

## Ellul Society 2026 Conference Schedule **DRAFT** as of March 23, 2026

### Notes

All sessions are in Madaleva Hall, Saint Mary's College, unless otherwise noted.

All sessions will be recorded and posted at [www.ellul.org](http://www.ellul.org).

For plenary sessions, we will stay in one large group.

For parallel sessions, please choose among three simultaneous tracks (A, B, or C)

Abstracts of all papers and presenter bios will be posted at [ellul.org/conferences](http://ellul.org/conferences) when available.

Help us keep on schedule by showing up on time at sessions. Thank you.

### Tuesday, July 14

7:30am - 8:30am      If you arrived on July 13, you are welcome to have breakfast at the dining hall (pay out of pocket).

morning              Optional pre-conference activity: Architectural walking tour of University of Notre Dame campus, with Samir Younes, professor of architecture and Ellul Society board member

morning              Board members: IJES board meeting

11:00am - 1:00pm      **Conference reception table open, & book table**

12:00pm - 1:00pm      **Lunch (dining hall)**

1:00pm - 1:30pm      **Welcome and opening remarks**  
Co-presidents Jake Marques-Rollison and Geri Forsberg, "The Importance of the Word"

1:30pm - 3:00pm      **Plenary session: The Word and Image**  
Daniel Cérézuelle, "Words, Idolatry, and Iconoclasm"  
David Lovekin, "Image, Word, and Desire: Photography and the Quest for Home"

3:00pm - 3:30pm      **Break**

3:00pm - 5:00pm      **Plenary session: The Word Spoken**  
Christian Roy, "The Primacy of Speech in Bernard Charbonneau's Media Ecology"  
Peter Blum, "Speech, Embodiment, Word: Ellul and Merleau-Ponty on *Parole* "

5:00pm - 6:00pm      **Break**

6:00pm - 9:00pm      **Dinner (Foley's, University of Notre Dame campus)**

**Keynote address, Timothy O'Malley**

**Wednesday, July 15**

7:30am - 8:30am

**Breakfast (dining hall)**

8:30am - 10:00am

**Plenary panel: The Word Humiliated in Education**

Nowhere is the word more important than in the educational system. Yet it is being degraded and humiliated by technological dominance, political correctness, censorship, and philosophical errors. This panel uses Jacques Ellul's insights from *The Humiliation of the Word* to examine how the word is being disrespected in our educational system and to suggest ways to restore it to its proper place.

Dennis Cali, Geri Forsberg

10:00am - 10:30am

**Break**

10:30am - 12:00pm

**Parallel sessions: The Word in Culture (Choose A, B, or C)**

**Track A: AI Direct: The Word and AI**

Mark Honegger, "Can You Trust AI?"

Davin Heckman, "What Is a 'Word' to a Large Language Model?"

**Track B: Theology / Church / Worship The Word in Church**

Sophia Mandt, "The Agony of Idolatry"

Tyler Hanson, "The Transfiguration of Sight"

**Track C: Media / Image The Word in Media**

Michael Morelli, "Revolutionary Images? Going to the Cinema"

Spencer Greenhalgh, "Image and Word in Mormonism's Foundational Media"

12:00pm - 1:00pm

**Lunch (dining hall)**

1:00pm - 1:50pm

**Plenary session**

Eugene Halton, "The Humiliation of Vision"

2:00pm - 3:30pm

**Parallel sessions: The Word: AI, Digital Culture, and Propaganda (Choose A, B, or C)**

**Track A: AI + Language**

Lee Cerling, "AI 'Speech' v. Ellul and Balthasar"

Luke Hartsock, "When Words Become Weights"

**Track B: Digital Culture**

Matthew Littlehale, "The Humiliation of the Meme"

John Eger, "The Endless Patter of Interpreting Emoji"

**Track C: Politics / Propaganda / Truth**

Robert Hogg, "Holocaust, Propaganda"

Daryl Charles, "Orwell and Ellul in Dialogue"

3:30pm - 4:00pm

Break

4:00pm - 5:30pm

**Parallel sessions: The Word and Human Communication  
(Choose A, B, or C)**

**Track A: AI and Human Communication**

Poppy Fynes and Nina Seron-Abouelfadil, "Ableist Intelligence"

Dawn Sutherland, "Simulated Speech and the Silence of Meaning"

**Track B: Ellul in Dialogue**

Ian Tuttle, "Ellul and Jean-Louis Chrétien"

Dustin Peone, "Vico, Joyce, Ellul"

**Track C: Word / Desire / Culture**

Ginny Landgraf, "Climate Science Censorship and Truth"

Garrett Soucy, "Poetry as the Redemption of Efficiency"

Evening

**Dinner on your own** / suggestions will be provided / Dining hall is open 4:30pm-6:30pm (pay out of pocket)

Evening

Optional activities / suggestions will be provided

**Thursday, July 16**

7:30am - 8:30am

**Breakfast (dining hall)**

8:30am - 10:00am

**Panel: Thinking Machines and the Re/making of People**

Jacques Ellul, one of the most incisive twentieth-century critics of technology's power in the modern world, and who wrote about "thinking machines" (p. 429) as early as *The Technological Society* (originally published in 1947), elaborated in *Humiliation of the Word* his fears that a world drowned in images and noises produced by technologies would turn away from the resonance and significance of spoken and written words. Now, with artificial intelligence (AI) being incorporated into everyday life, and transhumanist aspirations driving the desires of Silicon Valley executives, a (re)discovery of Ellul's concerns and proposals in *Humiliation* is facilitated by this panel.

Davin Heckman, Mark Honegger, Ugochukwu Stophynus Anyanwu

10:00am - 10:30am

**Break**

10:30am - 12:00pm	<p><b>Parallel sessions: The Word in Media, Culture, and Society (Choose A, B, or C)</b></p> <p><b>Track A: Media / Culture / Society</b>  Corentin Messina, “Evangelicals in Quebec and Media Culture”  George Thomas, “Images, Desire, and the Primacy of the Word”</p> <p><b>Track B: Theology / Presence / Sacrament</b>  Jason Hudson, “Dialectical Presence, Christian Thirdwayism”  Noel Adams, “Ellul and Kierkegaard on the Significance of Humiliation”</p> <p><b>Track C: Reclaiming the Word</b>  Almantas Samalavicius, “Reclaiming the Word in the Age of an Image”  Meg Shipp, “Time to Think: Fighting for Focus in an Accelerated Age”</p>
12:00pm - 1:00pm	<b>Lunch (dining hall)</b>
1:00pm - 2:30pm	<p><b>Plenary Session</b>  Chris Sundby, “Ellul and the Situationists”  Read Schuchardt, “An Idol That Speaks”</p>
2:30pm - 3:00pm	<b>Break</b>
3:00pm - 4:30pm	<p><b>Plenary panel: Rising and Falling Institutions: The Word and Institutions</b></p> <p>With steadily increasing distrust in “traditional” institutions brought about by phenomena too broad and diverse to describe at length here, it was nevertheless clear to Jacques Ellul, a professor of institutions and author of a multi-volume history of institutions, that the humiliation (i.e., manipulation, weaponization, and devaluation) of written and spoken words plays a role in the decline of institutions once trusted by the average person. Panelists in this session investigate Ellul’s writings on language, images, technology, and institutions to explore, in concrete, critical, and constructive ways, the changes taking place in educational, political, and ecclesial institutions.</p> <p>Vincent Beaulac, Stephanie Bennett, Dawn Sutherland</p>
4:30pm - 5:00pm	<b>Conference adjourns</b>