Call for Papers

Nonreligion and Secularity Research Network Conference

6-9 June 2023

University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada

Many existing studies in nonreligion and secularity research focus on what nonreligious individuals, communities and societies are not: the different ways they are not (or less) religious in their values, identities, practices and beliefs. The decline of religion is important to map and to understand. Also important to understand is how nonreligion is defined against religion when it comes into contact with the latter. In some ways though, this is an understanding of nonreligious individuals, groups, institutions and nations as 'minus God' or 'minus religion'. There have been calls over the past couple of decades to move research and scholarship instead towards a substantive (or positive) understanding of nonreligion and secularity.

The theme of this conference is tied to the positive content of nonreligion and secularity, defined as the worldviews, life stances, identities and behaviours distinct from yet potentially in tension with religion, present among the less or nonreligious and which shape their lives and realities. How should we define and use substantive (or positive) nonreligious concepts such as nonreligious worldviews, life stances, existentiality, identities, cultures, sacrality, ethics, moralities and meaning-systems, if at all? What activities do nonreligious individuals engage with in relation to their worldviews and beliefs? What values do social institutions espouse, if not overtly religious ones? What language is used for meaning-making outside of what can be defined as religion? These are a few examples among many of substantive nonreligion research questions. With nonreligion on the rise in many countries across the globe, generating substantive knowledge of the phenomenon is crucial to better grasp what defines the pasts, presents and futures of our societies.

The Nonreligion and Secularity Research Network (NSRN) invites both paper and session proposals for its 2023 conference titled *Towards Substantive Understandings of Nonreligion and Secularity*. The 2023 NSRN conference will be held in partnership with the Nonreligion in a Complex Future (NCF) research project, based at the University of Ottawa (Canada) and led by Professor Lori Beaman.

The 2023 NSRN conference will be delivered using a hybrid virtual and in-person format. For those who can travel, we strongly recommend you join us in person at the conference venue at the University of Ottawa in Ottawa, Canada from 6-9 June 2023. However, for those who cannot join in person, there will be at least one hybrid session

room (out of two session rooms in total) throughout the days of the conference where participants can present virtually, listen to other virtual and in-person presentations and ask their questions. There will be no fee to attend the 2023 NSRN conference either in person or virtually.

Deadline for session and paper proposals: 16 December 2022

Instructions for submitting session and paper proposals:

Each individual may only present one paper at the 2023 conference, on top of being a co-author on other papers, chairing/organizing a session, and/or being part of an author-meets-critics session.

Each session will be allocated a 1h30min timeslot during the conference.

To submit a **paper proposal**: e-mail nsrnconference2023@gmail.com with the
- Title of the paper
- Abstract of the paper (max. 150 words)
- Whether the paper will be presented in person in Ottawa (recommended) or virtually
- First and last name, institutional affiliation, title/position, and contact e-mail address of the primary author
- First and last name(s), institutional affiliation(s), title(s)/position(s), and contact e-mail address(es) of the co-author(s) (if applicable)

To submit a **session proposal** (with 3-4 papers and a chair): e-mail nsrnconference2023@gmail.com with the
- Title of the session
- Abstract of the session (max. 150 words)
- First and last name(s), institutional affiliation(s), title(s)/position(s), and contact e-mail address(es) of the session chair and organizer
- Whether each of the (3-4) papers in the session will be presented in person in Ottawa (recommended) or virtually
- Titles of each of the (3-4) papers
- Abstracts of each of the (3-4) papers (150 words max. each)
- First and last names, institutional affiliations, titles/positions, and contact e-mail addresses for each paper's primary author and co-author(s)

To submit an **author-meets-critics session**: e-mail nsrnconference2023@gmail.com with the
- Book title, publication year, and press
- Book abstract (150 words max.)
- Whether the session format will be entirely in person in Ottawa (recommended), entirely virtual or a hybrid in-person and virtual session
- First and last name, institutional affiliation, title/position, and contact e-mail address of the session organizer

- First and last name(s), institutional affiliation(s), title(s)/position(s), and contact e-mail address(es) of the book's author(s)
- First and last names, institutional affiliations, titles/positions, and contact e-mail addresses for each of the (2-4) critics

All paper and session proposals must be e-mailed to nsrnconference2023@gmail.com by the end of the day on Friday the 16th of December 2022. For any questions, please contact the programme chair Cory Steele by e-mail at cstee023@uottawa.ca Notifications of acceptance will then be e-mailed to conference participants in February 2023.