



*University of Toronto Centre for Ethics
The Fifth Annual Graduate Conference at the Centre for Ethics*

Imagining 150: The Ethics of Canada's Sesquicentennial

May 5th, 2017 Centre for Ethics, Larkin Building 200

Friday May 5th, Larkin 200

9:00: Registration (Refreshments and snacks)

9:20: Opening Remarks

9:30-11:00: Panel 1: Problems in Canadian Political Theory

Timothy Berk, "Recognizing the Unicorn: Applying Charles Taylor's Politics of Recognition to Scotland"

Daniel Sherwin, "The Problem of Comparative Political Theory in Canada: Responding to Resurgence"

Thilo Schaefer, "Distributing the Benefits and Burdens of Laneway Housing in Toronto"
Discussant: Professor Torrey Shanks

Chair: Sara Lee

11:15-12:45: Panel 2: Federalism and its Technologies

Jason VandenBeukel, "Revolution in the Red Chamber? Evaluating the Initial Record of the Independent Advisory Board on Senate Appointments"

Jennifer Bonder, "An Ethical Political Economy? The Political Economy of 1867, 1967, and Lessons for Canada150"

Gordon Thomas, "Liberalism, Civic Republicanism, and Senate Reform"

Discussant: Professor Larry LeDuc

Chair: Erin Troy

12:45 to 1:30: Lunch (catered by Ghazale—vegetarian options provided)

1:30-3:15: Panel 3: Policy and Power

Milan Ilnyckyj, "Canadian Climate Change Policy from a Climate Ethics Perspective"

Teddy Harrison, "Indigeneity, Impartiality, and Criminal Justice"

Jason Hoult, "Canada 150 Years from Now: An Essay in Social and Political Thought"

Discussant: Professor Mariana Valverde

Chair: Taylor Putnam

3:30-5:00pm: Panel 4: Canadian Identity Revisited

Thibault Biscahie, "Postnationality: A Rhetorical Fallacy that Conceals Canada's Underlying Nationhood Construction?"

Sana Patel, "Religious Identity in Canada: Examining the Factors Contributing to the Canadian Muslim Identity within the South Asian Diaspora"

Kate McCray, "A New Autonomy: Reimagining Enhanced Support for Persons with Disabilities"

Discussant: Professor Paul Bramadat

Chair: Karl Manis

5:00-6:00: Break, relocation to Jackman Humanities Institute (JH100A)

6:00-8:00: Keynote Address by Professor Paul Bramadat, JHA100A

“Om Canada: What Scandals Teach Us About Religion, Diversity, and National Imaginaries”

The 2015 public controversy over the “Om the Bridge” yoga event in Vancouver in which concerns over the “cultural appropriation” of Hindu practices mixed with Indigenous political claims and a form of orientalism nevertheless tells us something about religion and society in the Cascadia bio-region, just as we can learn a great deal about alterity and moral panic by considering a 2014 debate over a York University student’s request for accommodation. What might these events have to teach us about our duties (and privileges) as scholars of religion and about the (re)imagined community of Canada?

Paul Bramadat is Professor of History and Religious Studies and the Director of the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria.

Panel Abstracts

Panel 1: Problems in Canadian Political Theory

Timothy Berk

Recognizing the Unicorn: Applying Charles Taylor's Politics of Recognition to Scotland

Canadian theorists of multinational federalism have been especially prominent in attempting to find 'solutions' to the 'problem' of 'fit' between nations and the state. This is not surprising, as, according to Taylor, "In a way, accommodating difference is what Canada is all about" (1993, 81). While there has been much scholarly attention devoted to the applicability of Kymlicka's multinational federalism outside of the Canadian context in which it was developed, comparatively little research has examined the applicability of Taylor's 'politics of recognition' towards non-Canadian case studies. This is unfortunate, because Taylor's analysis of 'recognition' contributes to the theory of multinational federalism by providing a powerful diagnostic lens to view national aspirations and to analyze inter-group conflict. This essay addresses this gap by using the case of Scottish nationalism to consider the relevance of Taylor's politics of recognition beyond Quebec, as a descriptive lens to make sense of, and as a prescriptive model to offer a 'solution' to the 'problem' of inter-group conflict within a multinational state.

This case study reveals that while Taylor's theory of recognition faces problems of applicability in that it assumes a relative consensus on what the 'nation' wants recognition of, and whom it wants recognition from. While some national narratives may be amenable to recognition of the minority nation's status within a multinational state by the dominant national group, other narratives will seek recognition of the nation's claims to independence, and will seek such recognition from the international community. Taylor therefore pays insufficient attention to the internal contestability of 'the nation', which is open to intra-group conflict over how to imagine the nation in relation to the state. Thus, the politics of recognition may be better suited as a descriptive rather than prescriptive lens, as the demands of recognition cannot always be reconciled by multinational federalism.

Timothy Berk is a PhD student in political theory at the University of Toronto. His research looks at 20th century German and Canadian political thought, focusing on the relationship between technological modernity and cultural diversity. His next project will compare Martin Heidegger and Charles Taylor on the possibility of multiple modernities.

Thilo Schaefer

Distributing the Benefits and Burdens of Laneway Housing in Toronto

Land is fundamental to the Canadian imaginary. However, while "land" in this Canadian imaginary typically summons images of idealized wilderness, today most Canadians live in urban centres. Yet, far from reducing the importance of land to our lives, urbanization and booming housing demand in these urban centres continually make land prices front page news. In Toronto, media outlets have begun to speculate on whether developing the city's laneways could make the local housing market more humane (take, for example, *Now Magazine's* "Can laneway homes take the pressure off Toronto's real estate market?"). However, zoning changes

that permit the intensification of urban land also increase its value. In the case where such changes allow the development of additional housing units in places where single-family homes are already in high demand (as they are in the areas where many of Toronto's lanes are located) this increase in land values can be substantial. Simultaneously, intensification also places additional pressure on existing local infrastructure and public services. This paper brackets the question of whether or not such a change would be desirable, instead concerning itself exclusively with the question of how the burdens and benefits of converting (what currently are) parking pads and garages into housing should be distributed.

Thilo Schaefer is a third year doctoral student in Political Theory at the University of Toronto. His dissertation sees Toronto's laneways as sites of political activity and normative contestation, examining how resident perceptions, social relationships, and dynamics of power shape these hidden spaces. He is also a Graduate Associate at the Centre for Ethics and a Massey College Junior Fellow.

Daniel Sherwin

The Problem of Comparative Political Theory in Canada: Responding to Resurgence

Over the last two decades, and in particular since the Idle No More protests of 2012, a number of indigenous scholars have written under the umbrella of Resurgence. Resurgence aims to articulate and revive traditional indigenous practices of governance, epistemologies, and ways of life. It is often set in contrast to the projects of Reconciliation and Recognition which have recently dominated Canadian political and academic discourse. During the same timeframe, mainstream non-Indigenous political theory has witnessed the emergence of the subdiscipline of Comparative Political Theory, which aims to engage non-Western forms of political theorizing. In this essay, I argue that non-Indigenous political theorists seeking to engage with the literature on Resurgence can learn from the insights of Comparative Political theory, but that such a conversation draws our attention to the need for a deeper engagement by theorists with the political and colonial contexts which shape the terms of their engagement with "non-Western" traditions.

Daniel Sherwin is a PhD Student in Political Science at the University of Toronto, specializing in Political Theory and Canadian Politics.

Panel 2: Federalism and Its Technologies

Gordon Thomas

Liberalism, Civic Republicanism, and Senate Reform

In the following paper I take stock of the current state of scholarship on Canadian historiography and connect it to the contemporary topic of Senate reform. How might each of the intellectual traditions in Canada assess the state of the federation and address Senate reform? More importantly, the sesquicentennial marks 150 years of stability and growth-What are the foundations that have provided such stability and where should we direct our attention next? I argue that the Senate's perceived failures are the result of a misperception of the purpose of the institution, and that when assessed from the liberal-republican tradition, the Senate performs a

much needed cathartic role. Interest in the intellectual foundations of Canada has received mixed interest leading to bouts of scholarship and active debate on Canada's intellectual roots and historiography. In the 1960's and 70's, the long standing pragmatic account of Confederation that had dominated Canadian institutionalism came under attack by the tory-touch thesis of the Marxist schools of Louis Hartz, Gad Horowitz, and C.B. Macpherson, and the 'red tory' conservatism of George Grant. In the 1980's the challenge came from scholars interested in the renewed debates around the Atlantic revolutions, challenging the 'red tory' category (Rod Preece), proposing a Lockean liberal founding (Janet Azjenstat), and excavating a civic republican tradition in Canadian political culture (Peter Smith). Since the 1980's, interest in the intellectual foundations of the Canadian regime has waned considerably, even in spite of the increased push for institutional reform to Canada's federal Parliament. While the work of Azjenstat and Smith has provided much needed primary research on the foundations of the Canadian regime, I renew this interest by applying it to the contemporary climate of Parliamentary reform and the question of the role of the Canadian Senate.

Gordon Thomas is a PhD student at Carleton University currently writing his dissertation under the supervision of Dr. Raffaele Iacovino. He holds a Bachelor's degree from St. Thomas University and a Master of Arts from Carleton University. Gordon's research explores the intellectual foundations of the Canadian regime and the Canadian constitution with specific focus on Canadian bicameralism. More broadly, his research interests are in the intersection between political philosophy, political culture, and constitutional design.

Jennifer Bonder

An Ethical Political Economy? The political economy of 1867, 1967, and lessons for Canada150

Canada must maintain a close economic relationship with the United States. Canadian values must be defended. In the country's sesquicentennial year, with a new American administration seemingly unaligned on global challenges like climate change and migration, these statements could appear antithetical. But the answer to both is yes. And understanding why is rooted in the study of political economy, or how politics influenced economics which in turn influenced politics. It was standard at every university in North America until the 1980s – in fact, the University of Toronto was one of its last bulwarks – but political economy has only recently re-emerged as a credible lens of analysis. Using it provides means to highlight the bridges between Canada's foreign and domestic policies, and the regional strife in a country that spans sea to sea. Politics have figured prominently in Canadian economic history in three ways: first, through laws regulating business to shape and promote economic development; second, through government in large-scale macroeconomic manipulation; and third, through government involvement in not just the creation of wealth, but in its distribution. In the definitive text on Canada's economic history by Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owsam, they argue that confederation was not a desperate reaction to American threats of annexation, but rather the product of increased Canadian confidence resulting from industrialization and urbanization. Similarly, the 'new nationalism' around 1967 capitalized on a second wave of confidence as Canada experimented with policy options like the Foreign Investment Review Agency. This paper looks at key moments in Canada's economic history and their surrounding cultural and international currents to better understand challenges that border both economics and ethics. The relationship between politics and economics produced fascinating results in 1867 and 1967, and

it is worthwhile to think more about what this could mean for Canada's 150th anniversary.

Jennifer is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History at the University of Toronto. Using newly-declassified documents, interviews, and mapping technology, her research explores Canadian foreign investment strategies and its effects on society and politics. After completing an internship with Global Affairs Canada, she caught the policy bug and hopes to enable decision-makers to learn from the policy experiments of the past. Jennifer holds fellowships with Massey College and The Bill Graham Centre for Contemporary International History. She speaks English & French, hails from the nickel capital of the world, and you can follow her tweets @jenbonder.

Jason VandenBeukel

Revolution in the Red Chamber? Evaluating the Initial Record of the Independent Advisory Board for Senate Appointments

Few institutions in Canadian government have been as maligned as the Canadian Senate. Derided as unnecessary, a dumping place for partisan loyalists who have done favours for the Prime Minister, unrepresentative, and unequal, the body's ability to act as a chamber of sober second thought has been severely undermined.

The election of a new Liberal government in 2015, however, heralded a new chapter in the Senate's history. Justin Trudeau's government has introduced a new appointment process that has two fundamental goals: ensuring that senators are more representative of Canadians and ensuring that they are freed from party supervision and thus able to act as a chamber with the ability to review legislation independent of partisan demands. Already this appointments process has been criticized, with the argument being that while Trudeau's new senators are not partisan Liberals, they nevertheless are liberal in their outlook and thus unlikely to act as a real check on power.

I propose to track both aspects of the new appointments process: the diversity of the appointments on a number of metrics, as well as the voting record of these newly appointed senators. This study will provide the first analysis of this significant change to the Upper House of the Canadian Parliament.

Jason VandenBeukel is a PhD student at the University of Toronto. His research interests include both Canadian and comparative politics, with a particular focus on radical right politics and conservative politics more generally.

Panel 3: Policy and Power

Milan Ilnyckyj

Canadian Climate Change Policy from a Climate Ethics Perspective

During the Harper years, Canada's international reputation suffered from a perception that the country strongly privileges oil and gas profits over the integrity of the global climate. While a change of tone has been noted with the new Trudeau government, the cautious and incremental approach to carbon pricing coupled by the decision to approve major new fossil fuel

infrastructure raises questions about how responsible a global actor Canada really is. Canada's 150th anniversary provides an opportunity to consider questions about Canada's role in confronting serious global issues, as well as the apparent disjuncture between Canada's history as a natural resource exporter and the steps needed to build a low carbon future. At the same time, the commercial and political imperatives driving major energy infrastructure projects (particularly fossil fuel projects) stand at odds with the Trudeau government's commitment to improving relations between Canadian governments and aboriginal peoples. In particular, they clash with the principle of free, prior, and informed consent which Canada has agreed to implement via the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The question of how much fossil fuel infrastructure to build and where is linked to deep enduring themes in Canadian politics, from national unity and federalism to Canada's role on the global stage and the place of indigenous peoples within Canada. At a minimum, adjudicating between these competing claims raises challenges for the present federal and provincial governments. Quite possibly, it also reveals a fundamental incoherence in Justin Trudeau's overall policy agenda.

Milan Ilnyckyj is a fifth-year PhD student in political science at the University of Toronto, as well as a junior fellow at Massey College. He is a graduate of the University of British Columbia (BA, political science and international relations), Oxford University (M.Phil, international relations), and the federal government's Accelerated Economist Training Program. He was also the founding president of the Toronto chapter of 350.org and an organizer with the fossil fuel divestment campaign at U of T.

Teddy Harrison

Indigeneity, Impartiality, and Criminal Justice

Liberal theory and Canadian justice practices share an emphasis on the importance of impartial judges. John Locke went so far as to argue that the need for an impartial judge to resolve conflicts gives rise to the political condition in the first place. Yet in some Indigenous approaches to justice, precisely the qualities that usually recommend a judge as impartial in the Canadian system – the lack of any direct prior knowledge of or relationship to the disputants – make them unsuited to justly resolve conflicts. This paper examines Indigenous conceptions of impartiality in the practice of justice and explores avenues for reconciling these with the dominant liberal model.

Teddy Harrison is a PhD candidate in Political Science at the University of Toronto and a doctoral fellow at the Centre for Ethics. He is writing a dissertation about the legitimacy of criminal justice for Indigenous people in Canada. He holds an MPhil in Politics from the University of Oxford and an Honours BA in Political Science from the University of British Columbia. He formerly worked as a policy advisor in Canada's Department of Justice.

Jason Hoult

Canada 150 Years from Now: An Essay in Social and Political Thought

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (introduced in 1982) opens by remarking, prior to any other consideration, that “Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of

God and the rule of law.” It is particularly fascinating to note, then, that not only do Canada’s foundations continue to be imagined and reimagined over 100 years after its “foundation” but that the foundation of Canada cannot be conceived or imagined except on the basis of principles that foster human dignity. It is by founding my image of Canada upon these core principles—the fundamental right to freedom and equality—that I want to explore what it is that we imagine for Canada—in Canada, as Canada—150 years from now. Indeed, imagining Canada 150 years from now is so critical an exercise for every Canadian precisely because it directly reflects on how we think about Canada now. In light of the future of Canada, I want to explore three critical issues—at once social, political, and economic—facing us today: the rights of sex-workers (alongside the problem of conflating sex-work and sex-trafficking), the poor and unstable environments of those whose living conditions are not secure (e.g., those who are homeless), and free trade (with particular emphasis on how to renegotiate NAFTA). By examining these issues, I want to open up, in conversation with others, an image of the future of thought and existence in Canada. That is, I shall argue, in my talk, that we can truly celebrate Canada—into the next 150 years and beyond—only insofar as we remain steadfast critics of the ways in which our social and political landscape has failed to embody the principles—the right to freedom and equality—with which we must all begin.

Jason Hoult is a Ph. D. candidate in the Department of Social and Political Thought at York University. He is particularly interested in examining the history and ontology that underpin the principles and values that found our understanding of modern philosophy and literature. In his dissertation, he investigates the relationship between the ethics of philosophy and the art of poetry through an analysis of Kant and Wallace Stevens. He argues that just as ethics must be creative in its structure in order to remain truly ethical so art must be ethical in its spirit in order to be truly creative.

Panel 4: Canadian Identity Revisited

Thibault Biscarie

Postnationality: A Rhetorical Fallacy that Conceals Canada’s Unconventional Nationhood Construction?

In December 2015, Prime Minister Trudeau claimed in the New York Times Magazine that Canada was “the first postnational state,” adding that there was “no core identity, no mainstream in Canada.” Is this the case? If so, what does this notion of “postnationality” encompass? One might argue that this term is a rhetorical fallacy. Indeed, a very strong sense of nationhood is required to hold Canada’s commitment to welcoming foreigners and to “integrate” them into its socio-economic and political systems (without “assimilating” them, like most nation-states). Nonetheless the Canadian model is important to interrogate not simply because of its own significance internally, but also for the contrast it sets with other forms of nationalism, in an era of growing right-wing populism.

This paper will interrogate these issues, grounded in a perspective that is connected to the historical development of Canada. As a postcolonial state, it could be argued, Canada has developed a very peculiar form of nationhood, that reflects its settler colonialism, but also its celebrated commitment to human rights and to tolerance. In fact, Canada has chosen to tackle its colonial legacy by erecting as governmentalities combinations of neoliberalism and

multiculturalism, thus making its national model at odds with the traditional ones (such as France, that favored republicanism and assimilation).

This paper will pose the question whether Canada is or is not postnational: instead of trying to erase or deny differences in a universalist quest for neutrality and uniformity, has Canada not done the opposite, by recognizing and embracing diversity, and building its national ethos upon this notion? Does this political agenda attempt to achieve ‘postnationality?’ Or does it instead reflect the strong willingness to build an alternative, although perfectible, conception of nationhood that offers promise for a more cooperative and tolerant world order?

I studied English and Russian languages at the Université de Provence for two years before successfully passing Sciences Po Lille’s competitive exam, where I specialized in Conflicts and Development issues as a graduate student. After a fruitful one-year exchange at the Université du Québec à Montréal, I decided to fully embrace my attraction for Canada and applied to York University, where I am currently working on my Ph.D. in Political Science. Using my perspective in International Relations and Comparative Politics, my academic interests revolve around issues related to postcolonialism, identity politics, nationalism and multiculturalism.

Sana Patel

Religious Identity in Canada: Examining the Factors Contributing to the Canadian-Muslim Identity within the South Asian Diaspora

This paper reports on the research and the findings of Muslim identity construction, in a specific Muslim diasporic community in Toronto. It uses Homi Bhabha’s concepts of hybridity and third space to analyze the construction of Muslim identity among young South Asian adults in Toronto. Semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with young South Asian adults and Muslim chaplains. This essay examined what factors contributed to their formation of a Muslim identity. Factors identified were: religious symbols, secular educational institutions, and family/societal culture and ethnicity. The results also indicated there is a significant difference between hyphenated and hybrid identities. This also led to the examination of the impact of stigmatization of sex/gender in the participant’s diasporic communities. A growing trend of young Muslims using the Internet for religious inquiry was also found. The paper additionally discusses the significant part religion plays in the intersecting identities of Canadians, and why religion matters to the “Canadian-ness” of the participants. Participants’ names will be replaced by “P1”, “P2”, “P3”, etc.

I have an honours BA in Political Science, from York University. I recently graduated from the MA program in Religion and Public Life, at Carleton University. My MA research focused on the construction of Muslim identity in Toronto. I have presented at a few academic conferences here in Toronto, and also in Chicago, and Boston. I hope to start a Ph.D program for Fall 2017.

Kate McCray

A New Autonomy: Reimagining Enhanced Support for Persons with Disabilities

At a time when Canadian identity on the world stage is epitomized by hospitality toward refugees, human rights, and reconciliation, a reconsideration of how the value of autonomy, so essential to our conception of human rights, is not only timely but essential. This paper

investigates a fault-line in the liberal conception autonomy, arguing that individualized autonomy further disenfranchises persons with disabilities by requiring of the ideal human being a type of self-authorship and self-sufficiency that is inherently outside the grasp of those living with disabilities. While the prevailing Western model of personhood largely revolves around an individualized autonomous will, able to make correspondingly individualized moral choices and take responsibility for the ramifications of those choices, for persons with mental health conditions who are more dependent on social support this model is inherently alienating. This paper proposes an alternative to a hyper-individualized autonomy and proposes instead a new autonomy in which agency is recognized as constitutive and socially informed. I examine the ways in which individualized agency, as a component of personhood, negatively impacts therapeutic models for mental and physical disabilities, and offer an alternative model of personhood that integrates social support and the role of caretakers in personal agency. Distributed agency acknowledges that the weight of moral decisions is shared between the self and the social community that makes those moral values intelligible, more accurately describing the social dependence many scholars recognize as the basic human disposition. This alternative structure for agency allows for a participatory expectation in human moral formation and choice, broadly for all people, and as such orients persons with disabilities at the center of the community rather than on the periphery by placing need and caretaking at the core of what it means to be social, to be Canadian, to be human.

Kate McCray is a PhD student in Theological Studies through the University of Toronto, University of St. Michael's College conjoint program, focusing on Christian ethics and disability. She completed Masters work at both Princeton Seminary and St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary, New York before moving to Toronto. Her research examines multiple systems for rethinking autonomy, personhood, and therapeutic supports for persons with disabilities, with particular interest in mood disorders and the ways in which altered experiences in childhood and adolescence impact the development of personhood.