

AMBROSE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CONFERENCE (ARC) 2026: REIMAGINING HOPE IN TURBULENT TIMES

PAPER AND POSTER ABSTRACTS (alphabetical by presenter)

Lincoln Alexander, “Conservation and Conciliation: Seeing the Contours of Settler-Indigenous Relations by Looking at Contemporary Wildlife Management Disputes”

Two encounters – one with a sixth-generation prairie settler condemning Indigenous hunters as careless and another with a sport fisherman frustrated by gillnetting on the Stikine River – characterize the strain within contemporary settler-Indigenous dialogue. The communication and relational gap between Indigenous and settler communities has many possible contributors, including differing traditions of memory, conflicting moral imaginations, and different social circumstances.

Through research, personal reflection, and lived experience, this essay argues that stories themselves are a vital source of wisdom. Different memories, philosophies, and social circumstances can fester into dialogues of hate and racism, but a shared epistemology that values stories brings hope for good relationships.

Rafael Baillie, “Extraction of α -Pinene Through Steam Distillation”

α -Pinene is a highly volatile organic compound commonly found in coniferous trees such as pine, fir, and spruce. It is the most abundant monoterpene in the atmosphere, primarily serving a defensive/protective role for the plant. This research aimed to find and develop a method to extract and isolate α -pinene from pine needles, and to do so in a reliable manner so that the protocol can be implemented into an undergraduate organic chemistry laboratory. There are multiple methods that can be considered for α -pinene extraction, such as steam distillation, hydrodistillation, and solvent extraction, amongst others. Through experimentation, steam distillation and subsequent solvent isolation proved to be the most reliable and reproducible method for extracting α -pinene from various coniferous needles. A solvent extraction method was also tested, but proved to produce samples that still contained impurities from some of the organic material from the needles.

Rachel Barg and Dr. Stephen Jeans, “Interdisciplinary Study Emerges from Digging into Geology”

What is the value to a biologist of interdisciplinary study that includes apparently different disciplines from their own? In this case, the discipline of geology. This study focuses on a biology researcher who chose to study both the importance of that other body of knowledge and how anyone might go about growing a broader integrated understanding between the two. Grounded research in the choices of an undergraduate biologist is presented. Perspectives of the instructor and learner are discussed in relation to learning paths offered and processes of discovery. However, the outcome was not what either anticipated. Opportunities were not necessarily chosen, and new ideas arose. Included is the analysis and reporting of value derived from learning in class, from

planning of a geological congress, participating in a field tutorial, and researching links to becoming an early-career scientist--identifying where personal professional development requires interdisciplinary knowledge now and in the future.

Micael Bittle, “The Fruit of Temptation: A Study on John Milton’s Notions on Temptation”
Throughout John Milton’s poetry, there tends to be some form of temptation that makes itself apparent; some cases are more obvious than others. Within this poetry, he sometimes uses the same ‘structure’ to explore what the temptation is, and how it is dealt with. In *Paradise Lost*, he uses the character of Satan to tempt Eve through four appeals about the fruit. In *Paradise Regained*, he uses the same Satan and four similar appeals to attempt to tempt Christ. However, the difference between the two lies in the result of Satan's efforts; one is tempted, one is not. He also believed that temptation was something that people experienced externally, meaning it came from an external source, most often Satan, and that is how people were tempted. To escape this temptation, one needed to have strong virtue and wisdom, and in most cases, this happened in the presence of other equally virtuous and wise people.

James Black, “Through the Eyes of the Apostle Paul: Examining Biblical Evidence for Women Leadership”

In the Canadian Church, a pressing issue remains regarding Women in Church leadership. This is an issue that every church has a theological stance on, and an issue that continues to divide congregations. Many people look at the passages from the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, or 1 Timothy 2:12-15 to form their opinion on this issue. Scholars have walked away from studying these passages from both an egalitarian view or complementarian view. Egalitarians will hold to the view that women, according to their gifts like anyone else, are capable of leading in the church. Complementarians however hold to the view that leadership should be left to the men in churches. In this paper, I will re-examine the biblical grounds of the arguments for and against women in church leadership in Paul’s letters. To conclude the paper, I will offer my opinion on the most compelling argument. It is my hope with this paper, that through my analysis of this issue Christians will realize that while both sides appeal to the Bible to make their argument, a deeper understanding of these key Pauline texts and a greater awareness of the range of possible interpretations will equip them with a better foundation for making important decisions about contemporary applications of Scripture.

Kaili Blackwell, “Good Wives and Hard Choices: Domestic Piety in the Work of Janet Lewis”
Janet Lewis wrote several of her historical novels with the same overarching goal: to understand how events unfold and why people do what they do. In pursuing that goal, Lewis also challenges a dominant habit in modern feminist criticism, which is equating women’s agency with overt resistance to patriarchy and treating domestic devotion as evidence of diminished autonomy. While feminist recovery work has rightly foregrounded silenced women, third-wave feminism began to produce contempt for wives and mothers whose lives remain centered on domestic piety. Lewis’s portrayal of women in her novels rebukes those habits; she instead reframes agency as consequential moral choice—for better or for worse. Bertrande from *The Wife of Martin Guerre* and Marianne from *The Ghost of Monsieur Scarron* both represent ‘patriarchal women,’ and from

this position they demonstrate complications to the resistance/subordination binary we have been trained to look for, choosing either to use that position for the greater good or to betray it altogether. Bound to historical norms and evidence, Lewis's fiction reframes what counts as significant action in traditional settings and inadvertently asks feminist criticism to treat domestic women as morally autonomous subjects rather than embarrassments to progress.

Kin Wing Chan, "Responding to Public Issues concerning LGBTQ+ through Pauline Theology"

This paper analyzes Romans 1:18–32—focusing on 1:24–27—through socio-historical exegesis and an examination of Paul's theological argument. It argues that Paul's critique targets a disorder of desire shaped by idolatry and expressed in power- and status-coded sexual practices, rather than modern same-sex partnerships defined primarily by identity categories. In dialogue with major interpretive approaches, the paper clarifies the rhetorical and theological function of this passage within Paul's larger gospel argument. Building on this reading, it develops a Pauline-theological framework for engaging public discourse on sexual minorities, showing how churches might hold together the universality of the gospel and communal moral formation without resorting to shame-based exclusion, and how practices of welcome can be pursued alongside discipleship.

Bryan Cheng, "The Book of Jonah"

My main idea of the conference paper is to go deeper into the book of Jonah and what purpose it serves in the world nowadays. This research explores the authenticity of the book of Jonah, the themes of the book of Jonah, and concludes with how people today should read Jonah. This study would start off by focusing on interpreting Jonah as a book that tends to have theological authenticity rather than historical authenticity. To understand how this book serves as a purpose of reflection for the people at the time and how people now should see it, the themes of the book should be explained, including the characteristics of God, the inclusiveness of the religion, the worthiness of repentance and grace. This study will conclude by suggesting how the above critiques could be reflected on Christian communities nowadays.

Prissy Chuoi and Juliana Hajduk, "A Deadly Spin: Impact of Whirling Disease in Alberta"

Whirling disease is an infectious disease of salmonid fish caused by a parasite called *Myxobolus cerebralis*. This parasite is identifiable by a characteristic that causes salmonids to have erratic, whirling swimming behaviour, delivering high mortality rates to the young, which poses a serious threat to Alberta's freshwater ecosystems. Despite its damaging effects on fish populations, whirling disease is not a health risk to humans or pets. It does however, stress Canadian fisheries financially as it occupies four major watersheds in Alberta, the Bow River, North Saskatchewan River, Oldman River and the Red Deer River. In this poster, we will (1) describe what whirling disease is, and where it originates from, (2) discuss how the disease impacts salmonid species in Alberta, and furthermore impacts Alberta ecosystems & economy, (3) highlight the life cycle and transmission of the parasite, and how it can be identified in our salmonid species, and to conclude, (4) discuss what kind of preventative measures Albertans can take to limit the spread and impact of whirling disease.

Moyo Collins, “Psychodermatology in College Students: Examining Symptom Perceptions, Health-Seeking Actions, and Psychological Help-Seeking”

Psychodermatology is particularly relevant among emerging adults because of dermatological conditions and body image concerns. In addition, this population is exposed to unique psychological, social, and environmental challenges that make them particularly vulnerable to psychological stress. Stressors include academic pressure, social adjustments, sleep deprivation, financial concerns, and lifestyle habits. Therefore, understanding the intersection of mental health and dermatological conditions in this population is crucial to implementation of early intervention strategies that forestall significant non-fatal disability worldwide. This explored how students perceive these conditions, their patterns of seeking medical or psychological support, and the influence of internal and external factors. Utilized sequential mixed methods design. Initial quantitative phase employed a cross-sectional survey to investigate multiple dimensions of these experiences and sequel qualitative phase explored social norms and structures that shape students' willingness to seek support. Seventeen participants total, 12 previously received mental health care, five never sought help. Total skin conditions reported: 94.1% acne, 5.9% cysts, 17.6% dry skin, 5.9% sun allergy and 35.3% eczema. 1. Moderate statistically significant positive relationship exists between psychological impact and intention to seek help which implies that students with higher perceived emotional impact are more likely to seek help. 2. Statistically significant negative correlation exists between symptom burden and avoidance which implies that student who have more symptoms, are more likely to seek help. Data collection ongoing. This advocates for better screening efforts towards the delivery of essential targeted care in lessening the overall impact of skin conditions through mental and dermatologic interventions.

Ivan Crisostomo, “Development of a Green Chemistry Experiment for Undergraduate Biochemistry Laboratory”

Various green chemistry experiments have already been developed and integrated in undergraduate general chemistry and organic chemistry laboratories. To date, there is no experiment in undergraduate biochemistry laboratory that aimed to apply any of the 12 green chemistry principles. The purpose of this research is to address by-product management in the canola oil industry and implement the practice of sustainability in biochemistry laboratories. Canola oil is one of the world's largest oilseed crops, and this industry has been producing large quantities of canola meal as by-product. This work aims to identify the most effective and environmentally friendly protein extraction protocol from canola meal and subsequently implement the experiment as an undergraduate experiment in an undergraduate biochemistry laboratory. The three protocols included the traditional Osborne method, alkaline extraction-isoelectric precipitation, and salt extraction-dialysis methods. These methods were compared in terms of their efficiency for protein recovery and their green chemistry three metrics using the life-cycle assessment (Jessop et al., 2012), green circle, and the green matrix (Ribeiro and Machado, 2013) methods. Finally, a set of laboratory experiments were developed where student would first extract the protein from canola meal via the three methods, evaluate the sustainability of each method, and propose modifications to improve both the yield and the green metrics.

Ariana Davis, “Knowledge Changes Behaviour: Exploring Human Behaviour Change through Informing Individuals of the Prestige Effect by Extending Processes Associated with the Bystander Effect”

The bystander effect happens when the increasing number of bystanders present at an emergency decreases the likelihood of helping behaviour, but the effect is mitigated when people are informed about it in advance. Consider also the prestige effect where individuals’ preferences are biased in the direction of items or ideas deemed valuable, but no research identifies what happens if one informs people about this effect. As both effects function on the basis of cognitive priming – subconsciously cueing a person – this research explores if the prestige effect could be mitigated like the bystander effect. This study compared participants inoculated against the prestige and bystander effects to a control group. The results of the research will help to inform of underlying cognitive processes that may alter human behaviour and perceptions. The results will be discussed in terms of societal influence on human behaviour and the role of cognitive priming.

Courage Debrah, “Beyond Profit-First Leadership: How Redemptive Leadership Impacts Ethical Decision-Making and Employee Well-Being in the Modern Workplace”

As the modern workplace continues to evolve rapidly, it experiences high levels of employee burnout, disengagement, and higher turnover rates. These negative effects in the workplace often result from poor leadership styles and approaches that prioritize business outcomes over people. The purpose of this paper is to explore the challenges associated with profit-first leadership but ultimately highlight the benefits of incorporating redemptive leadership approaches in the modern workplace, analyzing its positive impacts on employee well-being and decision-making. Firstly, this paper will briefly describe both leadership styles, followed by two major themes: the role of redemptive leadership in improving ethical decision-making through the development of a culture of integrity, responsibility, and trust; and the role of redemptive leadership in improving employee well-being through the development of a culture that values people, growth, and work. Lastly, this paper will review some internal and external limitations of redemptive leadership in diverse workplaces and suggest how these limitations can be managed while utilizing its benefits.

Julianna Denton, “Balancing Human Resources Priorities: A Focus on Employee Well-Being and Long-Term Organizational Performance”

Human Resources (HR) plays a central role in shaping how organizations balance their priorities with employee well-being, influencing both daily workplace experiences and long-term organizational direction. This paper argues that a balanced HR approach, one that intentionally integrates employee well-being with organizational priorities, creates the conditions for stronger organizational performance. When Human Resources focuses on supporting employees while also advancing organizational goals, they are helping to strengthen employee trust and contribute to a healthier, more stable workplace culture. These relational outcomes directly enhance long-term organizational performance and demonstrate that caring for employees is strongly linked to achieving long-term organizational success.

Joel De Bruyn, “A Christian Response to the Changing World”

Jackson Earle, “An Analysis of Coaching Leadership Styles in High-Performance Sport: Identifying Which Approach Best Supports Athlete Development and Competitive Success in Sport”

This paper examines various forms of leadership that are applied by coaches in the world of competitive sports. These include autocratic, transformation and democratic leadership. This paper will examine how coaching behaviour and athlete preference interact with each other, and how they influence athletic satisfaction, directly connecting leadership styles with performance outcomes. Another focus of this paper will be how different cultures respond to different forms of leadership, such as Greek and Chilean athletes and their responses to leadership styles like authoritarian and democratic, depending on the cultural upbringing around them. This paper will also draw on theories such as Chelladurai’s model of modern sports leadership research.

Ben Farley and Cole Giesbrecht, “Alberta Indicator Species: The Black Hills Mountainsnail (*Oreohelix cooperi*)”

Although small, with a shell around 1 cm in diameter, the Black Hills Mountainsnail plays many important ecological roles in the Cypress Hills of Alberta. The snail has a critical function in nutrient cycling and is part of the food web. With its only habitat in Canada being in the isolated sky islands of the Cypress Hills, its limited dispersal capabilities put the mollusc at risk due to increased fire suppression, climate change, and many other factors. This relict species survived the previous ice-age by taking refuge in the unglaciated region; will it survive us?

Rylee Flamont, “A Theological Reflection on Disability”

The paper I wish to present at Ambrose’s research conference offers a theological reflection on disability as it relates to the Genesis account of the fall. It explores if the disabled were part of the creative acts of God and what it truly means to be disabled in our world. My paper offers personal perspectives and experiences on disability as I myself have Tourette’s syndrome, a disability I have lived half my life with. To examine whether or not the disabled were created in the image of God or are a result of the fall, I look to God himself and the Hebrew Bible writings on healing, sin, and disability, as well as multiple disability theologians. Theologians such as Stanley Hauerwas’ thoughts on suffering, John Vanier on the value of the disabled, John Swinton on disability and inclusion, and Nancy Eiesland’s work, *The Disabled God*. As I am not Christian, this paper also looks at disability outside of the Christian perspective and how disability is viewed within our society. Exploring what it’s like to be part of a marginalized part of society, barriers and limitations faced within social systems and how able-bodied people view the disabled. With theological examination its evident that disability isn’t in relation to sin but from the creative acts of God made with a purpose. Overall, this paper aims to bring to light the theology of disability and the prejudice of being disabled in our society and Christian communities.

Alen Francis, “Desire and Hope in Dostoevsky and Augustine”

In moments of moral collapse, the problem is rarely that we desire too little, but that we desire wrongly. Augustine’s Confessions and Dostoevsky’s Crime and Punishment portray overwhelming desire not as weakness of will, but as this crisis of orientation—an attachment to goods that cannot bear the weight placed upon them. When desire attaches itself to distorted goods—whether

personal ambition, autonomy, or heroic self-justification, it fractures both the individual and the community. Yet the very intensity of desire also becomes the condition for restoration.

After briefly introducing Augustine's account of the divided will and his understanding of love as the force that moves the soul, I turn to Raskolnikov's "extraordinary man" theory as a modern parallel: a vision of moral exceptionalism that licenses violence in the name of a perceived higher good. Though separated by centuries, both figures experience desire not as weakness but as misalignment—an orientation toward goods that cannot sustain the weight of the soul.

Crucially, neither text leaves the reader in fragmentation. Augustine's reordering of love through grace and Raskolnikov's gradual restoration through Sonya's compassion suggest that desire's potency is not abolished but redirected. Overwhelming desire thus emerges as both crisis and possibility: destructive when turned inward toward self-sovereignty, restorative when reoriented toward transcendent and relational goods. In this way, both authors imply that hope lies not in the suppression of desire, but when it is refashioned.

Nicole Fraser, "Transforming Leadership in the Management of Youth Sports: Servant Leadership as a Foundation for Resilient and Flourishing Young Athletes"

Youth sports organizations have experienced significant growth over the past decade, resulting in organizations facing increasing demands, including higher fixed costs, the need for expanded programs, and greater sustainable staffing and volunteer support. Many youth sport organizations have chosen to adopt business-oriented models that prioritize scale and increasing revenue to ensure that youth have proper access to sport with fair costs. While this model of business has the potential to increase access to sport for youth, it also increases the pressure on leadership to ensure that athletes not only participate but develop resilience, character, and life skills through sport. When this desire for efficiency, growth, and performance outcomes overtake these priorities, there is a risk that opportunities for well-being, personal growth, positive teamwork, and positive psychological development may be limited (Tézier, 2025). This paper explores how utilizing the servant leadership approach can support coach and managers in creating environments that prioritize athlete growth, resilience, well-being, and the addition of positive life skills. By serving others first, with organizational scale and performance metrics as a secondary supporting value, youth sport organizations can operate as both businesses and values-driven communities, which create positive environments where young athletes feel supported, grow as individuals, and develop the confidence to engage positively both in sport and life.

Wilian Gatti Junior, "Entrepreneurs as Designers: Implications for Teaching and Learning"

The idea that entrepreneurs perform as designers requires a change in the way business schools handle design thinking, in particular, its cognitive aspect. In this conceptual paper, we examine the missing links in design thinking in the context of management and business and outline the implications in adopting these missing links in the teaching and learning practices in entrepreneurship education. We first settled our theoretical perspective of design thinking in the middle of the two extremes that currently characterize the two views of design thinking: a descriptive and a prescriptive approach. Then, we draw upon the activity system framework proposed in expansive learning theory to show the fusion between two systems (the proposed and the current) that can lead the changes in the cognitive routines and where the creation of new

business opportunities can be learned and developed. To mediate the proposed activity system that will support the design cognition for entrepreneurship students, new pedagogical approaches currently discussed were presented, moreover the changes derived from these practices. This paper attempts to offer a complementary approach that would bring the essential cognitive tools necessary for instructors and students to creatively work the teaching-learning process.

Cole Giesbrecht and Ben Farley, “Alberta Indicator Species: The Black Hills Mountainsnail (*Oreohelix cooperi*)”

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Madeleine Goossen, “Tragedy in *The Ghost of Monsieur Scarron*”

This paper explores the difference between tragic hamartia, tragedy as the result of a flawed action, and akrasia, tragedy resulting from a passion driven departure from one’s normal character. This paper employs Aristotle’s Poetics to understand these concepts, with a focus on the importance of action in tragedy, to understand the grim ending of Marianne Larcher in Janet Lewis’ novel *The Ghost of Monsieur Scarron*. Using Aristotle’s definitions, this paper argues that Marianne Larcher’s tragic end was the result of passion driven akrasia because of her inaction and permanent departure from her good character and not hamartia, as is typical to tragic literature.

Juliana Hajduk and Prissy Chuoi, “A Deadly Spin: Impact of Whirling Disease in Alberta”

Whirling disease is an infectious disease of salmonid fish caused by a parasite called *Myxobolus cerebralis*. This parasite is identifiable by a characteristic that causes salmonids to have erratic, whirling swimming behaviour, delivering high mortality rates to the young, which poses a serious threat to Alberta's freshwater ecosystems. Despite its damaging effects on fish populations, whirling disease is not a health risk to humans or pets. It does however, stress Canadian fisheries financially as it occupies four major watersheds in Alberta, the Bow River, North Saskatchewan River, Oldman River and the Red Deer River. In this poster, we will (1) describe what whirling disease is, and where it originates from, (2) discuss how the disease impacts salmonid species in Alberta, and furthermore impacts Alberta ecosystems & economy, (3) highlight the life cycle and transmission of the parasite, and how it can be identified in our salmonid species, and to conclude, (4) discuss what kind of preventative measures Albertans can take to limit the spread and impact of whirling disease.

Tianna Hardman, “The Evolution of Art in Janet Lewis’s *The Wife of Martin Guerre*”

Between first drafts and finished products, many ideas are explored, set aside, and refined to achieve the cohesive finished product that authors publish. Janet Lewis in her work “*The Wife of Martin Guerre*” wrote her first draft as a short story, a significantly shorter work than the novella we have today. Her first draft was bilingual (English and French), contained many gothic elements, and lacked scenic depictions which so beautifully reflected the state of her main character

Bertrande. Lewis' final novella is unilingual, deeply religious, and describes vast landscapes that are integral to the final piece. Exploring these differences allows for a greater appreciation of the final piece, and a glimpse into the great mind of Janet Lewis, who took a piece of history and made it her own.

Sydney Harner, “Responsible Human Resource Management: Balancing Organizational Performance and Employee Wel-Being through Ethical Practice”

This research explores the concept of responsible human resource management (HRM) and how it helps organizations balance business goals with the well-being of employees and other stakeholders. Studies highlight the role of top management and HR professionals in shaping workplace policies that influence organizational culture and employee experiences. Sustainable and humanistic HRM practices that emphasize ethical decision-making, long-term thinking, and respect for human dignity can positively affect employee motivation, ethical climates, and overall job satisfaction, while also supporting organizational performance. Overall, the findings suggest that HRM is more than just a business function and should be viewed as an important contributor to ethical organizations and the common good, leading to improved organizational performance.

Josh Hill, “Hope-Driven Leadership: Building Resilient Organizations”

Leaders must maintain resilience, morale, and long-term performance during times of organizational, social, and economic uncertainty. This research looks at hope as an organizational capacity that can be consciously developed through institutional frameworks, values-based management, and leadership techniques. This study examines the role that hope plays in organizational resilience and human flourishing, mainly drawing from business and management literature with supplementary insights from psychology and ethics. This paper synthesizes existing research to identify key leadership behaviors and organizational practices that foster realistic hope without denying uncertainty. It will also tie in core Biblical principles and examples that support the findings. By reframing hope as a strategic and ethical resource, this paper offers a practical framework for leaders seeking to guide organizations through challenging times while maintaining trust, engagement, and purpose.

Dr. Stephen Jeans and Rachel Barg, “Interdisciplinary Study Emerges from Digging into Geology”

What is the value to a biologist of interdisciplinary study that includes apparently different disciplines from their own? In this case, the discipline of geology. This study focuses on a biology researcher who chose to study both the importance of that other body of knowledge and how anyone might go about growing a broader integrated understanding between the two. Grounded research in the choices of an undergraduate biologist is presented. Perspectives of the instructor and learner are discussed in relation to learning paths offered and processes of discovery. However, the outcome was not what either anticipated. Opportunities were not necessarily chosen, and new ideas arose. Included is the analysis and reporting of value derived from learning in class, from planning of a geological congress, participating in a field tutorial, and researching links to becoming an early-career scientist--identifying where personal professional development requires interdisciplinary knowledge now and in the future.

Sherri Krahn and Harsimar Singh, “Managing Pea Weevil Populations within Alberta’s Agriculture”

The pea leaf weevil (*Sitona lineatus*) is an invasive insect species in Alberta known for its negative impact on agriculture. Originally native to Europe, it was first recorded affecting peas in Alberta in 2000. Since agriculture is vital for the livelihood of farmers and a primary food source for consumers, it is economically important to protect crops from invasive pests like the pea leaf weevil. The pea leaf weevil feeds on leaves, seedling growing points, and nitrogen-fixing nodules of various crop plants. Larvae inflict damage by consuming root nodules that house nitrogen-fixing bacteria. This feeding reduces nitrogen availability in the soil, leading to chlorosis, stunted growth, and yield loss—particularly during dry prairie conditions. Because of this disruption to both crop productivity and natural soil processes, effective management strategies are essential. Recent research has focused on estimating the economic impact of prairie crop pests and refining management thresholds for species like the pea leaf weevil. Studies suggest that preventative seed treatments may reduce early larval damage. However, research also highlights potential effects on non-target beneficial invertebrates, emphasizing the need for balanced approaches. Increased introduction of native Albertan predators into affected fields may promote natural predation and reduce pea leaf weevil populations through ecological methods. By integrating ecological and economic perspectives, sustainable pest management strategies can balance crop protection with long-term agroecosystem health. Through early deterrence methods and natural predation, there is hope that pea leaf weevil populations in Alberta can be controlled without harming beneficial organisms or disrupting existing ecological processes.

Dongyeon Lee, “God’s Promise for Diaspora Mission Revealed in Isaiah 4 and 6: Insights from a Biblical and Theological Perspective”

As the world becomes more globalized, more immigrants are emerging. In this trend, the importance of diaspora mission is also increasing. Diaspora mission began to be seriously addressed in the global mission community.

This study will examine the biblical and theological perspective of diaspora mission through Isaiah 4 and 6. After reviewing previous scholarship and definitions of diaspora mission, this study analyzes God’s purpose and promise through Isaiah chapters 4 and 6. Subsequently, this study explores the significance of diaspora mission for the overall trajectory of the mission of God.

This study will help us understand the promises God extends to diaspora peoples who are forced to live in other countries due to war, famine, and religious persecution. It will also help us understand how the church should serve them and how to direct diaspora mission.

Avalon Legault and Ellia Tse, “The Dirt on Earthworms: Annelid Aliens’ Effect on Alberta’s Ecosystems”

Earthworms are commonly known for being beneficial to soil and a natural help in gardening and agriculture because of their role in cycling nutrients, increasing soil fertility, and ground aeration. While earthworms have a positive role in certain ecological contexts, these introduced annelids can have detrimental effects on native ecosystems and species by altering soil qualities and influencing native species. In our poster, we aim to (1) identify the species of earthworms found in Alberta and describe their introduction, reach and role across the province’s different ecosystems; and (2)

explain the methods of earthworm spread and dispersal to northern forest ecosystems, indicating ways to mitigate their invasion. Primarily, we will (3) discuss the effects of their presence on Alberta's native plants and animals, and the soil properties in affected ecosystems. We intend to clarify conceptions about earthworms' benefit, communicate how introduced earthworms affect Alberta's forest ecosystems, and share methods to reduce their spread.

Amy Lemke, "St. Augustine's Theory of Education: A Synthesis of Essentialism & Holism"

Here at Ambrose University, it is incumbent upon us to study the legacy of St. Ambrose, for whom our school is named. A major figure in the shadow of St. Ambrose is his most prominent student, St. Augustine, whose influence extends far beyond Christianity today and into the spheres of contemporary philosophy, literature, and educational theory. St. Augustine's theory of education is summarized by Ryan N. S. Topping in his book *Happiness and Wisdom: Augustine's Early Theology of Education*, which provides a unique and helpful synthesis of essentialism and holism which might otherwise be seen as educational theories in opposition to one another. Essentialism is the educational theory which holds that there is a core body of knowledge which should be consolidated and passed on within every culture. Holism or humanism in education are a set of theories which seek to educate the full person in all of their complexity. These two schools of thought seem to be frequently pitted against each other, but this presentation will seek to show the ways that St. Augustine provides a helpful balance for educators of all backgrounds.

Lian Lister, "A Sabbath Vision as Hope for Creation: Practicing Resistance and Restraint in a Culture of Consumption"

As Walter Brueggemann puts it, we in the West live in a non-stop culture of anxious productivity and insatiable acquisitiveness. It is no secret that the bottomless demand of our consumeristic culture ultimately brings greatest harm to those with the least power or voice to speak for themselves. Intentional or not, our lives are inextricably entangled in irreducibly complex systems that contribute to global injustices and environmental harms. In the face such overwhelmingly bigger-than-us problems, is there hope for a different way? What resources within our Christian tradition can help us both engage theologically and respond practically? This paper seeks to develop a theology of creation care using a biblical lens of Sabbath to understand the relationship between God, humans, and the non-human creation. Drawing on Norman Wirzba's assertion that God's Sabbath rest and delight on the seventh day gives creation its ultimate purpose of participation in the divine life (the purpose of salvation fulfilled in Jesus Christ), I argue that our creation mandate and human vocation must be understood with this ultimate purpose and meaning in view. I examine how the Sabbath commandments develop this in a practical way as a discipline of restraint and resistance and explore the potential of Sabbath keeping as an earth keeping practice in today's consumeristic culture. Inviting Christians like me who are concerned about the global impact of our consumption habits, but overwhelmed with where to begin, I present the hope of Sabbath, suggesting that one way of starting is by stopping.

Joshua Liwanag, “The Role of Music in Video Game Immersion: A Case Study on Genshin Impact”

Games utilizing anime characters are often dismissed as merely appealing to fans who drool at skin-clad animations and spend money to cater the appearance and power level of their ‘in-game player character’ to their liking. However, music, in tandem with story, animation quality, and gameplay mechanics, contribute significantly to a player’s immersion into a game, and therefore overall engagement and playtime. The role of music has a greater impact on a player’s immersion into a video game experience when exploring, battling, and watching cutscenes than gamers and non-gamers realize.

In this paper, I show how gameplay experiences across dynamic environments influence player immersion. Video game composers and scholars have developed and utilized tools to highlight “specific aesthetic, architectural, cultural, or even political characteristics of in game places” (Kellman, 2021). The development of musical cues, creation of soundscapes; and the concepts of background listening, aesthetic listening, semiotic listening, and ludic listening all contribute to immersion within a video game. Creating emotional ‘arcs’ through composition, as well as placing musical works within a socio-cultural context in game and in real life affect a user’s immersive experience. Additionally, implementing moments that “invite us to act, move, play in some relation to the musical soundtrack”(Kamp, 2024) or creating moments where “we hear music as communicating something about the game.”(Kamp, 2024) Building on Kamp and others, I examine the music of Genshin Impact, in order to illustrate how the in-game cutscene music, battle music, and exploration music contribute to an immersive gameplay experience.

Johana Mak-Castro and Dr. Claudia Sasse, “Finding Hope through International Students’ Eyes: Photovoice Insights for Teaching and Learning”

This session presents a photovoice-based study exploring how international students experience hope, adaptation, and resilience in Canadian practicum and workplace settings. Guided by the question: How can faculty and staff foster environments that nurture hope and belonging for international students? Twelve students from diverse programs captured photographs and narratives reflecting contrasts between their professional experiences at home and in Canada. Their images reveal moments of challenge, adaptation, and inspiration, offering insights into how students navigate disruption and find hope in unfamiliar environments.

Aligned with the conference theme, Reimagining Hope in Turbulent Times, this session highlights how international students’ perspectives illuminate pathways to hope and resilience in postsecondary education. Their stories demonstrate that cultural and academic disruptions can be transformed into meaningful connections, fostering belonging, agency, and flourishing. Faculty and staff can leverage these insights to enhance culturally responsive teaching, integrate diverse learning tools, and support students’ professional, personal, and faith journeys.

Attendees will explore key findings, methodological approaches, and student-generated images illustrating hope, adaptation, and perseverance. An interactive segment will invite participants to reflect on their own experiences, considering how storytelling and visual inquiry can inspire hope and co-create strategies for inclusive and resilient learning environments.

This session contributes to theory and practice in postsecondary education by modeling participatory methods that center student voices, highlight pathways to hope, and advance

culturally responsive pedagogy in turbulent times (Bennett et al., 2019; Komaie et al., 2018; Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001; McIntyre, 2003).

Arwynn MacPherson and Alexandra Martens, “Urbanization and Rising Risk of Echinococcus Multilocularis in Pets and Humans in Alberta”

Coyote tapeworms (*Echinococcus multilocularis*) are commonly found in coyotes, foxes, and domestic dogs. It can be transmitted through feces from an infected animal; this can also arise from fruits and vegetables that have come in contact with the infected feces. *Echinococcus multilocularis* is important to understand as it affects humans, especially those with infected pets or those who come in contact with infected food. This parasite can live in humans for 5 to 10 years without any signs or symptoms. Once symptoms arise, they can include nausea, vomiting, weight loss, abdominal pain, and jaundice. In this poster we aim to summarize the life history of the coyote tapeworm and determine if the increased urbanization of coyotes causes more infections in humans and pets in Alberta. We seek to gain an understanding of the tapeworm’s effects and influence on us and about ways to mitigate the rising risks of infection. We also seek to bring hope to the people who may be afraid of these creatures due to their lack of education on the subject.

Alexandra Martens and Arwynn MacPherson, “Urbanization and Rising Risk of Echinococcus Multilocularis in Pets and Humans in Alberta”

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Hayley Meijndert, “Charismatic Communities and Christian Ethics: Exploring Spirit-Empowered Ministry and Ethical Responsibility”

Christian ethics and charismatic theology are both well-developed theological disciplines, yet their intersection has received little scholarly attention. This study addresses that gap by examining how charismatic Christian communities can practice Spirit-empowered ministry in ways that are biblically grounded, ethically responsible, and theologically faithful. While Christian ethics has often neglected the active role of the Holy Spirit, charismatic theology has often lacked sufficient ethical boundaries, leading to misuse and theological distortion. This paper argues that integrating these disciplines produces a more faithful vision of the church as Christ designed it to be.

The study first creates a framework of Christian ethics, with particular attention to ethics being located in specific communities, times, and places, the role of the church when it comes to Christian ethics, and the Spirit’s often neglected role in ethical formation. It then examines

charismatic theology, defining charismatic communities by the active presence of the charismata and affirming the scriptural and ecclesial significance of the spiritual gifts while acknowledging the ethical misuse that often goes alongside them.

The model I propose emphasizes healthy church culture, which is cultivated by communal discernment, mutual accountability, and an openness to correction. These practices are vital to sustain healthy charismatic ministry, ensuring that exercise of the charismata remain grounded in love, accountable to the church, and aligned with Scripture and the Spirit's purposes. By bringing Christian ethics and charismatic theology into dialogue, this project offers an ethical evaluation of charismatic practices and proposes a constructive model for their faithful use.

Amy Morris, "I Will Survive: The Role of Music on Trauma Resilience"

Surveys done by the World Health Organization have revealed that over 70% of people globally will experience a traumatic event within their lifetime (Kessler et al. 2017). While mental health practitioners have numerous methods with which to support people who have experienced trauma, music and music therapy have become notably effective means of doing so. (Beer et al. 2019, Rosenberg et al. 2021) This paper offers a framework for how we can understand music informed trauma research in our current climate of trauma paradigms. I show how our current perceptions of supporting people who have experienced trauma are often limited to traditional therapy settings. Drawing on research in trauma resilience that shows how music gives agency, provides social reassurance, and allows exploration of identity (Nijs et al. 2021), this research shows the value of music in shaping how trauma resilience is viewed, and frames future implications on the practice of music therapy. I further consider the role of gender in approaches to music as a coping mechanism (Rosenberg et al. 2021), which will inform my argument towards how we conceptualize trauma between genders. With the ever-growing presence and use of music in both the everyday and professional settings, this research adds to a timely conversation about how music helps individuals to cope and build up resilience to trauma.

Dr. Matthew Morris, "The Origins of Rosy Red Minnows in Alberta"

Rosy red minnows (*Pimephales promelas*) are an orange variant of the fathead minnow that have recently been documented in Alberta's waters. The origin of these fish is unclear, but it is possible they come from illegal pet store or bait fish releases. Given that rosy reds are found alongside native fathead minnow, there is concern of hybridization. Here we present a mitochondrial haplotype network that compares cytochrome c oxidase I sequence diversity in wild-caught rosy red and fathead minnows, as compared to rosy red minnows purchased from Calgary and Edmonton-area pet stores. This is a first approach to determine (a) if rosy reds originate from pet store fish, and (b) if a unique DNA barcode exists for pet store rosy reds that could be used for environmental monitoring.

Tonny Mwangi, "Serving through the Lens of Identity: Exploring How First-Generation Immigrants' Identities Influence Their Service Delivery"

This qualitative study explores how immigrants' identities influence the ways they deliver services to others in professional contexts. Using an exploratory, phenomenological design and grounded in Social Identity Theory and Transformative Learning Theory, the research examines how cultural

background, group belonging and reflective learning processes shape the approaches of immigrant service providers to newcomer clients. Immigrants, working as service providers at the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, are invited to participate in semi-structured interviews to share their lived experiences of identity negotiation, cultural adaptation, and professional practice. Data will then be analyzed thematically to identify patterns related to identity expression, experiences of belonging or exclusion, and moments of learning or perspective transformation in relation to service delivery. By exploring the experiences of immigrant service providers, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how identity is both shaped by, navigated and utilized within service roles. Findings are expected to offer insights for organizations and practitioners seeking to foster more inclusive, culturally responsive service environments and to support immigrant service providers in navigating identity, learning, and professional practice.

Josiah Nelson, “The Effect of Generic and Specific Labels on the Mislabelling of Salmon”

Seafood mislabelling is a global problem, including in Calgary, Alberta. Mislabelling has conservation, economic, and health concerns. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) regulates seafood labels in Canada, but inconsistently permits generic (non-species-specific) labels for some products. In previous research, it was demonstrated that mislabelling occurred at a higher rate when a generic label, such as Salmon, was used, when compared to species-specific labels, such as Atlantic Salmon. This study compared mislabeling rates of generically- and specifically-labelled salmonid products. This study also tested out the newly purchased MinION MK1B DNA sequencer. 25 samples of salmon were taken from stores and restaurants; 11 were labelled Salmon and 14 were labelled with the full species name. Samples were identified using DNA barcoding: the DNA was extracted, the cytochrome c oxidase 1 gene was amplified, the DNA was sequenced with the DNA sequencer, and the DNA sequences were compared with the Barcode of Life Database to determine the species. The species identity from the DNA barcode was then compared to the CFIA Fish List to determine if the product was mislabelled. A Chi-square test was used to determine if generic samples differed in mislabeling rate from species-specific labels.

Dr. Saulo Neves, “The ‘My Serious Life Project’ Year 2: “Transforming the Docuseries into a 45-minute film for Educational Use and Knowledge Mobilization”

Scientific research across disciplines is increasingly scrutinized for its relevance and quality, with leisure studies especially challenged to demonstrate meaningful engagement with broader society. The “My Serious Life Project” is a three-year initiative that responds to leisure scholars’ calls to “mobilize our work beyond academic audiences to enhance its relevance” (Glover, 2015, p. 2). This is achieved by translating the Serious Leisure Perspective (SLP), a theoretical framework developed by Robert A. Stebbins (1992; 2007; 2020), into accessible visual content that connects academic theory with everyday experiences (Powell, Davies, & Nutley, 2018). The project directly addresses the need for socially relevant leisure research that bridges academic concepts with public understanding (Demirbas et al., 2024), by producing a documentary and evaluating its educational effectiveness. While the completed 150-minute documentary series from the project's first year provides substantial educational value, its length presents practical barriers to classroom use (Oliveira, 2026). Educational research shows that shorter, focused content enhances student engagement and retention, especially in postsecondary settings where class periods typically range

from 50 to 90 minutes. Therefore, in Year 2 (2026), our goal is to transform the six-episode documentary into a single, 45-minute educational film suitable for classroom use, laying the groundwork for the next phase of the project. This presentation offers an overview of the three-year project and its current situation, highlighting lessons learned and challenges faced during “My Serious Life Project” Year 2.

Dr. Ken Nickel, “Are we beyond hope? Scrutinizing the Contents of Pandora’s Jar

Keeping theologians and philosophers busy for centuries, our Christian Bible—from Genesis to Revelation—has no monopoly on maddeningly perplexing passages. Greek mythology gets in on the act with its fair share of perennial ‘head-scratchers’. One such example from Hesiod’s Works and Days and Theogony is the archetypal account of the Zeus’s creation of the first human woman, Pandora. In similar fashion to Eve beguiling Adam with forbidden produce, so too Pandora unknowingly beguiles Epimetheus with a jar (not a box!) containing ‘all gifts’. Epimetheus’s lust and inattention permit Pandora to carelessly ‘lift the lid’ ... and the world is never the same. Hesiod tells us that before Pandora can secure the lid everything in the jar escapes, with one exception. Under the watchful eye of Zeus, everything is unleashed, except hope! If we ourselves had heard such a pithy story from the lips of the Delphic Oracle we’d be no better positioned than Socrates in demanding, ‘What is the meaning of this riddling utterance?’ Does hope remain with us or are we deprived of hope? Humankind’s desperate hope for hopefulness has generated no end of interpretive sophistry and illusion. This presentation 'hopefully' puts an end to all speculation, and will ‘lift the lid’ once and for all on Hesiod’s archetypal story.

Ethan Nickerson, “‘The Fourth Central Power’: An Analysis of Bulgaria and Its Contributions to the Central Powers During the First World War”

In the First World War the Central Powers consisted of the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the Kingdom of Bulgaria. Despite being drastically smaller than its allies, both in terms of landmass and population count, the Balkan state still contributed significantly to the war effort of the Central Powers, mobilizing over a million soldiers, providing large amounts of food to all three empires, and achieving incredible military victories in Serbia, Greece and Romania. This small nation defeated hundreds of thousands of Allied soldiers in decisive battles and engaged hundreds of thousands more in Greece from late 1915 to the end of war, keeping them from deployment to the Western Front. This also freed up troops of the major Central Powers for more important strategic action. Regrettably, Bulgaria’s actions during the Great War have been largely neglected in the historiography of the conflict, and therefore this paper will examine the factors that caused the nation’s participation with the Central Powers, its motivations and objectives during the war, and its contributions and successes between 1915 and 1918.

Emilie Pregal, “The Negative Impact Social Media Has on Female Athletes”

Athletes who play at a high-level compete under intense physical and psychological pressure, however, due to social media being such a big part of our society today, it creates more pressure than beyond play. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Tiktok, and Youtube are being used to spread constant harassment, hate, and criticism after poor performances. This presentation will

explore how online hate and abuse can lead to a decline specifically in female athletes' mental health which can lead to anxiety, depression, sometimes burnout. By including examples and examining female athletes who have a great impact on young female athletes such as Simone Biles and Harper Murrey, this presentation will highlight how excessive online hate really is and how it can affect female athletes not only in their performances, but also in their day to day life. It will also give ways in how female athletes are able to move forward from this and give examples of ways to better their mental health during performance. In the end, this presentation will argue that stronger mental health support systems for female athletes and accountability on social media platforms are essential to protect their mental health and well-being in a sports environment.

Dr. Claudia Sasse and Johana Mak-Castro, "Finding Hope through International Students' Eyes: Photovoice Insights for Teaching and Learning"

This session presents a photovoice-based study exploring how international students experience hope, adaptation, and resilience in Canadian practicum and workplace settings. Guided by the question: How can faculty and staff foster environments that nurture hope and belonging for international students? Twelve students from diverse programs captured photographs and narratives reflecting contrasts between their professional experiences at home and in Canada. Their images reveal moments of challenge, adaptation, and inspiration, offering insights into how students navigate disruption and find hope in unfamiliar environments.

Aligned with the conference theme, Reimagining Hope in Turbulent Times, this session highlights how international students' perspectives illuminate pathways to hope and resilience in postsecondary education. Their stories demonstrate that cultural and academic disruptions can be transformed into meaningful connections, fostering belonging, agency, and flourishing. Faculty and staff can leverage these insights to enhance culturally responsive teaching, integrate diverse learning tools, and support students' professional, personal, and faith journeys.

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This session contributes to theory and practice in postsecondary education by modeling participatory methods that center student voices, highlight pathways to hope, and advance culturally responsive pedagogy in turbulent times (Bennett et al., 2019; Komaie et al., 2018; Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001; McIntyre, 2003).

Harsimar Singh and Sherri Krahn, "Managing Pea Weevil Populations within Alberta's Agriculture"

The pea leaf weevil (*Sitona lineatus*) is an invasive insect species in Alberta known for its negative impact on agriculture. Originally native to Europe, it was first recorded affecting peas in Alberta in 2000. Since agriculture is vital for the livelihood of farmers and a primary food source for consumers, it is economically important to protect crops from invasive pests like the pea leaf weevil. The pea leaf weevil feeds on leaves, seedling growing points, and nitrogen-fixing nodules of various crop plants. Larvae inflict damage by consuming root nodules that house nitrogen-fixing bacteria. This feeding reduces nitrogen availability in the soil, leading to chlorosis, stunted growth,

and yield loss—particularly during dry prairie conditions. Because of this disruption to both crop productivity and natural soil processes, effective management strategies are essential. Recent research has focused on estimating the economic impact of prairie crop pests and refining management thresholds for species like the pea leaf weevil. Studies suggest that preventative seed treatments may reduce early larval damage. However, research also highlights potential effects on non-target beneficial invertebrates, emphasizing the need for balanced approaches. Increased introduction of native Albertan predators into affected fields may promote natural predation and reduce pea leaf weevil populations through ecological methods. By integrating ecological and economic perspectives, sustainable pest management strategies can balance crop protection with long-term agroecosystem health. Through early deterrence methods and natural predation, there is hope that pea leaf weevil populations in Alberta can be controlled without harming beneficial organisms or disrupting existing ecological processes.

Matthew Smith, “Cultivating Citizens: The Essential Role of the Humanities in Democratic Life”

Toik Gwendolyn Tieleman, “The Pro-Ana Paradox: Personal Experiences Navigating Pro-Ana and Recovery Content on ED Forums”

Online pro-anorexia (“pro-ana”) forums are often stigmatized as monolithically harmful. However, recent research indicates that they are complex, nuanced spaces that often host both content promoting disordered eating behaviours as well as content encouraging recovery. This complexity creates a unique environment where users face competing messages that may threaten or affirm their sense of self, yet the resulting interplay and identity negotiation in between remain unexplored. This study investigates this gap through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with four members of MyPancakeCafe, a forum that explicitly hosts both pro-ana and recovery content. The grounded theory analysis aims to develop a substantive theory explaining the social-psychological process of navigating this digital paradox. Findings will contribute a nuanced, participant-centered understanding that moves beyond simplistic “harm versus support” binaries. This research has implications for developing more effective and compassionate digital interventions, harm-reduction strategies, and clinical approaches that acknowledge the complex reality of eating disorder experiences in online communities.

Dr. Colin Toffelmire, “Scribal Prophecy and the Day of the Lord”

This paper describes the way in which the Day of the Lord theme is used in diverse and intersecting ways in the Book of the Twelve (Minor Prophets). Scribes working with existing prophetic material, and constructing new prophetic material, create an edited book of prophecy that deploys the theme of divine judgment in order to both challenge and comfort listeners. This contributes to a theology that considers seriously suffering caused by divine action, but ultimately stresses the importance of hope in God's care for the covenant relationship.

Ellia Tse and Avalon Legault, “The Dirt on Earthworms: Annelid Aliens’ Effect on Alberta’s Ecosystems

Earthworms are commonly known for being beneficial to soil and a natural help in gardening and agriculture because of their role in cycling nutrients, increasing soil fertility, and ground aeration.

While earthworms have a positive role in certain ecological contexts, these introduced annelids can have detrimental effects on native ecosystems and species by altering soil qualities and influencing native species. In our poster, we aim to (1) identify the species of earthworms found in Alberta and describe their introduction, reach and role across the province's different ecosystems; and (2) explain the methods of earthworm spread and dispersal to northern forest ecosystems, indicating ways to mitigate their invasion. Primarily, we will (3) discuss the effects of their presence on Alberta's native plants and animals, and the soil properties in affected ecosystems. We intend to clarify conceptions about earthworms' benefit, communicate how introduced earthworms affect Alberta's forest ecosystems, and share methods to reduce their spread.

Finley Van Hell, "Sobibor: Understanding Revolt in Despair"

The Holocaust is a tragedy that is marked by despair. After all, faced with such explicit human evil and death, one is bound to feel crushed. Despite this, survivors and victims pressed on. Uprisings at Nazi concentration camps are often both stories of hopelessness and hope; Sobibor, one of the most famous camp revolts, resulted in the escape of half the camp (with around 50 of 300 initial escapees surviving the war), with those who failed to escape being killed, the camp shortly being dismantled following the escape. So how do we understand the Sobibor revolt, and what does it tell us about hope in despondency? What factors may lead to rebellion where it does not for others? As one survivor of Sobibor recounts, "Some people didn't run at all. They gave up." Sobibor, as aforementioned, is one of the more famous concentration camp uprisings, in part because it was one of the more successful ones. In this way, it serves as a compelling study. This paper will largely focus on the history of Sobibor, especially the uprising; it will include research looking at different academic papers and primary sources, including survivor accounts. I seek to understand how a potential combination of group cooperation, desperation, and hope for the future may have led to revolution at Sobibor, and what it means to find hope in a despairing situation.

Huafang Wang and Yihong Zhu, "Reimagining Hope in Turbulent Times: A Theological Interpretation for Plant Drought Resistance and Regeneration"

In an era marked by ecological instability, social turbulence, and existential uncertainty, hope is often reduced to psychological optimism or secular strategies of resilience. This paper argues that hope should be primarily understood as a theological category grounded in creation, suffering, and divine promise. Plant biology—specifically drought resistance and tissue and cell culture—serves as a witness to the structure of hope embedded within creation. By interpreting plant resilience and regeneration through a theological lens, the study demonstrates that hope manifests as growth under constraint, waiting amid uncertainty, and renewal after fragmentation. This interdisciplinary approach reimagines hope in turbulent times not as escape from adversity but as life oriented toward God's promise.

Joel Warren, "From the Silver Screen to the Cine-Concert: How the Storytelling Capabilities of Film-Music Affect Audience Reception, Experience, and Appreciation"

Frodo Baggins looks back at Rivendell one last time as the Fellowship make their trek towards the Misty Mountains. A hauntingly beautiful soprano voice, heard only by the audience, sings in Elvish

as the adventurers depart on their perilous journey. Is it the juxtaposing images of peace and danger on the screen or the comforting, yet sorrowful music that affects one's reception of the story?

Traditionally reception scholars view film-music as nondiegetic art subordinate to the images on the screen (Oliver and Swarbrick 2019); reserved for background listening (Gorbman 1987). However, few have studied how shifting audience focus by placing film music in the foreground via cine-concerts—concerts whose main feature is film-music—affects reception of the work. When the performance focus of film-music changes, its perception as either programmatic or absolute music becomes blurred. If film-music cannot be adequately defined when taken from its original context, it becomes increasingly difficult to define the music in its original context too. As an increasing number of people consume the cine-concert how should we approach the differences in audience reception of this music?

By analyzing aesthetics studies, music psychology debates, musical arrangements, and concert reviews, my presentation demonstrates how shifting listener focus to the forefront of perception causes a difference in musical appreciation without sacrificing the programmatic, musical storytelling properties. I will draw on work from reception studies (Lehman 2018, Okazaki 2020, Stoppe 2014) to discuss the opposite sides of the absolute/programmatic film-music-coin debates between musicologist, aestheticians, and psychologist in recent years.

Bethany Wickens, “The Room Where It Happened: How Broadway Bootlegs Shape the Theatre Fandom”

When you hear slime tutorial, you might assume an arts and crafts demonstration. However, searching on Google or YouTube for the so-called slime tutorial reveals hundreds of illegal bootlegged recordings of shows and musicals. Drawing on the work of theatre scholars in conjunction with digital comments from fans, audience studies, and polarizing bootleg commentary, this paper will focus on the impact bootlegs have on theatre fans and its contribution to the global theatre community.

Welsh and Wolf propose that “A musical encompasses the spectator's entire experience with a show, from their first acquaintance until it fades from memory.”(Welsh and Wolf 2019). Peter C. Kunze has further argued that, rather than harming theatre as an art form, bootlegs can increase fan engagement (Kunze 2023). I propose that bootlegs extend the time a spectator experiences the show, thus extending its reception. Drawing on the work of Kathryn Edney (2017) and Jessica Hillman-McCord (2017), who situate musical theatre in the 21st century, I will dissect traditional cellphone etiquette alongside fan behaviour to investigate the fan's perspective on bootlegs. I will also draw on YouTube slime tutorial comment sections and actor commentary to discuss the complicated positive and negative ramifications of bootlegged theatre. Through this investigation, I will show how bootlegs can mitigate theatre's financial inaccessibility, build a stronger fan base, and lead to a more connected theatre community.

Maria Withey, “Does Religious Context Affect Expression of Sexual and Gender Diverse Culture?”

Researchers have long been interested in how Institutional context affects identity, meaning, motivation and belonging for sexual and gender diverse populations. However, despite the importance of religion in shaping sexual and gender diverse rights, there has been little comparative

research on how their community formation and collective identity varies across faith-based and secular organizations. To address this gap in the knowledge, I conducted narrative theme analysis with ethnographic observation.

The Institutions were identified as Faith University and Compassion University located within Western Canada. Compassion University with a campus setting of more than 30,000 students is a very large campus. Faith University with approximately 2000 students has a predominantly Christian faith focus. The participant group selected at each University was chosen on the basis of welcoming the sexual and gender diverse community as well as allies. Groups were observed from September to February of 2025/26. Preliminary results show that Institutional events and artistic expression affect what a sexual gender diverse expression looks like at each University setting. At Faith University negotiation of identity revolves around being true to the self and divine relationship. While at Compassion University there are more opportunities for self-discovery through interactions in novel and stimulating new ways that support finding of the authentic self and exploration of possible selves. The research directly addresses our societal conceptions about bias and lived experiences of the sexual and gender diverse community. Results will be discussed in terms of human thriving on campuses that preserves human dignity and caring.

Yihong Zhu and Huafang Wang, “Reimagining Hope in Turbulent Times: A Theological Interpretation for Plant Drought Resistance and Regeneration”

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Paul Wong, “A Christian Studies Approach to Homelessness”

Ethne Zieb-Herrmann, “‘There’s always a good ending’: How Individuals with FASD Express Resilience against Hardship”

Being a lifelong disability, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) presents long-term challenges for affected individuals and their families. Research has broadly covered these challenges, which has both allowed for the creation of informed care practices while also contributing to a deficit-based narrative of individuals with FASD. Opposed to this deficit-based narrative, this study uses a strength-based approach to bring to light the factors that empower participants to be resilient against hardship. Through in-depth interviews inspired by McAdams’ (2007) Life Story Interview, participants described not only the challenges they have faced, but the positive life factors that have helped them bounce back from those challenges. Mental health and housing struggles were commonly reported challenges. As participants defined resilience in their own words, they described resilience-building factors such as learned coping strategies, significant relationships, and

learning more about FASD. By empowering participants' voices, this project offers an alternative to the popular deficit-based narrative of FASD and has implications for further strengths-based research and intervention.