Prof. Dr Beth Singler

Assistant Professor in Digital Religion(s)
Co-Director URPP Digital Religion(s)
University of Zurich, Switzerland

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I am a digital and cultural anthropologist focussing on the religious, ethical, and societal response to artificial intelligence (AI). I employ traditional and digital ethnographical techniques to study digital religions, transhumanists, and public discourse. Fieldwork has taken place in the UK, the USA, Japan, and among online communities and on social media. My science communication work includes a series of award-winning short documentaries on AI, writing and presenting a BBC Radio 4 documentary on the cultural impact of the Terminator, popular publications, science festival talks, press interviews, and international media appearances. My research has also been recognised with awards, including the 2021 Digital Religion Research Award from the Network for New Media, Religion, and Digital Culture Studies, the 2017 Arts and Humanities Research Council's Best Research Film of the Year, the Evening Standard's *Progress 1000*, the Hay Festival's *30 to Watch* and Cofinitive's *21 to Watch*, and an ISSR Book Prize in 2025. I published two new books on religion and AI in 2024 - *Religion and AI: An Introduction*, and the *Cambridge Companion to Religion and AI*.

Employment

March 2025 - **Co-Director, URPP Digital Religion(s) in Phase 2 URPP Digital Religion(s) from Jan 2025**
University of Zurich
- Supporting the Director in all matters relating to the management of the URPP Digital Religion(s) and, in this capacity, participates in regular strategic meetings with the Director and the scientific and administrative management.
- Involved in strategic, financial, and funding decisions

Jan. 2025- **Member of the Board of Directors for the Digital Society Initiative, *University of Zurich***

Jan. 2025 - **Principal Investigator in Phase 2 of URPP Digital Religion(s) from Jan 2025**
Project: "Post-AI Religion and Religious AI: Reciprocal Disruption and Futures"
- Post doc, Kristina Eiviler
- PhD, Accursio Graffeo
- Research Assistant, Jasmin Müller

Aug. 2023 - **Co-Lead, Media Existential Encounters and Evolving Technology Lab**
University of Zurich
The MEEET Lab offers researchers, students, and the interested public the opportunity to get to know, try out and use technologies that have taken and are taking a decisive role in the process of digital transformation of our society.
- Team leadership and strategy
- Collaboration with stakeholders and other research organisations
- Workshop design and delivery

Oct. 2022 - **Assistant Professor in Digital Religion(s)**
University Research Priority Programme (URPP) Digital Religion(s)
Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies
University of Zurich

- *Research:*
    - Digital and traditional anthropological research on the conceptions and narratives of AI impacting people's lifestyles, religions, communities, and futures.
      Publications on theistic AI discourse online, science and religion, digital religions, religious tropes and narratives, and the anthropology of anxiety and trust.
- *Teaching:*
  Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, courses and seminars:
    - "Digital Religion(s): Methods, Technologies, and Futures"
    - "Religion, Speculative Fiction, and Popular Culture
    - "Artificial Intelligence, Religions and Ethics", with Dr Hadil Labadidi
    - "Entanglements of politics with AI and religious influences", with Prof Dr Dorothea Lüddeckens

  Digital Society Initiative and School of Transdisciplinary Studies, module coordinator:
  - Minor in Digital Skills: Artistic Reflection Module
  - Minor in Innovation and Entrepreneurship: XP-Lab Module

Oct. 2020 - Sept 2022 **Director of Studies: Theology, Religion, and the Philosophy of Religion,**
Homerton College, University of Cambridge

- Academic guidance and pastoral care for undergraduates
- Experience in admissions, interviews, EDI (equality, diversity, and inclusion), and unconscious bias training
- Administration of exam enrolment, coordinating supervisions, and writing references.
- Member of Homerton College's Governing Body and Equality and Diversity Committee.

Oct 2018- Sept 2022 **Junior Research Fellow in Artificial Intelligence,**
Homerton College, University of Cambridge

Feb. 2016 - Oct. 2018 **Research Associate on the "Human Identity in the Age of Nearly Human Machines" Project**,
Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, St Edmund's College, University of Cambridge

- Ethnographic fieldwork among AI technologists and experts.
- Surveying technological and pop-cultural sources on AI.
- Produced a series of short documentaries on the future of AI and robots to engage the public, which involved interviews with theologians and philosophers. The first of which, *Pain in the Machine*, won the AHRC Best Research Film of the Year award 2017.

June 2002 - Oct. 2010 **Freelance Script Editor and Temp Worker, London**
Temp positions while freelancing. PA for film producers, magazine publishers, and Heads of Communications.

Teaching Experience:

Oct 2025- **Module Co-Ordinator, Minor in Innovation and Entrepreneurship**
In charge of the XP-Lab module
School of Transdisciplinary Studies, UZH

2024- **Module Co-Ordinator, Minor in Digital Skills: Artistic Reflection**
Digital Society Initiative and School of Transdisciplinary Studies, UZH

2024- **Co-Supervisor, PhD**
Maike Sieler, Religious and Societal Effects of AI, UZH
Accursio Graffeo, AI New Religious Movements (dual degree with UZH and DREST - University of Turin / University of Modena and Reggio Emilia)

Oct. 2022- **Assistant Professor in Digital Religion(s)**
- Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, courses and seminars:
  - Digital Religion(s): Methods, Technologies, and Futures
  - Religion, Speculative Fiction, and Popular Culture
  - Entanglements of Politics with AI and Religious Influences, with Prof. Dr Dorothea Lüddeckens
  - Artificial Intelligence, Religions and Ethics, with Dr Hadil Labadidi

Oct. 2012- Sept 2022 **Affiliated Supervisor and Lecturer, Faculty of Divinity, Cambridge**
Supervising and lecturing undergraduates. Postgraduate supervision on MPhil essays and dissertations.

Topics taught include sociological and anthropological theorists, digital technology and society, science and religion, gender, film and broadcasting, contemporary diet culture, and responses to the Anthropocene from social media influencers.

Nov. 2020 - Dec. 2021 **PhD Supervision Committee Member, KU Leuven**
Supervising a PhD thesis on "(Post)Human Encounters: Imaginations of and interactions with the 'Technological Other."

Feb. 2019 **Guest Lecturer: Masters Course on Theology, Imagination, and Culture, Sarum College, Salisbury, UK**
Sessions on:
"Transhumanism – Technology's Field of Dreams"
"AI - technological eschatology."

Nov. 2018 **Guest Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Cambridge.**
Paper SOC 8: "Religion and Contentious Mobilisation."
Sessions on "From Moral panics to Moral Parodies - A History of the Concept of the 'New Religious Movement'"

Qualifications:

2011 - 2016 **PhD Theology and Religious Studies**,
Pembroke College, University of Cambridge
Supervisor, Dr Timothy Jenkins

Thesis: *The Indigo Children: New Age Experimentation with Self and Science* (Monograph published with Routledge in 2017)

Maternity leave Feb. 2012 – Sept. 2012

2010 - 2011 **MPhil Theology and Religious Studies (Distinction)**,
Pembroke College, University of Cambridge
Supervisor, Dr Timothy Jenkins
Master's thesis: "*Skeletons into Goddesses": Creating Religion, the Case of the Pro-Ana Movement*

1999 - 2002 **MA Hons (Cantab) Theology and Religious Studies (2:1)**,
Pembroke College, University of Cambridge

Undergraduate thesis: *"A Thing of Spirit, Not of Heritage": Inventing Religion, the Case of Modern Pagan Witchcraft*

Academic Publications:

Books

Forthcoming *AI Hopes, Fears, and Realities: Technological, Religious, Societal, and Philosophical Perspectives*, a MEEET-Lab Edited Volume, Bloomsbury, UK

2024 *Religion and AI: An Introduction*, Routledge

2024 *The Cambridge Companion to Religion and AI*, co-edited with Fraser Watts, Cambridge University Press.

2021 *Radical Transformations in Minority Religions*, co-edited with Eileen Barker, Routledge https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315226804

2017 *The Indigo Children: New Age Experimentation with Self and Science*, an ethnographic monograph on the New Age Movement, Routledge; https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315100845

Articles

2025 "Specialists without Spirit": GenAI Professors, Epistemic Networks, and Religious Education", in a special issue of *Journal for Pedagogy and Theology*, edited by Prof. Dr Thomas Schlag https://www.degruyterbrill.com/document/doi/10.1515/zpt-2025-2042/html

2024 "Existential Conversations with Large Language Models: Content, Community, and Culture", with Murray Shanahan, pre-print available at https://arxiv.org/abs/2411.13223

2023 "'Will AI Create a Religion?": Views of the Algorithmic Forms of the Religious Life in Popular Discourse", in *American Religion*, vol. 5 no. 1, 2023, p. 95-103.

2023 "AI Gods, Jeans Gods, and Thrift Gods: Responding to Responses to the Blessed by the Algorithm Paper (Singler 2020)", in a Special Issue on the Work of Beth Singler, Debates do NER, YEAR 23, N. 43 (2023): Religion and Digital Life (Nov. 2023) https://seer.ufrgs.br/index.php/debatesdoner/article/view/136578

2020 "'Blessed by the Algorithm': Theistic Conceptions of Artificial Intelligence as Entanglements of AI and Religion', in *AI and Society*, 35, pages 945–955 https://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s00146-020-00968-2

2020 "The AI Creation Meme: A Case Study of the New Visibility of Religion in Artificial Intelligence Discourse", for a special issue on 'the New Visibility of Religion' for *Religions*, 11 (5), 253; https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11050253

2019 "Existential Hope and Existential Despair in AI Apocalypticism And Transhumanism", in *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*, vol 54, issue 1; https://doi.org/10.1111/zygo.12494

2018 Edited a special issue on Religion and AI for *The Journal of Implicit Religion*, vol 20, no.3, including contributing two articles:

- "An Introduction to Artificial Intelligence and Religion for the Religious Studies Scholar"; http://dx.doi.org/10.1558/imre.35901
- "Roko's Basilisk or Pascal's? Thinking of Singularity Thought Experiments as Implicit Religion"; https://doi.org/10.1558/imre.35900

2015 "Big, Bad Pharma: New Age Biomedical Conspiracy Narratives and their Expression in the Concept of the Indigo Child", in *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* (2015) 19 (2): 17–29; https://doi.org/10.1525/nr.2015.19.2.17

2015 "'My Brother, the Insect': Researching the Indigo Children and their New Age Cosmologies and Spiritual Guides", in *DISKUS: Journal of the British Association for the Study of Religion.*

2014 "'SEE MOM IT IS REAL': The UK Census, Jediism and Social Media", in Journal of Religion in Europe, (2014), *7*(2), 150-168. https://doi.org/10.1163/18748929-00702005

Book Chapters

Forthcoming "Singularity as Salvation? Hopes and Fears of the Future in Reddit Discussions", in Lorenz, J. (ed) Divine Devices: The Emerging Technologies of Enchantment and Wonder, with Gerold Schneider and Katja Valaskivi

Forthcoming "The Moving Event Horizon of AI New Religious Movements and Emergent Spiritualities", Geraci, R (ed.) *Edward Elgar Handbook of Religion and Artificial Intelligence*

2027 "AI, Religion, and Neoliberalism: From 'Thin Pagan Religion' to 'Appifying' Jesus", in Guest, M. and Bielo, J. (eds), *The Handbook of Religion and Neoliberalism*, Bloomsbury

2026 "What is a God? Modalities and Typologies of Deities in Post-AI Religiosity, the Case of LLM-Theisms" in Neumaier, A. (ed) Artificial Religion: Media - Practices - Materialities, Kohlhammer, Germany https://shop.kohlhammer.de/kunstliche-religion-abacp87.html

2025 "Artificial Intelligence and Hope", in van den Heuvel, S. and Scioli, A. (eds) *The Oxford Compendium of Hope*, Oxford University Press

2025 "Insights from Current Research on the Entanglements of AI and Religion", with Kristina Eiviler, in Schlag, T. and Yadav, K. (eds)., *Religious communication, interaction and transformation in a culture of digitality. Collected insights from the Zurich University Research Priority Program "Digital Religion(s)*, DeGruyter

2024 "Introduction: Religion and AI", in Singler, B. and Watts, F. (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to Religion and AI*, Cambridge University Press.

2024 "The Anthropology and Sociology of Religion and AI" in Singler, Beth and Fraser Watts (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to Religion and AI*, Cambridge University Press.

2023 "How I Stopped Worrying and Learned to Question the Apocalyptic AI", in Campbell and Cheong (eds) 'Thinking Tools for AI, Religion and Culture'

2022 "Left Behind? Religion as a Vestige in 'The Rapture of the Nerds' and Other AI Singularity Literature", in *Science and Religion in Western Literature: Critical and Theological Studies*, ed Michael Fuller, Routledge.

2022 "AI Apocalypticism and the Religious Impulse In, and From, the Terminator Franchise", in *Representing Religion in Film*, eds Rebecca King and Tenzan Eaghill, Bloomsbury.

2022 "*Origin* and the End: Artificial Intelligence, Atheism and, Imaginaries of the Future of Religion", in *Emerging Voices in Theology and Science*, eds Bethany Sollereder and Alistair McGrath, Routledge.

2021 "When Galaxies Collide: The Question of Jediism's Revisionism in the face of Corporate Buyouts and Mythos 'Retconning'", in *Radical Transformations in Minority Religions*, eds Beth Singler and Eileen Barker, Routledge.

2021 "Radical Transformations in Minority Religions: Reflections", in *Radical Transformations in Minority Religions*, eds Beth Singler and Eileen Barker, Routledge.

2020 "Artificial Intelligence and the Parent/Child Narrative", in *AI Narratives: A History of Imagining Thinking About Intelligent Machines*, eds Stephen Cave, Kanta Dihal and Sarah Dillon, OUP; DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780198846666.003.0012

2019 "Conceiving AI: Creation and the Parent/Child Narrative in Blade Runner 2049", in *Blade Runner 2049 and Philosophy*, eds Robin Bunce and Trip McCossin, Open Court Publishing Company.

2016 "No Leader, No Followers: The Internet and the End of Charisma?" in *Visioning New and Minority Religions: Projecting the Future*, INFORM's 25th Anniversary Conference Volume, ed. Eugene Gallagher, Routledge; https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315317908

2016 "The New Age Movement and the Definition of the Child", in *The Bloomsbury Reader in Religion and Childhood*, edited by Anna Strhan, Stephen G. Parker, and Susan Ridgely, Bloomsbury; https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2018.1458911

2015 "Internet-based New Religious Movements and Dispute Resolution" in Religion and Legal Pluralism, edited by Russell Sandberg, Ashgate, pages 161-178.

2015 "Possession and Exorcism in the New Age Movement" in *Spirit Possession around the World Possession, Communion, and Demon Expulsion across Cultures,* edited by Joseph Laycock, ABC-CLIO

Book Reviews

2022 Calvin Mercer and Tracy J. Trothern. 2021. *Religion and The Technological Future: An Introduction to Biohacking, Artificial Intelligence, and Transhumanism*, Palgrave Macmillan, for the Journal of the American Academy of Religion (JAAR) https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfac044

2022 Wesley J Wildman and Kate J. Stockly. 2021. *Spirit Tech: The Brave New World of Consciousness Hacking and Enlightenment Engineering*, St Martin's Press, for the Journal of the American Academy of Religion (JAAR) https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfac044

2021 Emily Cox-Palmer-White. 2021.*The Biopolitics of Gender in Science Fiction: Feminism and Female Machines* - Routledge Studies in Speculative Fiction. *Foundation: Journal of the Science Fiction Foundation*, 139, 50.2 (Summer 2021) https://www.proquest.com/docview/2580076825

2017 Gregg, Stephen E. and Lynne Scholefield. 2015. "Engaging with Lived Religion: A Guide to Fieldwork in the Study of Religion". Oxford: Routledge. 180pp. In *Fieldwork in Religion* 12.1 (2017) pages 129–130; https://doi.org/10.1558/firn.34700

2014 Campion, Nicholas. 2015. "Astrology and Popular Religion in the Modern West: Prophecy, Cosmology and the New Age Movement", Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2012. Pp. 254. In *Religious Studies Review*, Volume40, Issue4, Dec. 2014, pages 195-196; https://doi.org/10.1111/rsr.12166_3

2013 Collins-Mayo, S., and P. Dandelion (eds). 2010. Religion and Youth. Aldershot: Ashgate, Fieldwork in Religion, 8(1), pages 113–115; 10.1558/firn.v8i1.113

2013 Bailey, M., and G. Reddon (eds). 2010. Mediating Faiths: Religion and Socio-Cultural Change in the 21st Century. Aldershot: Ashgate. Fieldwork in Religion, 8(1), pages 113–115; 10.1558/firn.v8i1.113

2011 Cusack, C. M. 2010. *Invented Religions, Imagination Fiction and Faith.* Aldershot: Ashgate. viii + 69 pp. ISBN 978 0 75466 780 3. £50.00. *Fieldwork in Religion*, 5(2), pages 259–260; https://doi.org/10.1558/firn.v5i2.259

Conference Papers and Talks:

International

Nov. 2026 KEYNOTE: "Independent Spirits? AI as Continuity, Disruption and Inspiration in Spirituality" MSU Foglio Speaker Series on Spirituality, ONLINE

Nov. 2026 "Challenges of AI", ISSR Seminar, Speakers: Beth Singler, Selmer Bringsjord, Philip Clayton, and Marius Dorobantu, ONLINE

Nov. 2026	"Spiritual Event Horizons: Eschatological Timeframes and Recursive Religious Responses to AI Paradigms and Hype", Religion and AI workshop, organised by Mark Coeckelbergh, Vienna
Oct. 2026	"Religion and AI: Further Notes from the Field", Faith and AI, Online
Sept.2026	EASR Conference, Bucharest, Romania
June 2026	"The Moving Event Horizon of AI New Religious Movements and Emergent Spiritualities", EuARE Conference, Rome, Italy
June 2026	"Religion and AI", LERU Theology and Religious Studies meeting, Helsinki, Finland
May 2026	KEYNOTE "The Stories We Tell About AI: Myths, Media, and the Making of Machines", Royal Society of Medicine, London, UK
March 2026	"Entangled Truths: Science and Religion at the Crossroads of World – Where Meaning Meets Matter", Panel Discussion, Darmstadt, Germany
Jan. 2026	KEYNOTE AI Ethics and Faith event, Art-AI, Lambeth Palace, London, UK
Nov 2025	KEYNOTE on Religion and AI, Faith Angle Europe 2025 Forum, Nice, France
Oct 2025	"Technology and the Apocalyptic Imaginary: Understanding AI through the Lens of Religion", Lund University, Program "At the End of the World: A Transdisciplinary Approach to the Apocalyptic Imaginary in the Past and Present", Online
Oct 2025	Speaker at Divan Symposium on Cross-Cultural AI, Berlin, Germany
Sept 2025	"Benevolent AI, Benevolent Conspiracies: Perceptions of Emergent Spiritual Truths in Recent LLM-Human Interactions", *Scientific, Artificial, and Conspiratorial Truth: Resonances and Differences* Workshop, LSE, London, UK
Aug 2025	"A Poly(theistic) Crisis? Emergent AI Deifications and Their Connection to AI Existential Risk Narratives and Solutions", ISMRC Conference, Boston, USA [Online]
Aug 2025	"Innovationism 2.0 and the Polycrisis: Discussions on Artificial Intelligence and Singularity on Reddit", with Gerold Schneider (URPP Digital Religion(s), UZH) and Katja Valaskivi (Helsinki), ISMRC Conference, Boston [Online]
July 2025	"Identities, Artificial Intelligence, Religion and Hope", Sea of Faith Network Conference, London, UK
March 2025	"Religion, the Human, and AI", Religious Studies Research Forum seminar, Queen's University Belfast
Feb. 2025	JSPS Symposium on Robotics, Religion and Ethics, Manchester, UK
Dec. 2024	AI and Faith Salon, ONLINE
Nov. 2024	KEYNOTE: "Human Says No: The Spectrum of AI Rejection from Religious and Conspiritual Narratives, to "Decels", "Pauses", "Positive Ludditism" and "Criti-Hype"', Dissent in the Digital Age Conference, Oxford, UK

Nov. 2024	KEYNOTE: “Glitching the Claude: Spiritual Jailbreaks and Hyperstitional Cultures through a Religious Studies Lens”, Religion and Media Workshop, AAR, San Diego, USA
Oct. 2024	KEYNOTE Panel with Q&A “AI – Disciplinary perspectives on AI. What does it mean for knowledge in the religion and worldviews classroom?”, RExChange Conference, Online
Sept. 2024	KEYNOTE: “Religion and AI: Notes from the Field”, AI and Faith, Online
Feb. 2024	Princeton CTI Webinar: “Current Research on AI & Religion”, USA
Nov. 2023	Panel on Religion and AI, American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, USA
August 2023	“The Algorithmic Forms of the Religious Life: AI and the Idea of the ‘Creation’ of Religion”, International Society for Media, Religion and Culture (ISMRC) Conference, Bochum, Germany
July 2023	KEYNOTE: Virtuous AI: Cultural Evolution, Artificial Intelligence, and Virtue Conference, Rome, Italy
June 2023	KEYNOTE: “AI and Religion: Imaginaries, Simulations, and Generated Worlds” at the “Digital Incarnation” Summer School, Paris, France, 28th – 30th June
June 2023	KEYNOTE: ISSR Annual Conference, Swindon, UK
June 2023	“AI and the Idea of the 'Creation' of Religion in SF Imaginaries and Ideologies", at Science, Fiction, Faith, and the Future(s), London Science Museum, UK
June 2023	Panel: “AI and Future Technology”, GoNeDigiTal Conference 2023, ONLINE
May 2023	Cambridge Anthropology-Theology Network: "AI and Religion: Entanglements and Ethnographic Impacts", ONLINE
Nov. 2022	“AI and the Future of Religion – An Evening with Beth Singler”, at the Centre for Culture, Society, and Religion, Princeton University.
Nov. 2022	“AI and Religion in 2041”, interdisciplinary panel for the Religion and AI Seminar, American Academy of Religion Conference, USA
July 2022	KEYNOTE: European Sociological Association, Sociology of Religion Conference, Groningen, 2022. Conference theme: ‘Religion in an unstable world: Challenges, transformations and future prospects’, ONLINE
June 2022	“The Rise of the Non-Player Characters and the Non-Human Others: New Risks and Opportunities for Anthropology from Artificial Intelligence and the Metaverse”, at Royal Anthropological Institute Conference: Anthropology, AI and the Future of Human Society, ONLINE
May 2022	Panel on Religion and AI at ‘Exploring Belief’ - the Religion Media Festival, London, UK
May 2022	KEYNOTE: “Deepfaking God? AI and Religious Creativity, Information, and Disinformation”, Religion and Science Forum Conference, Birmingham, UK, 2022. Conference theme: the use and ethics of information (data) for science, religion, and society.

May 2022	"AI in Faith and Faith in AI", Sociologies of AI Network, Leeds University, ONLINE
Nov. 2021	"fAIth: Believing in AI and AI in Belief", Annual Digital Religion Research Award Lecture, Texas, USA [online]
Oct. 2021	"The Dreams Our Stuff is Made of: Trust, Agency, and Superagency" AI Ethics seminar at Chalmers AI Research Centre, Sweden [online]
March 2021	"'Blessed by the Algorithm': Artificial Intelligence and Religion in Online and Offline Discourse", AI and Religion Research Seminar at KU Leuven, Amsterdam [online]
Feb. 2021	"Contemporary Significance of AI for Religion", Cambridge Festival, University of Cambridge, UK [online]
Nov. 2020	"Robot Politicians: Even Better than the Real Thing?", Homerton Alumni Seminar, Homerton College, University of Cambridge [online]
Sept. 2020	"'Blessed by the Algorithm': AI, Agency, and Religion", AI and Religion Conference, Foundazione Bruno Kessler, Italy [online]
Nov. 2019	"Blessed by the Algorithm": Artificial Intelligence and Religion", Edinburgh University Seminar, Edinburgh, UK
Nov. 2019	"Blessed by the Algorithm": AI Teleology and Popular Discourse, TORCH, Oxford University, Oxford, UK
Nov. 2019	"Clap if You Believe in AI: Fairies, Ghosts, and Algorithmic Gods", Exeter University History and Philosophy of Science Seminar, Exeter, UK
Nov. 2019	"'Blessed by the Algorithm': Theistic Conceptions of Artificial Intelligence as Entanglements of AI and Religion", Religion and AI Research Group, American Academy of Religion (AAR), San Diego, USA (peer-reviewed)
Nov. 2019	KEYNOTE: "I just keep at it till I succeed": Sophia the Robot, the Singularity, and AI Teleology", Religion and Media Workshop, American Academy of Religion (AAR), San Diego, USA
Sept. 2019	"Clap if you Believe in AI: Fairies, Ghosts, and Algorithmic Gods", Trust and Technology Initiative Conference, University of Cambridge, UK
July 2019	KEYNOTE: "Thinking About What You Think About Machines that Might Think: Anthropology and AI Apocalypticism", CenSAMM (The Centre for the Critical Study of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements) annual conference
May 2019	"Sexist Input = Sexist Output", Seminar, CRASSH (Centre for Research in Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities) University of Cambridge, UK
May 2019	"Blessed by the Algorithm", AI: Religious and Ethical Perspectives conference, Science and Human Dimensions Project, Jesus College, University of Cambridge, UK
April 2019	"FAUX-BOTS" Or… Telling AI Tales: AI Narratives, Fear, and Responsibility, British Society for Literature and Science Conference, Royal Holloway, UK
March 2019	"Faith and AI", Workshop speaker and leader, St George's House, Windsor Castle, UK

Feb. 2019	"What machines can tell us about being human", Homerton College Research Seminar, University of Cambridge, UK
Nov.2018	"Elon and Victor: Narratives of the Mad Scientist as applied to AI Research", Science in the Public Conference, Cardiff, UK
Nov. 2018	"AI in a Religious World", Templeton Conference, Cyprus
Sept. 2018	"AI and Trust" Trust and Technology Initiative, Annual Conference, Cambridge, UK
July 2017	"The Narratives of Artificial Intelligence", Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence Conference, Cambridge, UK
June 2017	"Three Examples of Identity Formation in Digital and Non-Digital Spaces", NASA and Princeton Centre for Theological Inquiry Workshop on Astrobiology and Digital Media, Windsor, UK
June 2017	"The Singularity is Nigh: Esotericism and Eschatology in Emerging Technology and the X-Risk Ecosystem", 6th International Conference of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism, Erfurt, Germany
March 2017	"The Stories We Tell Ourselves about Artificial Intelligence", Foreign and Commonwealth Office workshop for UK-German AI collaboration, Berlin, Germany
Sept. 2016	"The Possibility of a Religion: Artificial Intelligence, Science Fiction and New Religious Movements", BASR Conference, Wolverhampton, UK
August 2016	"'It's the End of the World as We Know It (And I Feel Fine)': An Ethnographic Comparison of Existential Hope and Existential Distress in Transhumanist and Apocalyptic AI Groups", Affective Apocalypses Conference, Belfast, UK (peer-reviewed)
July 2016	"LessWrong = Less Religious? Secularity as Moral Boundary Making in Future Technology Focussed Groups", Ian Ramsey Centre Conference on Post-Secularity, Oxford, UK
May 2016	"Roko's Basilisk or Pascal's? Thinking of Singularity Thought Experiments as Implicit Religion", Implicit Religion Conference, Canterbury, UK
August 2015	"When Galaxies Collide: Jediism's Revisionism in the Face of Corporate Buyouts and Mythos 'Retconning'", International Association for the History of Religion Conference, Erfurt, Germany
August 2015	"Big, Bad Pharma: New Age Biomedical Conspiracy Narratives and their Expression in the Concept of the Indigo Child", International Association for the History of Religion (IAHR) Conference, Erfurt, Germany
May 2015	"126 Characters in Search of an Author: Twitter and Thinking Out Loud on Social Media, The Case of The Indigo Children", Connected Life Conference, Oxford, UK
Nov. 2014	"Black, White or Blue? The Indigo Children, Hip Hop, and Interrogating Assumptions about the Race and Aims of 'New Agers'", American Academy of Religion, San Diego, USA (peer-reviewed)

Sept. 2014 "'My Brother, the Insect': Researching the Indigo Children and their New Age Cosmologies and Spiritual Guides", BASR Annual Conference, Sept. 2014, Milton Keynes, UK

July 2014 "The Tomorrow People, Today: The Indigo Children and an Attempted Resolution of the Crisis in the Definition of the Child", SocRel Annual Conference, Brighton, UK

Feb. 2014 "No Leader, No Followers: The Internet and the End of Charisma?", INFORM 25th Anniversary Conference, London, UK

Sept. 2013 "Big, Bad Pharma: New Age Biomedical Conspiracy Narratives and their Expression in the Concept of the Indigo Child", British Association for the Study of Religion (BASR) Annual Conference, Liverpool, UK

Sept. 2013 "Blame Sheila: The 2011 UK Census, 'Other Religion' and the Rhetoric of Narcissism", BASR Annual Conference, Liverpool, UK

June 2013 "The 2011 Census and the 'Other' Category: A Discussion of Jedi and Scientologists", BSA Sociology of Religion Study Group Study Day: "Making Sense of the Census, The SocRel Response", London, UK

Sept. 2012 "Jedi Ltd. or Limited Jedi? Jediism and the Changing Domains of Religious Conflict in New Religious Movements" BASR Annual Conference, Winchester, UK

Sept. 2011 "When Ritual Cannot End – The Pro-Ana Movement Online and Anamadic Asceticism", BASR Annual Conference, Durham, UK

March 2011 "Theology in the 3rd Millennium: Studying New Religious Movements on the Internet, the case of the Pro-Ana Movement", INTERFACE Conference: Being a Young Theologian in the World, Maynooth, Ireland

Switzerland

Oct. 2026 "Serpent or Apple? Truth and Lies in Artificial Intelligence and Religion", Ringvorlesung: "Truth and Lies: Transdisciplinary Perspectives and Reflections", UZH

June 2026 "Extremism and upheavals in the future: Does AI make religion extreme, or does religion make AI more extreme?", Extremism Summer School, Zurich, Switzerland

April 2026 "Move Fast, Break Things, and Live Forever: Transhumanist Prophecies, Politics, and Power", Theology Seminar, UZH

Nov. 2025 "Religion and AI: An Introduction", Digital Society Initiative's Community 'AI, Culture, and Society' Reading Group, Zurich, Switzerland

Nov. 2025 "Religion and AI: Emergent Forms of LLM Spirituality and Possible Consequences", for 'Pandora's Box' an ETH GESS Seminar, Zurich

October 2025 Lecture on emergent LLM spirituality, as part of a lecture series on "How Digitalization and AI are Changing our Society", Zurich, Switzerland

July 2025 "Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Society", Panel Discussion on Visions of the Future with AI as Seen in Harari's *Nexus*, MEEET-Lab Public Event, Zurich, Switzerland

April 2025 GENTEC 2025 Workshop: workshops on Gender and Technology, Zurich, Switzerland

January 2024	UZH Tower Talk, Zurich, Switzerland
Oct. 2024	"Religious Digital Transformation: From Finding God on the Forums to God-like AI", Digital Society Initiative
Sept. 2024	AI Ethics Workshop, MEEET-Lab
March 2024	"Religion and AI", Digital Society Initiative, Communication Community
Dec. 2022	Keynote seminar on "Religion, AI, and Digital Media", for Conference on Twitter, Insta, TikTok, Tinder – Mobile Medien und die mediatisierte Gesellschaft, St Gallen University, Swizerland
Oct. 2022	"AI and Digital Religion(s)", at Digital Religion(s) Conference, Switzerland

Public Talks

Oct. 2026	Ghost in the machine – Church responsibility and opportunities for shaping the future in the age of artificial intelligence, EKS, Zurich
Oct. 2026	"What is AI Doing to Us?", AI+X Summit, Main Stage Panel, Zurich, Switzerland
Sept. 2026	UZH Alumni Event, Swiss Embassy, London, UK
August 2026	"Are the AI Gods Coming?", Scientifica, Zurich, Switzerland
June 2026	Session on Religion and AI for WEF Foresight Network Event on "Unconventional Futures in Unconventional Times", Geneva, Switzerland
May 2025	"Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Society", Panel Discussion on Visions of the Future with AI as Seen in Harari's «Nexus», MEEET-Lab Public Event, Zurich, Switzerland
May 2025	Panel on "Human, God and AI: The challenge of artificial intelligence", Kirchentag, Hannover Germany
April 2025	Abu Dhabi Culture Summit, Panel: "Being Human: Ethics in the Age of Artificial Intelligence", invited by the Abrahamic Family House
Nov. 2024	Panel Discussion, "Artificial intelligence: what humanity for tomorrow? From the inert to the living", University of Geneva, Switzerland
August 2024	"Being Human in an Age of AI", talk, Greenbelt Festival, UK
July 2024	"The End of Humanity", Panel Discussion, Zurich, Switzerland
March 2024	"AI and the Future of Religion", Christians in Science, Online
Oct. 2023	Church Times Webinar: "AI and the Church", with Bishop Stephen Croft and Andrew Brown, and Eve Poole, Online
Sept. 2023	"How AI is Shaping Our Future", Scientifica, ETH and UZH, Zurich, Switzerland
August 2023	Panel: "Do You Believe the Hype? Culture, Society, Politics and God in An AI World", Greenbelt Festival, UK
Dec. 2022	"Obsessed with Sentience? What language models are teaching us about our expectations of tech and humanity", panel for the Digital Ethics Summit, Tech UK
Sept. 2022	"Mythology and Science Fiction", panel at Science Fiction Squared: A Symposium Exploring the Future of Science Fiction, London, UK and ONLINE
June 2022	"fAIth: Believing in AI", New Scientist Evening Lecture, London, UK
March 2022	"AI: Friend or Foe?", New Scientist Live, Manchester, UK
March 2022	"A Salon for Humans & Machines, a conversion with Beth Singler - AI, Us, and Our Dreams of the Future", with William Powers, for the Max Planck Institute for Human Development
Feb. 2022	Book Launch – Radical Transformations in Minority Religions, INFORM seminar series
July 2021	"Just because you can, does it mean you should? Ethics in Artificial Intelligence (AI)", BCS Data Management Specialist Group, UK [online]

June 2021	"Existential Threats: the Unpredictable Horizon" panel and "Why Democracy Needs an Algorithm – Max Tegmark", CogX Festival of AI and Emerging Tech, London, UK [online]
May 2021	"Ethical tech & bias in AI", panel, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece [online]
April 2021	"Preparing for the Robopocalypse: the Real Dangers of Artificial Intelligence and Robots" – Homerton College, University of Cambridge [online]
Nov. 2020	"Living In Our Stories About AI", NYU's Institute for Public Knowledge, NYU Tandon's Department for Technology, Culture and Society and the 370 Jay Project, New York [online]
Oct. 2020	"The Near Future", Panel for Ada Lovelace Day Conference [online]
Sept. 2020	"Technology and democracy: rebuilding from the bottom-up", Cambridge Alumni Festival in association with the Hay Festival, Cambridge, UK [online]
June 2020	"Privacy Not Included", Panel, CogX Festival of AI and Emerging Technology [online]
Feb. 2020	"Trust and AI", Westminster workshop, London, UK
Jan. 2020	Night of Ideas Festival, French Embassy, London, UK
Oct. 2019	"AI, the end of Society?" Norwich Science Festival, UK
Oct. 2019	"God and the Machine", Cambridge Festival of Ideas, University of Cambridge, UK
Oct. 2019	"Could Robots Ever Become Artists?", panel at the London Science Museum, London, UK
Sept. 2019	"Are We Ready for Artificial Intelligence?", Cambridge University Alumni Festival, UK
June 2019	"Robomorphisation & The Retrofit Human", CogX Festival of AI and Emerging Technology, London, UK
March 2019	"AI and humans: fear, hope, and the future", AI Summit, Munich, Germany
Sept. 2018	"The Fractured Mirror", Ars Electronica, Liz, Austria
Sept. 2018	"What Machines Can Tell Us About Being Human", New Scientist Live, London UK
June 2018	"Pain in the Machine" panel and screening, Cheltenham Science Festival, UK
April 2018	Panels on "What do Robots think about when no one is around" and Frankenstein, Edinburgh Science Festival, UK
Nov. 2017	"Pain and the Machine", BBC Click Live, London, UK
July 2017	"The Transhumanist Club" – The New Scientist, Barbican, London, UK
June 2017	"The Knowledge" at the Science Museum – "How to Make a Robot", London, UK
June 2017	"The Machine Mind", Cheltenham Science Festival, UK
May 2017	"30 to Watch" and "The Cambridge Series", and "BBC Click Live", The Hay Festival, UK
May 2017	"This House believes that AI/Robotics will make us happier", The Annual Centre for the Application of Research (CSAR) Debate: Churchill College, Cambridge, UK

Corporate Talks

July 2025	"Religion and AI: Entanglements, Imaginaries, and Futures", research presentation at Google, London, UK ONLINE
April 2020	"Are We Ready for Artificial Intelligence?", JISC, [online]
Oct. 2018	"Good in the Machine: AI, Society, and Ethics" FCA, London, UK
Oct. 2018	"What machines can tell us about being human" IP EXPO, London, UK
Sept. 2018	"AI Narratives", Google DeepMind, London, UK
April 2018	Amazon Research Cambridge (ARC) Seminar Series, Cambridge, UK

Funding and Awards:

July 2026 **SNF Scientific Exchange Funding for Visiting Fellow at the URPP Digital Religion(s) and Collegium Helveticum:** Victoria Lorrimar, Director of the Centre for Technology and Human Futures, Associate Professor and Senior Research Fellow in the Institute for Ethics and Society, University of Notre Dame, Australia

- 27,500 CHF, 10 months

August 2025 **Winner of a 2025 International Society for Science and Religion (ISSR) book prize**, in the category of books for professionals and educators, for *Religion and AI: An Introduction* https://www.issr.org.uk/issr-statements/issr-2025-book-prize/

August 2025 Project Lead with Prof. Dr Thomas Schlag: Templeton Funded Project: "Strengthening Resilience and Well-Being in Adolescents through Religion-Related AI and Digital Resources"
- 110,000 CHF over two years to fund two PhDs (match funding of 45,944 CHF for total budget of 155,944 CHF)

July 2023 Digital Society Initiative funding, UZH: MEEET Lab (Media Existential Encounters and Evolving Technology Lab), co-lead.
- The MEEET Lab offers researchers, students and the interested public the opportunity to get to know, try out and use technologies that have taken and are taking a decisive role in the process of digital transformation of our society.
- 121,428 CHF (matched for total budget of 242,856 CHF)

Nov. 2021 Digital Religion Research Award 2021, Network for New Media, Religion, and Digital Culture.
- Winning journal article – "The AI Creation Meme: A Case Study of the New Visibility of Religion in Artificial Intelligence Discourse", special issue on 'the New Visibility of Religion' for *Religions*, 11 (5), 253; https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11050253
- Honorarium $700

Sept. 2018 - June 2019 Co-Investigator, 'Global AI Narratives Project', Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence (CFI), Cambridge
- An international project combining local workshops and publications.
- Co-wrote the successful grant application.
- Funded by Templeton World Charitable Foundation (TWCF) and Google DeepMind for £300,000.

Nov. 2017 AHRC Best Research Film of the Year Award for *Pain in the Machine* Short documentary on AI and robotics, involving interviews with theologians and philosophers - £2000 for next film.

April 2016 Cambridge Shorts/Wellcome Trust Short Film Scheme
£4,000 for the production of *Pain in the Machine.*

July 2011 Faculty of Divinity Graduate Award for Distinction in the MPhil (£300)

June 2011 The Bethune-Baker Graduate Studentship – Pembroke College, Cambridge £5,700 p.a. for three years.

Academic Service and Science Communication

June 2026- LERU Steering Committee representative from UZH from 2026

June 2026- Global Network Religion and Theology, Treasurer and Steering Committee representative from UZH

Feb 2025- Member of the Future U, UZH think tank on the future of the university.

2025- Member of the "Conceptualizing Agency, Religion, and Digitalization" (CARD) Network, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemainschaft, Europe

2025- Member of the RhetAI Research Challenge working group focused on the exploration of Faith-based issues and the subject of Persuasion in Artificial Intelligence, USA

Jan 2024- Advisory Group, Global Affairs, UZH

2024- Governance board, URPP Digital Religion(s), UZH

2023- Selection Committees for a post doc (Digital Society Initiative at UZH) and two professorships (Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies at UZH)

2022/23 On the advisory boards of two external projects with Templeton funding: "Self-enhancement, 'Biohacking' and Spiritual Yearning" (Australia) and "Muslims, the Secular, and Existential Risk" (UK).

Dec. 2022 Member of Digital Society Initiative Communities at UZH: Ethics and Communication

Dec. 2022 Co-Chair Steering Committee, Religion and Emerging Technologies, American Academy of Religion
- Peer review of submissions for Religion and Emerging Technologies sessions at AAR conferences.

Oct. 2022- Faculty Board, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Zurich

March 2022 Founding Member, Religion and Technology Working Group, Woolf Institute, Cambridge
- Collaborative meetings and seeking seed funding for Religion and Technology Projects

Aug. 2021 Contributor to the Cambridge University's ThinkLab Cambridge Festival Public Engagement Project
- https://www.thinklab.strategic-partnerships.admin.cam.ac.uk/people

Jan. 2021 Contributor to a white paper on AI Ethics, European Academy of Religion and Society
- Available at https://europeanacademyofreligionandsociety.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/EARS-Whitepaper-Artificial-Intelligence.pdf

Nov. 2019 - Steering Committee, Religion and AI, American Academy of Religion
- Peer review of submissions for Religion and AI Research Seminars at AAR conferences.

Oct. 2019 Programme Committee AISB Symposium on Anthropomorphism & AI, 2020
- Peer review of submissions.

Sept. 2018-Feb. 2019 Member of the UK Advisory Board for "Citizenship in a Networked Age", a Templeton World Charitable Foundation project.
- Final report at https://citizenshipinanetworkedage.org/

Jan. – Dec. 2018 Co-Chair of the advisory board for RSA/Google DeepMind Forum on Ethical AI. Advising on the formation and execution of citizen juries for the 18-month project

Nov. 2017 Gave evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on AI
- Research and series of short films cited in the final report, "AI in the UK: Ready, Willing And Able?": https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201719/ldselect/ldai/100/100.pdf

June 2017 Editorial Board member for Cambridge University's "Research Horizons" publication, special issue on Artificial Intelligence

May 2017 - Co-Founder, 'Faith and AI' Project, CFI

June 2019 Organised a series of workshops on AI Ethics and social issues with faith leaders from various faiths, St George's House, Windsor Castle.

Peer reviewer: *Journal of AI and Society*, *Religions*, *Journal of Religion, Media and Digital Culture*
Publisher reviews: Routledge, T&T Clark/Bloomsbury.

Research Fellowships and Memberships

Oct. 2024- **Member, AI and Faith Civil Society Commission**

Oct. 2024- **Member, AI and Faith, International Network**

March 2023- **Associate Professor, Digital Society Initiative, University of Zurich**

Dec. 2022- **Associate Fellow, Homerton College, University of Cambridge**

Nov 2021 - **Founding Member, Human Augmentation Research Network**

May 2021- **Fellow of the International Society for Science & Religion**

Awards and Recognition:

2025 International Society for Science and Religion (ISSR) book prize, in the category of books for professionals and educators, for *Religion and AI: An Introduction* https://www.issr.org.uk/issr-statements/issr-2025-book-prize/
2021 Digital Religion Research Award 2021, Network for New Media, Religion, and Digital Culture, USA.
2020 One of Cofinitive's 21toWatch, UK.
2019 Sifted's Top 30 AI People in Europe to Follow on Twitter.
2018 & 2017 One of the 'Progress 1000' – the 1000 leading figures selected by the Evening Standard, UK.
2017 Winner of the 2017 AHRC Best Research Film of the Year for "Pain in the Machine", UK.
2014 Rising Star 2014, University of Cambridge - Public Engagement scheme.

Media Appearances:

Presenter and Writer: "I'll be back: 40 Years of the Terminator", documentary, BBC Radio 4

TV and Radio: SRF, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Free Thinking BBC Radio 3, The Today Programme BBC Radio 4, The World at One BBC Radio 4, Inside Science BBC Radio 4, The Sunday Programme BBC Radio 4, Beyond Belief BBC Radio 4, The Essay BBC Radio 3, BBC Click and BBC Click Live, the BBC's Inside Out documentary series, BBC News, LBC radio, CNBC, and Radio 5 Live.

Press: The Economist, the FT, The Atlantic, Digital Frontier, The LA Times, The New York Times, Guardian US, New Scientist, BBC, Forbes, CNBC, Mediacat, Techworld, Alphr, OneZero, Church Times, SRF, Mensa Magazine, The Daily Beast, Motherboard, Insider.gr, FastForward.

Podcasts: Hyperscale, Belief in the Future, The Business of Thinking, History Hit – Patented, Mysteries of Science from The Times Junior: Science and Nature, Royal Anthropological Institute, the FUTURES podcast, the Hay Festival Podcast, the Radical AI Podcast, AI and You, Mind over Chatter (University of Cambridge), Desert Island Discworld, Naked Reflections, and The Naked Scientists.