

# The International Jacques Ellul Society

*presents a colloquium on*

# JACQUES ELLUL & THE BIBLE

**June 28-30, 2018**

Hosted by Regent College      Vancouver, British Columbia

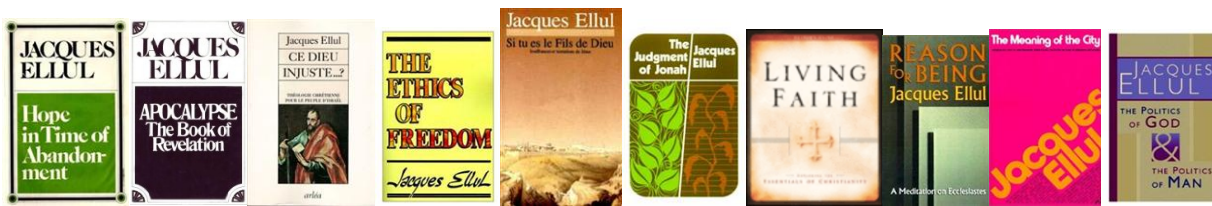
*Information and registration at [www.ellul.org](http://www.ellul.org)*

Jacques Ellul (1912-94) is best known as one of the premier voices of the 20<sup>th</sup> century analyzing the emergence, characteristics, and challenges of the “technological society” --- the growing and seemingly irresistible dominance of technological tools, processes, and values over the whole of life and the whole of the world.



But the Bordeaux sociologist simultaneously produced almost as many works of biblical study and reflection as sociology. In these studies, Ellul delivered brilliantly creative insights as well as provocative challenges to traditional theology. All serious students of Ellul, whether part of faith communities like Ellul (in the French Reformed Church) or not (like his colleague and best friend Bernard Charbonneau), have found interaction with his theological writings an essential complement to the study of his great sociological works. This conference will seek a multi-perspectival hearing of Scripture stimulated by Ellul’s works.

The conference program includes papers from multiple disciplines and perspectives, from France, North America, and beyond, from veteran Ellul scholars to younger voices. Our critical focus will be on (1) specific biblical texts about which Ellul wrote (e.g., Ecclesiastes, Revelation, II Kings, Romans 9-11, Jonah), (2) specific biblical topics about which Ellul wrote (e.g., the city, the work, money, prayer, incarnation, ethics, faith/hope/love), and (3) more generally on Ellul’s interpretive method. Our purpose is to understand Ellul and the Scriptures in depth, to critically re-examine his perspectives, and to consider their relevance and application today.



## Conference Program

### Thursday, June 28 11:00–2:00    *Registration & Check-in*

From 2:00 p.m. onward on Day One (Thursday) of our conference, Ellul scholars David Gill (Berkeley), Christian Roy (Montreal), and Frédéric Rognon (Strasbourg) will set the stage by considering the rich and distinctive biblical perspectives in the thought of both Jacques Ellul and his intellectual counterpart, Bernard Charbonneau. Poet and professor Albert Moritz (Toronto) will unpack for us an important and fascinating sample: “Ellul’s *Apocalypse* in Poetry and Biblical Exegesis.” Our evening banquet speaker will be leading Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann on “The Conflict between *Techne* and *Metis*.”

### Friday, June 29 & Saturday, June 30

From 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Day Two (Friday) and 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Day Three (Saturday) our program will include presentations by AIJE President Patrick Chastenot (Bordeaux), Daniel Cérézuelle (Bordeaux), Andrew Goddard (London), Stephanie Bennett (Florida), Lisa Richmond (Wheaton), Greg Wagenfuhr (Colorado), Virginia Landgraf (Chicago) --- with Jeff Greenman, Craig Gay, and Iwan Russell-Jones (all faculty at Regent College, Vancouver) --- and several other scholars and writers from both sides of the Atlantic (see complete list below). A highlight will be a presentation from film-maker Jerome Ellul about recent discoveries of unpublished material from his grandfather’s archives.

We expect an attendance of 60-80 men and women of all ages, locations, backgrounds, vocations, faiths, and philosophies. Alongside veterans and experts in Ellul’s thoughts will be people exploring his thought for the first time. Exciting discussions will take place in conference sessions, but also at meals together, and during informal breaks between sessions.

## Registration & Conference Details

**Registration** costs include not just the program but the evening banquet, two lunches, and coffee breaks. Regular Registration: US \$120; \$60 full-time students or unemployed; add \$30 late fee for registrations received after May 31, 2018. No refunds after May 31, 2018.

**Housing & local transportation:** Go to our Conference Registration site for lodging links. (Google: Weebly Ellul Society)

**Location:** the conference takes place at Regent College near the University of British Columbia. (5800 University Blvd., Vancouver BC, V6T 2E4 Canada)

**Optional Pre-Conference Course:** On the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday just before the conference (June 25-27, 2018), David Gill and Jeff Greenman will be co-leading a course (five 3-hour sessions) on “*Jacques Ellul: Prophet in the Technological Wilderness*.” This course is available for graduate level academic credit as well as for non-credit course auditors. Registration for this course *includes* registration for the conference which follows, June 28-30. **summer@regent-college.edu**

**General information:** www.ellul.org email Ted Lewis at **ellulsociety@gmail.com**

## Presenters & Topics (in alphabetical order)



### **Peter Anderson**

Peter holds a PhD in theological studies from Southeastern Baptist Seminary. He is the assistant to the Dean of Doctoral Studies and adjunct professor of Christian ethics at Southeastern. Throughout his graduate work, he has sought to interact with Ellul's ideas on theology, hermeneutics, and ethics through seminar papers and various conference presentations. Peter's dissertation was titled *The Presence of the Peaceable Kingdom: Shaping Protestant Social Ethics from Jacques Ellul and Stanley Hauerwas*.

### **"JE's Theological Interpretation of Scripture"**

Ellul represents a unique version of what is now termed TIS (theological interpretation of Scripture) practiced by theologians such as Kevin Vanhoozer and Craig Bartholomew. In order to show this, I will examine Ellul's expositions on the theological virtues alongside Kevin Vanhoozer's development of theodrama in *Faith Speaking Understanding*. This presentation will argue that Ellul's development of faith, hope, and love drives the ethical dimension of his hermeneutical method. I hope to offer further clarification of and expansion upon Ellul's insightful exposition of character, virtue, and embodied ethics.



### **Jeff Appel**

Jeff is a doctoral candidate in the department of Religious Studies at the University of Denver. His research interests include the philosophy of technology, continental philosophy, cultural theory, and political theology. He serves as an assistant editor for *The Other Journal*, *Political Theology Today*, and *The Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory*. He is currently writing his dissertation, which places the contemporary French poststructuralist, Bernard Stiegler, into conversation with the academic subdiscipline of Material Religion.

### **"Sign, Structure, and (Christ) Event: Illuminating Ellul's Anarchic Hermeneutics"**

At its core, this paper understands Ellul's interpretive methodology as an 'anarchic hermeneutics'. However, far from signaling a nihilistic ideology of chaos and violence, 'anarchic' here signifies a non-hierarchical, re-configuring process around matters of central concern. Through the methodological lenses of political theology and philosophical poststructuralism, I argue that a certain confluence of actions, indexes, and structures of Ellul's Kingdom semiotics (e.g. "being a sign") are interrelated in such a way that the general condition of Ellul's anarchic interpretive approach can be better illuminated.



### **Stephanie Bennett**

Stephanie is Professor of Communication and Media Ecology at Palm Beach Atlantic University in South Florida. She is a frequent conference presenter at the National Communication Association convention, the Religious Communication Association, International Jacques Ellul Society, and the Media Ecology Association. Much of her research focuses on digital culture and silence. Her roots in the work of Jacques Ellul, Walter Ong, and Neil Postman stem from a life-long desire to work toward organizational simplicity, strong community, and authenticity and intimacy in human relationships.

### **"Living Faith: Revelation and Religion in the Thinking of Jacques Ellul"**

It is all too common for religious faith (even in Christian circles) to be viewed as a matter of obeying laws and rules under threat of judgment and condemnation. Fear and guilt rule. Institutional and doctrinal conflicts divide people of such "faith." In stark contrast, Ellul develops, from his understanding of Scripture, a view of faith as a living relationship to God (a response to God's revelation, not to human religion). Authentic faith implies a discipleship and ethics of holiness, distinguished from the surrounding culture by its cultivation of the relationship with God and by the shalom it seeks with others.

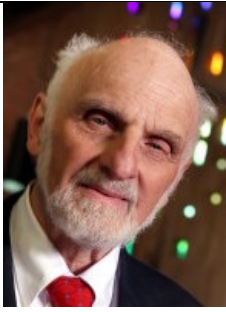


### **Luiz Adriano Borges**

Luiz is Professor at the Federal University of Technology in Paraná, Brazil. His primary research interests are the History and Philosophy of Technology and Science. His recent research projects are on "The Christian View of technology" and "Hope in times of war. Science, technology and society in Tolkien, Huxley, Lewis and Orwell (1892-1973)."

### **"Babel – The Tower, the City, and the Technological Paradox"**

Taking Genesis 11.1-32, the Tower of Babel story, as a starting point, alongside Ellul's *Meaning of the City*, we will explore the place of technological development in the cultural mandate of God. We will investigate this passage of Genesis in three ways: (1) exegetically, i.e., looking to comprehend the basic text and its meanings; (2) applying this exegesis in order to see how Babel can manifest itself today; and (3) exploring the Christian hope for cities and its intellectual critique.

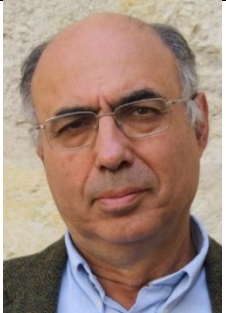


### **Walter Brueggemann**

is one of the most influential Bible interpreters of our time. He is the author of over one hundred books and numerous scholarly articles. He is a graduate of Elmhurst College (A.B.), Eden Theological Seminary (B.D.), Union Theological Seminary (Th.D.), and St. Louis University (Ph.D.). He served as faculty at Eden Theological Seminary (1961-1986) and at Columbia Theological Seminary (1986-2003) where he is William Marcellus McPheeters Professor Emeritus of Old Testament. Brueggemann's primary method with the text is rhetorical criticism. Words matter to Brueggemann, and one can tell that by listening to him speak as he hangs on to particularly theologically significant words. His magnum opus, *Theology of the Old Testament* (1997), is a rhetorical-critical look at the Old Testament through the lenses of "testimony, dispute, and advocacy." Among his best-known works is *The Prophetic Imagination* (1978) and *Message of the Psalms* (1984). He is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ.

#### **"The Conflict between *Techne* and *Metis*."**

I will return to the prophetic narratives of I and II Kings and consider the envelope of royal power in the narrative that sought to deny the folk epistemology of the prophets. [*techne*: craft knowledge, know-how, control; *metis*: wisdom, prudence]



### **Daniel C er zuelle**

Daniel studied philosophy and social science. As a philosopher he has taught the philosophy of technology in France and the USA and since 1991 has served on the board of the *Soci t  pour la philosophie de la technique*. As a sociologist he is investigating the social importance of non-monetary economy in modern society. He is currently the scientific director of the *Programme Autoproduction et D veloppement Social* (PADES). He is the author of *Pour un autre d veloppement social* (1996), * cologie et libert : Bernard Charbonneau precursor de l' cologie politique* (2006), *La Technique et la Chair* (2011), and other works.

#### **"Sarx, Incarnation, & Technology in Jacques Ellul"**

The New Testament proclaims that God took on *sarx*, human flesh; he was "incarnated." For both Ellul and Charbonneau truth and human values must be incarnated, take on human flesh and not remain as abstract ideas and empty words or theories. We will make some reference to Charbonneau and Ilich but, thanks to the recent transcription and publication of Ellul's biblical studies tapes on death and resurrection, we will encounter some interesting and new Ellul material on the issue of the body in the Bible.



### **Patrick Chastenet**

Patrick Troude Chastenet is Professor of Political Science at the University of Bordeaux. He was Jacques Ellul's student assistant in the 1970s. He has published ten books, including *Lire Ellul* (1992), *Jacques Ellul on Politics, Technology, and Christianity* (2005), *Jacques Ellul penseur sans fronti res* (2005), and *Comment peut-on (encore)  tre ellulien au XXI me si cle?* (2014). He is the founding president of the Association Internationale Jacques Ellul, director of *Cahiers Jacques Ellul*, and a founding board member of IJES. He has organized several international multidisciplinary colloquia on Ellul's thought and legacy.

#### **"The Different Forms of the Gift & the Question of Money"**

With Saint Paul, Ellul reminds us that, insofar as love of Mammon is tantamount to hatred of God, money is the root of all evil. But Mammon enslaves the rich just as much as the poor. To counter its sway, the gift, as both an expression and a fruit of the love of God, is the only thing that makes it possible to desacralize money. In the Bible, the gift is not a moral obligation, but a free act of love.



### **Jerome Ellul**

Jerome Ellul holds a master's degree in history from Universit  Michel de Montaigne (France). He is a multi-instrumental musician (piano, guitar, harmonium, organ, improvisation, and composition), photographer, and filmmaker. His site [jayavermanprod.com](http://jayavermanprod.com) exhibits some of his work. He is a member of the Association Internationale Jacques Ellul and is actively involved in numerous projects to preserve and extend the legacy of his grandfather. He is currently engaged in collecting material for a documentary to be titled *Jacques Ellul : Technique et Th ologie*.

#### **"Update on the Jacques Ellul Archives: Manuscripts and more!"**

By the time of the Vancouver Conference, Jerome hopes that work on Ellul's study of James and Amos will be finished. Perhaps some interesting correspondence between Ellul and Charbonneau will also be ready. A great deal has been found in Ellul's archives. His manuscripts clearly show how his reflections on freedom, faith, and hope were born in his biblical studies. Jerome will update us on the huge project to discover, identify, and share his grandfather's prose, poetry, recordings, and correspondence





### Kevin Garrison

Kevin Garrison is Associate Professor of English at Angelo State University (Texas) where he teaches and writes about theories of technology, focusing primarily on the ideas of Jacques Ellul. His articles on Ellul can be found in *Explorations in Media Ecology*, the *Bulletin of Science, Technology, & Society*, and an upcoming edition of the *Ellul Forum*.

#### “Ellul’s Truth & Reality: A Dialectic of Philosophical & Media Theory Perspectives”

Jacques Ellul’s dialectical thinking has roots in his belief that reality is *both* unchanging and changing (Van Vleet, 2016). For media theorist Richard Lanham (1995), the idea that reality is unchanging is a *philosophical* system of thought, born out of the Platonic ideal of a truth that is unmediated and absolute. The idea that reality is changing is a *rhetorical* system of thought, born out of the Sophist ideal of a truth that is mediated and relative. We will explore Ellul’s dialectical theology through the lens of Lanham’s media theory. Specifically, I combine Lanham’s ideas about media with Ellul’s ideas about theology to argue for a Biblical hermeneutic that oscillates between the philosophy and rhetoric dialectic. I conclude by arguing that Christian truth is fundamentally a question of mediation.



### Craig Gay

Craig is Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Regent College. He earned his BS at Stanford University, his MTS at Regent College and his PhD at Boston University. He lectures in the areas of Christianity, Society, and Culture and is the author of *The Way of the (Modern) World* (Eerdmans, 1998); *Cash Values: The Value of Money the Nature of Worth* (Eerdmans, 2004); and *Dialogue, Catalogue and Monologue* (Regent College Publishing, 2008); He has contributed chapters to a number of collections on the subjects of modernity, secularization, economic ethics, and technology.

#### “Being Present within the Technological Society”

Christians, Ellul believed, are called to be present – to bear witness to the possibilities of grace and freedom - at precisely those points of maximum tension that exist between God’s redemptive purposes and a sinful world at enmity with God. Modern technological development, he insisted, is one such point. Yet the Christian task is neither to repudiate modern technology nor even to seek, somehow, to reform it. Rather, Christians are simply called to bear witness to the possibilities of freely and personally transcending technological determinism. Just how and why Ellul believed this to be possible is the topic of this presentation.



### David Gill

David (BA, UC Berkeley; MA, San Francisco State) earned his PhD at the University of Southern California with a dissertation on *The Word of God in the Ethics of Jacques Ellul*, subsequently published (1984) as the first of his seven books on theological or business ethics. He spent a sabbatical year 1984–85 and several summers in Bordeaux, meeting with Ellul and many Ellul scholars, family, and friends. He recently retired from a forty year career as a business school and seminary professor of ethics. He is the founding president of the International Jacques Ellul Society (2000) and a founding board member of the AIJE.

#### “Ellul, Bible, & Word of God”

An overview/introduction to Jacques Ellul’s biblical writings and his views of Scripture, its character, importance, and function. Biblical text and revelation; the unity and variety of Scripture; original, canonical, and contemporary contexts; freedom of interpretation; multiple layers of meaning; our questions for Scripture and Scripture’s questions for its readers; criticism and appreciation for Ellul’s biblical studies.



### Andrew Goddard

Andrew is Senior Research Fellow at the Kirby Laing Institute for Christian Ethics. He previously taught Christian Ethics at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford University, and then at Trinity College, Bristol. Andrew studied at Oxford University, earning an MA in Philosophy, Politics and Economics, a Diploma in Theology, and then a DPhil in Theology for a thesis on the work of Jacques Ellul, particularly his writings on law and politics. This was published as *Living the Word, Resisting the World: The Life and Thought of Jacques Ellul* (2002). Much of his current academic work is focused on sexual ethics, especially within Anglicanism and its structures. He was ordained in the Church of England in 1996

#### “The Politics of Samuel and the Politics of Ellul”

Jacques Ellul’s biblical theology of political power and ethic of Christian anarchism and non-power is developed in various works, most fully his study of 2 Kings, *The Politics of God and the Politics of Man*. However, he gives little attention to the narrative of David’s rise and rule in 1 & 2 Samuel which offers perhaps Scripture’s most sustained reflection on political power. This paper will explore that narrative to see what it illumines in and what it might add to a biblical theology of political power shaped by Ellul.



**Jeff Greenman**

Jeff is President and Professor of Theology and Ethics at Regent College. He studied at Albion College (BA), Regent College (M.Div.), Oxford University (MA), and the University of Virginia (PhD). Before coming to Regent, Jeff was a professor and administrator at Wheaton College and at Tyndale Seminary in Toronto. Jeff's research has focused on Christian ethics, the history of biblical interpretation, spiritual formation, theological education, leadership development, and global Christianity. He is the author or editor of eleven books, including *Understanding Jacques Ellul*, and numerous essays and chapters in books and in academic journals ranging from the *Anglican Theological Review* to the *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*.

**An Unjust God? Ellul & the Challenges of Romans 9 – 11**

Paul's Letter to the Romans, chapters 9-11, has challenged its interpreters for 2000 years. How does the church relate to the Chosen People, Israel? We will consider Jacques Ellul's unique take on this passage, and more broadly on the Jewish/Christian relationship, in his *Ce Dieu injuste—? Théologie chrétienne pour le peuple d'Israël* (1991; ET: *An Unjust God? A Christian Theology of Israel in light of Romans 9–11* (2012)



**Kelsey Haskett**

Kelsey L. Haskett, PhD, is Professor of French and Chair of the Department of World Languages and Cultures, at Trinity Western University (Langley BC). Her main areas of teaching include French literature, French civilization, and French language and composition. Her research centers on the study of French women authors, and in particular, Marguerite Duras, as well as on the intersection between literature and spirituality. She spends time every summer in France, pursuing her goals of research, writing, and professional development.

**“Ellul’s City in Scripture and Poetry”**

*The Meaning of the City* analyses the role of the city, as portrayed throughout the Bible, with tremendous scope, depth, and originality --- with the city as a metaphor for the trajectory of humankind, from its rejection of God to its final redemption. The recent discovery of several poems, which Ellul wrote alongside *The Meaning of the City*, reveals not only the intellectual but also the personal and emotional investment of Jacques Ellul in this topic.



**Jason Hudson**

Jason Hudson is a PhD student in theology at Cliff College (UK) and an adjunct professor at Cincinnati Christian University (USA). His current work seeks to bring the thought of Jacques Ellul and Wendell Berry into confrontation with current attitudes toward progress, particularly within the context of evangelical Christianity. Beyond mere academic curiosity, his current interests rise out of an effort to bring his theological and philosophical thought into harmony with his roles as a church leader, professor, amateur farmer, and political dissident.

**“Power, Non-Power, and the Demonic”**

Jacques Ellul's dialectic theology relies heavily on his conception of Satan and the Demonic. This essay examines Ellul's view of the demonic including his treatment of the principalities and powers of Romans 13 and other texts. The demonic as primarily the realm of power and all that it engenders- technology, politics, money, violence, et al.- is set apart from the way of Christ. The temptations of Christ, according to Ellul, are rooted in this dialectic: power and trust. Christ, however, rejects power, as such, and trusts God to fulfill his promises. This trust that rejects power is the ethical freedom that stands dialectically opposed to the deterministic and closed way of power. Finally, the framing of Ellul's dialectic within his conception of the demonic clarifies that the essential evil of power is that it divides what ought to be unified. The Will of God, then, the dialectical opposite of the Will to Power, inspires unification, de-alienation: that in Christ, “all things hold together.”



**Virginia Landgraf**

Ginny is an Indexer-Analyst at the American Theological Library Association. Her Princeton Theological Seminary Ph.D. dissertation looked at Jacques Ellul's thought on institutions from both theological and sociological points of view. Before her theological studies she was a Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand. Besides diverse Ellul-related topics, she has presented on complementary views of abundance and scarcity among rival economic philosophies and is working on a presentation on different theologians' approaches to the Cold War and what lessons they offer for resistance to totalitarianism today. She is a church musician and worship planner at Loop Christian Ministries in Chicago.

**“Decalogue, Truth, & Reality”**

This paper will look at the Ten Commandments through the lens of Jacques Ellul's distinction between the orders of truth and reality. Ellul saw God's commandments as promises delineating the space in which life was possible. One can read his theological work as further elaborating on these promises, in that each of the commandments can be expressed as a way that reality should be kept open to truth. As in the biblical Decalogue God's self-declaration as the One who brought Israel out of Egypt is an integral part of the commandments, in Ellul's work it is the living God, not any sociological phenomenon, who promises that these commandments can be kept. In Ellul's sociological work each of the ten ways that reality should be kept open to truth, paralleling the commandments, is also present. When reality is closed in upon itself, vicious cycles of death reign. However, in the sociological work Ellul posits no guarantor who promises that reality can be kept open to truth.

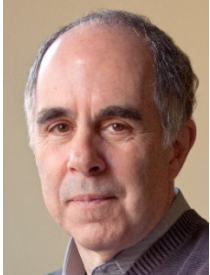


### **Michael Morelli**

Michael Morelli is a PhD candidate studying theological ethics and technology at University of Aberdeen, Scotland. He originally is from Vancouver, Canada, where he received a BA in English and Communications (Simon Fraser University) and a MA in Christian Studies (Trinity Western University). He has also worked in local churches and is a freelance writer when time permits.

#### **“The First Propaganda Campaign: Ellul’s Reading of the Genesis Fall”**

Although Jacques Ellul often characterized his work as a dialectical enterprise which separated sociology and theology he also frequently wrote about the “spiritual nucleus of a problem” which radiates into sociological problems. In this paper I explore Ellul’s theology of the Fall account in Genesis and demonstrate how this is the theological center around which the sociological problem of propaganda in Ellul’s work orbits. In *The Humiliation of the Word*, for example, Ellul writes, “We can foresee the Fall as soon as sight is considered independently of the word. But what initiates this consideration of sight apart from God’s word which culminates in the rebellious taking of fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil? The first propaganda campaign: a subversive conversation between the Serpent and Eve during which Adam is present but remains silent. For Ellul, from *this* propaganda *all* propaganda flows.



### **Albert Moritz**

Albert is the Blake C. Goldring Professor of the Arts and Society at Victoria University in the University of Toronto. He is primarily a poet; his work has earned the Guggenheim Fellowship, the Award in Literature of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Griffin Poetry Prize, and other recognitions. His *The Sparrow: Selected Poems* will appear in spring 2018. His nonfiction and scholarly works (some written in collaboration with Dr. Theresa Moritz) include biographies of Emma Goldman and Stephen Leacock, the *Oxford Illustrated Guide to Canadian Literature*, and two studies of sublime and picturesque landscape in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century prints and engravings.

#### **“Ellul’s Encounters with the Apocalypse in Poetry and in Biblical Exegesis”**

This paper will explore the dialectic by which Ellul analyzes the Apocalypse and which he uses, in another form, to address it creatively. The Apocalypse is the only Biblical book to which Ellul devoted two works, (1) his study *L’Apocalypse, architecture en mouvement* (1975; ET 1977) and (2) his remarkable book-length poem *Oratorio: The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. *Oratorio* (1997) which only appeared three years after Ellul’s death, but was “written in the sixties” according to the publisher’s cover note. Perhaps the poetry is the seed later to be unfolded in his exegesis, but already containing everything and, it could be said, in a superior fusion. Investigating Ellul’s creative and analytical forms of dialectic illuminates the complex but clear vision of the Apocalypse that he offers. It shows us that the poem in particular dramatizes and enacts one of the great revelations he drew from the Apocalypse, the manner in which the God-granted free creativity of the human being encounters God’s permanent activity.



### **Elisabetta Ribet**

Elisabetta is a PhD candidate working with Professor Frédéric Rognon at the Faculté de Théologie Protestante, Université de Strasbourg, France. She’s working on a Thesis whose title is “La provocation de l’espérance. Perspectives théologiques actuelles dans l’oeuvre de Jacques Ellul”. Before meeting Ellul’s writings, she was a pastor in the Waldensian and Methodist Church in Italy. The idea of working on hope also comes from her pastoral experience with youth, migrants and generally dealing with the “presence au monde modern” of Christianity in our age.

#### **“Hope & Abandonment in the Bible”**

For Ellul hope is not merely a “Pauline virtue” or even the grounding of his *ethics of freedom* --- it also must be read and understood as an element of a dialectical pair: together with *abandonment*. In this paper we will focus on how Ellul uses Scripture to illuminate the truth and reality of both concepts, which can become a fundamental key to better understand the dialectic of hope in Ellul’s theological thought.



### **Lisa Richmond**

Lisa Richmond is Director of Library and Archives and a faculty member at Wheaton College, which holds one of the largest collections of books and papers relating Jacques Ellul outside of France. In 2014, she presented a paper on Ellul at the conference of the Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians. She serves of the IJES board and recently completed a new English translation of Ellul’s *Présence au monde moderne* (2016). She is a PhD student studying 17th-century literature and theology at the Institute for Research on the Renaissance, Classical Age, and Enlightenment at the Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier III (France).

#### **“Ellul on Work and Vocation”**

We will examine Ellul’s convictions concerning what the bible says about the meaning of work in the Christian person’s life and the relationship between work and vocation. Ellul addresses this theme at the end of his *Ethics of Freedom* and in other writings. We will compare Ellul’s convictions to those of Jean Calvin and Max Weber and offer some application to contemporary culture.



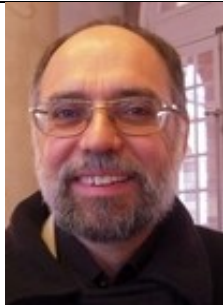


### **Rolando Rodriguez**

Rolando is a graduate student at Yale Divinity School, concentrating on Philosophical Theology. He earned his B.A. in Biblical and Theological Studies from Bethel University. His interest areas include Kierkegaard, theology and culture, continental philosophy, and ethics. Ellul's theological roots in Barth and Kierkegaard, and his sociological roots in Marx, encourage him to hope that Ellul will be a strong resource for future research on Christian engagement with Critical Theory.

#### **“Pauline Use of *Sarx* and Sartrean Existentialism”**

Ellul's *Ethics of Freedom* proposes a Christian ethics founded on the dialectic between freedom, by the a priori act of God, and the reality of humankind. Ellul's ethical system finds its inspiration from both a strong influence of Marx from early on in his intellectual career, a Barthian interpretation of scripture, and close reading of the Pauline letters. One particular aspect from Pauline theology that is important to Ellul's work is Paul's use of *sarx* (flesh) in his epistles, which Ellul understands as “the power of man in his opposition to God.” (EF, 134) This opposition is further described as “man's anxious self-centeredness” (EF, 135) which Ellul then correlates with Sartre's existentialism which is too focused on the self. In this paper, I will attempt to do three things: (1) explain Ellul's interpretation of Pauline use of *sarx*, (2) place it in light of Ellul's understanding and critique of Sartrean existentialism, and (3) evaluate the Ellul's correlation between the Pauline use of *sarx* and existentialism. I will argue that Ellul partially misunderstands Sartre's concept of freedom. Ellul's incorrect correlation of existentialism as “self-centeredness” and his interpretation of Pauline use of *sarx* affects his theological ethics in *The Ethics of Freedom*.



### **Frédéric Rognon**

Frederic is Professor of Philosophy on the Protestant Theology Faculty at the University of Strasbourg and publication director of the review *Foi & Vie*. He is member of the committee of the Søren Kierkegaard Society. He is author of *Jacques Ellul. Une pensée en dialogue* (2007, 2<sup>d</sup> ed. 2013) and *Généralions Ellul. Soixante héritiers de la pensée de Jacques Ellul* (2012).

#### **“Ellul, Hermeneutics, & the Analogy of Faith”**

In his relation to the Holy Scriptures, Jacques Ellul has always had a distrustful attitude against the historical-critical method. He opposed to it the Kierkegaardian meditation, and above all the method of “proportion of faith” (or “analogy of faith”). What does it mean? It is an expression of Paul the Apostle (κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως : Romans 12, 6), rediscovered by Jean Calvin, and which want to let the Scriptures interpret themselves. According to Ellul, the “abnalogy/proportion of faith” is the best alternative to scientific exegesis. We will show its main principles and its heuristic potential, and we illustrate it by several examples, thanks to the second part of *To Will and to Do* (first publication in French in 2017, unpublished in English), and to various biblical commentaries from Jacques Ellul.



### **Jacob Rollison**

Jacob Rollison is a doctoral student in theological ethics at the University of Aberdeen (UK). He holds a BA in Economics from Wheaton College (IL) and an MA in Media & Communication from the European Graduate School in Saas-Fee, Switzerland. He is the author of *Revolution of Necessity: Language, Technique, and Freedom in Jacques Ellul and Slavoj Žižek*, (Atropos Press, 2016).

#### **“Qohelet, Kierkegaard, and...Luther? Ellul's Anti-Philosophical Reading of Ecclesiastes”**

Jacques Ellul's reading of Ecclesiastes, which he describes as the most central Biblical book in his life, draws on Ellul's reading of Soren Kierkegaard, with Qohelet attempting to ironically undermine Greek philosophical thought. I argue that Ellul re-reads Kierkegaard through Ecclesiastes, undermining the philosophical categories employed by Kierkegaard and bringing Ellul's own theological irony and search for God's *presence* closer to Kierkegaard's Lutheran roots. This Ellulian 'presence' provides the theological impetus for the opposition to static thought throughout Ellul's oeuvre.



### **Christian Roy**

Christian is an independent scholar of intellectual and cultural history, an art and cinema critic, and a translator from several European languages, based in Montreal. A specialist of the French Personalist tradition, he published his thesis on its origins (PhD McGill 1993), having previously identified its Bordeaux “school” around Bernard Charbonneau and Jacques Ellul as an early fount of the critique of technology. He has just completed the first English translation of a book by Charbonneau (*The Green Light: A Self-Critique of the Ecological Movement*, Bloomsbury, 2018), soon to be followed by that of Ellul's posthumous *Theology and Technique* (Wipf & Stock). He is on the editorial committee of the *Ellul Forum* (ellul.org). Aside from articles on George Grant and many little-known Personalists, he has contributed entries on them to *The Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Politics* (Greenwood Press, 2006) and *Enciclopedia della persona nel XX secolo* (Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2008), in addition to writing *Traditional Festivals: A Multicultural Encyclopedia* (ABC-Clio, 2005). Many of his texts are available online at <https://roychristian.academia.edu>.

#### **“Nature & Scripture in Bernard Charbonneau”**

Bernard Charbonneau did not share his friend Jacques Ellul's Christian faith, but was consciously shaped by Christian heritage: the Bible was thus central to his thinking. His engagement with Scripture comes into focus in his discussion of the complex, ambivalent relationship between Nature and Christianity in *The Green Light: A Self-Critique of the Ecological Movement* of which he is an early pioneer, and whose Biblical underpinnings are brought out in his first work to become available in English.





### **Iwan Russell-Jones**

Iwan Russell-Jones is Professor of Theology and the Arts at Regent College. He earned the BA at the London School of Theology, the MTh at the University of Aberdeen, and the DPhil at Oxford University. Before coming to the Regent faculty in 2011, Iwan worked over 25 years as a producer and director for the BBC, in both television and radio. He produced documentaries that include *The Crucified King* (BBC1 2003) and *American Prophet* (BBC2 2008), which explore the religious dimensions of Martin Luther King Jr.'s leadership of the civil rights movement; and *Who Do You Say I Am?* (BBC1 2007), which features poet Michael Symmons Roberts reflecting on the contemporary meaning of the life of Christ. With the help of a team of students from Regent College he recently directed a film called *Making Peace with Creation* (2016).

#### **“We Do Not See Our Signs”: the Humiliation of Word *and* Image”**

The Psalmist's complaint about the foes of God who have “set up their own signs for signs” (Ps. 74:4-9) appears in important sections of at least two of Ellul's books (*Hope in Time of Abandonment* and *The Humiliation of the Word*). This text is, he says, “a very strong and up-to-date description of autonomous human effort”, and the clue to understanding our contemporary semiotic crisis. The paper will explore the importance of this theme in Ellul's thinking, particularly as it relates to the arts and the critique he develops in *The Empire of Non-Sense*. While Ellul is known for his strident criticism of the overwhelmingly visual nature of contemporary culture, his argument suggests that technique has led to the humiliation of both word *and* image. What hope, if any, does he hold out for the arts in the modern world?



### **Elizabeth Sanderson**

Elizabeth Sanderson is a historian and an information scientist who writes about visual culture, critical theory and the nature of truth. She received her MA from UIC in 2012 and her MLIS from Dominican University in 2016. Her upcoming book *Bamboozled: Alternate Historiographies* is currently under peer review.

#### **“Cain, Power, Efficiency, and the City”**

Jacques Ellul's writings in *The Meaning of the City* (1951) draw a connection between the motivations of Cain as the first city builder and the human desire to tame Eden and rebuild it as a testament to human power. In *The Technological Society*, Ellul reveals the nature of *techne* to be efficiency and the nature of humankind as inefficiency. The city as a manifestation of this efficiency exists in a warring state with its inhabitants enslaving them to the myth of progress and belief in their own power. This paper unpacks how Ellul's vision of humanity as inefficient relates to the Biblical idea of man as a reflection of God's image and the implications that these ideas have on how we view information, truth and history in a time where *techne* and political systems of power seem to have buried truth under information.

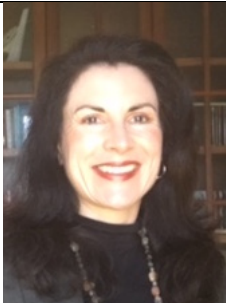


### **Read Mercer Schuchardt**

Read is Associate Professor of Communication at Wheaton College (IL) where he teaches courses in public speaking, media ecology, media effects, media and composition and journalism. He earned his BA at Swarthmore, and his MA and PhD in Media Ecology at New York University. He is co-author of *Understanding Jacques Ellul*.

#### **“An Ellulian Reading of the Woman Caught In Adultery” (Jn 7:53 - 8:11)**

Jacques Ellul posited two claims about Scripture, and a claim about the medium of Scripture, that are unique, compelling, and provocative: (1) Scripture should be read dialogically; (2) Scripture is not a series of answers, but a series of questions that ultimately make us responsible for our own lives; (3) The Ten Commandments *had* to be smashed so that they would not become visual idols, but could instead be written on the hearts of the Hebrews. Why did Jesus never write down any of his teachings? Why did he never write “anything” down at all, except one time (in the case of the woman caught in adultery in the John 8 story)? Why did he write in the sand? Why did he erase it after he wrote it? What does it mean, say, imply, or declare for us today?



### **Naomi Stafford**

Naomi is a commercial lawyer practising in the State of New South Wales, Australia. She is admitted to the High Court of Australia and the Supreme Court of New South Wales. Naomi holds a Bachelor of Arts and Laws and a Master of Laws from the University of Sydney majoring in public international law. Naomi first heard about Jacques Ellul at the 2017 TEAR Conference in Australia. The main speaker, Dr Jonathan Cornford of Manna Gum Ministries, spoke on the Bible & Economy and quoted from *Meaning of the City* which started her interest in the writings of Jacques Ellul.

#### **“Can Ellul's City be Inclusive, Safe, & Sustainable?”**

According to the forward to the United Nations' New Urban Agenda, ‘we have reached a critical point in understanding that cities can be the source of solutions to, rather than the cause of, the challenges that our world is facing today.’ Sustainable Development Goal 11 challenges the world to make cities ‘inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.’ In light of the bleak message about the city in Ellul's *Meaning of the City*, is it conceivable, achievable, or advisable to commit ourselves to urban renewal and hope? Do the less fully-developed allusions to the cities of refuge, the founding of Jerusalem, the vision of New Jerusalem or the commission to ‘seek the welfare of the city’ (Jeremiah 29:7) provide any hope or is urban renewal a misguided illusion?



### **Greg Wagenfuhr**

Greg is an author, theologian, and pastor. His most recent book is *Plundering Egypt: A Subversive Christian Ethic of Economy* (Cascade, 2016). He serves as a theology consultant to the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO). He received his PhD in Theology and Religious Studies from the University of Bristol (UK) researching Jacques Ellul, the sacred, and Christian faith as desacralisation. His current projects involve the creation of a theory of value, a forthcoming *Unfortunate Words of the Bible and Christianity*, and a book on ecclesiology.

### **“Freedom and Exodus, Ellul and N.T. Wright”**

Jacques Ellul’s biblical studies are unique. While he is clearly influenced by the early Karl Barth of the *Romerbrief*, Ellul is not a strict Barthian. His interpretation of Scripture is creative while remaining mostly plausible and faithful to contemporary scholarship. For these reasons this paper argues that Ellul’s theological work is not simply a phenomenon of the mid to late 20th century, but has lasting value. To illustrate this lasting value we will look at Ellul’s notion of Christian freedom alongside N.T. Wright’s emphasis on the importance of the Exodus as the formation of the people of God. One major contrast becomes quickly evident: Ellul’s freedom is that of the individual whereas for Wright, God’s liberation is of a people. How do Ellul and Wright use Scripture to develop their perspectives?