



Parkland Institute's Conference

THE ROAD AHEAD:

Strategies for Building
a Better Future

November 15–17, 2024

UAlberta Campus & Livestream

ParklandConference.ca

The Road Ahead:

Strategies for Building a Better Future

In recent years, Alberta, Canada, and the world have been on a dangerous path. It is a path toward inequality and unsustainability. It is a path that creates winners and losers, with the losers left at the side of the road. It is also a path that leads to environmental destruction. Those who put us on this path foment division and conflict. But this path is not inevitable. We can forge a better direction for our communities. We need to find new ideas and refresh old ideas to fit new challenges. More than anything, we need to find new ways to organize so that we may build a more just, more democratic future for everyone.

This conference takes a hard look at the path taken and offers options for a way forward.

We would like to thank the generous support of the following sponsors for helping to make this conference possible:



Greetings from Parkland Institute Director

Jason Foster



Dear conference participants,

Welcome to Parkland Institute's 28th annual conference. It is always a highlight of the fall to gather at the conference to discuss the important issues of our times.

There is no question these have been difficult, challenging times, especially for those concerned about community, equity, and social justice. The extreme right is in the ascendant. Lying for political gain has become the norm and denigrating expertise and science has morphed into a morbid sport. Increasingly neighbours across the political fence cannot have a civil conversation. All the while, our forests burn, and record storms slam our coastal areas.

Alberta, Canada and the world are on a dangerous path. A path that I fear will be littered with those abandoned and betrayed by the elite's never-ending march toward more profits and more riches.

In light of these circumstances, it is easy to become discouraged. But we need to resist the temptation to lay down our tools. Together, we still can — or rather, we must — build a better world.

We need to find new ideas and refresh old ones to fit new challenges. This means discovering new ways to organize so that we can bring new people into the movement for justice and equality. That is what this conference aims to do. I hope this weekend can be part of building a new kind of movement for tomorrow – a movement anchored in our shared commitment to social, economic and climate justice and propelled by our desire to forge a new and better path for our communities.

A weekend of talks and workshops will not build that future by itself. But it can give us glimpses of the world we want, impart us with ideas for how to get there, and instill the hope that, together, we can achieve it.

I hope you enjoy the conference. Enjoy reconnecting with old friends and meeting new ones. And along the way we can learn a bit more about how we can be a part of a brighter future for Alberta.

I also want to remind you that the work of Parkland relies on the support of our community. If you feel inspired this weekend, please

consider contributing to our efforts, whether through a donation, becoming an ongoing supporter, or sharing your appreciation with our hardworking staff. Together, we can be the change we wish to see in Alberta and beyond.

Warm regards to all,

Jason Foster

Director

Parkland Institute

Friday

November 15, 2024

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
1-001, ETLC

OPENING KEYNOTE

John Vaillant

FIRE AND OIL: Rising to the Challenge of a More Flammable World

Humans, aided by the fossil fuel industry (the “fire industry”), have altered the chemistry of our planet and its atmosphere in profound, life-changing ways. As a result, we are now, in real time, crossing a threshold into a new climate regime marked by previously unimagined extremes and whipsawing instability. How we conceptualize and respond to this unprecedented challenge is of immediate and paramount importance, not just to our psyches and our souls, but to the future of everyone on Earth. In this talk, John Vaillant will offer ways of seeing, feeling – and meeting – this epochal moment.

Saturday

November 16, 2024

8:00 am
ETLC Lobby
Doors Open

9:00 am – 10:15 am
1-001, ETLC
PLENARY
Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah
Strategic Response Workshop: Countering Far-Right Populist Tactics and Coordinating Collective Action
This presentation will provide an overview of far-right tactics and strategy, and how progressive movements can coordinate collective action to respond.

10:15 am – 10:45 am
ETLC Lobby
BREAK
Coffee and pastries will be available

10:45 am – 12:00 pm
A. 1-013, ETLC
CONCURRENT SESSION
Labour in Alberta: Where now?
Kim Siever, Labour Journalist, The Alberta Worker
Alberta Workers are Falling Behind
Quinn Benders, President, Non-Academic Staff Association
Perspectives From the Front Lines: Bargaining in Alberta, 2024

B. 1-003, ETLC
CONCURRENT SESSION
Conflict Revolution: A Workshop on Embracing Conflict
Julie Hrdlicka — Owner, Conflict Revolution

CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm
ETLC, Second Floor Foyer

LUNCH
Catered by Upper Crust

1:00 pm – 2:15 pm
1-001, ETLC

PLENARY

Nora Loreto

Can We Save Canada's Social Safety Net?

In the 1980s, Canadian politicians rejected an older economic order and gleefully embraced neoliberalism. Today, Canadians are living under the consequences of those decisions – an affordability crisis, a housing crisis and the rush to make more money than corporations in Canada have ever made before.

How can we turn the tide against these forces? Nora Loreto will talk about the need to rebuild movements that can re-balance democratic power against corporate power if we are to have any hope in building better futures for us all.

2:15 pm – 2:30 pm
ETLC Lobby

BREAK

2:30 pm – 3:45 pm
A. 1-013, ETLC

CONCURRENT SESSION

The State of Democracy

Jared Wesley, University of Alberta

Polarization and Democratic Backsliding

Bradley Lafortune, Public Interest Alberta

On the Frontlines of Democracy: Responding to the UCP and Rightwing Populism

B. 1-003, ETLC

CONCURRENT SESSION

Workshop: Storytelling for Change

Carissa Halton, Founder, Halton Strategic

3:45 pm – 4:00 pm
ETLC Lobby

BREAK

4:00 pm – 5:15 pm
1-001, ETLC

PLENARY

Andy Longhurst

At What Cost? Surgical Privatization and the Threat to Public Health Care

Surgical outsourcing is on the rise in Alberta and across Canada. This presentation reviews developments in British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario. Federal and provincial legislation that maintain publicly financed provincial health systems, free at the point of delivery, are threatened by the incursion of publicly funded corporate providers and unlawful patient charges. Some governments, physicians, and for-profit providers rationalize outsourcing as a benign form of private sector involvement that maintains public health care, free at the point of delivery, and compliance with the Canada Health Act. This presentation reflects on the costs to patients and citizens as governments pursue privatization instead of evidence-based policy strategies that improve timely access to care.

Sunday

November 17, 2024

<p>8:00 am ETLC Lobby</p>	<p>Doors Open</p>
<p>9:00 am – 10:15 am 1-001, ETLC</p>	<p>PLENARY</p> <p>Ginetta Salvalaggio <i>Disinformation: The First Step in Dismantling Systems of Care</i></p> <p>Over the past several years, a troubling pattern of information control has emerged to impede transparent public discourse in Alberta. The Alberta disinformation “formula” includes: 1) suppressing public data; 2) blocking ideology-threatening science; 3) sponsoring ideology-supporting pseudoscience; and 4) creating formal structures to disseminate disinformation narratives. Dr. Salvalaggio will walk us through the Alberta substance use disinformation timeline and its very tangible consequences. Substance use policy is but one example, and she will explain why this pattern ought to concern every Albertan, across all matters of public policy.</p>
<p>10:15 am – 10:30 am ETLC Lobby</p>	<p>BREAK Coffee and pastries will be available</p>
<p>10:30 am – 11:45 am A. 1-013, ETLC</p>	<p>CONCURRENT SESSION</p> <p><i>Inflation, Its Causes, and the Way Forward</i></p> <p>Silas Xuereb, Research and Policy Analyst, Canadians for Tax Fairness <i>How Corporate Profits Fueled the Affordability Crisis</i></p> <p>Gillian Petit, University of Calgary <i>Saying the Quiet Part Out Loud: Confronting the Current Reality of Increasing Low-Income and Low Wage Growth in Alberta</i></p>
<p>11:45 am – 12:00 pm ETLC Lobby</p>	<p>BREAK</p>
<p>B. 1-003, ETLC</p>	<p>CONCURRENT SESSION</p> <p><i>Workshop: More than Concessions - Organizing, Fighting Back, and Spadework</i></p> <p>Tina Oh, Organizer, Activist, Campaigner</p>

CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm
1-001, ETLC

CLOSING KEYNOTE

Koren Lightning

From Acknowledgement to Transformation: Advancing Indigenous Laws, Engagement, and Reconciliation

This presentation explores the essential shift from symbolic gestures to meaningful actions that truly uphold Indigenous rights, respect Indigenous laws, and drive genuine reconciliation. By applying, respecting, and engaging with Indigenous law, we open real pathways to justice and equity. Attendees will gain practical insights into building cultural competency, fostering belonging, and navigating cultural differences with sensitivity and respect. This session will inspire and empower participants to take meaningful steps forward, embracing reconciliation through actions that create a more inclusive and equitable future.

ALBERTA FEDERATION OF LABOUR

WORKERS RIGHTS

SUSTAINABLE JOBS

SECURING OUR FUTURE

WORKERS DEMAND BETTER

WWW.AFL.ORG

The banner features a vertical stack of three QR codes on the left, each with a globe icon in the center. To the right of the QR codes are three bolded text labels: 'WORKERS RIGHTS', 'SUSTAINABLE JOBS', and 'SECURING OUR FUTURE'. On the far right, there is a large circular icon containing a stylized, segmented vertical bar. The background of the banner is a grayscale image of a person's arm and hand, with a dark vertical bar on the right side.

Welcome to Parkland Institute's 28th Annual Conference

Your full conference registration includes:

- Friday and Sunday Keynotes
- All plenary and concurrent sessions
- Saturday Lunch

Food and Beverages

Coffee, tea, and water will be available during breaks. Pastries will be available Saturday and Sunday mornings.

We encourage you to use your own travel mug for coffee and tea. Lunch on Saturday is provided to all full-conference registrants, including volunteers and representatives of tabling organizations with badges. Lunch will include vegetarian options. Show your badge to gain entrance to the lunch room.

You are also welcome to bring your own lunch, and there are food vendors available a short walk away at the Students' Union Building (SUB).

If You're Late

If you arrive late for keynotes or plenaries, please enter through the south side rear door so as not to interrupt the speaker.

Parking

We recommend you park in the Windsor Car Park located at 116 Street and 92 Avenue. Friday evening after 6 pm on Saturday, as well as Sunday parking is available for a flat fee of \$5.50. Hourly parking is available on 116 Street for \$3.50/hour.

Volunteers

The Parkland Conference would not be possible without the support of the volunteers who perform many hours of work on our behalf. Please help us thank them.

Special Thanks

Flavio Rojas and Carolina Tiemi Odashima, our graphic designers
Rob Butz, our webmaster
The A-Team Volunteers (you know who you are)

We All Have a Story to Tell

We all have a story to tell, but the precious few minutes afforded us at the end of each session for dialogue is not the time to tell it.

Parkland people are remarkably diverse, and our conferences bring together a special blend of academics, activists, students, and community members — every one of whom has an incredible story to tell. That's why we've ensured multiple ways for attendees to converse with each other and our guests.

Please help ensure that the question-and-answer time at the end of each session is enjoyed by everyone by following these simple rules:

- Keep your remarks short and to the point. Questions or comments that require lengthy background information are not well suited to this format. If you cannot adequately ask a question within 30 seconds, consider saving it for another opportunity.
- Don't hog the microphone. People who have not yet had the opportunity to speak will be given priority.
- Participant speaking lists may be altered to balance representation by age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, or other identities. Just because you put your hand up first doesn't mean it's your turn.
- Value dialogue. Everyone has something to contribute.
- Please do not interrupt speakers, facilitators, or other conference-goers.
- Do not campaign at the mic. It is inappropriate to ask your fellow conference-goers to support your cause, no matter how important it is.
- Be conscious of how your behaviour impacts others. Practice stepping up/stepping back so we can ensure that everyone is able to contribute.

Friday

November 15, 2024

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Room 1-001, ETLC

Opening Keynote



John Vaillant

FIRE AND OIL: Rising to the Challenge of a More Flammable World

Humans, aided by the fossil fuel industry (the “fire industry”), have altered the chemistry of our planet and its atmosphere in profound, life-changing ways. As a result, we are now, in real time, crossing a threshold into a new climate regime marked by previously unimagined extremes and whipsawing instability. How we conceptualize and respond to this unprecedented challenge is of immediate and paramount importance, not just to our psyches and our souls, but to the future of everyone on Earth. In this talk, John Vaillant will offer ways of seeing, feeling – and meeting – this epochal moment.

John Vaillant is an author and freelance writer whose work has appeared in The New Yorker, The Atlantic, National Geographic, and The Walrus, among others. His first book, The Golden Spruce, was a bestseller and won several awards, including the Governor General's and Writers' Trust awards for non-fiction. His second non-fiction book, The Tiger, won the B.C. Achievement Award for Non-Fiction, was a bestseller, and has been published in 17 languages. In 2014 Vaillant won the Windham-Campbell Prize, a global award for non-fiction. In 2015, he published his first work of fiction, The Jaguar's Children, which was long-listed for the Dublin IMPAC and Kirkus Fiction Prizes, and was a finalist for the Writers' Trust Fiction Prize. His latest book, Fire Weather (Knopf, 2023), is a #1 national bestseller; it has won the Baillie Gifford Prize (UK) and the Writers' Trust Shaughnessy Cohen Prize, and was a finalist for Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award (US), and the Writers' Trust Non-fiction Prize. It has been named one of the ten best books of 2023 by The New York Times, among many other prominent publications.

Chivers Carpenter

On Side with Alberta Workers

The lawyers of Chivers Carpenter represent labour organizations and workers in all levels of court and facets of labour relations, human rights, administrative, professional regulatory and employment law.

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Vanessa Cosco
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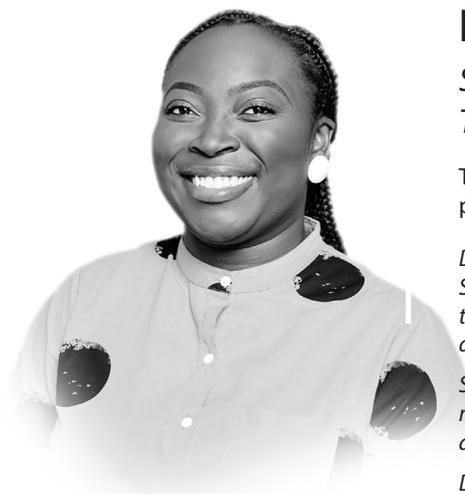
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Saturday

November 16, 2024

8:00 am ETLC Lobby	Doors Open
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9:00 am – 10:15 am Room 1-001, ETLC	Plenary
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Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah

Strategic Response Workshop: Countering Far-Right Populist Tactics and Coordinating Collective Action

This presentation will provide an overview of far-right tactics and strategy, and how progressive movements can coordinate collective action to respond.

Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah is the Co-Director of Policy and Advocacy at Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights. Before joining Action Canada, she was the Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity (CCGSD) and has been instrumental in advancing the rights of 2SLGBTQ+ youth and communities.

She has spoken at Parliamentary standing committees and has appeared in numerous media outlets. She has held several advocacy and policy-oriented positions in government and non-profit organizations, including Oxfam Canada and Global Affairs Canada.

Debbie is an accomplished community educator, feminist activist, and social justice advocate driven by the mission of creating a more inclusive, equitable, and safe world. She has continued to dedicate her time to local progressive organizing, including most recently, as a commissioner for the Ottawa People's Commission on the Convoy Occupation.

10:15 am – 10:45 am ETLC Lobby	Break Coffee and pastries will be available.
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Saturday

November 16, 2024

10:45 am – 12:00 pm
Room 1-013, ETLC

Concurrent Session

A. *Labour in Alberta: Where Now?*



Kim Siever

Alberta Workers are Falling Behind

This presentation will highlight the state of labour legislation and bargaining in the province, specifically for the public sector, identify current challenges and pressure points, and offer suggestions for improving conditions going forward.

Kim Siever's writing experience includes three years as editor-in-chief with Lethbridge News (2010–2013) and three years as a political correspondent with Elect Lethbridge (2010–2013), both of which were citizen journalism projects. Between 2014 and 2021, Kim had been part of the curation and live tweeting team at YQL Vote, a grassroots collective devoted to politics that affect Lethbridgians. He also was the main writer for LDSCaNews in 2000 and 2001, a writer for his high school newspaper, and on the editorial team for his junior high newspaper. Kim has also been a freelance writer for commercial clients since 2013. Prior to that, they worked as a communications specialist for a private company.

Kim has also been a guest speaker at both the University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College in management and social work classes, discussing entrepreneurship, communication, and building community. He also spoke at Olds College on his journey toward becoming a radical left queer Mormon.

Kim Siever ran for a seat on city council in 2001. There were 6 mayoral candidates and 35 councillor candidates, the largest slate in Lethbridge's history. They managed to garner just under 1,000 votes, despite being relatively unknown and having yet to have built out their social network.

Kim also ran as an independent candidate in the Lethbridge riding during the 2021 Canadian federal election. He placed 5th out of 6 candidates in the Lethbridge race but 7th out of 91 independent candidates across the country.

Kim Siever lives in Lethbridge with their spouse and 4 of their 6 children. They have a bachelor's degree in drama and French. They have also completed some coursework toward a second undergraduate degree, in political economy. They grew up in Regina, but graduated from high school in Abbotsford. They started married life in Surrey and moved to Lethbridge in 1998.

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Quinn Benders

Perspectives From the Front Lines: Bargaining in Alberta, 2024

This talk will offer a look at the challenges and strategies faced by public-sector unions in Alberta as they navigate the bargaining landscape in 2024. Drawing on experiences from the frontline, the discussion will highlight key issues such as government-imposed austerity measures, secret bargaining mandates, and threats to the constitutional right to strike. The speaker will explore how unions are standing firm in their fight for fair wages, job security, and respect for workers' rights across public sectors. The talk will emphasize the importance of solidarity, strategic alliances, and grassroots mobilization as unions confront these challenges and demand a fair deal for their members in the face of mounting political pressure.

Quinn Benders (he/him) is currently serving his second term as President of the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) at the University of Alberta, bringing years of union involvement to the role. With a background that includes acting as a steward, chairing key ad-hoc committees, leading research initiatives, and previously holding positions as both PAC Chair and Vice-President, Quinn has demonstrated his commitment to advancing the union's goals. His leadership is defined by a focus on member engagement, promoting equity and access, democratic renewal and building strategic alliances. Additionally, Quinn has a long-standing passion for community organizing with the hopes of fostering meaningful change.

10:45 am – 12:00 pm
Room 1-003, ETLC

Concurrent Session

B. Workshop: Conflict Revolution - Embracing Conflict



Julie Hrdlicka

Today, our relationships are filled with friction and frustration as we struggle to discuss critical issues like climate change, inequality, and democracy. How can we engage in meaningful conversations in such divided times? How do we stay grounded when our instincts push us to either fight or flee?

In this workshop, through storytelling and group discussions, we'll explore skills that help us approach conflict with greater strength, clarity, understanding, and choice.

Julie Hrdlicka (she/her) has spent the past 25 years dedicated to community work, using her skills to build, collaborate, and organize for social change. She has lived and worked in Israel, served as a human rights observer in Iraq in 2003 and 2005 and was elected as a School Board Trustee for the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) in 2015 and 2017.

During her time at the CBE, Julie encountered a conflict that 'knocked her off her feet' and continued to challenge her. Through her healing process, she realized that many around her were also struggling with trauma, disconnection, and emotional dysregulation due to conflict. This inspired her to launch her mediation and facilitation business, Conflict Revolution.

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Julie's approach is rooted in Transformative Mediation, which focuses on shifting interactions from destructive to productive. Her work is guided by the principles of Restorative and Transformative Justice, emphasizing relationships, accountability, and the goal of ending harm.

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm
ETLC, Second Floor Foyer

Lunch – Catered by Upper Crust

Save the Date!

Parkland Seasonal



OPEN HOUSE

December 12

5 pm–9 pm • Arts and Convocation Hall, UofA

Saturday

November 16, 2024

1:00 pm – 2:15 am
Room 1-001, ETLC

Plenary



Nora Loreto

Can We Save Canada's Social Safety Net?

In the 1980s, Canadian politicians rejected an older economic order and gleefully embraced neoliberalism. Today, Canadians are living under the consequences of those decisions – an affordability crisis, a housing crisis and the rush to make more money than corporations in Canada have ever made before.

How can we turn the tide against these forces? Nora Loreto will talk about the need to rebuild movements that can re-balance democratic power against corporate power if we are to have any hope in building better futures for us all.

*Nora Loreto is a writer and activist based in Quebec City. She's the editor of the Canadian Association of Labour Media and a freelance writer who writes for magazines and online platforms across North America. Her fourth book, *The Social Safety Net* (Dundurn 2024) is part of a multi-part series called *Canada in Decline*. The next book in the series, *Corporate Control*, will be released in May 2025.*

*Nora co-hosts the popular podcast *Sandy and Nora Talk Politics* with Sandy Hudson. She also hosts *The Daily News with Nora Loreto*, a daily news podcast that gives Canadians the five headlines they need to hear for each day. In her extremely limited spare time, she is the president of the Canadian Freelance Union.*

2:15 pm – 2:30 pm
ETLC Lobby

Break

Saturday

November 16, 2024

2:30 pm – 3:45 pm
Room 1-013, ETLC

Concurrent Session

A. *The State of Democracy*



Jared Wesley

Polarization and Democratic Backsliding

Politics are polarizing throughout many parts of the world, including Canada. Driven and amplified by demographic, environmental, economic, and cultural shifts, these dynamics coincide with the erosion of core democratic norms and institutions. These forces are evident in Alberta, where the polarization of the provincial party system has brought with it challenges to the bedrock principle of political pluralism. In this talk, Dr. Jared Wesley explores the intersections of polarization and democratic backsliding, illustrating that – the more divided we become, the less we can rely on norms of liberal democracy to hold us together.

*Jared Wesley is associate dean (graduate studies), a professor of political science, and a member of the Black Faculty Collective at the University of Alberta. He specializes in the comparative analysis of provincial politics, with a particular focus on political culture and public opinion. Jared leads the Common Ground initiative — a long-term research project aimed at examining the gap between who Western Canadians are and who they see themselves to be. He has co-authored two practical accounts of Canadian politics: *Inside Canadian Politics* (published by Oxford University Press) and *The Public Servant's Guide to Government in Canada* (University of Toronto Press). Over the last five years, Jared has delivered over 80 presentations as a panelist, roundtable presenter, and keynote speaker.*

Saturday

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Bradley Lafortune

On the Frontlines of Democracy: Responding to the UCP and Rightwing Populism

Alberta's democracy is under attack by the UCP government and Public Interest Alberta is on the frontlines forging new coalitions and strengthening existing ones. From housing and public services to pensions and 2SLGBTQ+ rights, our common cause as Albertans has never been more apparent. The question before us is: "How do we continue to come together to build something new?"

Bradley (he/they) is a passionate community organizer, settler, and advocate for social justice, human rights, and the public interest. Born and raised on the prairies, he has spent the last 20 years in Edmonton. In the past, Bradley has worked with community organizations, labour unions, and advised leaders and politicians from all levels of government. His favourite part of advocacy is working with good people helping make big change happen.

Born in Edmonton, raised in Saskatoon, and now a long-time and proud Edmontonian, he attended the University of Alberta, studying English Literature, Political Science, and Cultural Studies.

2:30 pm – 3:45 pm
Room 1-003, ETLC

Concurrent Session

B. Workshop: Storytelling for Changee



Carissa Halton

In this hands-on mini workshop, join author and story teller, Carissa Halton, to explore the ways storytelling personalizes debate and can uniquely and profoundly influence change. We'll look at examples of story-driven communications and workshop how to find the story with the most impact. You'll come away understanding some basic principles about storytelling, as well as how to use it to spur social change from the human-centered perspective.

Carissa Halton's is an award-winning writer, speaker, and facilitator. Her writing has appeared in Today's Parent, Alberta Venture, Eighteen Bridges, Postmedia newspapers and more. Her essays have been anthologized and have won her both an Alberta and National Magazine Award. Her debut book, Little Yellow House: Finding Community in a Changing Neighbourhood, was shortlisted for the 2019 Robert Kroetsch Edmonton Book Prize. Carissa lives in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada with her husband and three school-aged children. In Fall 2025, her novel about the women at the forefront of clashes between Communist and Fascist forces in the 1930s Crowsnest Pass will be published by NeWest Press.

Saturday

November 16, 2024

3:45 pm – 4:00 pm
ETLC Lobby

Break

4:00 pm – 5:15 am
Room 1-001, ETLC

Plenary



Andy Longhurst

At What Cost? Surgical Privatization and the Threat to Public Health Care

Surgical outsourcing is on the rise in Alberta and across Canada. This presentation reviews developments in British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario. Federal and provincial legislation that maintain publicly financed provincial health systems, free at the point of delivery, are threatened by the incursion of publicly funded corporate providers and unlawful patient charges. Some governments, physicians, and for-profit providers rationalize outsourcing as a benign form of private sector involvement that maintains public health care, free at the point of delivery, and compliance with the Canada Health Act. This presentation reflects on the costs to patients and citizens as governments pursue privatization instead of evidence-based policy strategies that improve timely access to care.

Andrew Longhurst, B.A. (Hons), M.A., is a political economist, health policy researcher, and PhD candidate in the Department of Geography at Simon Fraser University. He is also a research associate with the B.C. Office of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. His previous publications include Failing to Deliver: The Alberta Surgical Initiative and Declining Surgical Capacity (Parkland Institute, 2023), The Concerning Rise of Corporate Medicine (CCPA-BC, 2022), and Reducing Surgical Wait Times (co-authored with Marcy Cohen and Margaret McGregor, CCPA-BC, 2016).

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Protecting & strengthening
Alberta's public health care

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Medicare



**PROTECT
REBUILD⁺**
ALBERTA'S HEALTHCARE

Alberta's healthcare isn't broken, it's being dismantled



We need to send a message loud and clear to our leaders: it's time to rebuild Alberta's public health care system.

 RebuildOurHealthcare.ca



Sunday

November 17, 2024

8:00 am ETLC Lobby	Doors Open
9:00 am – 10:15 am Room 1-001, ETLC	Plenary



Ginetta Salvalaggio

Disinformation: The First Step in Dismantling Systems of Care

Over the past several years, a troubling pattern of information control has emerged to impede transparent public discourse in Alberta. The Alberta disinformation “formula” includes: 1) suppressing public data; 2) blocking ideology-threatening science; 3) sponsoring ideology-supporting pseudoscience; and 4) creating formal structures to disseminate disinformation narratives. Dr. Salvalaggio will walk us through the Alberta substance use disinformation timeline and its very tangible consequences. Substance use policy is but one example, and she will explain why this pattern ought to concern every Albertan, across all matters of public policy.

Ginetta Salvalaggio (she/her/elle), MD, MSC, CCFP (AM), is a Professor with the University of Alberta Department of Family Medicine. She received her degree in Medicine from the University of Alberta and completed a family practice residency in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Initially practicing as a rural locum, she eventually returned to Edmonton to establish a family practice. Dr. Salvalaggio joined the Department of Family Medicine in 2007. She has also completed a Masters of Science in Population Health through the University of Alberta School of Public Health. As an Associate Scientific Director with the Inner City Health and Wellness Program, she co-leads a community based program of research with structurally vulnerable people who use drugs. Her academic interests are focused on social accountability, community engagement, partnered advocacy, and co-designed health services for urban underserved populations.

10:15 am – 10:30 am ETLC Lobby	Break Coffee and pastries will be available
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Sunday

November 17, 2024

10:30 am – 11:45 am
Room 1-013, ETLC

Concurrent Session

A. *Inflation, Its Causes, and the Way Forward*



Silas Xuereb

How Corporate Profits Fueled the Affordability Crisis

During the pandemic, corporate profits reached record levels in Canada. Around the same time, inflation reached levels not seen since the early 1980s. This was not a coincidence, nor an inevitable consequence of living in a market-oriented society. Rather, it reflects the outsized power of large corporations to set prices. Corporations used those profits to pay shareholders rather than reinvest in the economy, exacerbating inequality. Rent prices continue to accelerate, driving a rental affordability crisis. We will discuss solutions to tax excess profits and prevent corporations from being able to profiteer during future crises.

Silas Xuereb is a Researcher and Policy Analyst with Canadians for Tax Fairness, an advocacy organization focused on progressive tax issues in Canada. He has previously worked with a range of academic and non-profit organizations that aim to better understand and raise awareness about socioeconomic inequalities, including the World Inequality Lab, the UBC Housing Research Collaborative, Oxfam Canada, and UBI Works. A member of the Progressive Economics Forum and the Center for Popular Economics, he is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in political economy at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, supported by a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship. He is actively trying to improve our understanding of how neoclassical economics came to dominate policymaking and to unlearn the economics he was taught through masters degrees at UBC and the Paris School of Economics.

Sunday

November 17, 2024



Gillian Petit

Saying the Quiet Part Out Loud: Confronting the Current Reality of Increasing Low-Income and Low Wage Growth in Alberta

During the pandemic, corporate profits reached record levels in Canada. Around the same time, inflation reached levels not seen since the early 1980s. This was not a coincidence, nor an inevitable consequence of living in a market-oriented society. Rather, it reflects the outsized power of large corporations to set prices. Corporations used those profits to pay shareholders rather than reinvest in the economy, exacerbating inequality. Rent prices continue to accelerate, driving a rental affordability crisis. We will discuss solutions to tax excess profits and prevent corporations from being able to profiteer during future crises.

Gillian Petit is a Senior Research Associate in the Department of Economics, University of Calgary. She holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Calgary and a JD from Queen's University. Her research focuses on Canadian income and social supports spanning several areas including tax policy, municipal policy, poverty policy, and access to justice. She has advised expert panels, including the BC Basic Income Panel, published peer-reviewed journal articles, and co-wrote a book on basic income. She serves as a member of the Affordability Action Council and is a regular contributor for IRPP. She works on intersectionality-informed, data-driven solutions to economic and social issues facing Canadians today.



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Sunday

November 17, 2024

10:30 am – 11:45 am
Room 1-003, ETLC

Concurrent Session

B. *Workshop: More than Concessions: Organizing, Fighting Back and Spadework*



Tina Oh

If progressives are serious about addressing the worsening attacks on the working class, organizing is one of the only proven salvations capable of building power that fights back. To organize is to build a continuously expanding base of durable relationships amongst ordinary people who are willing to come together in numbers and take risks to defeat and make concessions against the corporate elite, their greed, right-wing populism and its austerity agenda. This workshop is an introduction to organizing that leans heavily on the traditional Labour method of spadework and can be applied to a wide range of political issues.

Tina Oh is a first generation Korean immigrant and a trade-unionist that was raised in a working class family in Edmonton. She is currently a lead organizer with Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 2, a national private-sector organizing union that represents many low-waged / immigrant workers in traditionally adverse sectors like janitorial, retail and subcontracted occupations. Tina was recently relocated back to Edmonton to coordinate the arrival of the Justice for Janitors campaign in the notoriously anti-union Alberta market, the province with the least union density in the country. She cut her teeth as an organizer and campaigner for over a decade in the Maritimes across climate, racial, labour issues. Tina also helped to co-found, and is the Chair of, the Centre for Migrant Worker Rights - Nova Scotia, a grassroots organization that directly supports, services and advances the rights of mostly Latin American and Caribbean migrant workers particularly in the farm and seafood production sectors.

11:45 am – 12:00 pm
ETLC Lobby

Break

Coffee and pastries will be available

Sunday

November 17, 2024

12:00 pm – 1:30 pm
Room 1-001, ETLC

Closing Keynote



Koren Lightning

From Acknowledgement to Transformation: Advancing Indigenous Laws, Engagement, and Reconciliation

This presentation explores the essential shift from symbolic gestures to meaningful actions that truly uphold Indigenous rights, respect Indigenous laws, and drive genuine reconciliation. By applying, respecting, and engaging with Indigenous law, we open real pathways to justice and equity. Attendees will gain practical insights into building cultural competency, fostering belonging, and navigating cultural differences with sensitivity and respect. This session will inspire and empower participants to take meaningful steps forward, embracing reconciliation through actions that create a more inclusive and equitable future.

Koren Lightning, K.C. '07 LLB, '18 LLM, CIC.C, Blue Thunderbird Woman, is Cree from Samson Cree Nation. She is the Legal Director of Wahkohtowin Law and Governance Lodge. She is Board Member for First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, Board Member for Women's Legal Education & Action Fund (LEAF) and Board Member for Peace Hills Insurance. She was Vice-President of Kasohkewew Child Wellness Society for 10 years. She was President of the Indigenous Bar Association for 6 years. She was an Acting Commissioner for Alberta Utilities Commission.

She has a Master of Laws from Osgoode Hall Law School, York University, her concentration was Alternative Dispute Resolution. Koren's work focuses on working with Indigenous clients and supporting the revitalization of Indigenous Laws. Koren advises in the areas of Indigenous Governance, Indigenous Child Welfare, and Indian Act matters. Koren also is an accomplished speaker on Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Relationship Building.

She was awarded the "Pringle/Royal sessional teaching excellence" Award from Faculty of Law, University of Alberta, as was awarded the Alumni Horizon Award in 2017. She was awarded "Tomorrow's Leader" Award from Women in Law Leadership Awards in 2019. Koren is alumni of the Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference. She was an elected council member for Samson Cree Nation from 2011-2014 and is co-founder of Hub, a community mobilization program to help reduce crime. She is a sessional instructor at Maskwacis Cultural College and University of Alberta, Faculty of Law.

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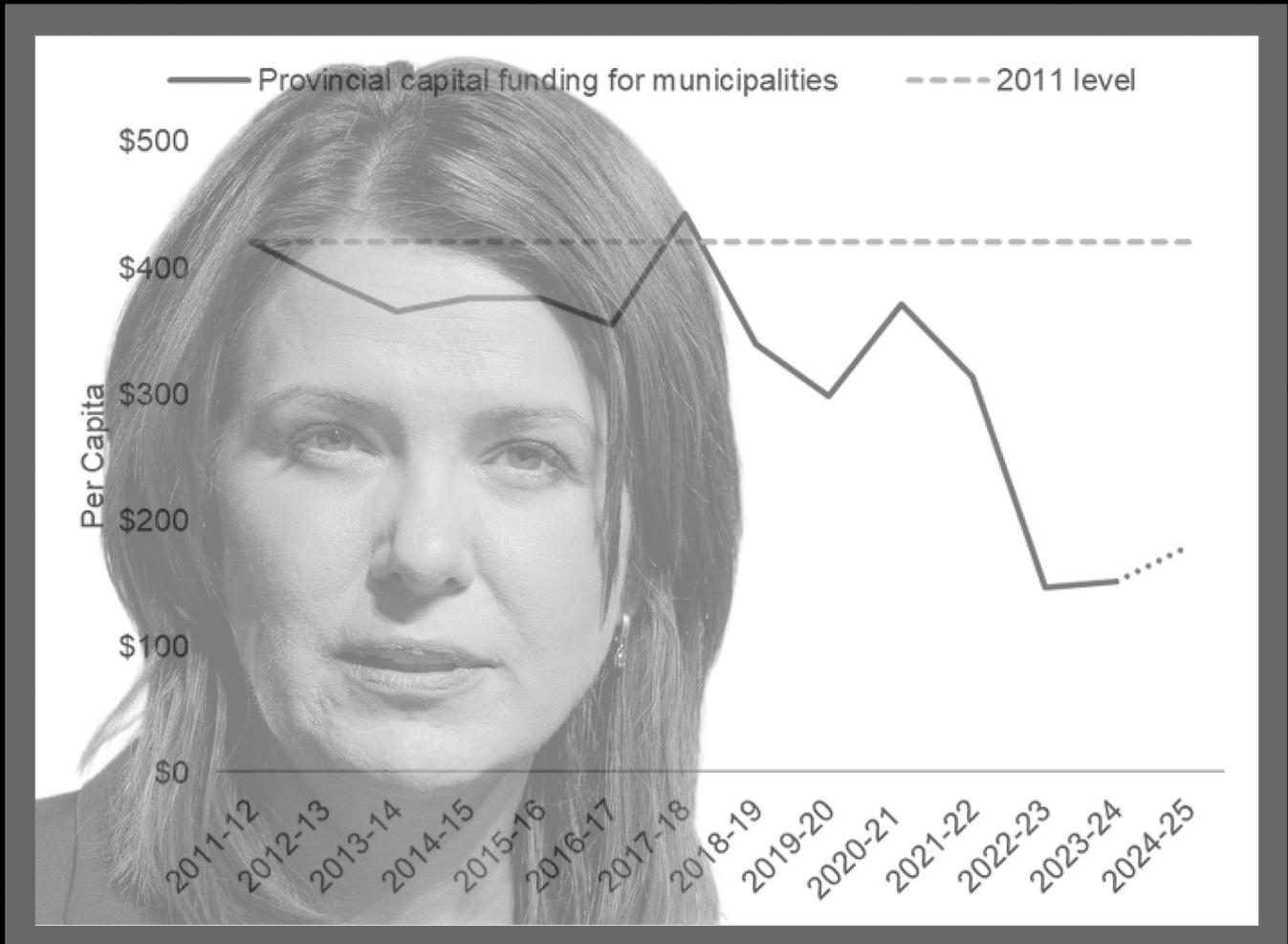
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