

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES IN DIALOGUE WITH SECULARITY

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2025

**11:00 -11:45 Welcome & Short Description of
Symposium Whys & Wherefores** - Rev. Paula Kline,
Rev. Prof. Patricia G. Kirkpatrick, and Prof. Ian
Henderson

11:45-12:45 Lunch

12:45-1:45 Presentation - Prof. David Selkak

1:45-2:00 Q&A led by invited Scholars - Dr. Amanda
Rosini and Rev. Dr. Prudence Neba

2:00-2:45 Break through groups - Dr. Amanda Rosini
and Rev. Dr. Prudence Neba

2:45-3:00 Feedback

3:00-3:10 Pause Sante

3:15- 3:45 Critical Assessment of the Day - Isabelle
Lindsay, Ana de Souza, and Adam Smith

3:45- 4:00 Where Do We Go from Here? - Prof.
David Selkak, Rev. Paula Kline, Rev. Prof. Patricia G.
Kirkpatrick, and Prof. Ian Henderson

4:00 - 5:30 Reception



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CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES IN DIALOGUE WITH SECULARITY: SEEKING THE RESONANCE

WELCOME TO THE LAUNCH OF OUR SYMPOSIUM SERIES SPONSORED BY THE LILLY INC. FOUNDATION INITIATIVE PATHWAYS FOR TOMORROW 2025, THE MCGILL SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND MONTREAL CITY MISSION, WITH THIS FIRST ENCOUNTER: CHRISTIANS IN DIALOGUE WITH SECULARITY!

THE IDEA OF THIS ONGOING DIALOGUE EMERGED AS WE PREPARED FOR THE RÉSONANCE CONFERENCE: SEEKING DEEPER CONNECTION IN A SECULAR WORLD, HELD LAST JUNE AT THE MONTREAL CONVENTION CENTRE. THE GERMAN SOCIOLOGIST HARTMUT ROSA OPENED THE EVENT WITH A PROVOCATIVE YET HOPEFUL REFLECTION ON HOW WE CAN NURTURE COMMUNITY AND DIALOGUE IN AN INCREASINGLY POLARIZED AND FAST-PACED WORLD.

WE WERE DELIGHTED WHEN THE RESPONSE FROM CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS WAS UNANIMOUS: WE NEED TO KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING.

TODAY, WE ARE DELIGHTED TO WELCOME PROFESSOR DAVID SELJAK AS THE GUEST SPEAKER FOR OUR SYMPOSIUM.

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US—AND ENJOY THE SYMPOSIUM!

PROFESSOR PATRICIA G. KIRKPATRICK, MCGILL SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

REV. PAULA KLINE, MONTREAL CITY MISSION



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SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS, RESPONDERS, & ANIMATORS

DAVID SELJAK

DAVID SELJAK IS PROFESSOR OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY IN WATERLOO, ONTARIO, AND FORMER CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO. WITH PAUL BRAMADAT, HE CO-EDITED **RELIGION AND ETHNICITY IN CANADA** (2005) AND **CHRISTIANITY AND ETHNICITY IN CANADA** (2008). WITH JOHN BORROWS AND PAUL BRAMADAT, HE IS CO-EDITING A NEW BOOK, **OPENING AND CLOSING RELATIONS: INDIGENOUS SPIRITUALITIES IN CANADA**, THE THIRD VOLUME OF THAT SERIES. HE HAS AUTHORED RESEARCH REPORTS FOR THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT'S DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE ON RELIGION AND MULTICULTURALISM IN CANADA AND CONSULTED WITH THE ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ON ITS POLICY ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION. FOR 15 YEARS, HE SERVED AS THE EDITOR OF **THE ECUMENIST: A JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY, CULTURE AND SOCIETY**, PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY NOVALIS. OF HIS FIVE CHILDREN, TWO WERE BORN IN MONTREAL, AND ONE, WHO WAS BORN IN ONTARIO, IS PURSUING A DOCTORATE AT THE UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL IN MATH AND COMPUTER SCIENCE.

PATRICIA G. KIRKPATRICK

BORN AND EDUCATED IN MONTREAL, PATRICIA IS WELL ACQUAINTED WITH THE CITY'S DIVERSE VOICES. SHE CONTINUED HER STUDIES IN JERUSALEM, LONDON, AND OXFORD, WHERE SHE PURSUED GRADUATE DEGREES IN HEBREW BIBLE AND ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN HISTORY. SHE HAS PURSUED HER ACADEMIC CAREER HERE AT MCGILL FOR THE PAST 40 YEARS AS A PROFESSOR OF HEBREW BIBLE AND ANCIENT ISRAELITE HISTORY. HER INTEREST IN FOLKLORE (**FOLKLORE STUDIES AND THE OLD TESTAMENT**, 1988) HAS ENABLED HER TO EXPLORE THE INTRICATE DOVETAILING OF HISTORY AND IDEOLOGY WITH REFERENCE TO ANCIENT ISRAEL. THIS HAS ALLOWED HER TO FURTHER EXTEND HER INTERESTS AND LED TO HER BOOK, ENTITLED **THE FUNCTION OF ANCIENT ISRAELITE HISTORIOGRAPHY IN BIBLICAL AND COGNATE LITERATURE** (1994). THE BOOK IS A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS BY MEMBERS OF THE CSBS ANCIENT HISTORIOGRAPHY SEMINAR, WHICH EXPLORES THE IDEA OF FUNCTION IN ANCIENT BIBLICAL AND COGNATE STUDIES.

IN THE PAST TWO DECADES, SHE HAS WRITTEN AND CONDUCTED RESEARCH ON ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE, BIBLICAL THEOLOGY, (ED. WITH P.R. MCCAROL, **CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY AFTER CHRISTENDOM** (2020), **POLITICAL THEOLOGY** (HOMMAGE À GREGORY BAUM, ED. WITH J.F. ROUSSEL 2022), COMPARATIVE INTERFAITH STUDIES, AND IS ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE NORTH AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ECUMENISTS.

ORGANIZER AND CONTRIBUTOR TO SYMPOSIA ON TOPICS FROM THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION(2023), INTERFAITH DIALOGUE (2023), TO RELIGIOUS PHOBIAS (2024), SHE HAS BEEN FORTUNATE, AS AN ORDAINED MINISTER SINCE 1985, TO EXPLORE THESE LATTER INTERESTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ACADEMY AND THE VARIOUS PEOPLE OF FAITH SHE HAS SERVED.

IN HER SPARE TIME, PATRICIA'S FAVOURITE PLACE IS IN THE WATERS OF THE CARIBBEAN SCUBA DIVING WITH THE CREATURES OF THE SEA.

PAULA KLINE

KLINE BECAME EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MONTREAL CITY MISSION AFTER SEVERAL YEARS AS A COMMUNITY WORKER, DEVELOPING HOUSING FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND MARGINALIZATION. UNDER HER LEADERSHIP, MCM HAS UNDERGONE A MAJOR TRANSFORMATION, INCLUDING THE CREATION OF TWO LEGAL CLINICS AND A VIBRANT PROGRAM OF INTERCULTURAL AND INTERFAITH COLLABORATION.

SHE HOLDS A MASTER'S IN INTERVENTION SOCIALE FROM L'UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL, A MASTER OF DIVINITY FROM THE MONTREAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, AND WAS ORDAINED BY THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA IN 2013.

CURRENTLY PURSUING A DOCTOR OF MINISTRY AT EMMANUEL COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, PAULA'S RESEARCH EXPLORES THE THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF HOSPITALITY AND MUTUALITY. THE DISCOVERY OF SOCIOLOGIST HARTMUT ROSA'S THEORY OF RESONANCE DURING THESE STUDIES SPARKED NEW REFLECTIONS ON CONNECTION AND MEANING IN SECULAR CONTEXTS AND ULTIMATELY LED TO THE ORGANIZATION OF THE JUNE 2025 CONFERENCE RESONANCE: SEEKING DEEPER CONNECTIONS IN A SECULAR WORLD AT MONTREAL'S CONVENTION CENTRE. THE EVENT FEATURED ROSA AS THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER AND OFFERED TWO DAYS OF DIALOGUE INTERWOVEN WITH SENSORIAL EXPERIENCES IN JAZZ, DANCE, AND FILM.

IAN HENDERSON

AFTER STUDIES IN CANADA, THE UNITED KINGDOM, AND GERMANY, IAN HENDERSON HAS TAUGHT AND STUDIED HISTORICAL JESUS RESEARCH, EARLY CHRISTIANITY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY SINCE 1988. THE AUTHOR OF **JESUS, RHETORIC AND LAW** (1996), AND PUBLISHES ON EARLY CHRISTIAN GOSPELS. HIS RESEARCH ALSO ENGAGES RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF GRECO-ROMAN (SOPHISTIC) RHETORIC; HE IS INTERESTED IN DESCRIBING GRECO-ROMAN POLYTHEISM AS A NEIGHBOUR TO EMERGING CHRISTIANITY. HE ALSO HAS RESEARCH INTERESTS IN ARGUMENTATION THEORY AND IN TRANSLATION THEORY IN RELATION TO CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN RECEPTIONS OF SCRIPTURE, ESPECIALLY AMONG CANADIAN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. HENDERSON'S CURRENT RESEARCH FOCUSES ON UNDERSTANDING THE ORIGINALLY INTENDED AUDIENCES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT GOSPELS.

ORIGINALLY FROM MANITOBA, HENDERSON BEGAN VISITING QUEBEC (EVEN CRASHING MCGILL LECTURES) IN THE 1960S AND 70S, INTRIGUED BY THE INTENSE DIFFERENCES AMONG STYLES OF SECULARITY AND LAICITÉ AS EXPERIENCED ACROSS CULTURES AND GENERATIONS. HISTORICAL JESUS RESEARCH HAS LONG EMPHASIZED JESUS' ESCHATOLOGY, HIS SENSE OF THE CRITICAL TEMPORARINESS OF HIS WORLD, AND HIS PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY, OVER AGAINST THE FRAGILE OR IDOLATROUS PRETENSIONS OF ALL POSSIBLE HUMAN SOVEREIGNS – HENDERSON IS STILL FASCINATED BY WHAT ERIK PETERSON IN THE 1920S CALLED THE "POLITICAL PROBLEM" OF MONOTHEISM AND THE PUBLIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPEL.



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AMANDA ROSINI

DR. AMANDA ROSINI EARNED HER PHD IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION FROM MCGILL UNIVERSITY IN 2023. HER DOCTORAL RESEARCH, “**REVISITING THE ROLE AND INFLUENCE OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL IN THE CONCEPTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CORE LEGAL CODE OF DEUTERONOMY**,” IS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY THAT AIMS TO UNDERSTAND THE FUNCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE LEGAL NARRATIVE OF DEUTERONOMY AND THE CONTEXT NEEDED FOR SUCH A LEGAL NARRATIVE TO BE CONCEIVED, DEVELOPED, AND WRITTEN. SHE IS ALSO INTERESTED IN HOW WOMEN IN THE HEBREW BIBLE ARE PORTRAYED AND CONSTRUCTED. ADDITIONALLY, SHE EXPLORES THE INTERSECTION OF THE BIBLE'S NARRATIVES WITH POPULAR CULTURE. FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, SHE HAS TAUGHT WOMEN IN THE BIBLE AT CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY AND BIBLE AND WESTERN CULTURE AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY. SHE IS ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS AND EDITORS OF THE **JOURNAL OF THE COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH ON RELIGION (JCREOR)**, A WEB-BASED, PEER-REVIEWED, INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL THAT PUBLISHES ARTICLES ON ALL ASPECTS OF SCHOLARLY RESEARCH ON RELIGION. THROUGH HER EDITORIAL WORK AND RESEARCH, SHE AIMS TO PROMOTE DIVERSE CRITICAL AND HERMENEUTICAL EXCHANGES AND TO HELP DEMOCRATIZE ACCESS TO PUBLICATION AND SCHOLARSHIP.

PRUDENCE NEBA

DR. PRUDENCE SIRRI NEBA RECENTLY EARNED HER PHD IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION FROM MCGILL UNIVERSITY. HER DOCTORAL RESEARCH, “**AN AFRICAN WOMANIST APPROACH TO ECO-JUSTICE: A HERMENEUTIC OF STEWARDSHIP IN POST-COLONIAL CAMEROON**,” EXPLORES THE INTERSECTIONS OF GENDER, ECOLOGY, AND FAITH IN THE CAMEROONIAN CONTEXT. SHE EARNED HER B.TH. FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN KUMBA, CAMEROON, AND A LATER EARNED A MASTER'S IN SACRED THEOLOGY FROM MCGILL IN 2019. AS AN ORDAINED MINISTER, SHE CURRENTLY SERVES AS A PASTOR AT A CHURCH IN MONTREAL WEST ON A CONTRACT BASIS. SHE IS A PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY, AND HER WORK BRIDGES THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT.

MATHEUS G. R. DE CARVALHO

DR. DE CARVALHO RECENTLY EARNED HIS PHD IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY AND HAS CONDUCTED RESEARCH AND TEACHING IN BRAZIL, ISRAEL, AND CANADA. HIS RESEARCH EXAMINES ANCIENT JEWISH HISTORY AND LITERATURE, WITH A FOCUS ON THE FIRST MILLENNIUM BCE AND SHIFTING CONCEPTIONS OF THE DIVINE. IN ADDITION TO HIS EXPERTISE IN JEWISH ANTIQUITY, HE HAS WRITTEN ON NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND IS COMMITTED TO FACILITATING ACADEMIC EVENTS AND CONVERSATIONS ON RELIGION IN PUBLIC LIFE.

ISABELLE LINDSAY

ISABELLE LINDSAY IS A PHD STUDENT IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AT THE SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY. HER RESEARCH FOCUSES ON MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE WAYS IN WHICH THE CONCEPTUAL AND STRUCTURAL SHIFTS OF EARLY MODERNITY TRANSFORM THESE TRADITIONS. HER INTEREST IN THE SECULAR THUS LIES CHIEFLY IN TRACING ITS ROOTS IN THESE DEVELOPMENTS, ESPECIALLY AS THEY GIVE RISE TO A NEW CONCEPTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND RESHAPE THE RELATION BETWEEN RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR FORMS OF THOUGHT.

ANA DE SOUZA

ANA DE SOUZA IS A PHD CANDIDATE AT MCGILL'S SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES. HER DISSERTATION PROJECT FOCUSES ON SECULARITY, GENDER, AND HINDUISM IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC. WHILE SHE IS FROM TORONTO, SHE COMPLETED HER BA IN CLASSICS AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT MCGILL, HER MA FOCUSED ON RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF LESLIE ORR AT CONCORDIA, AND AN LL.M. FOCUSED ON SOCIO-LEGAL APPROACHES TO RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND CONSTITUTIONAL LAW IN INDIA AT DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY.

ADAM SMITH

ADAM SMITH IS A PHD CANDIDATE IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AT THE SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY. HIS WORK FOCUSES ON THE PLACE AND USE OF RELIGION IN 20TH-CENTURY PHILOSOPHY. IN DOING THIS, HE IS INTERESTED IN TRACKING THE SHIFTING BOUNDARIES BETWEEN THE RELIGIOUS AND THE SECULAR AND THE ROLE THIS BOUNDARY PLAYS IN DECIDING WHAT IS CONSIDERED LEGITIMATE OR ILLEGITIMATE IN DIFFERENT DOMAINS OF KNOWLEDGE.



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