Fact Sheet:

_new Religions in Quebec: Alternative Spiritualities after Vatican II and the ‘Quiet Revolution’_

April 25, 2014
McGill University, Montréal

Organized by:
Susan J. Palmer (Dawson College and Concordia University) and Solange Lefebvre (University of Montréal).

Participants:
Peter Beyer, University of Ottawa
Lorne Dawson, University of Waterloo
Loraine Derocher, Université de Sherbrooke
Susan Palmer, Dawson College and Concordia University
Martin Geoffroy, Cégep Édouard-Montpetit à Longueuil au Québec
Michael Kropveld, Info-Cult/Info-Secte
Guy-Robert St-Arnaud, Université de Montréal

Student Participation:
Paul Gareau, University of Ottawa
Andrew Lairenge was hired as the technical assistant.

Event Description:

This conference was funded by the Social Sciences and the Humanities Research Council and the Religion and Diversity project had, as part of its mission, the goal of mapping the contours of religious diversity in Canada. The purpose of the one-day workshop on Québec’s new religious movements was to bring together scholars and researchers who have studied the phenomenon of alternative religions in Québec since the “Quiet Revolution”. These movements include the Catholic _intéristes_, or conservative schismatic movements within Québec’s ultramontane type of Catholicism, as well as indigenous, imported and international NRMs or “sects”. Controversial “sectes” like the Solar Temple and criminal “cult leaders” like Roche Moses Theriault have been highlighted in the media, but there are to date surprisingly few in-depth ethnographical studies of these groups. The objective of the workshop was to showcase on-going research on Quebeçois alternative religions, to share theories and observed patterns on Québec history and culture, and to focus on Québec as a favorable “ecological niche” for new spiritual movements and radical social experiments and alternative worldviews. An additional objective of the workshop was to build scholarly networks across Québec between French and English universities and their faculty and students, thanks to the funding and the attendees, this networking was highly successful.