



Mark your calendar and join us for these upcoming events in our Winter/Spring 2019 program:

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FEBRUARY 13 - Troy Patenaude, “Contemporary Indigenous Relations”

7:00 p.m. – 9 :00 p.m.

Parkland United Church

2919 – 8th Avenue N.W.

Calgary, AB

Troy Patenaude is Manager, Visitor Experiences and Indigenous Relations at Fort Calgary. He is a cultural historian of Metis heritage who seeks to make Canada a more just and resilient place through land-based education, intercultural sharing, and the arts.

Note: There is no charge to attend our monthly events, but donations are always welcome.

Attention Donors
If you are writing a cheque to us, please write our name as *Ploughshares Calgary Society*. If you write it to the name of Project Ploughshares, the bank will not honour it for us, unfortunately.

March 13 - “The World is My Country”

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Parkland United Church

2919 – 8th Avenue N.W.

Calgary, Ab

There is a change to our March 13th meeting. Instead of our originally scheduled speaker, we will present the movie, **“The World is My Country,”** followed by a facilitated discussion. This lively movie tells the amazing story of Gary Davis and his controversial efforts to promote world citizenship. Could such efforts provide a roadmap to a better future?



- ❖ “Muslims love Jesus. So why do people think we hate Christians?” by Bilal Hassam, *The Independent*, December 24, 2018. In this article, Dr. Bilal Hassam, a writer, broadcaster, and creative director at British Museum TV tackles Islamophobia and points instead to the beliefs that Christians and Muslims share. He notes that, across the globe, Muslims and Christians have lived together in peace and harmony for over 1,000 years, and it is this spirit of co-operation that needs to be revived in our communities. See <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/muslims-christmas-jesus-god-islamophobia-prophet-muhammad-a8697971.html>
- ❖ In 2007, Daniel Ellsberg published *The Doomsday Machine: Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner*. This book reveals a shocking firsthand account of America’s nuclear program in the 1960s and explains how the nuclear arms build-up threatens the survival of humanity.
- ❖ One can freely access, online, the January/February issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. A number of articles by leading experts on U.S., Russian, and Chinese ‘modernization’ programs explain how so-called nuclear modernization poses extreme costs and dangers and how these might be short-circuited or at least limited in scope. See <https://thebulletin.org/>
- ❖ “Canada must be clear-eyed about nuclear disarmament.” In this *Globe and Mail* (January 20, 2019) article, Ernie Regehr and Douglas Roche describe the 1987 Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty and the current serious threat that it will be terminated. They recommend intervention by Canada. See <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-canada-must-be-clear-eyed-about-nuclear-disarmament/>
- ❖ “North Korea says it won’t denuclearize unless U.S. removes threat,” by Kim Tong Hyung, Associated Press, *CTV News*. December 20, 2018. Hyung discusses how denuclearization would not be unilateral on the part of North Korea: the United States would need to withdraw or significantly reduce its 28,500 troops currently stationed in South Korea. See <https://www.ctvnews.ca/world/n-korea-says-it-won-t-denuclearize-unless-u-s-removes-threat-1.4225534>
- ❖ “2019 Doomsday Clock statement” by the Science and Security Board, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. This year’s Doomsday Clock statement points to the devolving state of nuclear and climate security. See <https://thebulletin.org/doomsday-clock/current-time/>
- ❖ On December 21, 2018, the Canadian Council of Churches, representing all 26 member denominations, wrote to Prime Minister Trudeau urging that Canada’s government support the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. (cont. on pg. 3).

See <https://www.councilofchurches.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Canadian-Council-of-Churches-United-Nations-Treaty-on-the-Prohibition-of-Nuclear-Weapons.pdf>

- ❖ In October, 2017, Devan Legare of Manulife Securities spoke at the Ploughshares Calgary monthly education meeting about Nuclear Weapons and your investments. They educated the audience about how corporations and financial institutions in North America and around the world are using your investments and deposits to capitalize the nuclear industry. The presenters discussed how investor activism has made positive changes within companies and institutions. Here is an inspiring story about "Resona," a Japanese lending institution that bans lending to those developing, making or possessing nuclear weapons. See <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20190107/p2a/00m/0bu/024000c> For other resources on this subject, see [Don't Bank on the Bomb](#) and activist shareholder groups www.share.ca and www.riacanada.ca. For a primer on the nuclear weapons issue, visit <http://www.pnnd.org/ipupnnd-handbook-supporting-nuclear-non-proliferation-and-disarmament>
- ❖ "This is not a drill: Lessons from the false Hawaiian missile alert" by Kristyn Karl and Ashley Lytle in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, January 10, 2019. This article addresses the importance of educating the public about the safety message "Get Inside, Stay Inside, Stay Tuned," which promotes the clear steps one can take to greatly increase the odds of survival in response to a nuclear attack: See <https://thebulletin.org/2019/01/this-is-not-a-drill-lessons-from-the-false-hawaiian-missile-alert/>
- ❖ "North Korea sounds the death knell for denuclearization," by Andrew Salmon in *Asia Times*, December 20, 2018. In this lengthy analysis, Salmon discusses the divergence of opinion between North Korea and the U.S. in what denuclearization is and to whom it applies. See <http://www.atimes.com/article/north-korea-sounds-death-knell-for-denuclearization/>

Our January Meeting: Tearing Down Statues? Changing Names? By Sally Hodges

At our January meeting, we welcomed Don Smith, (Professor Emeritus of History, University of Calgary), who offered an introduction to the problems of seeing the past through the interpretive and moral lenses of the present. This stance is called "presentism," which, according to Smith, is mistaken. The title of Smith's talk was "Good Politics, Bad History." He noted that historical perceptions in Canada have shifted in the last five years, thanks to the good work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Moreover, he noted, it is not always easy to know what were culpable actions in the past and what action Canada should take as a result. Smith stated that, even now, many indigenous bands are living in "atrocious" conditions and that the penal situation with regard to First Nations' peoples is "terrible." Thus, Canadians need to pay much better attention to both the present and the past. Smith further noted that, "It is villainous that there are so many things wrong" today concerning the living conditions of some bands.

Smith pointed out that our understanding of history changes frequently. For example, Sir Hector-Louis Langevin (1826-1906) came into the news recently when the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) mentioned that Langevin thought the residential schools were a good idea. From that statement, Langevin was alleged, incorrectly, to have been the founder of the residential schools. Smith informed the audience that as the Minister of Public Works in the 1890's, Langevin had them built, but it was not his role to make decisions about them. Consequently, Smith argued, in response to indigenous protests, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau acted too hastily in renaming the Langevin Block on Parliament Hill. Even a cursory check in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography would have provided more accurate information about Langevin and his career. Smith noted that later, in the federal cabinet, Langevin had fought against the execution of Louis Riel.

Egerton Ryerson is another case in point, Smith stated. Ryerson founded the Ontario school system in the 1840s, visited schools in Switzerland looking for models for them, and believed that residential schools would teach indigenous children English and offer trades' training. Ryerson lived with First Nations' peoples for a year, became their "blood brother," and learned their language. His Objibway friends called for the schools (but did ask for them to be under First Nations' control). Smith noted that, by our present standards, Ryerson has been unfairly labeled as anti-indigenous.

Smith moved on to discuss our first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, who was a complex man of his times and an assimilationist. To him "the Indians" were a minor issue because they were less than 1% of the population in Ontario. However, Macdonald wanted them to learn English, to be part of society, and to be able to vote. In 1857, the Gradual Civilization Act searched for a way to assimilate First Nations' peoples: they were to give up their Indian status and attend residential

schools. All the members of Parliament voted yes to this proposal except William Lyon McKenzie, who was concerned about the effect of the act on the rest of Canada's population. In the mid-19th century, such views were par for the course. However, between 1867 and 1883 four treaties were created, thanks to Macdonald's approach. In contrast with Ontario Premier Mowatt ("treaties unnecessary"), George Brown (westward expansion to run the globe), and Sir Wilfred Laurier ("reduce the size of reserves"), Macdonald looks good, Smith said. Historically, England and other Christian nations saw no problem in taking over territories held by peoples who roamed over them—they were thought to have the right of discovery due to the arrival of the so-called "civilized" world.

Macdonald had a First Nations' friend who had escaped from residential schools; he told Macdonald that the concept of confederation came from the Iroquois. This man was so impressed with Macdonald that he named one of his children after him. After the murder of Indians and the execution of Louis Riel in 1885, Macdonald suggested that male Indians should receive the vote. This idea was highly controversial; in the end there was no vote for the First Nations until indigenous males received the right to vote in the 1970s. Judge Murray Sinclair (chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission) spoke out against Macdonald-bashing and called for the recognition of First Nations' peoples. No scholarship, historians, or academics were quoted to counter the accusations that have been made against Macdonald, Smith said.

Smith expressed that we do need to remember how badly most First Nations were treated from the start: Edward Cornwallis put a bounty on MicMac scalps in 1752; around the same time, Jeffery Amherst suggested that "smallpox blankets" be distributed to First Nations. Early Canadians did not recognize that First Nations' peoples had their own unique and rich culture and were not inferior—they simply wanted to retain their own unique identity. Smith noted that to reverse these beginnings, now regarded as flawed, non-indigenous people need to know more First Nations' stories and to honour rejected First Nations' ancestors. *The White Goose Flying Report*, Calgary's response to the TRC, recommended renaming the Langevin Bridge, which was done. Contrary to these swift moves presupposing presentism, Smith urged that we not apply present values to past actions. He concluded by observing that one needs to do due diligence before concluding that a particular historical figure did more harm than good.



We are very grateful for your loyal moral and financial support. over the years that has allowed us to continue working for and educating about peace. Please consider donating for 2019 soon if you haven't already done so. If you have already sent in your donation for 2019, we thank you.

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