2018-19 Annual Report

ABOUT US

The Centre for Studies in Religion and Society (CSRS) is an interdisciplinary research centre located at the University of Victoria in Victoria, British Columbia. We acknowledge, with respect, the Lekwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the CSRS stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

At the CSRS, our mission is to foster the scholarly study of religion in relation to any and all aspects of society and culture, both contemporary and historical.

The CSRS is regularly and deeply engaged in conversations with policy makers and civil society, in an effort to connect scholarly research on religion and society to the broader world. We also sponsor graduate student, faculty, artist in residence, visiting researcher, and sabbatical fellowships, and produces a dynamic annual program of public lectures and seminars. The CSRS is committed to pluralism and dialogue, attracting participants whose backgrounds and perspectives reflect a wide variety of religious, spiritual, and secular points of view.

ACTING DIRECTOR’S NOTES: Christopher Douglas

It’s been a privilege to step in as Acting Director while Paul Bramadat is on study leave for the year. One of the Centre’s activities that I’ve enjoyed the most is hosting public academic lectures at UVic on topics of religion and society for Victoria’s broader community. This included our regular schedule of Thursday afternoon lectures, as well as our feature Ideafest lecture on religious rights in Canada (see page six for a full account) and two special John Albert Hall lectures co-sponsored with the Anglican Diocese of British Columbia. The first of these, in November, was a fascinating panel discussion on “Gender, Justice and the Church,” featuring feminist church activists Cheri DiNovo, Jennifer Henry, and Gina Messina. The second was our January hosting of US journalist Chris Hedges on “Christian Fascism and the Rise of Donald Trump.” It was the largest public event in CSRS history, with about 800 attendees.

The Centre’s research continued apace, with Paul leading the Cascadia research project into the spirituality of the Northwest region, aided by Research Coordinator Chelsea Horton. The Centre hosted many active research fellows this year, including Ramesh Bairy from India, Tatiana Tiaynen-Qadir from Finland; graduate student fellows Daniel Sherwin from the University of Toronto, Mo Wei from Shanghai Normal University, Kasra Ghorbaninejad from Northeastern University and Helen Jennings from the Arctic University of Norway; and Hairong Huang, Denae Dyck, Kefen Zhou, Zahra Kazani, and Liang Han from UVic. We hosted UVic Faculty Fellows Megan Swift and Sara Beam, as well as local favourites Miles Lowry and Terry Marner as our Artists-in-Residence. Our many Associate Fellows and Community members continue to drop by for coffee talks, helping to make the Centre the vibrant intellectual community that it is. Throughout the year, we’ve enjoyed the special and rewarding “Relationship and Reconciliation” coffee talks on Indigenous-Settler relations, led by Michelle Brown and Chelsea Horton, as well as Terry’s monthly cinema series.

This year has seen some dramatic personnel changes at the Centre, besides my Acting Directorship. The Centre saw its Administrative Assistants, Sarah Grindlay and Roshnie Kabir-Clarke, leave for full-time positions elsewhere at UVic. Meanwhile, our Administrative Coordinator, Sally Lin, was seconded to the Office of the VP-Research to work on a health care research initiative. We were sorry to see them go but wish them the best in their new positions; meanwhile, we were very happy to welcome Noriko Prezeau as our new Administrative Assistant in May, and Becky Rogers as our new Administrative Coordinator in March. Scott Dolff remains our steadfast Research Associate and events coordinator extraordinaire, the holder of CSRS institutional memory (and heart) until Paul returns in July 2019.
A list of the FELLOWS-IN-RESIDENCE who form the heart of our community:

VISITING RESEARCH FELLOWS

Brian Froese
(Assoc. Prof. of History, Canadian Mennonite University)
Alberta’s Apocalypse: Evangelical Eschatology, Anticommunism, Oil and the Cold War

Pushpa Kamal Subedi
(Prof. of Rural Development, Tribhuvan University)
Nepalese Communities Struggle with Christian Conversions

Tatiana Tiaynen-Qadir
(Postdoctoral researcher, University of Tampere)
Science and Religion in Northern Europe: Global Institutional Dynamics in Human Experiences of the Divine

HAROLD COWARD INDIA RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Ramesh Bairy
(Indian Institute of Technology Bombay)
Making of the Matha: Caste, Hinduness and the Contemporary

RELIGIOUS STUDIES TEACHING FELLOW

Rachel Brown
(Uvic Religious Studies)
Consuming Identity: Food and Maghrebine Muslim Experience in Paris and Montreal

VISITING GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWS

Kasra Ghorbaninejad
(PhD Candidate, Northeastern University),
Protesting Shias, Pope-ish Sultans? Cross-Religious Alliance Building Across the Mediterranean in the 1600s

Helen Jennings
(PhD Candidate, The Arctic University of Norway),
Religion, Tourism and Indigeneity

Mo Wei
(PhD Candidate, Shanghai Normal University),
Sparkling Light of Enlightenment and Religious Art in Zikawei (Xujiahui)— T’ou-Sè-Wè (1847-1949)

WINNIFRED LONSDALE GRADUATE FELLOW

Liang Han
(MA Candidate, UVic History)
The Integration of Religions in Victoria’s Chinatown from 1858-1930

IAN H. STEWART GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWS

Hairong Huang
(MA Candidate, UVic History),
Popular Religion and Guandong Politicians: Political Mobilization over Population during the Mid-19th to the Early 20th Centuries

Daniel Sherwin
(PhD Candidate, U of T Political Science),
Settler-Colonial Responses to Indigenous Resistance: A Critical Examination of Euro-Canadian Political Thought

VANDEKERKHOVE GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWS

Denae Dyck
(PhD Candidate, UVic English)
Forming Wisdom: Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the Work of the Sage in Victorian Britain

Kefen Zhou
(PhD Candidate, UVic History)
Mission to Modernize: The Contributions of Canadian Missionaries in China

HEATHER J. LINDSTEDT AND BRIAN A. POLLICK GRADUATE FELLOWS

Zahra Kazani
(PhD Candidate, UVic History and Visual Studies)
Belief Embodied: Uncovering the Relationship of Script, Geometry and Magical Ideas in Medieval Islamicate Societies

CSRS ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

Miles Lowry
Ogham - The Tree Alphabet

Terry Marner
Searching for Home - Finding Fingerposts in Neuroscience
UVIC FACULTY FELLOWSHIPS

Megan Swift  
(Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies)  
Appropriating the Past: The Russian Orthodox Church and Putin-Era Commemoration of the Victims of Stalinist Political Repression

Sara Beam  
(Department of History)  
The Origins of Single Motherhood in Europe During the Reformation Period: Links with Canadian Policies Toward Single Mothers Today

Angela Andersen  
Cemevleri: An Examination of the Historical Roots and Contemporary Meanings of Alevi Architecture and Iconography

Harold Coward  
Word, Chant and Song in the Major Religions: Spiritual Transformation

Jane Dawson  
What About the Bible? An Exploration of Current Interpretive Practices

Erica Dodd  
Treasures of the Early Christian Church

Robert Florida  
Ethical Issues in Modern Buddhism

Christopher Gillespie  
When Church and State Collide: Secularism in Early 21st Century North America

Andrew Gow  
Secularism in Christianonormative Secular Societies

Nicola Hayward  
The Use of Funerary Art for Commemorating Social Identity and Memory: The Case of the Via Latina’s Samaritan Woman

Lindsay Herriot  
Disrupting the Catholic versus Transgender Binary: Using Queer Theology to Empower Catholic Educators in Affirming Transgender Students

Stefan Sunandan Honisch  
“The Power of a Healing Service:” Musical Encounters with a Disabling God

Victor Hori  
The Modernization of Buddhism in Global Perspective

Graham Jensen  
Unorthodox Modernisms: Varieties of Personal Religion in Twentieth-Century Canadian Poetry

Lesley Jessop  
Students or Tailors? A Re-evaluation of the Sculptures on the South Transept of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris

Francis Landy  
The Book of Isaiah

Lytton McDonnell  
Tuneful Trances: Music, Mysticism, and Re-enchantment in Modern America

Graham McDonough  
How Catholic Schools can be Thought of as Sites of Inter-Religious and Ecumenical Dialogue

Brendon Neilson  
Post-Christian Diaspora: How Millennials are Making Meaning after Leaving the Church

Jordan Paper  
Theology Throughout Most of the Human Past: The Spiritual Life and Understanding of Gathering-Hunting Peoples

2018-2019 Associate Fellows

Travis O/Brian  
Religion, Rights & and Conflict in Canada: The Internationally Protected Freedom of Religion or Belief

Peter Scales  
Views of the Shepherds: Interviews of Experienced Clergy

Angela Andersen  
Cemevleri: An Examination of the Historical Roots and Contemporary Meanings of Alevi Architecture and Iconography

Harold Coward  
Word, Chant and Song in the Major Religions: Spiritual Transformation

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Jarrad Reddekop  
Relating to the Forest in Amazonian Quichua Philosophy; Relational Ontology, Selfhood, Ethics, and Aesthetics

Paige Thombs  
Arc of the Covenant: The Evolution of Trinity Western University’s Community Covenant as a Response to Secularization

Lycia Trouton  
Post-Conflict, Plural Society of the Island of Ireland and Communities of the Irish/Ulster Scots Diaspora

Anna Tsurkan  
Islam and Politics in “Arab Spring” Countries from an International Community Perspective

Carolyn Whitney-Brown  
The Meaning of Founding Stories: Jean Vanier and L’Arche Communities Around the World

Grace Wong Sneddon  
Chinese Canadian Spirituality in the 21st Century

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Grace Wong Sneddon  
Chinese Canadian Spirituality in the 21st Century

Katherine Young  
The Divyaprabandham, Canonization, and Śrīvaisnava Formation: Musical Tropes and Identity Negotiations
From September 2018 to April 2019, we hosted **20 public lectures**, which drew a total attendance of **912 people** from the university and greater Victoria communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 13, 2018</td>
<td>Christopher Douglas</td>
<td>The Christian Right in American Literature and Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 20, 2018</td>
<td>Kevin Lewis O'Neill</td>
<td>The Unmaking of David Roney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 27, 2018</td>
<td>Grace Wong Sneddon</td>
<td>Rescue Home Missions: Institutionalizing Race, Gender and Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 4, 2018</td>
<td>Kasra Ghorbaninejad</td>
<td>Protesting Shias, Popish Sultans: Cross-Racial Identification in the 17th C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 11, 2018</td>
<td>Angela Andersen</td>
<td>Unresolved Matters: Contemporary Islamic Architecture in Turkey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 18, 2018</td>
<td>Megan Swift</td>
<td>Putin and the Patriarch: Appropriating Russia’s National Past</td>
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<td>Oct. 25, 2018</td>
<td>Helen Jennings</td>
<td>Religion, Indigeneity and Tourism in British Columbia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 1, 2018</td>
<td>Adrienne Williams Boyarin</td>
<td>Converts, Cleaners, Cannibals: Jewish Women in Medieval Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 8, 2018</td>
<td>Jerald Sabin</td>
<td>Faith and Race in Politics: Language, Media and the NDP Leadership Election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 22, 2018</td>
<td>Zahra Kazani</td>
<td>The Theatrics of Script: Material Culture and Magical Practices in Medieval Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 10, 2019</td>
<td>Daniel Sherwin</td>
<td>How Does Settler Colonialism Control the Boundaries of Debate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 24, 2019</td>
<td>Danae Dyck</td>
<td>Forming Wisdom: Reinterpretation and Dialogue in A Drama of Exile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31, 2019</td>
<td>Miles Lowry</td>
<td>Letters from the Trees: Mysteries and Devotions of the Irish Tree Alphabet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 7, 2019</td>
<td>Hairong Huang</td>
<td>The Taiping Rebellion: Christian or Political?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 14, 2019</td>
<td>Jordan Paper</td>
<td>The Religion of Humans for the First 95% of Their History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 28, 2019</td>
<td>David Clough</td>
<td>The Challenge of Christian Animal Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 14, 2019</td>
<td>Rinku Lamba</td>
<td>The Meaning(s) of Religion in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 21, 2019</td>
<td>Liang Han</td>
<td>The Integration of Religions in Victoria’s Chinatown from 1838-1930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 28, 2019</td>
<td>Sara Beam</td>
<td>How the Reformations Created Single Motherhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 4, 2019</td>
<td>Ramesh Bairy</td>
<td>Thinking Religion Regionally: Hindu Institutions in Contemporary South India</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2019 Global South Colloquium

*Religion and Its Others: Power, Sovereignty, and Politics in Indian Politics Past and Present*

Funded by a Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (SICI) Programme Development Grant as well as support from the Lansdowne Lecturer fund allocated to the Religious Studies program in the Faculty of Humanities, the CSRS hosted a two-day academic conference on the subject of religion in India in historical, political, and socio-cultural frameworks. The symposium began with an evening lecture on March 14, 2019, by Dr. Rinku Lamba of the Centre for Political Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi, India. Her lecture, “The Meaning(s) of Religion in India” explored the myriad meanings of religion in India over time and space, with a focus on bhakti and devotional traditions in medieval and early modern India. The second day featured three sessions of original papers, covering topics such as the many-headed histories of religious reform from different perspectives, and the complex topic of secularism in India.

Bringing together scholars from religious studies, history, sociology, political science, and anthropology, from institutions in India, the United Arab Emirates, the United States of America, and Canada, the symposium broached a number of questions pertinent to the study of religion today that complement ongoing discussions about religion, secularism, post-secularism, and power from a decidedly South Asianist perspective. The symposium plans to continue conversations in a future meeting in Doha, at Georgetown University-Doha, within an expanded framework to include Indian Ocean sites alongside territorial South Asia.
2018-2019 JOHN ALBERT HALL PUBLIC LECTURES

Gender, Justice and the Church

Cheri DiNovo  Jennifer Henry  Gina Messina

On November 29, 2018, the CSRS and John Albert Hall Trust hosted a panel discussion titled “Gender, Justice and the Church.” Three leading reformers—Cheri DiNovo, Jennifer Henry, and Gina Messina—reflected on the ways in which Christian communities have struggled with the longstanding and systemic mistreatment, underpayment and sexual harassment of women and members of the LGBTQ+ community. Michelle Slater, pastor of Oak Bay United Church, moderated the discussion.

Christian Fascism and the Rise of Donald Trump


In his talk, he elaborated on what he sees as the demise of the American Empire and the rise of a new age of fascism rooted in the Christian Right. These themes are the subject of his most recent book, America: The Farewell Tour, a chapter of which he also took time to discuss with CSRS fellows, UVic faculty and graduate students in a private seminar.

John Albert Hall Interview Series

• June 21, 2018 – “Reforming Tradition: A Conversation with Remi De Roo,” an interview with Bishop Remi de Roo by Ian Alexander
• March 17, 2019 – “The Christian Left and Canadian Politics,” featuring Bill Blaikie. Blaikie, in conversation with a panel of local experts, explored what it means to be a progressive Christian in today’s political climate
• March 27, 2019 – “Up Close and Personal with Herbert O’Driscoll.” Herbert O’Driscoll interviewed by Ian Alexander, including reflections on O’Driscoll’s latest book, A Greening of Imaginations

2019 SUMMER LECTURE SERIES

The 2019 Summer Lecture Series featured research fellows visiting from institutions in Saskatchewan, Australia and England, in addition to UVic. The issues were contemporary and historical, domestic and international, and garnered wide interest. The lectures were held each Wednesday evening in May in the David Strong Building.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 8, 2019</td>
<td>Kerry Sloan</td>
<td>“A Great Compassion: Spirituality in Metis Culture, Law and Diplomacy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 22, 2019</td>
<td>David Tollerton</td>
<td>“Religion and Public Holocaust Remembrance in Britain”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 29, 2019</td>
<td>Kefen Zhou</td>
<td>“Christianity and Chinese Women’s Social Mobility, 1880-1950”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**2019 IDEAFEST**

**The Changing Face of Religious Rights in Canada**

In March 2019, the CSRS co-sponsored with the Faculty of Law a panel discussion on "The Changing Face of Religious Rights in Canada" for UVic's Ideafest. The session was prompted by the momentous Supreme Court ruling related to the accreditation of Trinity Western University's proposed School of Law. In June 2018, Canada's highest court upheld the decision of two provincial law societies denying accreditation to the proposed law school. The issue was a required "Community Covenant" that would effectively deny admission to LGBTQ+ individuals, which the court agreed was discriminatory.

The legal panel consisted of Kathryn Chan, CSRS Associate Fellow and Assistant Professor of Law at UVic, a specialist in religion and law; Jeremy Webber, former Canada Research Chair in Law and Society and Dean of Law at UVic; and Earl Phillips, executive director of the proposed TWU School of Law. It was moderated by Christopher Douglas. The session was another installment in their long-running public discussion (and disagreement) about the school and the ruling. Kathryn and Jeremy had argued that the mandatory covenant entailed an undue restriction on the Charter Rights of potential LGBTQ+ students, while Earl had contended that TWU had an institutional right to religious freedom of belief that protected the covenant. The panelists had a vigorous exchange of views, followed by a short moderated discussion and then a broader question-and-answer period with the audience.

One emergent question discussed was that of the future direction of religious rights in Canada, and how it might impact individual and institutional freedom of religion in the country. St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver, for instance, receives public funding, yet its Catholic commitments may restrict its ability or willingness to provide abortion or medical assistance in dying services to patients – another case of institutional religious rights coming into potential conflict with individual rights. The evening opened up a host of important issues. What is the relationship between an institution's religious freedom and that of its members? How should the Court understand "Charter values," as opposed to the relatively better defined Charter Rights? And what do the changing generational values about LGBTQ+ – and other rights – tell us about the future of religious belief and practice in Canada and abroad?

**CENTRE CINE**

**Season 4: September 2018 – April 2019**

Season four of the monthly Centre Cine series of Coffee Talks, facilitated by our Artist-in-Residence Terry Marner, explored questions of morality, culture, the search for meaning, and other themes arising from the human spiritual journey.


Centre Cine participants are sent the name of a selected film each month. All the films are available to stream on Netflix and most are available from the Greater Victoria Public Library. The participants watch the film in their own time to prepare for a group discussion. During the Coffee Talk time slot, Terry facilitates an engaging conversation about the film. We are excited to introduce incoming CSRS fellows to Centre Cine's 5th season this fall.
RESEARCH PROJECT UPDATE: RELIGION IN CASCADIA

**Phase II: Analysis and Knowledge Dissemination**

Things have been busy for the “Religion in Cascadia” research team since the last CSRS Annual Report. Data collection has been completed and analysis and knowledge dissemination are well underway.

Specifically, sociologist Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme produced an accessible quantitative report highlighting key data from the project’s Pacific Northwest Social Survey. In spring and summer 2018, Paul Bramadat, Lynne Marks, Chelsea Horton, and Taylor Antoniazzi from the University of Victoria conducted qualitative fieldwork with a combined total of 312 participants in Victoria, Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland. This includes interviews with religious and community leaders; focus groups with millennials and religious adherents; and oral history interviews with families with irreligious and committed Christian roots in the region reaching back to the early twentieth century.

The interviews and focus groups were transcribed and coded in summer and early fall 2018. Archival sources were likewise collected from online repositories and onsite at archives in Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland. Thank you to Research Assistants Paige Thombs, Zabeen Khamisa, Angela Anderson, Darren Reid, and Taylor Antoniazzi for their essential contributions to this work, and to Liang Han for her English translations of the Chinese Times newspaper.

Team members, who work from a variety of academic angles, are now reviewing this rich data pool and writing draft chapters. Chapter topics include historical and generational patterns of irreligious and Christian adherence and practice; Indigenous spiritualities and settler colonial place-making; reverential naturalism; and contemporary “religious nones.”

The team is meeting at the University of Washington in Seattle in late May to workshop chapter drafts, which will then be revised and submitted for publication by an academic press. Team members will likewise be sharing findings from the project at several academic conferences in spring and fall 2019.
OUR PEOPLE
Christopher Douglas (Acting Director)
Paul Bramadat (Director)
Scott Dolff (Research Associate)
Noriko Prezeau (Administrative Assistant)
Becky Rogers (Administrative Coordinator)
Chelsea Horton (Cascadia Research Coordinator)
Aidan Crossley (2018 Work Study Student)
Karine Hack (2019 Work Study Student)
Chrystal Phan (Humanities Development Officer)

PROGRAM COMMITTEE
Christopher Douglas, Chair (English)
Paul Bramadat, History/Religious Studies
Alexandra D'Arcy, Linguistics/Assoc. Dean Humanities
Kathryn Chan, Law
Bruce Kapron, Computer Science
April Nowell, Anthropology
Charlotte Schallié, Germanic and Slavic Studies
Coby Tschanz, Nursing
Neilsh Bose, History
Ex officio:
Oliver Schmidtke, Political Science/CFGS
Graham McDonough (CSRS Advisory Council)

ADVISORY COUNCIL
Graham McDonough, Chair (University of Victoria)
Lori Beaman, University of Ottawa
John Biles, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
Michelle Brown, Cree poet, performer, homilist
Victor Hori, McGill University, emeritus
Dvora Levin, Congregation Emanu-El
Mary Louise Meadow, Anglican Church of Canada
Jo-Ann Roberts, Media/Civil Society
Amyn Sajoo, Simon Fraser University
David Seljak, St. Jerome’s University
Hari Srivastava, University of Victoria

Financial Summary
For the fiscal period of April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019

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<tr>
<th>Operational Revenues</th>
<th>$261,737</th>
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<td>General Endowments</td>
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<td>CSRS Main Endowment</td>
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<td>Other Donations</td>
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<td>Supplies, Equipment, Infrastructure</td>
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<td>John Albert Hall Lecture Series</td>
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<td>Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute</td>
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<td>Misc. lectures, conferences, events</td>
<td>$450</td>
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* The salaries and benefits of the Cascadia research staff members are included in the project expenses section.

The principal amount in the CSRS Endowment accounts as of March 31, 2019 is $6,121,252