

BREAK OUT SESSIONS
Know Fear
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES Conference
September 15, 16, 2010

HOMOPHOBIA AS SPIRITUAL OFFENSE

LED BY PROFESSOR ADA JAARMSMA

Meets in Room N208

In this presentation, I argue that spiritual inwardness helps us to overcome homophobia. I describe the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard's teachings about our very approach to existence—who we are, who we want to become. I look to this account for clues about how our approach to existence plays a key role in how we challenge, or perhaps unwittingly collude with, forms of prejudice like homophobia.

What can we learn about ourselves by reflecting on what we fear? Are there kinds of anxiety that might actually open us up to spiritual deepening? How willing are we, as individuals, to take responsibility for how we live sex, sexuality, and gender in our daily lives?

Dr. Ada Jaarsma is an assistant professor of philosophy at Mount Royal University. She works in continental philosophy, feminist philosophy, critical theory, and gender studies. She has recently published articles on same-sex marriage, queering Kierkegaard, and the television show *Mad Men* and is completing a manuscript entitled *Offending Others: Sin, Sex, and Critical Theory*.

SURVIVING FEAR ON THE URBAN STREETS (NOTE: LIMIT 20 PEOPLE)

LED BY REVEREND TRAVIS ENRIGHT and Barry Belcourt

Meets in Room L117

Reverend Enright has designed a Sacred Gathering called Standing Stones: a gathering that can be described as, “dancing smoke”, because it incorporates symbols of Cree smudge and Christian incense dancing together, a place to heal ancient wounds.

The cry of a mother, the cry a police siren, the cry of the homeless.

These are the sounds of the urban street.

Fear lingers in the hearts of those that live in the center of our city.

Fear lingers in the minds of those that pass them by.

How do we survive in the darkness of the fear?

We survive! Walled in by the Fear or Freed by the Light. We Survive!

Reverend Travis Enright is a Plains Cree from Central Saskatchewan. He is a priest in the Anglican Diocese of Edmonton, he currently works at All Saints' Anglican Cathedral and is the Diocesan Aboriginal Coordinator. He is also a member on the Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee.

Barry Belcourt is an intake worker at Herb Jamieson Centre (and a self professed survivor of the night)

FEAR: WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR – ABSOLUTELY... SOMETHING?

LED BY PROFESSOR LEANNE WILLSON, KING'S

Meets in Room N210

In this breakout session, we'll talk about the psychological experience of fear and the physical responses to it. While these physical responses are typically associated with poor health outcomes, there are ways to channel the energy they provide for good. We'll discuss what kinds of things we fear, what it's like to be afraid, ways to cope with fear and anxiety, and how faith is related to coping.

Dr. Leanne Willson is a Research Psychologist who specializes in Social Cognition (how the way we think and the things we believe influence our social experiences). Her work in the area of stress and coping (related to cross-cultural research) has been published in the *International Journal of Stress Management* and the *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*. She is an Associate Professor of Psychology at The King's University College.

CONTRADICTING FEAR WITH COURAGE: WOMEN TO WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN

LED BY LAURYN OATES

Meets in Room N209

As a scrappy 14-year-old in a west coast bedroom community, Lauryn read a newspaper article in 1996 describing the Taliban's edicts against women and girls in Afghanistan. She summoned all of her teenage vigor, angst and distemper into a frenzy of rage in response, launching a petition demanding that the rights of women be restored in the barbarous hell of Taliban Afghanistan. The rage frenzy has been fed a steady diet of confrontations with cultural relativists, stoppists and other unsavoury characters. Today Lauryn works to advance education in conflict zones and to defend the universalism of human rights.

Lauryn Oates is currently Projects Director for Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, and a doctoral student in literacy education at the University of British Columbia. She divides her time between Kabul and a shack on top of a bluff on a small island where she plays house with a brawny carpenter and a disobedient mutt

PHOBIAS XENO-, HOMO-, ISLAMO-: MEANING WHAT WE SAY

LED BY PROFESSOR MICHAEL DE MOOR & ROBERT BRINK

Meets in Room N108

How we talk about our political opponents matters, especially how we characterize their positions. Recent discussions raise important questions about our word choices. What are the implications and consequences of using the language of pathological fear to characterize a broad swath of opposition to social movements and of oppositional social movements? We will look particularly at the use of the term "Islamophobia" to characterize the recent backlash against the building of an Islamic community centre and mosque near "Ground Zero." What are the social and political implications of calling that movement "Islamophobic"? Is such a description accurate and fair? What does it mean for how we respond to the ideas and emotions expressed by those who oppose the project?

Dr. Michael De Moor is Assistant Professor of Social Philosophy at King's

Mr. Robert Brink is a frequent sessional lecturer in Political Science at King's

CLIMATE CHANGE, POPULATION GROWTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL ARMAGEDDON: MOVING FROM MALTHUSIAN DILEMMA TO CHRISTIAN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

LED BY PROFESSOR MICHAEL FERBER AND GUEST PANELISTS

Meets in Room **N109**

Many believe the Mayans predicted it for the winter solstice of the year 2012. Thomas Malthus believed it would happen when population growth exceeded food production. Al Gore believes it will happen when the earth overheats. Talk of impending environmental catastrophe saturates newspapers, television and blogs. In this break-out session Michael Ferber will provide an overview of potential ecological catastrophes, then guest panellists will nuance these environmental fears through a Biblical discussion on faith, hope and love.

Dr, Michael Ferber is Assistant Professor of Geography and Environmental Studies at King's

REELY SCARY MOVIES: EXPLORING THE ATTRACTION TO BEING CONFUSED, DISGUSTED AND TERRIFIED AT THE MOVIES

LED BY PROFESSORS DAVID LONG AND CHRIS PEET

Meets in Room **L116**

Do you think North American shelled out over \$500 million to watch horror films last year because they simply wanted to experience heart pounding mayhem, panic, horror, confusion and disgust? Perhaps you think they flocked to darkened cinemas because they needed a healthy outlet for the stress, tension and anger that fills their modern lives? Or maybe it had something to do with them embracing the opportunity to live on 'the edge' – of existence that is. Strangely, this all suggests that our experience of horror movies might well be what we are supposed to experience when we read and hear stories about God. Care to take the plunge into darkness and light with us?

Dr. David Long is Professor of Sociology at King's

Dr. Chris Peet is Associate Professor of Psychology at King's

'THE WORM AT THE CORE': FEAR OF DEATH AND BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF LIFE

LED BY PROFESSOR STEVE MARTIN

Meets in Room **N110**

The fear of death is what drives all truly human activity, including especially culture and religion." This is the key idea of Terror Management Theory. It argues that we repress the awareness of our mortality by building (or participating in building) symbolic systems that will outlive us and our children. In this way our fear of death is overcome. But because we live in a pluralistic world, such systems are also ways we assert our superiority to different others, others whose different ways of believing and living threaten the truth of our system. We must convert them, or kill them, lest we face the inevitability of our own death.

Is this true? How does the fear of death express itself in our culture? What might be a Christian response to the fear of death? What kind of culture might be built by those who affirm the triumph of life over death?

Dr. Steve Martin is Professor of Theology at King's.

FIGHTING FEAR WITH POLICY: BUILDING A BETTER WORLD THROUGH GOOD GOVERNMENT (WEDNESDAY ONLY)

LED BY HON. LINDA DUNCAN AND HON. PAUL DEWAR
Meets in Room N101

Join two Members of Parliament to talk about the role of good governance both at home and overseas. Paul Dewar M.P. Ottawa-Centre and New Democrat Foreign Affairs Critic will address critical foreign policy issues that affect peace and security. Linda Duncan M.P. Edmonton-Strathcona and New Democrat Critic for the Environment will share her struggles to refocus federal policy towards a clean energy sustainable future.

Linda Duncan was elected Member of Parliament for Edmonton-Strathcona in October of 2008, becoming the second New Democrat MP ever from the province of Alberta, and the only non-Conservative to represent the province in the 40th Parliament. She serves as the NDP Environment Critic.

Before her election to Parliament, Linda worked as an international environmental law consultant based in Edmonton. She held a senior portfolio as the Chief of Enforcement for Environment Canada, and served as Assistant Deputy Minister for Renewable Resources for the Yukon government. Internationally, she has served as a senior legal advisor to Indonesia, Bangladesh and Jamaica in instituting programs for effective environmental enforcement.

Paul Dewar is the Member of Parliament for the federal riding of Ottawa Centre and serves as the New Democratic Party (NDP) Foreign Affairs Critic. He is the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Prevention of Genocide and other Crimes Against Humanity. He is also a member of the Parliamentary Network for Nuclear Disarmament and sits on the Parliamentary Friends of Burma Committee.

Paul has travelled to Erbil, Iraq where he participated in a conference titled *Practical Federalism in Iraq*, to Morocco, Afghanistan, and more recently, to Lebanon, where he acted as an election observer with the National Democratic Institute.

He also travelled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as part of a delegation focused on aid, development and peace building. Earlier this month, Paul was in Qatar for the Doha Forum on Development where he shared a stage with vice-presidents of Spain and the EU Parliament to advocate for increased participation by rich and emerging economies in battles against poverty and climate change.

HONDURAS WATER PROJECT (Thursday only)

LED BY JUSTINE VANDERGRIFT AND THE 2010 HONDURAS WATER PROJECT TEAM
Meets in Room N101

Nothing can help overcome the fear of 'otherness' like spending time in another culture and environment. The members of last summer's Honduras water project have inspiring stories to tell about their work in the community of El Coyolar in Honduras. Come and experience the sounds, sights and TASTES of Honduras and learn how you can be a part of this annual off-campus, for credit, learning experience.