

Institute for the Humanities Spring 2003 Lecture Series (continued)

Modernity, Secularity, Pluralism

As the 21st century opens, modernity and secularity in the West are strangely counterpointed by forms of Islam which reject them, and by new religious movements, para-Christian or New Age, which ignore them. In this series, three doctoral candidates will share their dissertation research, and together help us address the question of the future of religious faith and practice in our own culture and the cultures of others.



Overcoming Onto-theology: George Grant and Religion without Religion

Peg Peters
Thursday, February 6, 2003
1:30–2:30 pm (Reception to follow)
Room 5119 AQ, SFU Burnaby

Religion has come to an end but people are still hungry for spirituality. George Grant believes that western Christianity has contributed to its own demise allowing religion to be an agent of the will to power that flourishes as modern technology. God too often has been something that we have tried to explain and control. Religion, which is a human practice, is always deconstructible in the light of the love of God, which is not deconstructible. Using Grant as a guide I will try to suggest a way forward for religion in a pluralist society.

Randy 'Peg' Peters is a Special Arrangements PhD candidate at Simon Fraser and an ordained minister. He is currently working on The Collected Works of George Grant and is writing his dissertation on Grant's religious appropriation of Martin Heidegger.

Becoming Non-Rational: Recent Transformations in Evangelical Belief

Bruce Hiebert
Thursday, February 13, 2003
1:30–2:30 pm (Reception to follow)
Room 5119 AQ, SFU Burnaby

Evangelical Christians represent an early modern form of belief. But instead of dying out as the world becomes postmodern, evangelical faith is stronger than ever. Part of the secret of this strength is the evangelical community's ability to fill older rational language forms with newer non-rational content. The evangelical discourse on the subject of science is typical of this transformation, and will be the focus of this lecture.

Bruce Hiebert is a Special Arrangements PhD candidate, and a former Mennonite pastor. He is also the author of Good Work: How to Live Your Values in the Workplace (Northstone, 1997).

Human Difference and Religion: Girard, Derrida, and Postmodern Anthropology

Christopher S. Morrissey
Thursday, February 27, 2003
1:30–2:30 pm (Reception to follow)
Room 5119 AQ

In the postmodern era, there is a great debate about human science. What is the human? How are humans different from other animals? Anthropologists, sociologists, and paleontologists all represent one essential position on the origin of human difference: gradual evolution. But there are two other essential positions in the great debate about the origin of human language and culture: those of Jacques Derrida and René Girard. How can their approaches contribute to a more radical anthropology? What can the social sciences learn from the debate of literary scholars in the humanities?

Christopher S. Morrissey is a Special Arrangements PhD candidate at Simon Fraser University and has taught Ancient Greek, Latin, and Classical Mythology in the Department of Humanities.