



University of  
Lethbridge

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & RELIGION  
STUDENT CONFERENCE  
APRIL 27, 2024

Oki, and welcome to the University of Lethbridge. Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.

Welcome to our local University of Lethbridge students, and big thank you to our friends from the University of Calgary and the University of Exeter for traveling here to participate today!

PROGRAM & SPEAKER DETAILS

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8:00 -  
9:00 AM

Light Breakfast

AH175

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9:00  
AM

Session 1 Starting from where we are....  
James Linville Presiding

AH116

9:00-9:30

Alexander Kwan

Unveiling Lethbridge: The Chinese National League and its effect on the Lethbridge Chinese during the 1900s

9:30-10:00

Jessica Mustard

Quilts and Quilting: Southern Alberta Women's Oral History

10:00-10:30

Edi Bates

Gendering of Indigenous Children in the Indian Residential School system

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10:30  
AM

Coffee break - 15 min

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10:45  
AM

Session 2 Studies in Cruelty  
James Linville Presiding

AH116

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|---------------|------------------|--|
| 10:45- 11:15  | Analise Bexte    | A Living Nightmare of Pain: The Violation of Suffragette Bodies Through Force Feeling in Edwardian Britain |
| 11:15-11:45   | Samantha Steynen | The Jewish Woman's Experience in the Holocaust   |
| 11:45 - 12:15 | Meaghan Primeau  | Contemporary Antisemitism: A Historical Continuum and Modern Manifestations                                |

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12:15  
PM

Lunch break - 45 min

AH175

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1:00  
PM

Session 3A Sufism  
Atif Khalil Presiding

AH116

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|-----------|-----------------|--|
| 1:00-1:30 | Josi Kerber     | The Oneness of Being in the Islamic Mysticism of Ibn al-'Arabi (d. 1240)         |
| 1:30-2:00 | Cassidy Ascione | Love and Divine Unity in the Sufi Metaphysics of Rumi                            |
| 2:00:2:30 | Abdullah Sattar | Individuality of Man: Iqbal's "Mard-e-Momin" and Kierkegaard's "Knight of Faith" |
| 2:30-3:00 | Ali Adel Fares  | Fatima al-Yashruti: An Exemplar of the Sufi Way                                  |
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1:00  
PM

Session 3B Asian Studies and All Sorts  
Meghan Primeau Presiding

AH117

1:00-1:30	Zachary Lekic	The Impact of the Kabuki-mono on Law and Culture in the Early Modern Period
1:30-2:00	Gerry Newbury	The Bottom Rung: Prostitution and Hierarchy in Tokugawa Japan
2:00:2:30	Caitlin McCaughey	Baby Got Bustle: Misconceptions of the female form in the 1870s and 1880s
2:30-3:00	Alexander Hourahine	The State is God and the Judges Its Avenging Angels: Judge Dredd and the State as a Religion

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Name	Title	Abstract
Ali Adel Fares	Fatima al-Yashruti: An Exemplar of the Sufi Way	<p>This paper explores the extraordinary life and contributions of Sayyidah Fatima al-Yashruti (1891-1978), a woman who, throughout her lifetime, continually transcended the social and religious norms of her day. Sayyidah Fatima was born in 1891 in Acre, Palestine. She was the daughter of Shaykh Ali Nur al-Din al-Yashruti (1794- 1899), the founder and shaykh of the Shadhiliyya Yashrutiyya Sufi order and was raised among his disciples.</p> <p>She grew up in her father's Sufi lodge (zawiya) and by the age of four, was the only female and child present at her father's councils and lectures which were regularly attended by some of the most prominent shaykhs, jurists and scholars of the time, individuals who Sayyidah Fatima would maintain lasting and affectionate relationships with. Forced out of her father's towering shadow following his passing when she was only eight years old, Sayyidah Fatima would go on to become a towering figure in her own right. Her voice influenced eminent religious scholars and academics, feminists, and cultural figures, many of whom traveled from across the world to meet her. Although she acquired a level of fame quite early on in her life, throughout her years, she maintained a humble life devoted to the service of God and welcomed all who sought her company, regardless of their religious affiliation or position in society. Sayyidah Fatima authored four books before her passing in 1978; these works, in addition to interviews with those who knew her personally, provide the primary sources used in constructing the historical narratives of this paper.</p>
Cassidy Ascione	Love and Divine Unity in the Sufi Metaphysics of Rumi	<p>By the 13th century of the common era, the Sufis or mystics of Islam had developed a comprehensive theory of 'ishq and mahabba – two types of overlapping love – which in their eyes were inseparable from the human being's relationship with God. The paper explores this metaphysics of love as it is found in the life and thought of the 13th century Muslim mystic, Jalal al-Din Rumi, with particular attention to his poetry and writings of spiritual instruction. As such, the paper concentrates on two themes. (1) The first is Rumi's intense relationship with the enigmatic and mysterious dervish, Shams al-Din Tabrizi, and other seekers with whom he formed profound spiritual connections. Rumi's poetry, addressed to and inspired by Shams, often made use of passionate and even erotic language to convey his experience of Shams as a mirror through which he could contemplate the divine Reality. (2) The paper further examines the purely theoretical side of his metaphysics in which love acts as the driving force of existence. Everything, and everyone, for Rumi, suffers from a yearning for the one supreme divine Beloved. Expressed differently, his conceptualization of love ties the individual experience of love for God to a cosmology in which the created universe also yearns for this very same object of affection. The paper argues that the theme of love in Rumi's writing reveals a unitive view of love that does not separate Platonic from erotic love, since all modes of love can be used to translate the deep experience of God that marks the existence of "everything other than God," thereby revealing an underlying unity of being. As the paper will demonstrate, this is how the Sufis have understood the theological cornerstone of Islam: divine Oneness (tawhid).</p>
Edi Bates	Gendering of Indigenous Children in the Indian Residential School system	<p>Compulsory heteronormative patriarchy has been used as a system of garnering control over Indigenous people of Canada since Europeans first contacted the Indigenous people. It is no surprise then that when Canada created the Indian Residential school system, the schools implemented strict and rigid compulsory heteronormative gender roles upon the Indigenous children. The IRS removed all ties to previously established gender that the Indigenous people held and enforced the new methods and norms for performing gender upon the children. When children deviated from these norms, they were subjected to large amounts of abuse, functioning to uphold these preconceived ideas purported by compulsory heteronormativity. In this paper I will be examining the IRS that housed Inuit children. I will be drawing on primary sources to examine the ways that gender was taught, as well as to examine the ways that gender was enforced with violence. I will be comparing the roles the schools believed were important to upkeep ideals of gender, as well as how the Inuit children's newly established compulsory heteronormative gender intersected with their racialized identity. I will compare the way that sexuality was addressed in the schools between the boys and girls to show how the norms being taught do fall under compulsory heteronormativity. I will also dig into what the compulsory heteronormative gender roles were and how they shaped the treatment of the Inuit children. Furthermore, I will conclude by showing how the enforcement of compulsory heteronormative gender norms functioned as a tool in genocide that removed the children from their culture in such a prominent way that they would not be able to fully reconnect with their culture, without first having to dismantle their beliefs of gender established by the IRS.</p>

Name	Title	Abstract
Annalise Bexte	A Living Nightmare of Pain: The Violation of Suffragette Bodies Through Force Feeding in Edwardian Britain	<p>This presentation will explore the embodied tactics utilized by British Suffragettes in the early 20th century, as well as how Suffragette bodies were violated through practices like force feeding. Embodied tactics were utilized to obtain a symbolic political body through enfranchisement. Refusing food and utilizing hunger was a way to exert control when very little was within imprisoned Suffragette's control. Controlling what they put into their body, as well as the choice to die for their cause allowed them to significantly contribute to the movement while in prison. Hunger strikes were a means for Suffragettes to assert control over their physical self, and force feeding was a way to strip them of that control. In my presentation I will illustrate how force feeding was an immense violation of women's bodily autonomy. By showcasing how Suffragette bodies were violated we can see how specific women's bodies were deemed unfit. Suffragette bodies were viewed as unwomanly, and in my presentation, I will showcase how force feeding was justified, as well as the public rhetoric surrounding the use of artificial feeding. Force feeding was a violation of Suffragette bodies in a multitude of ways. Firstly, it violated their physical body by causing physical harm and long-term symptoms. This physical violation was akin to rape and violated their body in a sexual manner. Force feeding also caused immense, lasting psychological harm to women. Lastly, force feeding was a violation of women's symbolic political body. This violation acted as a way to strip women of their political agency, and symbolically remove them from the political sphere. Embodied political tactics were used by Suffragettes and as a result they took up significant amounts of space in political discourse, despite the clear goal of removing them from the political world.</p>
Alexander Hourahine	The State is God and the Judges Its Avenging Angels: Judge Dredd and the State as a Religion	<p>The film Dredd presents a world in which society is governed by an authoritarian regime from which disorder is dealt with brutally and quickly. This paper uses sociologist Robert Bellah's concept of a civil religion as a lens to view the world of Dredd and what the film hypothesizes about the future of civilization. This paper argues that the hyperbolic future Dredd presents is a commentary on how governments are regarded. Religious doctrine and state law are compared and argued to be one and the same. This paper examines the real-world examples of fascist states and compares them to the world of Dredd to find that both share striking similarities. Additionally, this paper argues that the state as a concept could be said to be both the object of worship and its laws, customs, and mores are the means of worship. This paper examines how national anthems are akin to state hymns, national holidays are like high holy days, as well as how and why the deaths of public service workers - namely police, military personnel, and powerful politicians - are framed in the same way martyrs are honored in religious traditions. Throughout the paper the connections between this 'civil religion' and the form of nationalism fascism seeks to engender is made. Finally, the paper takes the fascist themes of the film to find the commentary behind the action to conclude that the police state of Mega-City One reflects real world attitudes to police and the state as a totality.</p>
Josi Koerber	The Oneness of Being in the Islamic Mysticism of Ibn al-'Arabi (d. 1240)	<p>The paper offers an overview of the life and thought of the medieval Muslim thinker Ibn al-'Arabi (d. 1240 CE), with a concentration on his ontology or philosophy of being. The Andalusian mystic's doctrine of wahdat al-wujud or the "oneness of existence" presents a non-dualistic conception of reality, even though its teachings are frequently expressed through the language of duality. The paper analyses how the mystic made use of the language of duality, opposition, and contradiction to convey a philosophy of Oneness. The paper opens with a brief discussion of the life of Ibn al-'Arabi. Here, we find that although he is often credited with formulating the doctrine of wahdat al-wujud, the expression was never used by him. The reluctance to use a specific term to designate the philosophy in question was, as we will see, a conscious decision that stemmed from a direct mystical encounter with "Being." In other words, it was the result of an ineffable experience that the mystic felt could not be systematically expressed in a philosophical system. Next, I transition into my primary discussion of the philosophy itself. For Ibn Arabi, wujud or "being," in its absolute nature, constitutes the formless, timeless, and immutable essence that permeates all levels of reality. Wujud is typically equated with "being" when translated into English. However, teasing apart the trilateral root w-j-d, reveals the essential notion that being cannot exist without finding. Because wujud is completely beyond human comprehension, it relies on the language of duality, contrariety, and opposition to be grasped. In this way, expressions of duality do not undermine Ibn Arabi's claim of essential, universal Unity. Instead, these expressions are a direct manifestation of it, to the extent that the One permeates the many, or the many point to the One.</p>

Name	Title	Abstract
Alexander Kwan	Unveiling Lethbridge: The Chinese National League and its effect on the Lethbridge Chinese during the 1900s	<p>Chinatowns in North America are fascinating. To a person not belonging to that ethnic group, they are only seen as a tourist attraction, a place to go for food or items you cannot usually get elsewhere. For those belonging to that group, they serve as a cultural hub. It is a place where generations come together and share stories of life before and after they immigrated to these Chinatowns, a place for Asian people to come and connect with their culture once more. Examining Lethbridge's own Chinatown would reveal a similar pattern, with the minor exception of the Chinese National League's presence in the small Alberta city. Exploring the League's presence in the city during the 20th century would go on to reveal the impact that it would have on Lethbridge's Chinese community, as well as the impact it would have on nationalistic pride during China's Communist Revolution of 1949. Firstly by employing Benedict Anderson's definition of Nationalism as an imagined community, it would provide the basis of the argument of the positive impact the National League would have. By utilizing the Galt Museum and Archives resources, the help of the Historical Society of Lethbridge's extensive database and knowledge, and with the Lethbridge Herald's archives, this paper begins to show a timeline of the organization from its beginning to the eventual destruction of Chinatown. By highlighting these key events and displaying the history and timeline of the League, it aims to achieve its goal of exploring the impacts the League would have on the Chinese population and its role on Lethbridge Chinese nationalism.</p>
Zachary Lekic	The Impact of the Kabuki-mono on Law and Culture in the Early Modern Period	<p>This paper explores the role of groups of criminals known as Kabuki-mono that emerged at the end of the Sengoku Jidai and the early Tokugawa period. This is achieved by reviewing the limited previous scholarship on the subject, connecting it together along with legislation passed by the Shogunate and emphasizing the impact of the presence of the kabuki-mono, and the counter-culture movement they inspired, on Tokugawa law and their efforts to control all aspects of society. Despite the Kabuki-mono being the primary target of Tokugawa law, including some of the defining edicts of the era, their importance is often overlooked. This paper seeks to show the importance of the kabuki-mono, and why they were such a threat to the young Shogunate and how the efforts of the Tokugawa shogunate were directly shaped by the Kabuki-mono and those hoping to emulate them. Images of the kabuki-mono and the kabuki artists they inspired play a large role in this paper owing to the mainly visual character of kabuki-mono cultural resistance to the shogunate. The paper starts by addressing the hierarchical realities of the Tokugawa shogunate and the shift in the role of the samurai following the end of the Warring States period. Next, the paper shows how, and in what context the kabuki-mono formed before describing their distinctive visuals and their actions that were deemed as unacceptable by the shogunate. The rest of the paper centers around the impact that the Kabuki-mono became enemy number one of the Shogunate, the impact they had on Tokugawa legislation, and how the shogunate attempted to crack down on them through physical punishment and targeted laws.</p>
Caitlin McCaughey	Baby Got Bustle: Misconceptions	<p>This paper looks at the embodied performance of social status during the late nineteenth century in England. The small waist, combined with a hefty derrière, grew in popularity during the 1870s and 1880s, aided by undergarments like the corset and bustle. In the 2010s, the small-waisted buxom silhouette returned with the social media influence of celebrities like Kim Kardashian and Cardi B. This recent trend focused on the sexualization of the body. Thus, the initial question for this conference paper is whether the stereotypically prudish Victorians also sexualized the form. While there was a sexual aspect to the figure, it was not the prevailing narration of the time. The silhouette created by the bustle and corset indicated the social status of women during the 1870s and 1880s through the garments' cost, practicality, and morality. The rising middle class made clumsy replications of upper-class fashion to be considered closer to the upper class but could never fully achieve the final look. The ability to afford and wear clothing that required the support of a bustle and corset also indicated the morality of the wearer unless the corset was tied too tightly. The bustled silhouette of the 1870s and 1880s was an embodied performance that allowed women to display their wealth with a glance at their attire. The modern gaze looks upon the same silhouette from a sexual point of view, evidenced by an image of Kim Kardashian, which "broke the internet" in 2014, but the same silhouette in the nineteenth century imbued the wearer's social status.</p>

Name	Title	Abstract
Jessica Mustard	Quilts and Quilting: Southern Alberta Women's Oral History	<p>As part of an Honours Thesis in Sociology, this year I have had the privilege of collecting the Oral Histories of four Southern Alberta women quilters. Using Feminist Oral History techniques, and Grounded Theory methods that prioritize reflexivity, I have sought to understand the personal meanings quilts have for my interviewees and what roles quilting and quilt-gifting play in their lives. In my work, I position quilting as an important and complex meaning-making activity that deeply affects social bonds and identities, and quilts as important artifacts imbued with many personal and historical meanings. I am particularly interested in generational and heirloom practices related to quilting and the ways that quilts and quilting relate to identity and empowerment, especially in the context of women's oppression and community engagement. Significant so far has been 1) Understanding quilts as significant demonstrations of women's informal history-keeping, commemorating, and family memorializing practices. 2) Understanding quilting as a form of embodied knowledge and as a strategy to express care and respect to others. 3) Recognizing the enduring nature of quilts and their effectiveness at bridging gaps, such as across life/death, language, distance, age etc. 4) Recognizing a quilter's enduring connection to their work and the personal benefits of quilting. 5) Understanding quilting and quilt distribution as related to traditional values and ideas of self-sufficiency, community building and generosity. This work is important because it lies at an intersection of issues related to the trivialization and exclusion of women's artwork and voices throughout history, the modern ways that quilters are using their work to enact meaningful personal and social changes, and the quilting community as a space dominated by white cis het ideals that uphold narrow ideas related to womanhood and family. Through this work, I hope to discuss these influences and capture the ways that my interviewees understand quilts and quilting in their lives.</p>
Gerry Newbury	The Bottom Rung: Prostitution and Hierarchy in Tokugawa Japan	<p>The Tokugawa period (1600-1867) of Japanese history saw the encouragement and crystallization of stringent multi-layered social hierarchies involving dichotomies of sex, age, and class. Within these established hierarchies, sex workers were considered to be part of the lowly hinin (non-human) caste, despite state sponsorship of urban pleasure quarters such as the famous Yoshiwara of Edo, and overall normalization of sex work in society. Notably, while both men and women fulfilled the roles of sex workers, the two had somewhat different cultural connotations, with male sex workers being associated with samurai culture and later kabuki theatre, while women were more commonly associated with familial obligation and brothels. The ultimate aim of this paper is to argue that in spite of the social nuances differing the roles of male and female sex workers, both were dehumanized by the social stratifications of a society that placed great emphasis on the power and pleasure of older men of a higher birth. In other words, due to policies and mindsets encouraged by the Tokugawa shogunate, there results a fetishization of subjugation, and a notion that sex workers were an ontological lesser. This is accomplished by comparing Tokugawa-era attitudes regarding female sex workers and male sex workers, as well as the ways that the dynamics of gender and age impacted those attitudes and their overall niches in Japanese society. This is accomplished through synthesis of modern scholarship, as well as primary source analysis of pieces of contemporary Japanese literature which prominently feature prostitutes as sympathetic but dehumanized characters.</p>
Meaghan Primeau	Contemporary Antisemitism: A Historical Continuum and Modern Manifestations	<p>This research paper explores the enduring and evolving phenomenon of antisemitism from its historical roots to its modern manifestations, highlighting how foundational ideologies and stereotypes persist despite evolving media landscapes. It begins by tracing antisemitism's historical evolution through different epochs, highlighting its initial association with religious and cultural differences in the Greco-Roman era, intensification during the Middle Ages with religious and superstitious motivations, and transformation into racial ideologies in 19th and 20th centuries. The focus then shifts to modern manifestations, particularly in North America, examining how these historical prejudices are perpetuated in today's digital era via popular culture and social media platforms, including specific case studies such as the use of antisemitic statements, themes, and other forms of antisemitic representation on platforms like Twitter and Facebook. Through a historical analysis drawing on various sources, including scholarly works, media reports, and internet content, this paper will examine the manifestation of antisemitic stereotypes in popular culture and digital media. The findings reveal that while the platforms and expressions of antisemitism have evolved—particularly with the advent of the internet and social media—the core ideologies and prejudices remain persistent. These manifest in both overt and subtle ways in popular culture and online spaces, significantly impacting societal perceptions and contributing to a pervasive culture of discrimination against Jewish people. This comprehensive approach combines historical context with contemporary analysis to provide a nuanced understanding of how antisemitism has been perpetuated and its impact on societal perceptions and attitudes toward Jewish people.</p>

Name	Title	Abstract
Abdullah Sattar	Individuality of Man: Iqbal's "Mard-e Momin" and Kierkegaard's "Knight of Faith"	<p>Muhammad Iqbal and Søren Kierkegaard, pivotal figures in the existential philosophy realm, diverged from their eras' predominant belief systems, which celebrated the unassailable primacy of human logic. Representing the Islamic and Judeo-Christian intellectual heritages respectively, they scrutinized the conventional reliance on unadulterated reason for understanding existence, divinity, and the intricate nexus between the cosmos, humanity, and the celestial. This paper delves into their discourses on individualism, advocating for a profound engagement with subjective insights and personal comprehension to grasp reality's essence. Iqbal, hailing from South Asia and celebrated as a poet-philosopher, alongside Kierkegaard, recognized as existentialism's progenitor, both underscored the vital role of individual experience in reality's perception. Their proposed existential evolution encompasses three stages: the aesthetic, ethical, and religious for Kierkegaard, contrasted with faith, thought, and epiphany for Iqbal. They contended that mere logic falls short in apprehending the divine or validating spiritual verities, suggesting instead a practical approach for truth's personal assimilation, facilitating a life aligned with said truth. Kierkegaard introduced the "Knight of Faith," embarking on a faith transcendental to logic, while Iqbal's "Mard-i-Momin" epitomizes a harmonization of divine edicts with human autonomy. These notions emphasize a departure from logical constraints towards a personalized, subjective divine rapport. This study seeks to illuminate the synergies and potential disparities within Iqbal and Kierkegaard's perspectives, particularly regarding individualism's philosophical treatment.</p>
Samantha Steynen	The Jewish Woman's experience in the Holocaust	<p>My paper is a look into the treatment of Jewish women during the Nazi era Holocaust, with an emphasis on the sexual violence experienced in ghettos and concentration camps. Through this paper I wish to expand upon the poor treatment of Jewish women and the sexual violence they were forced to endure. I will be discussing the full effects that the rapes and assaults had on Jewish women, and the complex traumas formed as a result of the physical issues arising such as infertility and pregnancies.</p> <p>I have found many scholarly works written about this race and gender based violence, as well as the outcomes of such crimes, including the prostitution many Jewish women resorted to in an effort to survive. These scholarly works are what will be used to connect the multifaceted acts of violence towards the Jewish experience during the Holocaust, while further exploring the complex nature that consent and sex take on during wartime and times of extreme struggle and fear.</p> <p>By furthering our understanding of the gendered aspects of what occurred during the Holocaust we can slowly piece together the full picture that all individuals faced. As present in our current day society, men's experiences tend to trump women's becoming set as 'the norm' for experiences. Therefore, by looking at the Holocaust through a gendered lens we can start to understand how deeply the inability to see gender affects current mainstream ideas. The ignored violence women face, are still traumas that need to be explored and discussed within an academic context</p>