

ABS Bulletin

A PUBLICATION OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR BAHÁ'Í STUDIES—NORTH AMERICA

2007 Annual Conference speakers announced

If you haven't yet made your plans to attend this year's Annual Conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies, don't delay! The conference begins on Thursday, 16 August and offers an exciting array of sessions, beginning with three special all-day programs.

These special sessions are (1) Student Development Program, for university students (and prospective students), offering an opportunity to develop and share insights, skills, and strategies for pursuing Bahá'í scholarship in a university setting; (2) Faculty Development Program, for university faculty (including prospective faculty and advanced graduate students) which will provide a forum to consult about aspects of Bahá'í scholarship; and (3) Scholarship and Community-Building: An Intensive Study of the Bahá'í Writings Relevant to the Conference Program, open to all participants, which will offer guided study of the Bahá'í writings relating to the conference theme, including presentations by prominent Bahá'í scholars, as well as participatory workshops and study sessions. This session will be an invaluable preparation for the remainder of the conference, and a unique opportunity for developing one's understanding of the Bahá'í writings. Presentations during this program

will include Gerald Filson, "Evolving Relationships: Communities of Scholars and External Affairs Work"; Abdu'l-Missagh Ghadirian, "Scholarship and Covenant in the Bahá'í



**Annual Conference of the Association for
Bahá'í Studies—North America
16–19 August 2007
Delta Meadowvale Resort and Conference Centre
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada**

Community"; Kurt Hein, "Abdu'l-Bahá on Leadership: The Spiritually Learned"; Ian Kluge, "The Philosopher in the Bahá'í Community"; and Alexander Kolodner, Shirin Majidi, Talel Aissi, and Munib Lohrasbi, "Why Become a Bahá'í Scholar."

Plenary speakers

This year, the prestigious Hasan M. Balyuzi Memorial Lecture will be delivered by Will van den Hoonaard, whose lecture will be entitled "Stop, Listen, and Look: Mutual Learning at the Intersection between the Bahá'í Community and the Social Sciences."

The roster of plenary speakers will also include Thomas Homer-Dixon,

Director of the Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto.

Michael Penn, of Franklin and Marshall College, will speak on "The Garment of Learning and Knowledge: Reflections on the Role of Scholarship in the Protection and Refinement of the Human Spirit."

Haleh Arbab, from the Bahá'í World Centre, will speak on "Generation of Knowledge and the Advancement of Civilization."

Augusto Lopez-Claros, Chief Economist of the World Economic Forum, will present on "Coping with the Challenges of Globalization."

A panel of young scholars, coordinated by Lisa Dufraimont, will reflect on the relationship between Scholarship and Community Building, and will include panelists Tahirih Naylor (Bahá'í International Community, New York), Nadim Sobhani (University of Toronto); and Layla Parker-Katirai (University of Toronto).

The session on "Scholarship,

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Conference program

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Community and Diversity: A Cross Cultural Perspective” coordinated by Deborah van den Hoonaard, will consist of a panel of Bahá’í scholars who will directly address how different peoples and groups understand and define scholarship and the roles it plays in community development processes, and in particular in relation to the Bahá’í community. Panelists will include Marie Gervais, Elizabeth Wright, and others to be announced.

Member of the Continental Board of Counsellors Ann Boyles will inaugurate a plenary dialogue series entitled “Reflections on Scholarship and Service.” The purpose of the session is to provide a forum in which a widely accomplished senior Bahá’í scholar will share, through a public dialogue with an interviewer, reflections on experiences as a scholar within the Bahá’í community. She will interview Ross Woodman, Professor Emeritus, University of Western Ontario.

It is hoped that through such a dialogue, younger scholars, as well as the community at large, will gain a deeper appreciation of the dynamics of creating a learning community, the collective journey that has been taken thus far, and the pathways that may open to us in the future.

Breakout sessions

Architecture and the Built Environment

Saman Ahmadi, “The Ringstone Symbol: Concept for a Bahá’í Center”

Noushin Ehsan, “Passion as an Engine to Creation”

Arts

Anne Gordon Perry, “Yours, Roger:

Letters to and From Roger White”

Jean Tschohl Quinn, “Musician of Service: Appreciated, Integrated, and Supported”

Gloria Shahzadeh, “Reflection on History through Art Form in General and Through Drama in Particular”

Robert G. Wilson, “Mark Tobey and the Spiritual in Art”

Bahá’í History and Biography

Duane L. Herrmann, “A Century of Progress toward Community Building: Topeka, Kansas”

Omid Ghaemmaghami, “The Báb’s Encounter with the Hidden Imam”

Marlene Macke, “Toronto: Birth of a Bahá’í Community 1919–1938”

Susan Maneck, “The Dasatir and the Tabernacle of Unity”

Ahang Rabbani, “A Lifetime with Bahá’u’lláh: The Reminiscences of Husayn Ashchi”

Mina Yazdani, “Anti-Bahá’í Polemics and Historiography”

Bahá’í Language Educators

Mark H. Rossman, “Five Research-Based Issues in International Distance Education”

Jeff Williams, “Community Building through the Virtual University”

Bioethics and Health Sciences

Abdu’l-Missagh Ghadirian, “Can Science Unravel the Mystery of Prayer’s Effect in Medicine?”

Lisa Molin, “Health, Healing, Personal Responsibility and the Bahá’í Faith”

Ashley Roberts, “Comparison of Faith-Based and Non-Faith-Based Interventions Aimed at HIV Prevention among Adolescents”



Ann Boyles will interview veteran scholar Ross Woodman

Philip Squires, “A Novel Approach to Depression”

Business, Ethics and Management

Gordon J. Kerr, “Shadow Boxing: Developing Ethical Organizations”

Lawrence M. Miller, “Capitalism and Community: The New Reality that Unites Wealth, Social and Spiritual Development”

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Association for Bahá’í Studies
34 Copernicus Street
Ottawa, ON
Canada, K1N 7K4
Tel. 613-233-1903
Fax 613-233-3644
E-mail: abs-na@bahai-studies.ca
Web site: www.bahai-studies.ca

Communication

- Jason Combs, "Sanctifying the Hearts for His Descent: Communion with God as an Ontological Condition of Community"
- Michael Karlberg, "The Press as a Consultative Public Forum"

Ecology and Sustainable Development

- Paul Hanley, "Are We Part of Nature, or Is Nature Part of Us?"
- Michelle Thelen-Steere, John Thelen-Steere, Timothy Kraft, and Tuli Rode, "The Garden of Being and the Eternal Complementation"
- Samuel Benoit, "'Abdu'l-Bahá as an Environmentalist"

Education

- Marie Gervais, Stephanie Afaganis, and Lisa Hauk-Meeker, "Approaching Spiritual Education within the Context of Secular Institutions"
- Kathy Madjidi, "Applying Community Development to Building a new Bahá'í Community Life"
- Pattabi S. Raman, "Changing World-views and Paradigm Shifts in the 20th Century in Disciplines of Scientific Inquiry: Impact on Scholarship and Community Building"

Gender Equality Studies

- Nathalie Auger, "Our Missing Daughters: Silent Gender Inequality in Québec"
- Geraldine Graber, "Education and Community"
- Augusto Lopez-Claros, "Closing the Gender Gap"
- Clare Jamal O'Brien, "Faith and Football: Junior Youth Study Circles in Kenyan Slums"
- Phyllis Sternberg Perrakis, "The Spiritual Adventures of the Midlife and Older Woman in

Contemporary Women's Literature"

- Joell Ann Vanderwagen, "New Perspectives on Gender and the Bahá'í Revelation"

Indigenous Studies

- MaryAnne DeWolf, "Literary Voices in First Nation Francophone Literature"
- May Sanaee, "The Missing Link to Building Community: Two Case Studies"



Haleh Arbab from the Bahá'í World Centre will speak on knowledge and civilization

Law and Governance

- Arash Abizadeh, "How Bahá'í Voters Should Vote"

Marriage and Family

- Susanne M. Alexander and Ron Shigeta, "Character and Bahá'í Marriage"
- Kamilla Bahbahani, "The Status and Attitudes of Singles in the North American Bahá'í Community"

Peace and Conflict Studies

- Helen Cheng, "Bahá'í Consultation: Toward a New Paradigm of Power"

- Hossain Danesh, "Unique Dimensions of the Bahá'í Concept of Peace"
- John Richard Davidson, "Myers-Briggs Personality Typology and Religious Prejudice: Preserving Unity and Analyzing Conflict in Progressive Revelation"
- Roger K. Doost, "The Road to Travel: From the Present to the Most Great Peace"
- Kimberly Syphrett, "'Abdu'l-Bahá: Leader of New Peace Science"

Philosophy

- Arvind Auluck-Wilson, "Dialectics, Materialism and Religion: Bahá'í Faith and the Advancement of Civilization"
- Ian Kluge, "Relativism and the Bahá'í Writings"
- Bonita Milby, "A Chalice of Pure Light: Reflections on the Sacred Design of Creation"

Psychology

- Jane Faily, "The Heart, and the Art of Community Building: A View of Recent Psychological Research Relating to Community Development"
- Patricia Romano McGraw, "The 'Breakthrough' Moment in Psychotherapy, Is It Really a Moment of Spiritual Transformation?"
- Michelle Thelen-Steere and Tuli Rode, "A Journey through the Hidden Words by Way of the Seven Valleys"
- Karen P. Williams, "Religion and Psychology: Combining Potent Forces"

Race Unity and Intercultural Issues

- Marie Gervais and Tim Heins, "Concepts of Oppression in Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Writings"

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Breakout program

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Science and Religion

- Faris Badi'i, "The Shrine of the Báb, Bahá'í Identity through Architecture"
- Rodney H. Clarken, "Developing WikiText Books on Bahá'í Topics"
- Stephen R. Friberg, "Mind And Matter: Why Both Are Necessary to Explain the Universe"
- Amanda Henck and Frank Fahdad Fani, "The Role of Intuition and Logic in Science Research"
- Ali Khorasani, "By Design"
- Samir Koirala, Faraneh Vargha-Khadem, and Dave Wellman, "Autism and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Scientific and Spiritual Challenges of Mis-Wired Minds"
- Timothy Kraft, "The Role of Science in an Ideal Community"
- Dale E. Lehman and Kathleen Kettler Lehman, "Planet Bahá'í: Reflections on an Online Community"
- Saba Mahanian and Farjam Majd, "Manifestations of Unity in, Order and Chaos: Correlating System Engineering with Bahá'í Principles"
- Laheeb Quddusi, "The Matrix: Themes of After-Life"
- Mitra Solomon, Ron Shigeta, Kevin Trotter and David Diehl, "The Bahainine Project: Bahá'í Blogosphere, New Ways of Sharing Bahá'í Perspectives"

Study of Religion

- Jobin Eslahpazir, "Memory of the Future: A New Form of Use of Persecution Memory and Its Relationship to the Resolution of Conflicts"
- Geza Farkas, "Divine English: The Guardian and the King James Bible"

Patrick Marshall, "Towards a Bahá'í Frame of Reference for Spiritual Care in Hospitals"

Robert Michell, "The Miracle of Suffering"

Shahrokh Monjazebe, "An Excellent and Priceless Heritage: The Scholarship of Bahá'u'lláh's Life and His Revelation"

Networking at the ABS Conference

The Association for Bahá'í Studies conferences are an ideal place to meet Bahá'í scholars, professionals, and experts in various fields, and to engage in informal exchanges about topics of mutual interest.

In order to enhance the networking aspect of the conference, the ABS makes efforts to facilitate meeting times during the conference. Please log on to the ABS Web site at www.bahai-studies.ca/networking.php to choose the areas you wish to network in and the ABS will arrange opportunities during the lunch and dinner breaks. A room and time will be provided so that people can gather and meet. We will email you the meeting place and time a few weeks before the conference opening.

Call for performers in Open Mic Coffeehouses

Calling all performers to add their unique musical talent to nightly informal "Coffeehouse" sessions. We are looking for Rock, Jazz, Pop, Hip-Hop, Folk, Country, and any other form of music you may offer. We ask that the quality be at a semiprofessional standard or better. Anyone interested in contributing can email the ABS office at abs-na@bahai-studies.ca. You may also sign up on a sign up sheet that will be posted on a bulletin board at the conference registration desk.

International Conference of Spirituality and Mental Health

On 3-4 May 2007, the Third International Conference on Spirituality and Mental Health was held at St. Paul University in Ottawa. A number of experts and researchers in the field discussed the role of spirituality on health and emotions. Abdu'l-Missagh Ghadirian from McGill University spoke on a spiritual concept of joy and suffering.

He explored a shift of consciousness from the materialistic view of joy and sorrow to a balanced and spiritual meaning of true happiness, emphasizing a need to look beyond the dark side of suffering and discover creative potential in adversity. Based on the Bahá'í writings and new research studies, he argued that suffering is an unavoidable characteristic of the material world and is connected to human perfection.

Mid-Atlantic Area Conference

The Association for Bahá'í Studies Mid-Atlantic Area Committee will be hosting a one-day conference for youth and pre-youth on Saturday, 15 September 2007 at the Philadelphia Bahá'í Center. There will be a \$5.00 registration fee to cover lunch. Guests of the Bahá'ís will be free.

The day will begin with lunch. Plans are underway to have presentations on science, business, education, law, year of service, and the arts. These will be shared through breakout sessions, a panel, and poster presentations. An evening program is in the process of being planned.

Check the Area Committee's Web site www.absmidatlantic.org for details as they are confirmed. For more information, contact Janet Rich, e-mail, JanetLRich@aol.com.