

# The International Jacques Ellul Society

*presents a colloquium on*

# JACQUES ELLUL & THE BIBLE

**June 28-30, 2018**

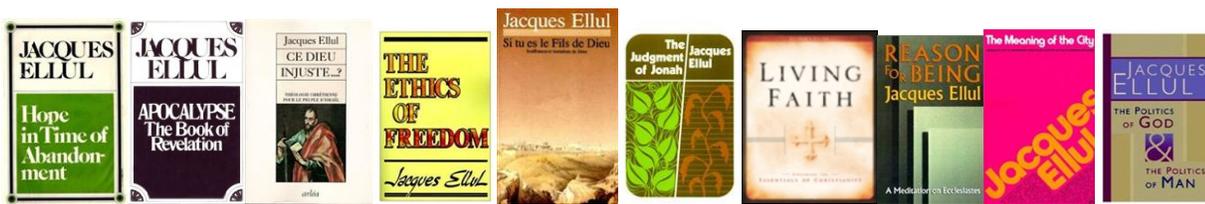
Hosted by Regent College      Vancouver, British Columbia

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.



## Program Schedule

### Thursday, June 28

- 9:00 –11:30 IJES Board and Advisory Council Members meet
- 12:30–2:00 Registration & Check-in for Conference; Book table open
- 2:00-2:40 Plenary Session (Chair: Jeff Greenman) [Chapel]  
#1: David Gill, “Scripture & Word of God in Ellul’s Writings”  
2:40-3:20 #2: Christian Roy, “Nature & Scripture in Bernard Charbonneau”
- 3:20-3:40 Break [Atrium]
- 3:40-4:20 Plenary Session (Chair: Lisa Richmond) [Chapel]  
#3: Frédéric Rognon, “Ellul, Hermeneutics, & the Analogy of Faith”  
4:20-5:00 #4: Albert Moritz, “Ellul’s Apocalypse in Poetry and Biblical Exegesis”
- 5:00-6:00 Break
- 6:00-8:00 Banquet & Plenary Session (Chair: David Gill) [Atrium]  
#5: Walter Brueggemann, “The Ancient Conflict Between *Techne* and *Metis*”
- 8:00-9:00 Casual conversation

### Friday, June 29

- 8:00-8:45 Coffee & Conversation [Atrium]
- 8:45-9:00 Plenary Session (Chair: Ted Lewis) [Chapel]  
Welcome
- 9:00–9:40 #6: Andrew Goddard, “The Politics of Samuel and the Politics of Ellul”  
9:40-10:20 #7: Daniel Cérézuelle, “The Sense of Incarnation in Ellul & Charbonneau”
- 10:20–10:40 Break [Atrium]
- 10:40-11:20 Parallel Session (Chair: Jacob Van Vleet) [Chapel]  
#9: Craig Gay, “Ellul, *La Technique*, & the Indispensable Liberation of the Person of Our Times”  
11:20-12:00 #10: Greg Wagenfuhr, “Freedom and Exodus, Ellul and N.T. Wright”
- 10:40-11:20 Parallel Session (Chair: Virginia Landgraf) [Classroom]  
#11: Lisa Richmond, “The Meaning of Jesus’ Life in *If You Are the Son of God*”  
11:20-12:00 #12: Michael Morelli, “The First Propaganda Campaign & the Origins of *La Technique*”
- 12:00–1:00 Lunch together [Atrium]
- 1:00-1:40 Parallel Session (Chair: Greg Wagenfuhr) [Chapel]  
#12: Read Schuchardt, “An Ellulian Reading of the Woman Caught In Adultery”  
1:40-2:20 #13: Jeff Greenman, “Ellul’s Biblical Theology of Israel: Key Ideas & Main Themes”  
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	<u>Parallel Session</u> (Chair: Stephanie Bennett)	[Classroom]
1:00-1:40	#14: Virginia Landgraf, "Ellul & the Ten Commandments"	
1:40-2:20	#15: Luis Adriano Borges, "Babel: The City of Man & the Technological Paradox"	
2:20-2:40	Break	[Atrium]
	<u>Parallel Session</u> (Chair: Albert Moritz)	[Chapel]
2:40-3:20	#16: Jacob Rollison, "God's Present: Kierkegaard, Qohelet, and Ellul's Reading of Ecclesiastes"	
3:20-4:00	#17: Elisabeta Ribet, "Hope & Abandonment in the Bible"	
	<u>Parallel Session</u> (Chair: Allyson Rogers)	[Classroom]
2:40-3:20	#18: Stephanie Bennett, "Living Faith: Revelation & Religion in Ellul's Thought"	
3:20-4:00	#19: Jason Hudson, "Power, Non-Power, and the Demonic"	
4:20-5:00	<u>Plenary Session</u> (Chair: Jacob Van Vleet)	[Chapel]
	#20: Jerome Ellul, "Update on the Jacques Ellul Archives: Manuscripts and more"	
5:00 onward	Evening Free	

## **Saturday, June 30**

8:00-8:45	Coffee & Conversation	[Atrium]
	<u>Parallel Session</u> (Chair: Geri Forsberg)	[Chapel]
8:45-9:00	Welcome	
9:00-9:40	#21: Kelsey Haskett, "Ellul's City in Scripture & Poetry"	
9:40-10:20	#22: Elizabeth Sanderson, "Cain, Power, Efficiency, and the City"	
	<u>Parallel Session</u> (Chair: Jacob Rollison)	[Classroom]
8:45-9:00	Welcome	
9:00-9:40	#23: Jeff Appel, "Sign, Structure, and (Christ) Event: Illuminating Ellul's Anarchic Hermeneutics"	
9:40-10:20	#24: Naomi Stafford, "Can Ellul's City be Inclusive, Safe, Resilient, & Sustainable?"	
10:20-10:40	Break	
10:40-12:00	Closing Plenary Session (Chair: Jeff Greenman)	[Chapel]
	Brief Report from new <i>Ellul Forum</i> Editor Lisa Richmond	
	#25: "Where Are We, Where Do We Go From Here?" (Panel Discussion)	
	Stephanie Bennett, Walter Brueggemann, Frédéric Rognon, Andrew Goddard	
12:00-1:00	Lunch Together	[Atrium]
1:00--3:00	(Optional) Post-Conference Discussion & Wrap-Up (Chair: Ted Lewis)	[Chapel]
1:00--3:00	Ellul Course Students meet with Profs. David Gill & Jeff Greenman	[Classroom]

## Presenters & Paper Topics in Order of Presentation



**David Gill** [dgill@ethixbiz.com](mailto:dgill@ethixbiz.com)

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.

### **#1 “Scripture & Word of God in Ellul’s Writings”**

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.



**Christian Roy** [christianroy2003@yahoo.com](mailto:christianroy2003@yahoo.com)

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](http://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>.

### **#2 “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.

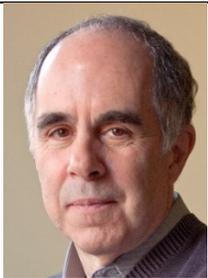


**Frédéric Rognon** [rognonfr@yahoo.fr](mailto:rognonfr@yahoo.fr)

Frédéric 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 *Génération Ellul. Soixante héritiers de la pensée de Jacques Ellul* (2012).

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

In his relation to the Holy Scriptures, Jacques Ellul has always had a distrustful attitude toward 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, which wants to let the Scriptures interpret themselves. According to Ellul, the “analogy/proportion of faith” is the best alternative to scientific exegesis. We will show its main principles and its heuristic potential, and illustrate it with several examples from the second part of *To Will and to Do* (first publication in French in 2017, unpublished in English), and from various biblical commentaries by Jacques Ellul.

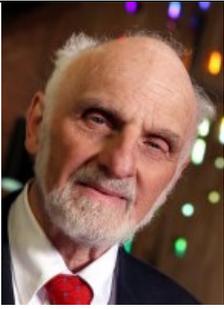


**Albert Moritz** [albert.moritz@utoronto.ca](mailto:albert.moritz@utoronto.ca)

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.

**#4 “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.



**Walter Brueggemann** [brueggemann33@cinci.rr.com](mailto:brueggemann33@cinci.rr.com)

One of the most influential Bible interpreters of our time, Walter Brueggemann 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 him, 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 are *The Prophetic Imagination* (1978) and *Message of the Psalms* (1984). He is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ.

### **#5 "The Ancient 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. Central in these narratives is the capacity of the prophetic figures to operate with and play upon the wisdom of the peasants (*metis*) in a way that bamboozles royal *techne*. In the interest of this inclination I will consider in turn the narratives of II Kings 4:1-7, 5:1-27, 6:8-23, and 6:24-7:20.



**Andrew Goddard** [goddardaj@googlemail.com](mailto:goddardaj@googlemail.com)

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

### **#6 "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.



**Daniel Cérézuelle** [daniel.cerezuelle@free.fr](mailto:daniel.cerezuelle@free.fr)

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 *Société 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 Développement Social* (PADES). He is the author of *Pour un autre développement social* (1996), *Écologie et liberté: Bernard Charbonneau précurseur de l'écologie politique* (2006), *La Technique et la Chair* (2011), and other works.

### **#7 “The Sense of Incarnation in Ellul & Charbonneau”**

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 Illich 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.



**Craig Gay** [cmgay@regent-college.edu](mailto:cmgay@regent-college.edu)

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.

### **#8 “Ellul, *La Technique*, & the Indispensable Liberation of the Person of Our Times”**

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.



**Greg Wagenfuhr** [greg.wagenfuhr@gmail.com](mailto:greg.wagenfuhr@gmail.com)

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.

### **#9 “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?



**Lisa Richmond** [lisa.richmond@wheaton.edu](mailto:lisa.richmond@wheaton.edu)

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 completed a new English translation of Ellul's *Présence au monde moderne* (*Presence in the Modern World*, Wipf & Stock, 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). Lisa serves of the IJES board and recently was appointed Editor of the *Ellul Forum*.

### **#10 “The Meaning of Jesus' Life in *If You Are the Son of God*”**

Jacques Ellul's *If You Are the Son of God* (*Si tu es le fils de Dieu*) is a little book, but it addresses several themes of central importance to Christian doctrine, namely, the nature of Christ and the meaning of divine and human suffering. I propose to examine what Ellul says in this book and consider the similarities and differences that Ellul's theology has with that of orthodox theology in these areas.



**Michael Morelli**

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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.

### **#11 “The First Propaganda Campaign & the Origins of *La Technique*”**

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.



**Read Mercer Schuchardt**

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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*.

### **#12 “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?



### Jeff Greenman

Jeff is President and Professor of Theology and Ethics at Regent College. He studied at Albion College (BA), Regent College (MDiv), 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*.

### #13 "Ellul's Biblical Theology of Israel: Key Ideas and Main Themes"

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)



### Virginia Landgraf [kaencat@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kaencat@sbcglobal.net)

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.

### #14 "Ellul & the Ten Commandments"

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.



**Luiz Adriano Borges** [hisguardian@hotmail.com](mailto:hisguardian@hotmail.com)

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).”

### **#15 “Babel: The City of Man & 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.



**Jacob Rollison** [jake.rollison@gmail.com](mailto:jake.rollison@gmail.com)

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).

### **#16 “God’s Present: Kierkegaard, Qohelet, and Ellul’s 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.



**Elisabetta Ribet** [elisabettaribet@gmail.com](mailto:elisabettaribet@gmail.com)

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.

### **#17 "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.



**Stephanie Bennett** [stephanie\\_bennett@pba.edu](mailto:stephanie_bennett@pba.edu)

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.

### **#18 "Living Faith: Revelation & Religion in Ellul's Thought"**

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.



**Jason Hudson** [jedwinhudson@gmail.com](mailto:jedwinhudson@gmail.com)

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.

### **#19 “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.”



**Jerome Ellul** [jerome.ellul@neuf.fr](mailto:jerome.ellul@neuf.fr)

Jerome Ellul holds a master’s degree in history from Université 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 Théologie*.

### **#20 “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



**Kelsey Haskett** [haskett@twu.ca](mailto:haskett@twu.ca)

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.

### **#21 “Ellul’s City in Scripture & 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.



**Elizabeth Sanderson** [esanderson@whiteoaklibrary.org](mailto:esanderson@whiteoaklibrary.org)

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.

### **#22 "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.



**Jeff Appel** [jsappel@gmail.com](mailto:jsappel@gmail.com)

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.

### **#23 “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.



**Naomi Stafford** [naomistafford@staffordlawyers.com.au](mailto:naomistafford@staffordlawyers.com.au)

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.

### **#24 “Can Ellul’s City be Inclusive, Safe, Resilient, & 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?

**#25 “Where Are We & Do We Go From Here? (Panel Discussion)**

Stephanie Bennett, Walter Brueggemann, Andrew Goddard, & Frédéric Rognon  
Chair: Jeff Greenman.



**IJES Executive Director Ted Lewis**      [ellulsociety@gmail.com](mailto:ellulsociety@gmail.com)

Ted Lewis is the Executive Director of the International Jacques Ellul Society. He is also Director of Communications at the Center for Restorative Justice & Peacemaking (University of Minnesota), providing training and consultation work for restorative justice programs. He is also an Acquisitions Editor for Wipf & Stock Publishers where he oversees the Jacques Ellul Legacy Series (of reprints and new translations). He holds an MA in Religious Studies (University of Minnesota), where he concentrated on the sociology of religious-based conflicts.

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