



# International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture

2025

University of California, Santa Barbara



Crossing Borders,  
Transgressing Boundaries

Religion, Migration, and  
Climate Change

# Sponsors

## Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

The International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture would like to acknowledge that our 2025 conference is being held on the lands, villages, and unceded territories of the Chumash people. We ask you to join us in thanking the Chumash peoples of this area, their Elders, and their past, present, and future generations. We take this opportunity to ask all of our conference attendees to reflect on the work that we do here today. As scholars, educators, and visitors, we affect these lands and the peoples that inhabit them. As we work together to bring awareness of and give a platform to a variety of diverse voices and perspectives, we remember that the Chumash peoples of this area are still fighting to have their voices not only heard, but included, in the creation of this society, upon their tribal territories.

## With Special Thanks to Our Sponsors

This conference is organized by the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture (ISSRNC) and hosted at the University of California, Santa Barbara. We would like to extend a special thanks to our sponsors for their help making the 2025 “Crossing Borders, Transgressing Boundaries: Religion, Migration, and Climate Change” conference possible. We raised more than \$22,000 of support this year which helped to make this event possible. We could not have done it without their generosity and support.

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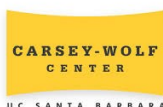


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# ISSRNC President's Welcome

Dear ISSRNC Conference Participants,

It's a great pleasure to welcome you to Santa Barbara and UCSB!

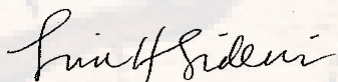
The last few years have felt like an onslaught: the shock of the first Trump Administration, a global pandemic; outrage and civil unrest in response to George Floyd's murder, a violent insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. Now, in the midst of Trump 2.0, we face unprecedented attacks on human rights, the free press, and on universities themselves. Many of us feel an acute need for solidarity and collective thought and action to safeguard the values we hold dear, as scholars and as human beings.

When this year's conference themes were initially conceived, we could not have fully anticipated how timely they would become. Climate-driven wildfires have recently ravaged large swaths of Southern California, bequeathing a legacy of toxic soils and waters, and a worsening housing crisis. Populations of migrating Western monarch butterflies are in free-fall, while politicians slash environmental regulations and undermine climate policy. Spiritually-inflected conspiracies about health and disease leave us vulnerable to cross-species viruses and future pandemics. Hardening of borders and scapegoating of migrants are intensifying daily, both in the U.S. and abroad. Meanwhile, billionaire technocrats, armed with fringe ideologies and ever-more sophisticated tools of artificial intelligence, are dismantling democracy in real time.

As interdisciplinary scholars, we understand that these are not separate emergencies; they are deeply and inextricably interconnected. The work we do to connect the dots between these escalating crises has never been more critical. In the timeliness of our 2025 conference theme, then, we see clearly the enormous relevance of our work. And where there is relevance there is hope. We convene in this beautiful spot—a coastal community whose own environmental disaster, half a century ago, catalyzed a nation-wide environmental movement—with renewed commitment to engaged, interdisciplinary scholarship that understands our planetary crises as a complex whole.

This year marks our twelfth conference and nearly two decades of this unique scholarly community. In tumultuous times, we remain steadfast in our commitment to thinking across disciplines—borders and boundaries—bringing our diverse intellectual approaches, methodologies, and ways of knowing to bear on the most important issues of our day. I am grateful for the work of the ISSRNC Board of Directors and the Conference Planning Committee, and for the support of many individuals, institutions, and academic units at UCSB. I look forward to celebrating the fruits of this collaborative labor with you over the next few days, and beyond.

With gratitude,



Lisa H. Sideris  
ISSRNC President

# Acknowledgements

This conference was made possible through the generous help and support of a number of individuals, who dedicated their time to help plan, organize, and carry out this event. Many people have been involved at different stages since the conference was first discussed in 2023. We would like to extend a special thanks to the following individuals for their help making the 2025 “Crossing Borders, Transgressing Boundaries: Religion, Migration, and Climate Change” conference possible.

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# Keynote Speakers

Ana Mariella Bacigalupo



**In collaboration with the Society of the Anthropology of Religion, the ISSRNC is pleased to present the 2025 Roy A. Rappaport Distinguished Keynote Lecture.**

Professor Bacigalupo earned her Ph.D. in anthropology from UCLA and is internationally recognized for her groundbreaking research at the intersection of Indigenous cosmologies, decolonial politics, and the more-than-human world. Her work explores the deep interconnections between spirits, shamans, sentient landscapes, and the undead—challenging Western assumptions about life, time, memory, gender, and the very boundaries of the human. Drawing from critical race and feminist theory, queer theory, new materialism, and studies of indigeneity in the Colonial Anthropocene, Professor Bacigalupo shows how shamanic discourses and practices offer powerful tools for resisting colonial and neocolonial structures. She reveals how Indigenous shamans—mediating across worlds and temporalities—act as public intellectuals and cultural critics. Their engagements with spirits and sacred landscapes not only confront the legacies of colonialism, but also inspire visions of social and environmental justice.

Professor Bacigalupo has conducted long-term fieldwork in Chile and Peru and has shaped scholarly conversations around the globe. She is the author of *Thunder Shaman: Making History with Mapuche Spirits in Patagonia*, *Shamans of the Foye Tree: Gender, Power and Healing Among the Chilean Mapuche*, and several other influential books and edited volumes. Her publications—over sixty peer-reviewed articles and book chapters—continue to influence scholars in anthropology, Indigenous studies, and the environmental humanities.



## Keynote Speakers

Robert Albro



Dr. Albro is Associate Research Professor at American University's Center for Latin American & Latino Studies. He earned his Ph.D. in sociocultural anthropology from the University of Chicago, and over the course of his career, has taught at institutions including Wheaton College in Massachusetts, George Washington University, and American University. Since the early 1990s, Dr. Albro has conducted extensive ethnographic research in Bolivia, particularly in the country's urban periphery. His work examines popular and indigenous politics, exploring how grassroots movements shape new forms of political participation, identity, and citizenship. This long-term research culminated in his acclaimed book, *Roosters at Midnight: Indigenous Signs and Stigma in Local Bolivian Politics*, published by the School for Advanced Research Press.

A major facet of Dr. Albro's recent work has been the role of sociocultural expertise in security contexts. He served as both a member and Chair of the American Anthropological Association's Commission on the Engagement of Anthropology with the U.S. Security and Intelligence Communities—known as CEAUSSIC. Through this work, Dr. Albro has emerged as a thoughtful, often provocative voice on how the social sciences are used—sometimes misused—in pursuit of security goals. His co-edited volume, *Anthropologists in the Securityscape*, brings together leading voices to consider the implications of these engagements for research, ethics, and professional identity. Dr. Albro's research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, the Mellon and Rockefeller Foundations, the American Council of Learned Societies, and others. He has also held fellowships with the Fulbright Program, the Carnegie Council, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Kluge Center at the Library of Congress.

# Lifetime Achievement Award

## Catherine L. Albanese

The International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture is pleased to announce Catherine L. Albanese as the recipient of the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award. This award recognizes distinguished scholars, writers, and leaders in the field whose work has a relevance and eloquence that speaks not just to scholars, but more broadly to the public and across disciplines.



Professor Albanese is renowned for her pioneering scholarship on metaphysical and nature-based religious traditions in the United States. Over the course of her career, she has broadened our understanding of American religion beyond traditional denominational lines, revealing a rich and dynamic religious landscape shaped by currents often left on the margins—until her work brought them to the center.

Professor Albanese's body of work exemplifies the very mission of the ISSRNC. Her scholarship has consistently spoken across disciplines and beyond academia—reaching public audiences with relevance, eloquence, and depth. Her 1990 book, *Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age*, remains a landmark study of the enduring power of nature-centered spirituality in American history.

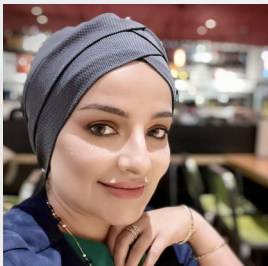
In addition to her many publications, including the widely used textbook *America: Religions and Religion*, now in its fifth edition, Professor Albanese has received numerous accolades. These include a Guggenheim Fellowship, her election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and her leadership as president of the American Academy of Religion in 1994. Her methodological innovations—particularly her move away from consensus models of religious history toward more interactive and pluralistic frameworks—have opened new avenues for generations of scholars. She has redefined what it means to study religion in America, and in doing so, she has helped reframe American religious life.



# Graduate Student Paper Award

At each conference, the ISSRNC selects one graduate student paper to receive a merit-based award for best graduate student paper. Several previous winners have gone on to publish their papers in the *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*, which we hope will be the case this year as well. Graduate students were asked to submit their full conference papers, and the submissions were anonymously reviewed by the Awards Committee. This year, the first place winner will receive a \$500 monetary award. The 2025 winner will be announced during the conference banquet.

## Previous Winners



### **Mai Lootah — 2023 Winner**

“Cosmic Chaos and Transformation in Scientific Qu’rānic Exegeses”

Lootah is currently a PhD candidate in the Department of Religion at Rice University.



### **Alexandre Grandjean — 2019 Winner**

“Biodynamic Wine-crafting in Switzerland” published in *JSRNC* Vol 15(3) in 2021. Grandjean is currently working as an independent researcher in Switzerland.



### **Lily Zeng — 2017 Winner**

“Problematizing Ideas of ‘Purity’ and ‘Timeliness’ in the Conservation Narratives of Sacred Groves” published in *JSRNC* Vol 12(2) in 2018.

Zeng completed her PhD at Yale University in 2018 and now works on biodiversity and conservation in Xiashuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture in southwest China.

## Honorable Mentions

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>2023</b> | <b>Emily Theus</b> , “Peripheral Visions of Ecological Crisis: Refusal and Revelation in Jeff VanderMee’s Hummingbird Salamander and Rumaan Alam’s Leave the World Behind.” Theus is a PhD candidate in Religious Studies at Yale University. |
| <b>2019</b> | <b>Ben Bridges</b> , “The Pachamama and Eucalyptus Dialectic: Religious Response to Invasive Species in Southern Peru. Bridges is now an Assistant Professor of Folklore and Environmental Humanities at Indiana University.                  |
| <b>2017</b> | <b>Nivedita Nath</b> , “ <u>From Pilgrim Landscape to ‘Pilgrim Road’</u> ” published in <i>JSRNC</i> Vol. 12(4) in 2018. Nath is now an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at UC Irvine.  |



# Travel Grant Awards

ISSRNC offers all in-person conference presenters the opportunity to apply for travel grant funding for conferences. Travel grant applications are anonymously reviewed by the awards committee and are distributed on the basis of need for in-person conference participation. Priority is given to graduate students, international scholars, contingent faculty, and independent scholars without institutional support. While we cannot always provide support to everyone who applies, we endeavor to support as many people as possible for each conference.

**This year, ISSRNC is pleased to provide over \$5,000 in support to travel grant awardees.**

**Mumtaz Alam** (Fiji National University)

**Stooti Baruah** (Jawaharlal Nehru University, India)

**Kunal Gounder** (Fiji National University)

**Sam Harrelson** (California Institute of Integral Studies)

**Matthäus Leidenfrost** (Freie Universität Berlin)

**Noémie Moutel** (Angers University, France)

**Maria Nita** (Open University, United Kingdom)

**Mario Orospe Hernandez** (Arizona State University)

**Benjamin Schmidt** (Rachel Carson Center, LMU Munich)

**Adam Stone** (Rutgers University)

# Conference Schedule

## Monday, June 23

**11:00am – 4:30pm**

**ISSRNC Conference Check In**

*Official Opening of the  
“Crossing Borders, Transgressing Boundaries: Religion, Migration, and Climate Change”  
Conference*

**12:00 – 12:45pm**

**Welcoming Remarks**

**Lisa Sideris**, ISSRNC President

**Lucas Johnston**, ISSRNC President Elect

**ISSRNC & SAR Plenary Session: 1:00 – 2:30pm**

**Sacred Geographies: How Religious Cultures Shape Multispecies Interactions**

**Greg Johnson** (University of California, Santa Barbara)

**Yiren Lin** (Taipei National University of the Arts)

**Lisa Sideris** (University of California, Santa Barbara)

**Mayfair Yang** (University of California, Santa Barbara)

**2:30 – 3:00pm** -----**Coffee Break (Location, TBD)** -----





# Conference Schedule

**Roy A. Rappaport Distinguished Keynote Lecture: 3:00 – 4:30pm**

***Ana Mariella Bacigalupo***  
(SUNY Buffalo)

## **Climate Crises and Postapocalyptic Futures: Visionary Landscapes in Northern Peru**

Northern Peruvian shamans' anti-anthropocentric eschatological narratives infused with scientific climate change discourses rewrite the climate change debate from a nonhuman point of view. By engaging in ethnographic research in Northern Peru through an indigenous decolonizing framework, I show how shamanic engagements with ancestor landscapes can restore a sense of belonging to the earth to meet the challenge of predatory capitalism and catastrophic climate crises. The goal of shamanic practices is to heal the epistemic fractures we have inherited between humans and ecosystems, between time and place, and between the geopolitical and the ecological. Shamans also offer a collective vision of humanity's future as climate change ravages the world. By decentering the human and gaining awareness of the inevitable end of the space-time of modern industrial civilization and humanity—and of a world that will continue to exist without us—shamans inspire us to respond to the climate crisis. When we accept that humanity will ultimately be destroyed by climate change events, shamans reason, we might mitigate our suffering by engaging in ethical, reciprocal, multispecies relationships to postpone the end of humanity, and to reimagine our existence in a post-human world.

**Mayfair Yang** (SAR President) and **Lisa Sideris** (ISSRNC President), Presiding

**5:00 – 7:00pm**

**ISSRNC & SAR Opening Reception** (Manzanita Quad)  
*Reception attendance is limited to those who registered in advance.*

# Conference Schedule

## Tuesday, June 24

**8:00am**

**Coffee** (1<sup>st</sup> Floor Corridor, University Center)

**8:00 – 11:00am**

**ISSRNC Conference Check In** (1<sup>st</sup> Floor Corridor, University Center)

### **Concurrent Session 1: 8:30 – 10:00am**

**Panel A** (State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **Infrastructure and ----**

According to anthropologist Kregg Hetherington, “across the humanities and social sciences, infrastructure is suddenly a buzz-word of the highest and most obnoxious order” (2019, 6). Despite Hetherington’s rather withering assessment, this conceptual turn is, in fact, proving highly useful in many fields in the environmental humanities. Inspired by the idea of borders, both material and conceptual, this roundtable therefore considers the utility of “infrastructure” for an emerging generation of studies of religion and nature. The discussants assembled in our roundtable all engage infrastructures in different ways, contributing to what might be considered an “inorganic” turn in studies of religion and ecology toward constructed systems that extract, stabilize, and develop natural elements for human ends. We consider how infrastructure scholars rethink the nature/culture divide by proposing that the natural environment is “the infrastructure of infrastructure.” How might infrastructure, as a conceptual category, trouble or transform studies of religion and nature?

- ◆ Evan Berry (Arizona State University)  
“Cars”
- ◆ Judith Brunton (Rice University)  
“Maps”
- ◆ J. Brent Crosson (University of Texas at Austin)  
“Dragons”
- ◆ Isaiah Ellis (Southern Methodist University)  
“Enchantment”
- ◆ Hillary Kaell (McGill University)  
“Risk”

# Conference Schedule

## **Panel B** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Ecopsychology, Solastalgia, and Meaning Making**

[Join via [Zoom](#) | Meeting ID: 971 7271 7404 | Passcode: 544751]

- ♦ Ryan Darr (Yale University)  
Eco-Grief and Mourning Across Borders
- ♦ Dakota Limon (California Institute of Integral Studies)  
Reconciling Human and Planetary Being: The Existential Role of Ecological Chaplaincy in the Climate Crisis
- ♦ Michael Nausner (Church of Sweden's Unit for Research and Analysis) **online**  
Resources for a Renewal of Theological Anthropology: Boundaries toward the More-than-Human as Creative Zones
- ♦ Matthäus Leidenfrost (Freie Universität Berlin)  
Decentering the Human: Myth as an Ambivalent Tool for Posthumanism
- ♦ **Moderator:** Ali Renna (Yale University)

## **Panel C** (Lobero Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Interrogating the Language and Character of Moral Exchange**

- ♦ Mark Larrimore (The New School)  
The Challenging Dignity of Trees: Contemporary Tree Enthusiasm as Barrier and Portal to Kin-Making in the Chthulucene
- ♦ Makoto Hunter (University of California, Santa Barbara)  
From "Inter-tropical Barbarians" to "Silicon Slopes": Mormons, Natives, Marital Borders, and Imagining Environmental Change in the American West
- ♦ Dominic Wilkins (Colorado College)  
Environmental Communication in Religiously-Affiliated Media Outlets: An Exploratory Study of the U.S. Catholic Church
- ♦ Colin Weaver (University of Chicago)  
Constructing the Repugnant Ecological Other: Christian Anti-Environmentalism and Conceptual Border Control through Negative Associations and Equivocation
- ♦ **Moderator:** Mark Peterson (University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee)



# Conference Schedule

**10:00 – 10:30am -----Coffee Break (1<sup>st</sup> Floor Corridor, University Center)-----**  
-

## **Concurrent Session 2: 10:30am – 12:00pm**

### **Panel A** (State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **Framing the Nature of the “Good” (and the “Good” in Nature) in Environmental Justice Research and Action**

The problem of defining and pursuing the “good”—articulated in myriad and at times conflicting ways by diverse religious traditions and political philosophies—is inadequately framed in sustainability science, which tends to reduce the “good” to a mere quantitative, measurable, and mathematical challenge. This seemingly objective framing elides the historical roots of sustainability science in western ways of knowing and eugenic logics that have legitimated regimes of extraction and exploitation which have harmed the lives of humans and other species. Panelists demonstrate the significant capabilities inherent to local forms of knowledge that are intimately grounded in—and seeking to be responsible to—particular places. As such, and in pursuit of the “good,” this panel contributes to the critical conversation of theory and interdisciplinary methodology being used to research cultural phenomena at work in urban spaces. This includes the migrant experience along with pressures of ongoing forms of displacement and disinheritance.

- ♦ Jason Sexton (University of California, Los Angeles)  
Accounting for Competing Theologies of Control: On the Sets of Assumptions and Narratives of Local Religious Actors
- ♦ Alesia Montgomery (University of California, Los Angeles)  
‘Creation before Creation’: Narratives of Environmental Struggle and Redemption
- ♦ Robert Cudd (University of California, Los Angeles)  
Solving Other People’s Problems?: ‘Neo-Developmentalism’ in Urban Sustainability Research and Policymaking
- ♦ **Respondent:** David Pellow (University of California, Santa Barbara)

# Conference Schedule

## **Panel B** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Porous Boundaries and Borders of Entangled Bodies: A Counterpoint Conversation**

[Join via [Zoom](#) | Meeting ID: 880 8913 4666 | Passcode: gDm2hZ]

One way to think about evolution on our planet is the migration of life through various terrains. Essential to this process are border crossings. In ecology, the boundaries between eco-systems are referred to as ecotones. These porous boundaries define evolutionary, ecological, embodied life. This is one reason Bruno Latour titled his posthumous book, *If We Lose the Earth, We Lose Our Souls* (2024). We are not ourselves without the planetary community that has led to the emergence of human bodies, and this is the same for all other life on the planet: we are various combinations of the exchanges of energy, materials, and information. This “entanglement” of life doesn’t necessarily lead to a healthy environmental ethic or some sort of biophilia. After all, it means we will also vanish as a species, and life as we know it now on the planet will be different in the future. Each embodied life is not just entangled and interconnected, but also a unique expression of a combination of things. What is our responsibility in such an interdependent context, but one that also requires “porous boundaries” for individual lives to persist? This round table will explore the “borderlands” and “porous boundaries” of life at multiple levels, reflecting on a set of common pre-circulated questions.

- ♦ Whitney Bauman (Florida International University)
- ♦ Greg Johnson (University of California, Santa Barbara)
- ♦ Kate Rigby (University of Cologne) **online**
- ♦ Kocku von Stuckrad (University of Groningen) **online**
- ♦ Carol Wayne White (Bucknell University)

## **Panel C** (Lobero Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **The Political Environment: Barriers and Opportunities for Environmental Action in Religious Communities** [Join via [Zoom](#) | Meeting ID: 613 948 1594 | Passcode: 249536]

There are many barriers to pro-environmental action. These barriers are experienced across all forms of political, social, economic, religious, and ideological identities, often in an interwoven nexus. For there to be an effective sustainability transition, action needs to be taken across all sectors of society, regardless of race, gender, religious, or political identity. Yet, while the environmental movement has made considerable headway in politically and religiously liberal communities, it is often met with suspicion, disdain, and outright rejection in politically and religiously conservative communities. This panel will explore the barriers and opportunities to environmental action that exist in faith communities, organized religious systems, faith-based educational institutions, and places of worship. In particular, but not limited to, panelists will discuss barriers and opportunities that exist in traditional communities that tend toward conservative praxis.

- ♦ Tanhum Yoreh (University of Toronto) and Maytal Lazarovic (University of Toronto)  
Barriers and Opportunities for Orthodox Environmental Action
- ♦ Jens Köhrsen (University of Basel, Switzerland) **online**  
The Limits of Religious Greening Processes: Results from a Mixed-Methods Study in Switzerland
- ♦ Robin Globus Veldman (Texas A&M University)  
“These People”: On the Limits of Empathy in Religious Environmental Fieldwork
- ♦ **Respondent:** Laurel Kearns (Drew University)

# Conference Schedule

----- Lunch 12:00 – 1:30pm (Carrillo Dining Commons) -----

## Concurrent Session 3: 1:30 – 3:00pm

### **Panel A** (State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **Transgressing Boundaries, Transforming Pedagogies: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Religion, Migration, and Climate Change**

This roundtable session responds to the conference's call to critically assess and rethink how our field imagines, controls, and defends borders and boundaries. By focusing on the urgent need for interdisciplinary approaches to the study of religion, migration, and climate change, we aim to challenge traditional academic silos and propose creative alternatives to address the climate crisis. This roundtable addresses explores how transgressing disciplinary boundaries can lead to more effective conversations with colleagues and students. Drawing from their diverse research and teaching experiences, our panelists will address the following overarching questions: "How can we, as interdisciplinary scholars of religion, nature, and culture, bridge epistemological and disciplinary borders to generate innovative pedagogical and research approaches that address the climate crisis? How can we contribute to re-imagining and restoring humanity's relationship with the land, cultivating more just and sustainable relationships, and learning from diverse cultural perspectives on how to live in balance with the land?"

- ♦ Amanda Baugh (California State University, Northridge)
- ♦ Elisha Chi (University of California, Santa Barbara)
- ♦ Elaine Nogueira-Godsey (Drew University)
- ♦ Sarah Pike (California State University, Chico)

### **Panel B** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **Human and Non-Human Persons**

- ♦ Braden Molhoek (Graduate Theological Union)  
All About Us: Conservation, Anthropocentrism, and Genetic Technologies
- ♦ Chantal Noa Forbes (California Institute of Integral Studies)  
Transgressing Coloniality: Tracking Borders, Boundaries, and Wildlife in Southern Africa
- ♦ Jacqueline Shaw (Boston University)  
Animal Conservation Law, Bowhead Whaling, and the Alaskan Iñupiat
- ♦ Lisa Sideris (University of California, Santa Barbara)  
Avatars of the Soul: Butterfly Migration in an Age of Extinction
- ♦ **Moderator:** Whitney Bauman (Florida International University)



# Conference Schedule

## **Panel C** (Lobero Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Interdisciplinary Philosophical Approaches to Borders**

What grounds us? What do we assume about the ground? Our philosophical and religious assumptions about the earth shape our thinking: Modern frames of the earth-as-resource extract coal, hydropower, and solar energy; land understood as kin changes the way we interact with non-human life, and ecologies shape identities, notable especially as we cross borders. What relationships do we make with the land and how do those connections take part in our subjectivity? This panel considers the metaphor of the ground: what we stand on and what roots our reasons, where we grow our food and thought, where we find our footing and what stabilizes our perspective. As we move to new places or adapt to the changing earth, what grounds do we leave behind? How do our grounds shift as we move? And do we need new grounds, physical or logical, or for liberatory ideas?

- ♦ Miriam Hamburger (University of California, Santa Barbara)  
Land, Self, Others
- ♦ Mitchel Hickman (University of California, Santa Barbara)  
The Nature Industry: Adorno, Aesthetics, and Autecology
- ♦ Patrick Tugwell (University of California, Santa Barbara)  
Rags to Riches to Borders: Self-Help Religion and the Construction of American Exclusion
- ♦ **Moderator:** Shakir Stephen (University of California, Santa Barbara)

-----3:00 – 3:30pm Break-----

## **Concurrent Session 4: 3:30 – 5:30pm**

### **Panel A** (State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **Religion, Nature, and Culture Across Borders: An Immersive Experience**

This special session offers two sonically and visually rich presentations.

- ♦ Bron Taylor (University of Florida)  
Curating Nature Spiritualities and Conservation at Art and Science Museums Around the World

Bron Taylor illuminates how museum curators in diverse countries and cultural contexts increasingly fuse art, science, and nature spirituality to promote pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors. Curators and their collaborators are meaning-makers, providing spiritually inflected worldviews that are especially appealing for those for whom the world's predominant religions do not provide compelling answers to the questions raised by the existence of existence. His presentation will provide a visceral feel for the intentions of the curators and the experiences of their visitors.

# Conference Schedule

- ◆ Willis Jenkins (University of Virginia)  
Designing Arts-based Exercises for (Contemplative) Community Engagement

This interactive session is organized around four ecoacoustic compositions designed to facilitate community engagement with coastal change on Virginia's Eastern Shore. The session explores theoretical questions about roles for arts and humanities in value formation by playing each piece and then explaining how, working with faculty in sciences and community representatives, we designed immersive music made with sonified data for the purpose of inviting values-based community reflection on coastal relations. The session's goal is (1) to open conversation on roles of religion-fluent scholarship in arts/humanities/sciences collaborations and (2) to consider theoretical questions to ask from community-engaged work on relations of cultural and environmental change.

## **Panel B** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Community Engaged Climate Action at the Wildland-Urban Interface**

Responding to the climate crisis requires interdisciplinary approaches that question traditional methodologies of conducting research. This includes challenging dominant Western academic frameworks as the sole arbiters of knowledge production, what has been referred to as the "god trick" of so-called objective research. Instead we intentionally collaborate with communities in research, recognizing the pluriverse of knowledge production that challenges epistemological hegemony, and pushes back against academic extraction in favor of reciprocal modalities of learning and exchange. This session follows such approaches and explores the role of public facing scholarship and community-engaged research for climate action. Participants will discuss their research in relation to religion, spirituality and climate action, their collaborative work with community partners, and traversing the boundaries that often exist between academic research and community engagement.

- ◆ Clara Bergamini (University of California, Santa Cruz)
- ◆ Alejandra Cano (University of California, Davis)
- ◆ Marianna Davidson (University of California, Irvine)
- ◆ Matthew Hartman (University of California, Humanities Research Institute)
- ◆ Grecia Perez (University of California, Riverside)
- ◆ Elane Westfaul (University of California, Irvine)

## **Panel C** (Lobero Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Eros, Thanatos, or Something Else Entirely?: Teaching to 2+C While Maintaining Self-Care and Student-Care**

This session creates a vulnerable space where participants can safely "hang out" and be human together, talking about the passions, concerns, challenges, opportunities, and conundrums that drive and/or impact their teaching, with the context of this "hanging out" the realities of a 2°C warmer planet by 2050 CE, give or take. Our intention is that this session provides an opportunity to reflect on our goals for the courses we teach, the public presentations we offer, our research and publications, collaborative work we may undertake, and how we navigate the various tensions that inevitably emerge in an educational setting built on competition, inflexibility, and the lacking of a coherent vision of what education on a 2°C planet will even resemble.

- ◆ Todd LeVasseur (College of Charleston)
- ◆ Sarah Robinson (Independent Scholar)

# Conference Schedule

## Wednesday, June 25

**8:00am**                      **Coffee** (1<sup>st</sup> Floor Corridor, University Center)

**8:30 – 9:45am**           **Closed Session** (Goleta Valley Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Religion, Ecology, and Environmental Ethics: A Case Study for the Applied Humanities Working Group**

Elizabeth Allison, Evan Berry, Christopher Chapple, Calynn Dowler, Ariel Mayse ([online](#)), Jonnie Schnytzer

## **Concurrent Session 5: 8:30 – 10:00am**

### **Panel A** (State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **Poetics of Home: Studies in Self-Understanding in Ecosocial Place**

Join via [Zoom](#) | Meeting ID 876 5154 2764 | Passcode 531392

In research on migration, colonization, and hybrid (dis)located identities in specific ecologies, this panel points to meaningful places and poetics, which touch a nerve on displacement and (re)emplacement in U.S., European, Latin American, and African contexts. Themes of absence and longing emerge—both among scholar-artists and their place-based case studies—which reflect changing self-understandings informed by a changing climate, personal and political definitions of home, and harmful histories, including colonization. Themes of home, and loss of home, shape reflections on solistalgia, a term encapsulating desire for a place that exists in a glorified past, where poetics become invitations to hear, see, laugh, and feel heartbreak, encountering ecosocial placemaking. Through a reflection across distinct territories of meaning, through studies in asylum-seeking, safe harbor, and contested and reclaimed home, this panel surfaces stories of longing amid political and climate-related change across interconnected, distinct, and contested places called home.

- ♦ Sarah Robinson (Independent Scholar)
- ♦ Katherine Kunz (Graduate Theological Union)
- ♦ Lilian Dube (University of San Francisco) - [online](#)
- ♦ Theresa Yugar (California State University, Los Angeles | Hispanic Theological Initiative)



# Conference Schedule

## **Panel B** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Pilgrims in the Wilderness: Mapping Meaning**

- ♦ Juan Campo (University of California, Santa Barbara)  
Comparing the Ecological Impacts of Modern Mass Pilgrimages: The Hajj and Sabarimala
- ♦ Samuel Cole-Osborn (Boston University)  
Ecosemiotics of Pilgrimage: Tracing Meaning with Mary Magdalene in France
- ♦ Kim Fromkin (Harvard University)  
Wild Pilgrimage: Reimagining the Sacred in a Secularizing World
- ♦ Mai Lootah (Rice University) **online**  
Edges of the Known World: Peripheries, Creatures, and Supraterrestrial Lines in Premodern Ottoman Cartography
- ♦ **Moderating: Mary Keller**

## **Panel C** (Lobero Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **From Kingdom to Kin-dom: Emergent Theologies and Practices of Kinship**

[Join via [Zoom](#) | Meeting ID: 915 2040 1115 | Passcode: 410405]

This panel consists of presentations on emerging efforts to encourage Christians toward an increasing openness to concepts of human kinship with the non-human world. Many strands of Christianity, both historical and contemporary, are characterized by longstanding themes of other-worldliness, wherein one's spiritual life is directed "upward" toward salvation and heaven or involves a significant distancing from "this world" because it is seen as fallen, sinful, and filled with temptation. But an emphasis on otherworldliness, with its attendant "ecological suspicion," is not a defining feature of all Christian communities. Among more liberal or progressive churches and religious organizations that embrace an ecological perspective, other conceptual strategies and practices are growing. The growth in the use of kinship language/concepts takes theological imagination (and action) into a different realm. The idea that humans need to value this world, and see the sacred in it, often leads to an understanding of the kinship of all of creation, with particular emphasis on human and other-than-human animals sharing identity and status as God's creatures.

Ryan Darr (Yale University)  
Laurel Kearns (Drew University)  
Julius Malin (University of Basel) **online**

**10:00– 10:30am -----Coffee Break (1<sup>st</sup> Floor Corridor, University Center)-----**

# Conference Schedule

**10:00 – 11:30am Closed Session** (1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center, Goleta Valley Room)

## **Publicly Engaged Scholarship in the Study of Religion Unit**

Rebecca Bartel, Lucas Johnston, Victoria Machado, Joseph Witt

## **Concurrent Session 6: 10:30am – 12:00pm**

### **Panel A** (State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **Developing a Model for Applied Environmental Humanities**

[Join via [Zoom](#) | Meeting ID: 949 7900 3153 | Passcode: 743528]

The Religion, Ecology and Environmental Ethics: A Case Study for the Applied Humanities Working Group (Working Group) is now in its second year of exploring how the primary sources of religious traditions, and the conversation with them, can help us navigate the “wicked” ethical issues and concrete problems presented by climate change. The Working Group members will share findings and results from the two years of meetings devoted to developing models and methods of applying the environmental humanities to environmental studies within academia, and to real-world climate and environmental dilemmas beyond academia. Discussion will focus on what religion, the environmental humanities, and the qualitative social sciences can contribute to analyses of climate and environmental dilemmas, and how to ensure these contributions can be best received. Of particular interest is attention to difference and diversity – which humanistic specializations seek to address, and which often get flattened in applied climate and environmental initiatives. Our discussion will therefore focus on re-invigorating interdisciplinary approaches to climate and environment through an engagement with diverse religious worldviews and practices.

- ♦ Elizabeth Allison (California Institute of Integral Studies)
- ♦ Evan Berry (Arizona State University)
- ♦ Christopher Chapple (Loyola Marymount University)
- ♦ Calynn Dowler (Vanderbilt University)
- ♦ Ariel Mayse (Stanford University) **online**
- ♦ Jonnie Schnytzer (Bar-Ilan University)

# Conference Schedule

## **Panel B** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **We are Shit: Bodies, Borders, and Nutrient Migration through the Lens of Critical Environmental Justice**

This roundtable will focus on a significantly understudied topic—human excreta. Through it we will provide a critical, interdisciplinary inquiry into the relationships among human beings and their diverse cultures (including bacterial cultures), environments, and religious beliefs and practices. Using Critical Environmental Justice (CEJ) as a framework for the discussion, the participants will think critically about what is usually taboo – poo. Shit is a literal substance requiring collection, transport, processing, and disposal or reintegration. Shit is also a sliding signifier and metaphor in many societies—referencing that which is low, distasteful, reviled, angering, or at other times, meaning something awesome. The politics of expendability (the fourth pillar of CEJ) connects both the literal and the metaphorical levels of ‘societal shit’ in an analysis of how "power flows through the multi-species relationships that make up life on earth" (Pellow 2018).

- ♦ Sarah Brownell (Rochester Institute of Technology)
- ♦ Alisa Keeseey (UC Santa Cruz)
- ♦ Sarah Nahar (Syracuse University)
- ♦ David Pellow (University of California, Santa Barbara)

## **Panel C** (Lobero Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Rigid and Porous Boundaries of Nationalism**

- ♦ Benjamin Schmidt (Rachel Carson Center, LMU Munich)  
Climate Change as Never-ending Ernstfall and the Limits of Solidarity: Planetary Boundaries in a World of National Borders
- ♦ Noémie Moutel (Angers University) and Maria Nita (Open University)  
Spiritual Dimensions in Climate Activist vs. Ethno-nationalistic Responses to Migration in Europe: A Look at France, the UK, and Romania
- ♦ Chris Crews (Denison University)  
The Rise of Christian Nationalism: Race, Identity, and Extremism in Contemporary Politics
- ♦ Margaux Crider Robinson (University of Kentucky)  
The Christian Moralism of Malthusian Populationism: A Retrieval and Critique
- ♦ **Moderator:** Robin Globus Veldman (Texas A&M University)

-----**Lunch 12:00 – 1:30pm (Carrillo Dining Commons)**-----

***JSRNC Editorial Board Meeting & Luncheon*** (Closed Meeting)  
(1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center, Goleta Valley Room)



# Conference Schedule

## Concurrent Session 7: 1:30 – 3:00pm

### **Panel A** (State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

**Nuclear Hauntings and Nuclear Afterlives: Legacies of Security and Violence in a Climate Insecure World** [Join via [Zoom](#) | Meeting ID: 838 0282 0762 | Passcode: 8555666]

This panel addresses the boundary-breaking, trans-temporal, and transgressive consequences of nuclear technologies with a focus on the theological, material, and ethical claims made by a diverse group of anti-nuclear thinkers and activists from the mid-twentieth century to the present. We discuss the ethical implications of nuclear technologies amid the challenges posed by climate change and growing calls for a global energy transition. Together, the panelists consider religious understandings and responses to nuclear weapons and energy, offering a robust theoretical understanding of debates about the transnational environmental and societal impacts of nuclear technologies. They raise important questions about cultural memory, the legacies of extraction and weapons testing on colonized lands, and the long-term implications of nuclear technologies on human and non-human organisms and environmental systems.

- ♦ Carleigh Berooint (Harvard University)
- ♦ Jacques Linder (Villanova University)
- ♦ Amanda Nichols (University of California, Santa Barbara)
- ♦ Adam Stone (Rutgers University)

### **Panel B** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **Fluid Dynamics: Wading in Dangerous Waters**

- ♦ Todd LeVasseur (College of Charleston)  
Surfing Down the 2C Wave: How to Paddle Without a Compass into Environs New and Scary
- ♦ Victoria Machado (Rollins College)  
Piety and Politics: The Fluidity of Florida's Waters from Baptisms and Burials to Debate and Denial
- ♦ Noel Salmond (Carleton University)  
River as Unifier, River as Boundary, River as Person: Rivers in Confluence at Canada's Capital City
- ♦ Georgina Drew (University of Adelaide)  
Morality Tales and Subterranean Migrations: Connecting Serpentine 'Naga' Encounters with Narratives of Social Decline and Resource Precarity
- ♦ **Moderator:** Sarah Nahar (Syracuse University)

# Conference Schedule

## **Panel C** (Lobero Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Cyberspirituality, Utopias, and Technology**

- ♦ Sarah McFarland Taylor (Northwestern University)  
The Digital Dilemma of Cottagecore's Mindful Nature Spirituality: A Case Study in Rejecting Not Amplifying the Social Media Siren's Call
- ♦ Yves Mühlematter (University of Zurich)  
Cybertopias and the Sacred: Utopian Futures, Spirituality, and the Tech-Driven Narratives of Transformation
- ♦ Evander Price (Chinese University of Hong Kong)  
There Is No Such Thing as a "Natural" Disaster
- ♦ **Moderator:** Ali Renna (Yale University)

## **ISSRNC Keynote Address: 3:30 – 5:00pm** (Bren Hall, Room 1414, Courtyard Entrance)

***Robert Albro***  
(American University)

### **Tangible Signs and Intangible Mysteries: Policy Responses to Religious Responses to Climate Displacement**

Multilateral and normative frameworks shaping the world's response to the climate crisis dedicate relatively little attention to its impacts on the cultural and religious worlds of those affected by climate change. But policy matters, not only because it conditions collective responses and resource allocations but also because it is a political and governance mechanism for making some priorities visible and others invisible. Drawing on a series of projects carried out at American University's Center for Latin American and Latino Studies over the previous decade, here I describe a range of individual and community responses to climate displacement, emphasizing the world-building possibilities of culture-religion-cosmology, and contrast these to current multilateral policy making regarding displacement, in order to highlight how religious world building is largely erased as a component of the experience of those displaced. This raises broader questions about how religion is accounted for, or not, as part of climate policy more generally.

- ♦ **Lucas Johnston** (ISSRNC President Elect), Presiding

# Conference Schedule

**6:00 – 9:00pm**      **Conference Banquet and Awards Ceremony**  
(Terrace, The Club & Guest House)  
*Banquet attendance is limited to those who registered in advance.*

**6:00pm**              **Drinks on the Terrace**

**6:30pm**              **Dinner**

**8:00pm**              **Awards Program**

**Welcome Remarks**  
**Lisa Sideris, ISSRNC President**

**Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture**  
**Joseph Witt, Editor-In-Chief**

**Graduate Student Paper Award**  
**Presented by Mary Keller, ISSRNC Member at Large**

**Lifetime Achievement Award**  
**Presented by Bron Taylor, ISSRNC Founder**

**Announcements and Closing Remarks**  
**Lucas Johnston, ISSRNC President Elect**



# Conference Schedule

## **Thursday, June 26**

**8:00am**

**Coffee** (1<sup>st</sup> Floor Corridor, University Center)

### **Concurrent Session 8: 8:30 – 10:00am**

**Panel A** (State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **The Greening of Religion Hypothesis Revisited: Roundtable Session**

The conveners of this session spent four years reading every social scientific study of religion and environmental behavior we could find (over 7000 studies), while meeting regularly to discuss and categorize patterns discernible in these studies. In 2016 our analysis of what we called “The Greening of Religion Hypothesis” was published. It was at that time the most comprehensive review of such research ever published and, given the growing number of such studies that have been subsequently studied, this will likely remain the case. We have, this said, kept track of relevant, subsequent studies, which convince us that our findings a decade ago have held up well. In the session, the conveners will update their assessments based on relevant, subsequently-published research, and then invite three additional researchers, all of whom have contributed their own significant studies to share their views and where it coheres with, and challenges, our earlier findings and current perceptions about what some have suggested is a significant and emerging greening of the world’s predominant religions.

- ♦ Laurel Kearns (Drew University)
- ♦ Bron Taylor (University of Florida)
- ♦ Robin Globus Veldman (Texas A&M University)
- ♦ Dominic Wilkins (Colorado College)
- ♦ Bernard Zaleha (Independent Scholar)

# Conference Schedule

## **Panel B** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Borders, Boundaries, Mobilizing: Discussions on Ivan Illich and Energy Democracy**

The panel will function as an interdisciplinary conversation between energy humanities and religious studies with Ivan Illich's work as nexus point. As the energy humanities gather interest, attention has turned to the ways social critic, theologian, and former Roman Catholic priest Ivan Illich anticipated the analysis of energy cultures. Published first in 1972, his essay "Energy and Equity," for example, claims that technology can be imbued with social values such that as a technology becomes dominant, so too do the values that have infused its invention. Illich also anticipated by decades the current conclusions of ecological economists and energy analysts like Vaclav Smil that unlimited increases in access to energy do not lead to ever increasing human wellbeing; after a certain threshold, "more energy means less equity." Panelists and our respondent will reflect on Illich's thought, its religious influences, its significance for current energy humanities, and its own limitations in the pursuit of energy justice.

- ♦ J. Brent Crosson (University of Texas at Austin)  
"Energy Slaves"? Caribbean Petro-States and the Reframing of Climate Crisis
- ♦ Terra Rowe (University of North Texas)  
Convivial Technologies and Energies of Incompletion
- ♦ Caleb Wellum (University of Toronto, Mississauga)  
The Power of Tools of Conviviality in an Age of Climate Crisis
- ♦ Respondent: Mario Orospe Hernandez (Arizona State University)

## **Panel C** (Lobero Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Back to the Future: Narratives of Tradition and Innovation**

- ♦ Timothy Stacey (Utrecht University) **online**  
Ecology and Belonging: In Search of a Progressive Narrative
- ♦ Sara Moussalli (American University of Beirut)  
*Ṣalāḥ versus Fasād*: Development of Environmental Interpretation in Modern *Tafsir*
- ♦ Stephanie Pincetl (University of California, Los Angeles)  
How We Lost the Holocene, Some Thoughts About a Different Future
- ♦ Andi Alfian (University of North Texas)  
Decolonizing Human-Animal Relations in Indonesia: Insights from Bara, Cindakko, and Tobalo Indigenous People of Sulawesi
- ♦ **Moderator:** Lucas Johnston (Wake Forest University)

# Conference Schedule

**10:00– 10:30am -----Coffee Break (1<sup>st</sup> Floor Corridor, University Center)-----**

**JSRNC Meet and Greet** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

*Interested in learning more about the Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture? Grab your coffee and come meet the members of the JSRNC editorial team. Find out more about the journal, what kind of work we publish, and how you can get involved! Coffee Break sponsored by Equinox Publishing.*

## **Plenary Session: 10:30 – 11:30am**

(1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center, State Street Room)

### **A Conversation with Catherine L. Albanese**

Terra Rowe (University of North Texas)

Bron Taylor (University of Florida)

**-----Lunch 11:30am – 1:00pm (Carrillo Dining Commons)-----**

## **Concurrent Session 9: 1:00 – 2:30pm**

**Panel A** (State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Troubling the Religious, Secular, and Scientific Boundaries in Human-Environment Interaction**

This panel gathers four papers that grapple with the distinction between religious and other forms of knowledge and practice, as related to ecological contexts and dilemmas, exploring epistemological boundaries and borders that validate or invalidate, empower or provincialize sustainability pathways. Although the study of religion evolved significantly since its origins in the colonial project, its foundational hierarchical, progressivist, univocal, and linear assumptions continue to prevail, especially beyond the confines of the academy. In other words, practitioners, policymakers, journalists and biophysical scientists, primarily in the global north, continue to assume that “beliefs,” “superstitions,” and “rituals” related to ecology are local, historically contingent, and lack the kind of universality claimed by science and scientific authority. This hierarchical bifurcation of ecological knowledge continues to shape public conversations about climate change and environmental challenges.

- ♦ Calynn Dowler (Vanderbilt University)  
Contesting Climate & Migration Orthodoxy in India’s Sundarbans
- ♦ Elizabeth Allison (California Institute of Integral Studies)  
Thawing Icy Chasms: Reconsidering the Sacred and Secular to Challenge Climate Narratives and Power Relations
- ♦ Mario Orospe Hernandez (Arizona State University)  
Cosmotekhnics in the Andes: Rethinking the Borders of Religion and Technology
- ♦ Moderator: Evan Berry (Arizona State University)  
The Resource Curse as Extractivist Theology



# Conference Schedule

## **Panel B** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Ethnic and Ethical Others and Landscapes of Power**

- ♦ Joseph Witt (University of Tennessee)  
Here's to the Long Haul: Dark Green Religion and Planetary Thinking in Appalachian Environmental Movements
- ♦ Joyce Konigsburg (DePaul University)  
Ethical Responses Supporting Environmental Migrants at the Borders of Society
- ♦ Chai Ning (Hunan University of Science and Technology)  
A Study on the Narrative Restoration of Cultural Heritage along the Westward Migration Ancient Road of Xibe Minority in China
- ♦ Rebecca Bartell (San Diego State University)  
Border Religion: Carceral Belief and the Locus of Imprisonment
- ♦ **Moderator:** Chris Crews (Denison University)

## **Panel C** (Lobero Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Climate Fictions and Resistance**

- ♦ Susie Wu (University of California, Santa Barbara)  
Becoming with Camels: Animal Cartography, Nomadic Science, and Climate (In)justice in Li Ruijun's River Road
- ♦ Meg Mercury (Graduate Theological Union)  
Pure Weirdness: On Time Boundaries and Borders and the Novel in the 'Anthropocene'
- ♦ Evander Price (Chinese University of Hong Kong)  
Sili-Fi: On Climate Fiction & Silicon Valley
- ♦ Devin Zuber (Graduate Theological Union)  
Cosmic Cartographies: Deterritorializing Borders in Native American Eco-fictions  
Devin Zuber (Graduate Theological Union)
- ♦ **Moderator:** Sarah Nahar (Syracuse University)

-----2:30 – 3:00 Break-----

# Conference Schedule

## Concurrent Session 10: 3:00-4:30

### **Panel A** (State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **Decolonizing Geographic and Biological Liminal Spaces**

- ♦ Sam Harrelson (California Institute of Integral Studies)  
Re-envisioning Boundaries: Ecological Theology, Migration, and the Sacredness of the Non-Human in the Context of Climate Change
- ♦ Alice Hill-Woods (University of Bristol)  
Speculative Matrescence: Relational Thinking at Maternal Thresholds
- ♦ Mary Keller (University of Wyoming)  
Spirited Migrations
- ♦ Wendy Wiseman (University of California, Santa Barbara)  
From “Contact Zone” to Solidarity?: (Neo-)Animism and Science in a World on Fire
- ♦ **Moderator:** Elaine Nogueira-Godsey (Drew University)

### **Panel B** (SB Harbor Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

#### **Biocultural Contestations in Island Geographies**

- ♦ Mumtaz Alam (Fiji National University)  
Navigating Contested Territories: Indigenous Resistance and Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Challenging Settler Boundaries in Colonial and Post-Colonial Fiji
- ♦ Stooti Baruah (Jawaharlal Nehru University)  
Performing Vaishnavism: A Critical Study of Ecology and Religion on Majuli Island
- ♦ Natsuki Chubachi (Kyoto University)  
The Multifaceted Carbon Economy in Indonesian Waqf Forests
- ♦ Kunal Gounder (Fiji National University)  
Social Impacts of Climate Change on the Coastal Communities: Case Study Togoru Village, Fiji
- ♦ **Moderator:** Sarah Robinson (Independent Scholar)

# Conference Schedule

## **Panel C** (Lobero Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

### **Ecology, Learning, and Practice in Context**

- ♦ Amy Bohorquez (California Institute of Integral Studies)  
Decolonizing College Science Courses Through Contemplative Practices
- ♦ Katherine Usik (University of Florida)  
The Heavens and the Farm: Astrology and the Agricultural Calendars of Britain and America
- ♦ Yael Dansac (Université libre de Bruxelles)  
Sacred Nature as Common Ground? Interfaith Synergies at *Laudato Si'* Initiatives in Belgium
- ♦ Yves Mühlematter (University of Zurich)  
Sustainability and Spirituality Among Young Adults in Switzerland  
[Co-authored with Christian Hoeger (University of Lucern), Christian Ratze (RWTH Aachen University), and Regula Keiser (University of Lucern)]
- ♦ **Moderator:** Sarah Pike (California State University, Chico)

## **Conference Closing Remarks and Full Members Meeting**

**4:45 – 5:30pm**

(State Street Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, University Center)

Conference Thanks and ISSRNC Transitions  
Lisa Sideris, Presiding

2025 ISSRNC Election Results and Board Introductions  
Lucas Johnston, ISSRNC President (2025—2027)

Statement from the *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture*  
Joseph Witt, *JSRNC* Editor in Chief

Announcements  
Amanda Nichols, ISSRNC Treasurer



# Conference Field Trip

## Santa Cruz Island



To conclude the 2023 *Crossing Borders: Transgressing Boundaries: Religion, Migration, and Climate Change* conference, ISSRNC will facilitate a group field trip to Santa Cruz Island, which is part of Channel Islands National Park. Known as *Limuw* (“in the sea”) by the Chumash people who inhabited the island for over 10,000 years, Santa Cruz is rich in cultural history and ecological diversity. Located approximately 20 miles from Ventura, Santa Cruz is California’s largest island. It is home to more than sixty endemic plant and animal species, including the Silver Lotus, Island Scrub Jay, and Island Fox, and has more than 3,000 historically significant archeological sites. Since the late 1970s, the Nature Conservancy has been working to protect native species and preserve the island’s unique biodiversity.

Field trip participants will travel by bus to Ventura Harbor, and then travel to the Island by boat. Once there, they will have the opportunity to meet with and learn from [Matthew Vestuto](#), the Tribal Chairman of the Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians (Chumash). Vestuto has been an outspoken proponent of preserving the official language of his tribe (Mitsqanaqan) and serves on the board of advisors for the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (AICLS). He is also the recipient of a 2024 Luce Indigenous Knowledge Fellowship and is collaborating with other tribe members and scholars to revitalize the language and cultivate language-learning opportunities. After the conversation with Vestuto, participants will have lunch and then will have a few hours to explore the island before returning to the harbor and back to campus.



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Professor of Philosophy, University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee

# ISSRNC Mission & Prospects

The International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture (ISSRNC) is an international and interdisciplinary community of scholars, founded in 2006, who are engaged in critical inquiry into the relationships among human beings, their diverse cultures and environments, and their religious beliefs and practices.

The ISSRNC facilitates scholarly collaboration and research and disseminates research findings through workshops, lectures, conferences and its affiliated, peer reviewed, Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture, which has been published quarterly since 2007. In the coming years, the society intends to continue to grow our social media platforms to better connect with our members and to develop additional ways to make our research and conferences digitally accessible.

The ISSRNC was organized and is governed through democratic processes. Our Board of Directors cordially invites all individuals interested in the scholarly investigation of religion, nature, and culture to join and to participate in ISSRNC activities. Members not only enjoy a growing number of benefits, including free online access to the Society's journal; they also increase the profile and strength of this important and growing scholarly field and help create further opportunities for religion and nature scholars.

After its inception in 2006 the society grew steadily, reaching 215 members by the end of 2008. Although annual membership declined after that due to the global economic crisis, society numbers grew dramatically in 2016 and 2017. They dipped again during the first two years of the Covid-19 pandemic but are now approaching our previous high point. We urge conference participants and current members to strengthen the ISSRNC by renewing their memberships, donating to the society when possible, submitting their scholarly work for consideration by the reviewers and editors of the *JSRNC*, and in other creative ways by offering talents that could advance the mission of the society.

The ISSRNC is recognized by the United States Internal Revenue Service as a 501 (c)(3) charitable / educational organization.





# Conferences 2006 - 2025

## **2006 Exploring Religion, Nature and Culture**

In collaboration and with the support of University of Florida,  
Gainesville, Florida, USA

## **2008 Re-enchantment of Nature Across Disciplines: Critical Intersections of Science, Ethics and Metaphysics**

In collaboration and with the support of CIGA-UNAM, Morelia, and with  
Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, Mexico

## **2009 Religion, Nature and Progress**

In collaboration and with the support of University of Amsterdam,  
Amsterdam, Netherlands

## **2010 Living on the Edge**

In collaboration and with the support of the University of Western  
Australia, Perth, Australia

## **2011 Religion, Nature and Art**

Co-sponsored with the Ethnological Museum of the Vatican Museums,  
Vatican City State

## **2012 Nature and the Popular Imagination**

In collaboration and with the support of Pepperdine University, Malibu, California, USA

## **2016 Religion, Science and the Future**

In collaboration and with the support of University of Florida,  
Gainesville, Florida, USA

## **2017 Mountains and Sacred Landscapes**

Co-sponsored by the India China Institute, The New School, New York City, USA

## **2019 Religion / Water / Climate: Changing Cultures and Landscapes**

In collaboration and with the support of University College Cork, Ireland

## **2021 Religion and Environment: Relations and Relationality**

Hosted virtually by Arizona State University's Julie Ann  
Wrigley Global Futures Lab

## **2023 After Earth? Religion and Technology on a Changing Planet**

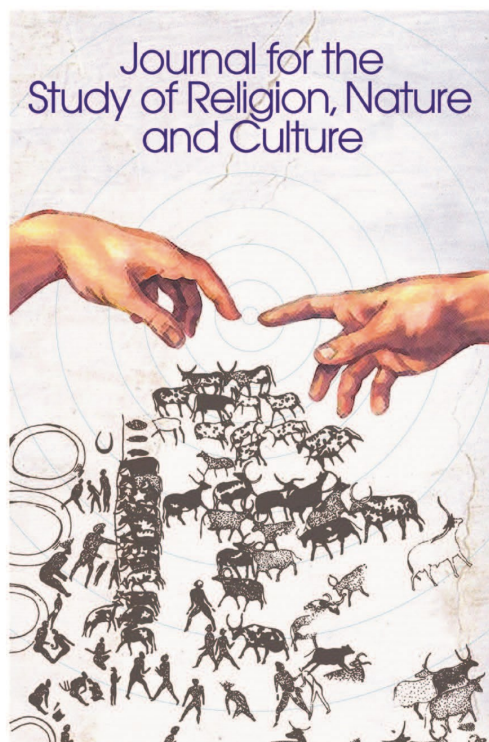
In collaboration and with the support of Arizona State  
University, Tempe, Arizona, USA

## **2025 Crossing Borders, Transgressing Boundaries: Religion, Migration, and Climate Change**

University of California, Santa Barbara



# Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture



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**Journal of Religion, Nature and Culture** explores, through the social and natural sciences, the complex relationships among human beings, their diverse 'religions' and the earth's living systems, while providing a venue for analysis and debate over what constitutes an ethically appropriate relationship between our own species and the environments we inhabit.

The journal is the official journal of the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture. Members qualify for a membership discount on subscriptions to the journal. To join please visit the Society website at [religionandnature.com](http://religionandnature.com)

#### Types of Articles and Special Issues

##### *Social Scientific and Cultural Studies*

Qualitative or quantitative analyses spotlighting the religion variable in human/environment relations. Examples include:

- Research grounded in cultural studies, ecological anthropology; environmental history, cultural geography, sociology, political science; historical ecology; and social movement theory.
- Analyses of the relationships between nature-related religious perceptions and values and human behaviors that impact nature, including the consumption of natural resources, breeding and fertility rates, lifestyle and livelihood choices, and social organization and forms of political mobilization.
- Analyses of the role of nature-related religion in environmental degradation, protection or restoration; or in precipitating or exacerbating social conflict, or in ameliorating such conflict.

##### *Natural Science Studies*

Research exploring through any branch of the natural sciences the connections between humans and the living systems upon which they depend. Examples include:

- Research grounded in cognitive science or evolutionary biology.
- Analyses of theories that purport to reveal the natural, evolutionary roots of religious and ethical beliefs, values and behaviors, such as "sociobiology."

- Analyses of the role of natural science in religious thought and behavior, such as those exploring how scientific narratives and cosmologies are being integrated into religious belief systems, and how environmental "conservation sciences" can assume a religious dimension in their formulation and practice.
- Critical reflections on the theoretical, philosophical, practical aspects of ecological science for religious traditions and ethical debates.

##### *Constructive and Normative Studies*

Religious and ethical perspectives on human obligations to ecosystems and other living things. Examples include:

- Research rooted in religious and philosophical investigations of a traditions understanding of what constitutes the proper relationships between human beings (and their social structures) and the Earth's living systems.
- Analyses or articulation of ethical arguments from one or more religious perspectives, including "world religions," "nature religions," "new religious movements," "lived religion," and so on. Such thematic issues and articles may explore any religious form of nature-related spirituality.
- Perspectives on and debates engaging postmodern theory and the "social construction of nature;" and related to domestic and international law, political philosophies, and public policies.

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