

Uses and Abuses of Power in Alternative Spiritualities

APRIL 26-29, 2023

SCHEDULE NOTES

All presentations will have hybrid accessibility. Another version of this schedule with Zoom links will be posted closer to the conference's start date.

Each session will be held in Harvard Divinity School's Swartz Hall (45 Francis Ave., Cambridge, Massachusetts).

Please note that session types are color-coded as follows:

Plenary	Workshop	Meal	Performance	Paper Session
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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2023

TIME	LOCATION	TYPE	PRESENTER	TITLE
5-7 pm	Braun	Welcome supper		
7-9 pm	Sperry	Plenary (Featured Emergent Scholars)	Guterman, Anna	"You Will Simply Go Nuts if You Try": A Discussion of Paradox within the Osho-Rajneesh Movement
			Jemmett, Amy	Can You Find Me?': Growing up in Scientology in 1990s Toronto
			Zheng, Matthew "Matta"	Dharmic Disidentifications: Queer Buddhists of Color, Racial Capitalism, and Power
			Schunemann, Mark	Powerful is the giving-up of power: The Southwark Mystery of Crossbones Graveyard's In-casts



THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2023

TIME	LOCATION	TYPE	PRESENTER	TITLE
9-11 am	Garvin	Paper session	Eastman Smith, Margaret	Empowerment and Disempowerment in Moral Re-Armament
			Belden, David	
	James West	Paper session	Vander Tuig, Adam	Ordained by Capital: Conscripting Religion in Corporate America
			Curtis, Morgan	Ancestors & Money: The Spiritual Dimension of Reparations Work for White People
			Ullah, Karim	The Use of Faith Power in The Shariah Economic Movement
			Louie, Jenn	Authority Over the Alternative: The Role of Social Media, Content Moderation and Se Alternative Spiritualities
	James East	Paper session	Gillis-Smith, Paul	The Institutionalization of Ecstasy: A Roundtable Discussion with Psymposia & Harvard's Psychedelic Student Groups
			Nickles, David	
			Pace, Brian	
			Devenot, Neşe	
			Breau, Jeffrey	
	Sperry	Paper session	Lord, Phil	From the "Cult Watchers" to the "Anti-Cult Wars": Tracing the Path to Rich and Rigorous Scientology Research
			Lyons, Adam	The Assassination of Shinzô Abé and Public Backlash against the Unification Church: Spiritual Abuse, Victim Blaming, or Both?
			Opalka, Katherina	"We are not spiritual masters": Narrative coding and de-coding of power structures
			McKanan, Tammy	Informed Consent: The Work of an Early "Anti-Cult" Program
11:30 am -1:30 pm	Braun	Lunch provided		
11:30 am – 12:30 pm	James West	Workshop	O'Keefe, Jac	Association for Spiritual Integrity: Lessons from a Young Organization Making a Difference
			Goldberg, Philip	
			Archer, Rick	
	James East	Workshop	Balliet, Suzy	Transforming the Poison of Abuse into Medicine
12:45-1:45 pm	James East	Workshop	Herrington, Sarah	Narrative Healing from Spiritual Abuse: How Telling Your Personal Story Creates Systemic Change



	James West	Workshop	Burschel, Maria	Genderspecific Manipulation (Gaslighting) through Non-violent Communication, Spirituality and Biologistic Concepts of Mother- and Fatherhood
2-4 pm	Sperry	Paper session	Adekogbe, Olatunbosun Samuel	"Oro" Fraternity Songs of Intimidation and Oppression Against Female Gender in Abeokuta, Nigeria
			gehman, john clayton	Religion and the Other: Experience between Knowledge and Truth
			Goodwillie, Christian	From Lion to Lamb: The Spiritual Humiliation of Shaker Richard McNemar
			Kanu, Ikechukwu Anthony	Sorcery, African Alternative Spirituality and the Abuse of Power
	James West	Paper session	Rendlen, Chelsea	Improving Self Improvement: How "The Untethered Soul" Exemplifies Barriers to Healing for Abuse Survivors When Reading Self-Help Books
			Palmer, Susan	Children and "Spiritual Abuse" in Alternative Spiritualities: Issues of Harm, Questions of Blame, and the Search for Solutions
			Mathiassen, Silje Trym	Uses and Abuses of Power in Ritual Practice with Ayahuasca
			Jaoudi, Maria	Cultivating Spiritual Experiences: The Chan Buddhist Ox Herding Pictures
	Garvin	Paper session	Thykie Makeeff, Tao	Power from the Pagan Past: The Viking Warrior as Template for (toxic) Masculinity
			Gregorius, Fredrik	Becoming indigenous? The development of Nordic Animism.
			Skjoldli, Jane	The Power(s) of Music and Musicians in Norse-oriented Religious Interfaces
	James East	Paper session	Gebara, Maria Fernanda	Indigenous Spiritualities: cultural appropriation or the last salvation?
			Eyers, Pegi	[Un]Conscious Colonialism – Why is “Native Spirituality” a Pagan Genre?
			Frias, Alvaro	The memory of Camilo: monuments of faith and revolution
4:30-6:30 pm	Sperry	Plenary	Breau, Jeffrey	The Doors of Deception: Psychedelic Spirituality as a Site of Abuse and Liberation
			Ross, Lily	
			Estrada, Yarelix	
			Greer, Christian	
			Gillis-Smith, Paul	
6:30-8 pm	Miscellaneous	Supper break		
8-9 pm	Sperry	Performance (spoken word)	Ray, Ricky	Male Vulnerability, Intimacy and Care: Two Poets in Collaboration and Conversation
			Gael Kelly, Devin	



FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2023

TIME	LOCATION	TYPE	PRESENTER	TITLE	
9-11 am	Garvin	Paper session	Phipps, Carter	Mysticism and Its Discontents: Does Spiritual Illumination Create its own Intrinsic Blindness?	
			Carreira, Jeff	Mitigating Risk in Extreme Spiritual Pursuit	
			Goldberg, Philip	The Guru Scandals: Lessons from the Recent History of Power Abuse	
	James West	Paper session	Castaño-Suárez, Orus Mateo	The biopower of faith leaders who are also alternative medicine practitioners in alternative spiritual communities.	
			Good, Jennifer Ellen	Earth-based spirituality's power to counter earthly disconnection?	
			Mortensen, Eric	The Ongoing Harm of the Term Shamanism: From Problematic Scholarly Misnomer to Evolving Cultural Appropriation	
			Gagné, Michel	"The High Cabal and the Lynch Mob: Exploring Conspiracism Through René Girard's Scapegoating Theory"	
	James East	Paper session	Harvey, Sarah	Empowerment and Abuse: Gender and Sexuality in Two Syncretistic NRMs	
			Newcombe, Suzanne		
			Wittich, Agi	Women-oriented Yoga: Female Empowerment or Patriarchal Practice in Disguise?	
			Tate, Karen	The Cognitive Disconnect of Goddess Spirituality	
	Sperry	Paper session	Bentsman, Michelle	Drinking Poison, Integrating Shadows: Paths toward Community, Integrity & Protection	
			Apffel-Marglin, Frederique	Uses and Abuses of Ayahuasca in the Upper Amazon	
			Koehlinger, Amy	Cautions and Correctives to Prevent Religious Abuse in Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy: Lessons from the Oregon Psilocybin Services Initiative	
11:30 am -1:30 pm	Braun	Lunch provided			
11:30 am – 12:30 pm	James East	Workshop	Arredondo, Tianna	Curiosity as Inner-Alchemy	
			James West	Assadourian, Erik	Countering the Eco-abuses of Dominant Societal Paradigms
				Mowll, Ian	
			Merrill, Michelle		



12:45-1:45 pm	James East (In person only)	Workshop	Rosado, Enrique	Inoculation Against Spiritual Abuse: A Science-Based Approach
	James West	Workshop	Swanson, Izzy	The Mirror Within: Abuse and Hope in Devotional Spirituality
2-4 pm	Sperry	Paper session	Magnett, Destiny	The Tower Crumbles, but Now You Can See the Star: Queer Temporalities, Religious Affects, and Healing Through Tarot Practice
			Collins, Nicole	Productive Instability?: Investigating the Intersection Between Gender Transition and Religious Conversion
			Mondragón, Delores	Drumming as the Oppressed of the Oppressed: Two Spirit Survivance In the Time of Native American Ceremonial Resurgence
	James West	Paper session	Merchasin, Carol	Investigating Alternative Spiritual Movements: What Experience and the Law Tell Us About Sexual Abuse in Alternative Spiritual Communities.
			Gollat, Angela	
			Augspurger, Jens	
	Garvin	Paper session	Miura, Naohito	Who is the "Master of the Teachings"? The Question of Religious Authority in the World Church of Messiah
			Sundar, Sudarshan	Brahma Kumaris: A women-led spiritual organization challenging a male-dominated spiritual landscape
			Rodgers, Judy	
	James East	Paper session	Caicedo Farbman, Melissa	The Guru at Your Fingertips: An Exploratory Study of Spiritual Leaders on Social Media
			Meedt, Petra	
			Jenkins, Olivia	
			Di Marzio, Raffaella	Choosing and leaving a spiritual community. Paths of change and personal development
			Ostehold, Helge	Chasing the Numinous: Hungry Ghosts in the Shadow of the Psychedelic Renaissance
			Fernandes-Osterhold, Gisele	
4:30-6:30 pm	Sperry	Plenary	Tillman, Patricia	Weaponized Vulnerability and the Search for Authenticity in Modern Yoga Communities
			Padova, Bianca	The Body as a Site of Exploitation and Healing: The Case of Yoga to the People
			Lovejoy, Allegra	Building Safer Spaces: Ethics and Transparency in Alternative Spiritualities
			Khalsa, Nirinjan	Healthy Happy Holy? Harm and Healing in Sikh Dharma's Kundalini Yoga Community
6:30-8 pm	Miscellaneous	Supper break		



8-9 pm	Sperry	Performance (exhibition)	Castaño-Suárez, Orus Mateo	Art and Power Exhibition.
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SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023

TIME	LOCATION	TYPE	PRESENTER	TITLE
9-11 am	James West	Paper session	Uddin, Ahm Ershad	"Islam and Harmful Practices: How Islamic Scholars Promoting Healthy and Ethical Spiritual Practices in the Face of Extremism"
			Eksi, Ahmet	
			Berger, Helen	
			Robins, Evan	
			Cinocca, Federico	
				Noctumonium and the Beasts of Satan: Responding to Emerging Acid Satanism Among Teenagers in Italy.
	James East	Paper session	Das, Rituparna	The Voice of the New Age Spirituality: An Assimilative, Inclusive and Equalising platform for the Marginalised and the Mainstream Religious Discourses
			Tarwater, Bonnie	Earth Crisis Support Groups
			Zinzendorf, Johannes	The Democratization of Power in the Spirit - A Harmonist Perspective
	Sperry	Paper session	Dansac, Yael	Embodying Celtic Heritage in Brittany's Megaliths: Creative Rituality for Cultural Belonging.
			Deniz, Dilsa	Mother Earth Goddess of Kurdistan: Neolithic spirituality, femininity and contemporality
			Gracia, Augustina	Empowerment and agency among Llave Mariana's practitioners: an ethnographic approach to an Argentinian spiritual movement
	Garvin	Paper session	Erlich, Michal	Neither Kittens nor Baby Monkeys: Enhancing devotees' Agency in Hyperlocal Guru-Bhakti Communities
			Mallick, Ata	The Santal Revolt of 1855 and the impact of Alternative Spirituality on Women
			Prabha Shankar, Dwivedi	Dandapāni Bhairava in Moksadayinī Kāśī: An Inquiry into the Tantric and Folk Connections of the Purāṇic Guardian-Deity of Banaras
			Singh-Sengupta, Sunita	Uses of Power: Individual Consciousness for Collective Consciousness
11:30 am - 1:00 pm		Lunch break		
1-2 pm	James East	Workshop	Stafford, Brian	A Look at Leadership Archetypes in Traditional and Alternative Spiritualities



	James West	Workshop	Chakour, Vanessa	Taken Without Permission: Medicinal Plants and Fungi on the Brink of Extinction and Remembering Reverence for Earth
	Swartz 125	Workshop	Choi-Gekas, Billy J.	“Transmuting Poison into Medicine: Intersecting Cultivation Practices and the Power of Spoken Word for Somatic Trauma Healing.”
			Beamish, Heather	
	Garvin	Workshop	Hollomon, Duncan	Spiritual Leaders and Betrayal Trauma
2:30-3:30	Sperry	Concluding Reflections		

