've also had success getting students with no musical background to engage with the music itself: quite apart from the lyrics, the music of George Harrison can help explain seeker religion while John Lennon's is a perfect example of postmodernism and both together would get the Juno for most orientalist-band-while-appropriating-Indian-religions.

Chris Klassen, Wilfrid Laurier University

Using Musical Performance to Think Through Ritual and Performativity

Discussing the connections between Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity and ritual studies analyses of religious performativity can become a weighty topic. I have found the use of music videos and recorded live performances to provide a useful arena for students to see, hear, and experience the theories they often find so complex. I will be discussing the way I do this in the classroom and ask questions of my own method, including its benefits and limitations.

David Feltmate, Auburn University at Montgomery

The Question I Have Never Been Able to Ask: Teaching About Popular Music, Culture, and Religion.

What can we ask students who are studying religion and popular music to study and how do we expect them to do it? In this age of easily accessible songs, videos, live footage, interviews, and message boards (among other things), the student of religion and popular music is inundated with data-data that, for the most part, our textual analytical and social scientific methods are designed to extract data from and provide grounds for analysis. But what about music? How do we bring the music into the classroom? If music is an open-ended means of communication, how do we train students to think about these arrangements of sound? How do we teach them to think about music in context and music's role in that context? I will use Steve Vai's "For the Love of God" to illustrate why this particular conundrum continues to challenge my teaching.

Shamma Boyarin, University of Victoria

Am I trying too hard to be popular: using popular music as material for teaching

In my teaching of religion I have used examples of popular music in the class room for a number of reasons: to provide an alternative to more conventional “dry” materials (such as selections from scripture, or complicated theological treatises), to show how certain issues find their ways even into the most contemporary forms of religious expression, and to incorporate elements in the class that are familiar on some level to students. This has included using Leonard Cohen’s Hallelujah to discuss the influence of the Bible on English literature. I have had students listen to and read the lyrics of Matisyahu’s King Without A Crown and a review of it on a Christian Website aimed at educating Christian parents, to discuss the similarities and differences between Jewish and Christian understandings of the Messiah. Finally I have used Heavy Metal to explore various issues pertaining to religion with students.

## **2. The Role of Churches in Immigrant Settlement and Integration in Canada**

This Roundtable will introduce and discuss a SSHRC funded research partnership exploring the role of Christian churches in helping immigrants and refugees settle and integrate into Canadian society. The purpose of this project is to develop a national research partnership that would investigate how to better equip church groups across Canada to help immigrants and refugees settle and integrate into Canadian society. It does so by adopting a cross-sectoral partnership approach emphasizing the co-production and co-mobilizing of knowledge. Partners represent multi-disciplinary Canadian researchers and leaders of inter-denominationally diverse church groups across Canada, including leaders of para-church organizations (i.e., faith-based groups that work independent of church oversight, often across denominations). The participants in the roundtable will discuss the theoretical and methodological challenges of such a project, preliminary findings, and the implications for action research. Presider: Joel Thiessen, Ambrose University College

Rich Janzen, Centre for Community Based Research

Immigrant Settlement and Integration: Introducing a National Research Partnership

The presentation will provide background as to the rationale for the research and why it is important for Canadian churches to consider working with immigrants. Survey findings from a previous national and interdenominational research study will be presented to provide insight how churches are presently adapting their vision, structure, and processes toward ministry to immigrants. Finally, an overview of the existing research partnership – an interdenominational research collaborative which has as its objective to study how to better equip churches to support immigrant settlement and integration – will also be provided. This presentation will also serve to introduce the remaining roundtable presentations exploring this theme within three diverse Canadian urban centres.

Mark Chapman, Tyndale University College & Seminary

Diverse Approaches to Immigrant Settlement and Integration Among Churches in Greater Toronto

More than 70% of Toronto residents were either born in a different country, or have at least one parent who is foreign-born. Of all immigrants in Canada, more than one in three lived in Toronto in 2006. As a result Toronto has developed a large number of services to help immigrants settle and integrate into Canadian society. This paper reports on four focus groups composed of participants in Christian churches in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) who are involved in immigrant settlement and integration. It explores diversity in the structure, vision and process of how Toronto churches are approaching this task. It also reports on these individual's perceptions of the effectiveness of Christian churches in helping immigrants settle and integrate into the GTA.

Sam Reimer, Crandall University

The Immigrant Settlement Work of Christian Churches in Atlantic Canada

Since the vast majority of recent immigrants end up in the Canada's three major cities, the percentage of visible minorities in the mid-sized Maritime cities is comparatively small. As a result, there are fewer ethnic congregations, and organizations that support immigrant settlement and integration are less common and have shorter histories. In such a milieu, some predominately Caucasian churches are actively involved in immigrant settlement. I present preliminary results for the immigrant settlement work of Christian churches in Moncton and Halifax, showing how they partner with and enhance the efforts of government services.

Michael Wilkinson, Trinity Western University

The Role of Churches in Immigrant Settlement and Integration: The Case of Refugees in Vancouver, BC

Vancouver is a unique city in comparison to other regions in Canada. Not only does it have the highest levels of no religion it is also populated by large migrations of people from Asia. The five largest ethnic groups are Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Indo-Canadian, and Japanese. As a major port city, Vancouver is also known as a gateway city for the Pacific Rim. In many cases, refugees come through the city and refugee programs operated by churches illustrate some of the ways in which churches support new arrivals. This presentation will focus on the

contextual factors that characterize Vancouver and refugee work.

Respondent: Paul Bramadat, University of Victoria

### **3. Playing Conservatism: The Performance of Evangelical Culture and Formation of Youth Identities**

Evangelical forms of Christianity have become increasingly prevalent socio-political forces in shaping the religious identity of young people today. Youth are very active in their identity formation, seeking different experiences that inform their worldview. What is unique to the evangelical encounter is a performative religiosity based in charismatic experience that produces conversions to more engaged socio-political identities engaged with variant social, political, and religious worlds that make up diverse societies like Canada and the US. This multidisciplinary roundtable will explore the question of how young people negotiate personal identity, and different socio-political and religious values through highly emotional and embodied engagements with different evangelical cultures. Mo and Wall will present how evangelical culture informs the acculturation of Chinese identity to Western worldviews yesterday and today, while Gareau and Chattoo will speak of the performance of religious conversion within Catholic evangelical summer conferences and in church-run haunted houses or "Hell-Houses". Presider: Michael Wilkinson, Trinity Western University

Helen Mo, University of Toronto

In Search of the "Serviceable Life": Christianity and Chinese Immigrant Youth in North America

As a daughter of Chinese immigrants, chafing against her parents' conservatism, Jade Snow Wong found in evangelical Christianity a "third space" between the moral orders of home and of the surrounding American society. Her memoir relates her struggle to forge new patterns of thought, leisure, and civic engagement as part of a generation of Chinese-Americans who had never known China firsthand. With "global" Christianities on the rise in North America, hers is a timely story...despite being published in 1945. Although current scholarship often presents Asian evangelicalism as a recent phenomenon, historical sources provide crucial comparative context. This paper uses Wong's memoir as an ethno-historical case study, highlighting continuities in the experiences of Chinese evangelical youth between the early twentieth century and now. Then, as now, second-generation immigrants drew on local and transnational Christian identities, institutions, and discourses as they negotiated generational schisms and their own acculturation into Western society.

Scott Wall, University of Waterloo

"Have you been to TC?": Religious Hype, Ethnic Identity, and Chinese-Canadian Experience in Toronto

Toronto's "Teens Conference" (or TC, as it is often called) is a four-day, high-energy evangelical event that brings together hundreds of young, second-generation, Chinese-Canadian Christians annually. It offers a unique lens for observing the production and performance of ethnic and religious identities, especially given its long-running tenure and widespread support from the evangelical Chinese churches of the Greater Toronto Area. This paper attempts to understand this phenomenon sociologically against the backdrop of evangelical Christianity's fixation with conference-type environments, while also accounting for the lived experience of second-generation Chinese-Canadians in Toronto. It argues that the ritual and religious components of the conference, which are heavily influenced and shaped by student involvement, contrast in many cases with the normative congregational experience of attendees. This presentation evaluates to what degree Teens Conference is an expression of evangelical fervour and of agency in projecting and asserting a Chinese-Canadian identity.

Paul Gareau, University of Ottawa

Reclaiming the Canadian Landscape: The Performance of Catholic Evangelization amongst Youth

The New Evangelization has over the past few years provided a renewed evangelical zeal in the Catholic Church by proselytizing Catholic youth into embracing a more religious and socio-politically engaged Catholic identity. One particular site of this renewal is a weekend youth conference called Journey to the Father, designed to allow for an affective and emotional religious experience for Catholic youth in the hopes of converting latent "cultural" Catholics into socio-political Catholic neophytes. This presentation underscores how Journey acts as an "alternative" public site for the inculcation of a Catholic identity in Canadian youth with an evangelical impetus in order to contest, and yet ultimately negotiate, the pluralism of Canadian values. Through explicating this formation of Catholic youth identity this presentation demonstrates the performative nature of identity formation amongst youth as core to the inculcation of evangelical values and discourse.

Saliha Chattoo, University of Toronto

"Darkness Has a Name": Performative Religiosity and the Language of American Evangelical Hell Houses

In the United States, evangelical youth engage in a unique form of performative religiosity through their church-run haunted houses, or "Hell Houses." These youth-acted conversion events allow young church members to craft theatrical depictions of significant issues in the lives of American youth that are woven into a narrative of sin, retribution and redemption. In addition to exploring how Hell Houses provide a performative space for youth to become active agents in the formation of their own religious identities, this paper will draw from the fields of linguistic anthropology and religious studies in order to employ modes of discourse analysis in an assessment of the religious language used—both textual and oral—in Hell Houses.

#### **4. When Two Rights Make a Wrong: Reasonable Accommodation in Light of the York University Incident**

A male York University student's request to be exempt from a study group with women for "religious reasons" sparked a national debate on gender rights and religious accommodation. This CSSR roundtable will bring together religious studies scholars to discuss reasonable accommodation in light of the York University case. It will not be confined to this topic but will highlight the case and the larger context surrounding it. The scholars will stimulate conversation while considering questions such as: How do we navigate competing rights claims? What is reasonable accommodation? What are its boundaries? Do religious rights have any place in a so-called "secular" public university? Does accommodating religious minorities promote inequality for other groups – such as women? The uproar surrounding the incident at York University demonstrates that the matter of religious accommodation, in particular, strikes a sensitive nerve with Canadians, and is a highly relevant topic for a roundtable conversation.

David Seljak, University of Waterloo

Competing Human Rights at York University

York University sociology professor Paul Grayson went public with a student's request for religious accommodation, igniting a debate on the accommodation of religious needs in a secular Canadian public space. Grayson outlined the case as a conflict between "parochial religious rights" and universal human rights—framing the request in the context of an ideological debate on secularism and religion in public life. This talk looks at the Ontario Human Rights Commission's policy on competing human rights, which understands both the right to gender equality and the right to religious freedom as universal human rights and suggests balancing such rights on a case by case basis. It also examines Dr. Grayson's public use of this private request for accommodation (a use that probably violates the Ontario Human Rights Code) to promote an ideological commitment to "closed secularism"—a commitment reflected in the response of various commentators and the mainstream media.

Meena Sharify-Funk, Wilfrid Laurier University

Canada and the Limits of Accommodation and Rights Discourse

From "integration" and "accommodation" to "pluralism" and "multiculturalism," a plethora of concepts have influenced Canadian public spheres and governmental policies. These debates over Canadian identity in the era of globalization and secularization have shaped some of the most divisive controversies in Canadian history. We are living in an age of severe contradictions and extremes, in which traditional, "consensus" Canadian concepts have been thrown into question. Fears of horrific violence perpetrated by terrorists have created a market for best-selling books that simultaneously promote broad-brush notions of Western moral superiority vis-à-vis a monolithic, authoritarian, and misogynistic Islamic culture, and skewer "politically correct" intellectual elites wedded to ideas of multicultural accommodation – elites who have allegedly betrayed Western culture and opened the floodgates to unassimilable immigrants and abhorrent value systems. In Ontario as well as Quebec, the subject of cultural accommodation sparks media firestorms, as in the recent York University case. These developments raise questions that publicly engaged intellectuals must be willing to engage in terms that can resonate outside as well as within the academy: Are there limits to tolerance? How can this principle be applied in situations of seemingly radical disagreement? Can people with profoundly different worldviews coexist? What can be done to navigate situations in which different types of rights – for example, religious rights and women's rights – appear to be in conflict? Above all, does multiculturalism have a future?

Johannes Wolfart, Carleton University

"The Augsburg Interim of 1548: Religious accommodation before the Age of Reason"

Surveying recent media output on cases of "religious accommodation" one gets the distinct impression that our society is entering entirely new social and political terrain. This paper suggests that this is not necessarily the case, arguing that the Augsburg Interim of 1548 represents a comparable instance of governmentally mandated religious accommodation. This paper explores such a comparison with consideration, in particular, of how *early* modern people reconciled in practice demands for "freedoms" which appeared incompatible in principle. This early modern case of accommodation is especially illuminating because more modern "strong secularists" have conventionally cast the experiences of their early modern forbears in the manner of a cautionary tale.

Laura Stemp-Morlock, University of Waterloo

"A Woman's Right to Choose: Women, Religion, and Rights in Canada"

The York University student who requested exemption from a mixed-gender study group did not cause such a furor simply because he sought religious accommodation, but because his request touched a sensitive nerve on gender equality. Without considering the specifics of the case, public response was swift and condemning, representing fears of women as "second class citizens" and losing the gains gender equality has made in Canada to regressive religious practices. Is this the case, however? I argue that this incident highlights another challenge women face. What does it say about a lingering patriarchy when a majority of women in that university class approved of the student's request, while a strong majority of the men disapproved? What happens when a woman seeks religious accommodation? This talk explores these themes, and women's inequality when it comes to religious rights.