

GRCP INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

March 26-27, 2026
UdeS (Longueuil Campus)
Les Grandes Portées Hall
(Room B2-2605)

To learn more about

D^r Matthew Seeger

 Matthew Seeger

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- 8:45** Guest reception and arrival
Les Grandes Portées Hall (room B2-2605)
- 9:00** Welcoming from the principal researcher, **D^r Mireille Lalancette** (UQTR), followed by the greetings of the organization committee, **D^r Marie-Eve Carignan**, **D^r Emmanuel Choquette**, and **D^r Carol-Ann Rouillard** (Université de Sherbrooke).
- 9:15** Presentation of **D^r Matthew Seeger** (Wayne State University)

Political Systems, Crisis Resilience and Renewal

One of the primary responsibilities of political systems is protecting the citizenry by preparing for, responding to, and assisting in the recovery from threatening and disruptive events. The political-administrative perspective on crisis management is increasingly important as disasters create higher levels of disruption and harm and requires more resources for planning, mitigation, and response (Rosenthal & Kouzmin, 1997).

One popular strategy focuses on the principle of resilience, an interdisciplinary construct that in general refers to the capacity of a system to maintain stability and functionality after a highly adverse, disruptive, threatening event, or simply as the ability to bounce back (Doerfel, et al, 2022; Lasky, et al., 2023). In fact, resilience has become a kind of holy grail of crisis planning and response (Tobin, 1999). As an attribute of systems, organizations, individuals, and societies, resilience has been offered as the solution to existential risks and mega crises including climate change driven disasters, technological collapses, and pandemic disease threats. Governments, for example, have often promoted hardening infrastructure, creating redundant systems and bolstering response capacity. This engineered resilience seeks to enhance disaster resistance, limit damage, and create the capacity to bounce back to the previous state quickly (Hollings, 1973).

This engineered resilience is in contrast to ecological change, which emphasizes adaption, post-crisis learning, and renewal (Hollings, 1996). The adaptive capacity of systems creates opportunities for substance growth, strategic change, and opportunities to address long-term problems following a crisis. Ecological resilience can thus be understood as the crisis-induced opportunity to renew a system.

Governments have begun to emphasize this adaptive resilience approach by “helping communities recover from disasters more effectively and rebuild in ways that reduce future risks” (Canadian Centre for Recovery and Resilience, n.p.). Interorganizational organizations have also embraced adaptive resilience. This includes the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 adopted by the United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction, the World Bank, and the G7.

This presentation explores the tenants of engineered resilience, including critiques that argue that it often impedes necessary change. Renewal is offered as an alternative approach that may emerge from a specific set of post-crisis discursive practices. These include prospective focus, value-centric appeals, and post-crisis learning. The nature of emerging risks and the possibility of mega-crises suggest that strategies of resilience may not be sufficient and that discourses of renewal through change may be more appropriate.

Biography of D^r Matthew Seeger

Matthew W. Seeger, PhD, is a Distinguished University Professor of Communication at Wayne State University in Detroit. His research concerns crisis and risk communication, the role of media, including social media, crisis coordination, failure of complex systems and post-crisis resilience, recovery, and renewal.

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To learn more about
D' Frédéric Boily

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He is a member of the World Health Organization Guidelines Development Group for Emergency Risk Communication and co-author of the CDC's *Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication* (Second Edition, 2015). He was a CO-PI on the investigation of the Legionnaire's outbreak associated with the Flint Water Crisis and an NSF funded projects focusing on water contamination, agency coordination and public warnings. He is a co-director of the Center for Emerging and Infectious Diseases at Wayne State, where he focuses on health promotion, vaccine hesitance, and public health preparedness. His work has been featured in the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, and *Rolling Stone*.

10:45 Break

11:00 Discussion with D' **Matthew Seeger**

12:00 Lunch break (provided by the GRCP)

1:00 Presentation of D' **Frédéric Boily** (University of Alberta - Campus Saint-Jean)

The Challenges of Understanding Right-Wing Politics and Populism: Between Permanence and New Waves

For several years now, and especially during Donald Trump's two presidential terms, debates about the right wing and populism have been omnipresent in the media. Observers frequently speak of a wave of right-wing and populist sentiment, consisting of political parties and leaders who break with democratic norms, that is said to be overwhelming Western democracies. There is even talks about fascism taking root in the United States. It is in this context that questions arise about the ideological evolution of the right and populism, with answers that are of crucial relevance today.

The presentation will examine the nature of the right wing and rightward shift, particularly to distinguish between different moments or periods. We will see that the phenomenon of rightward shift is not ideologically unambiguous and that the right wing of yesterday is not identical to that of today. Thus, the phenomenon of rightward shift must also be understood as an ideological evolution. We will see that what is presented as a rise in populism overlooks the long history of the phenomenon and, above all, that many analysts fail to distinguish between different forms of populism. This perspective will allow us to see that populism is a long-standing phenomenon in the United States, Canada, and even Quebec. In short, the aim is to offer some keys to understanding a multifaceted ideological evolution that is difficult to grasp in its generality and in terms of its internal coherence.

Biography of D' Frédéric Boily

Frédéric Boily is a full professor at Campus Saint-Jean (University of Alberta). He is a specialist in Canadian politics. His research focuses on the right wing, conservatism, and populism. He is the author of *Droitisation et populisme. Canada, Québec et États-Unis* (PUL, 2020), and he also edited the collective work *Les droites provinciales en évolution (2015-2020). Conservatisme, populisme et radicalisme* (PUL, 2021). His book *Génération MBC. Mathieu Bock-Côté et les nouveaux intellectuels conservateurs* (PUL, 2022) was finalist for the Canadian Political Science Association's Francophone Award (2024). He recently co-edited, with Martin Geoffroy, a collective work: *Le Canada à l'épreuve du complotisme, du populisme et du régionalisme (2018-2023), Québec* (PUL, 2025).

2:30 Break

2:45 Discussion with D' **Frédéric Boily**

3:45 End of the first day of conferences

4:00 **Welcome Cocktail**

Le Belvédère Room (13th floor, room 13300)

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D^r Elizabeth Dubois

 Elizabeth Dubois

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8:30 Guest reception and arrival
Les Grandes Portées Hall (room B2-2605)

9:00 Presentation of **D^r Elizabeth Dubois** (University of Ottawa)

The Political Power of Social Media Influencers

From opinion leadership to social media influencer marketing, popular social media personas are being integrated into election campaigns around the world. Online influencers' ability to reach targeted, and often hard to reach, audiences could be a helpful advancement in campaign strategy but, if left unchecked, could also exacerbate the spread of disinformation, foreign interference, and lead to electoral interference.

These new political actors play a range of roles from advertiser to journalist to engaged citizen making their impacts hard to measure and their activities hard to regulate. In this talk, Elizabeth Dubois synthesizes current literature and presents findings from a new mixed-methods study, questioning what counts as "personal influence", whether influencers might serve as trusted opinion leaders in an information environment where trust in democratic and news systems are dwindling, and whether legal and regulatory frameworks globally are ready for political influencers in elections.

Biography of **D^r Elizabeth Dubois**

D^r Elizabeth Dubois (PhD, University of Oxford) is an Associate Professor and University Research Chair in Politics, Communication, and Technology at the University of Ottawa, where she runs the Pol Comm Tech Lab and is a member of the Center for Law, Technology, and Society. She is also a Faculty Associate and former Fellow at the Berkman-Klein Center at Harvard University. Her work examines political uses of digital media, including artificial intelligence, political social media influencers, and online harassment of public figures. She hosts the *Wonks and War Rooms* podcast where political communication theory meets on the ground strategy. Find more about her work at www.polcommtech.ca or check out her latest report, *Influencers and Elections: The many roles that content creators play*.

10:30 Break

10:45 Discussion with **D^r Elizabeth Dubois**

11:45 Lunch break (provided by the GRCP)

12:45 Presentation of **D^r Sébastien Mort** (Université Paris Nanterre)

The radio talk show and the conservative media ecosystem in the United States, from Ronald Reagan to Donald Trump: history, operation, and political role

Before Fox News established itself as the dominant media outlet for conservatism in the early 2000s, and long before the channel forged symbiotic relationships with Donald Trump and the MAGA sphere, it was radio that first made it possible to promote radical right-wing ideas to the American public. Thanks to political radio talk shows, a genre that emerged in the early 1990s with the launch of *The Rush Limbaugh Show* in the summer of 1988, which ideas gained unprecedented visibility in the media ecosystem and political sphere, and became firmly entrenched in the public sphere.

Taking the emergence and spread of conservative radio as its guiding thread, this lecture analyzes the construction and rise of the US conservative media ecosystem from the end of Ronald Reagan's presidency to the present day. It examines the logic of this ecosystem, its role in the production of "outrage" – a rhetorical style specific to right-wing media – and its links to the Republican Party.

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It shows that, initially, this ecosystem's relations with the Republican Party elite were forged because of ideological and discursive convergence, but in a pragmatic and conditional manner, and remained fluid. With Trump's political rise, the transition from a "post-terrestrial" media regime to a "hybrid" system, and the concomitant emergence of new cable broadcasters (One American News Network, Newsmax) and a new generation of radio hosts (Ben Shapiro, Dan Bongino, Charlie Kirk), these relationships became symbiotic. A powerful instrument of conservative protest and a staunch ally of the GOP, the conservative media ecosystem has established itself as a leading political force, contributing to Republican legislative victories in 1994 and 2010 and Trump's victories in 2016 and 2024.

Biography of **D' Sébastien Mort**

Sébastien Mort is a lecturer in American societies and cultures at Université Paris Nanterre and a member of the Centre for English-Language Research (CREA). He works on conservative media in the United States, the intersection between politics, information production, and journalism in the United States, and the phenomenon of political intimidation of journalists in the Trump era. He is the author of *Ondes de choc : histoire médiatique et politique de la radio conservatrice aux États-Unis* (Shock Waves: A Media and Political History of Conservative Radio in the United States), published in 2024 by Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles (2025 Assises du Journalisme Research Book Award). His work has been published in the *Revue française d'études américaines*, *Politique américaine*, *Transatlantica*, *New Political Science*, and the *European Journal for American Studies*.

- 2:15** Break
- 2:30** Discussion with **D' Sébastien Mort**
- 3:30** Closing remarks and acknowledgments
- 3:45** End of the International Workshop