Vancouver Institute Spring 2012 Program

* Free Public Lectures *

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

General Information

Please see the [Vancouver Institute home page](http://vaninst.ca/Vi2012Spring.html).

Lecture Times

Saturday evenings, 8:15 p.m. (doors open 7:30 p.m.), except where otherwise noted.

The Spring 2012 season comprises nine lectures, from January 28th to March 31st, omitting February 18th (midterm break).

Spring 2012 Lecture Schedule

*(Please click on the lecture date for further detail.)*

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<td>Professor Patricia Churchland, Department of Philosophy, University of California – San Diego</td>
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<td>Professor Ken Sharpe, Department of Political Science, Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania</td>
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<td>Practical Wisdom: The Right Way To Do the Right Thing</td>
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<td>Dr. John Grunsfeld, Deputy Director, Space Telescope Science Institute and Former NASA Astronaut, Baltimore, Maryland</td>
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<td>Professor Lawrence Krauss, School of Earth and Space Exploration and Physics Department, Arizona State University</td>
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<td>Ms. Elizabeth Hay, Canadian Novelist and winner of the Giller Prize, 2007, Ottawa</td>
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<td>Mar 31</td>
<td><strong>Professor Stephen Ward</strong>, Director, Center for Journalism Ethics, University of Wisconsin-Madison</td>
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Vancouver Institute Information

* Free Public Lectures *

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Lecture Schedules

Except where specially noted, lectures are Saturday evenings, beginning at 8:15 p.m. (doors open 7:30 p.m.).

Spring 2015


General Information

How to join: If you have a Vancouver Institute brochure, you can fill out the contained form and mail it with a cheque to the indicated address; otherwise you can simply come to a lecture, well ahead of the lecture time (there may be a lineup) with the membership fee.

How to get there.

About The Vancouver Institute. Complete list of lecture titles, from 1916 to the present.


The lectures are in Lecture Hall No. 2 in the Woodward Instructional Resources Centre, University of British Columbia. When necessary, neighbouring overflow halls in the Centre, with closed-circuit TV, are used, and the speaker visits each hall during the question period.

Seats in the front half of the main hall are reserved for members until fifteen minutes before the starting time, and a few seats are reserved for specific people. Seating is otherwise first-come, first-served.
Cecil and Ida Green Lecture

Morality and the Brain

A Canadian by birth, Professor Churchland is currently a faculty member of the UCSD Philosophy Department, an adjunct professor at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, and an associate of the Computational Neuroscience Laboratory (Sejnowski Lab) at the Salk Institute. She won a MacArthur prize in 1991. Educated at the University of British Columbia, the University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Oxford (B.Phil.), she taught philosophy at the University of Manitoba from 1969 to 1984. Professor Churchland has focused on the interface between neuroscience and philosophy. According to Professor Churchland, philosophers are increasingly realizing that to understand the mind one must understand the brain, and this has been the thrust of much of her recent research work.

Background Information

(These references were compiled by the webmaster in the hope that they will prove interesting to some readers. The web being what it is, some of them will have vanished by the time you go to look them up, and there is—of course—no guarantee of their accuracy.)

Speaker's website

"My research focuses on the interface between neuroscience and philosophy. Although many philosophers used to dismiss the relevance of neuroscience on grounds that what mattered was “the software, not the hardware”, increasingly philosophers have come to recognize that understanding how the brain works is essential to understanding the mind.

"I explore the impact of scientific developments on our understanding of consciousness, the self, free will, decision making, ethics, learning, and religion and issues concerning the neurobiological basis of consciousness, the self, and free will, as well as on more technical questions concerning to what degree the nervous system is hierarchically organized, how the difficult issue of co-ordination and timing is managed by nervous systems, and what are the mechanisms for the perceptual phenomenon..."
of filling-in. The central focus of my research has been the exploration and development of the hypothesis that the mind is the brain. …"

Interview with Bill Moyers

In this clip, journalist Bill Moyers interviews philosopher Patricia Smith Churchland on how empirical research in the neurosciences could have radical implications for longstanding philosophical questions concerning the nature of knowledge, the self, and conscious experience.

She also discusses the limits of our imaginative abilities, and how they have historically failed us when we attempt to speculate concerning what types of phenomena will, in principle, never be adequately explained in solely materialistic terms. Consequently, she thinks we shouldn't take a failure of imagination as an insight into ontological necessity.

American Scientist: Scientists' Nightstand interview

- Could you tell us a bit about yourself?
- What books are you currently reading (or have you just finished reading) for your work or for pleasure? Why did you choose them, and what do you think of them?
- When and where do you usually read (specific location, time of day, etc.)?
- Who are your favorite writers (fiction, nonfiction or poetry)? Why?
- What are the three best books you've ever read? Explain.
- …
Professor Ken Sharpe Lecture

Professor Ken Sharpe
Department of Political Science
Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania

will be addressing the Vancouver Institute on February 4, 2012 at 8:15 p.m., Lecture Hall No. 2 in the Woodward Instructional Resources Centre, University of British Columbia.

Practical Wisdom:
The Right Way To Do the Right Thing

An expert on foreign policy, Latin American politics, and U.S. drug enforcement policies, Professor Sharpe is co-author of Drug War Politics: The Price of Denial which examines the ineffectiveness of America's punitive narcotics policy and calls instead for a public-health approach that aims to reduce demand for drugs. He has written several books analyzing, among other issues, the political economy of the Mexican auto industry, the relationship between U.S. foreign policy and constitutional democracy, and the imperial presidency. His most recent work, Practical Wisdom, co-authored with Professor Barry Schwartz, proposes a better way to make personal and social decisions. He received his M.Sc. from the London School of Economics and Ph.D. from Yale University.

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Description of Drug War Politics

Why have our drug wars failed and how might we turn things around? Ask the authors of this hardhitting exposé of U.S. efforts to fight drug trafficking and abuse. In a bold analysis of a century's worth of policy failure, Drug War Politics turns on its head many familiar bromides about drug politics. It demonstrates how, instead of learning from our failures, we duplicate and reinforce them in the same flawed policies. The authors examine the "politics of denial" that has led to this catastrophic predicament and propose a basis for a realistic and desperately needed solution.

Domestic and foreign drug wars have consistently fallen short because they are based on a flawed model of force and punishment, the authors show. The failure of these misguided solutions has led to harsher get-tough policies, debilitating cycles of more force and punishment, and a drug problem that continues to escalate. On the foreign policy front, billions of dollars have been wasted, corruption
has mushroomed, and human rights undermined in Latin America and across the globe. Yet cheap
drugs still flow abundantly across our borders. At home, more money than ever is spent on law
enforcement, and an unprecedented number of people—disproportionately minorities—are
incarcerated. But drug abuse and addiction persist.

The authors outline the political struggles that help create and sustain the current punitive approach.
They probe the workings of Washington politics, demonstrating how presidential and congressional
"out-toughing" tactics create a logic of escalation while the criticisms and alternatives of reformers
are sidelined or silenced.

Student ratings

"The best professor I've ever had, heard of, or anticipate encountering again. A teacher in every
sense of the word. He has pretty much defined my time at Swarthmore."
Dr. John Grunsfeld Lecture

Dr. John Grunsfeld
Deputy Director
Space Telescope Science Institute and
Former NASA Astronaut
Baltimore, Maryland

will be addressing the Vancouver Institute on February 11, 2012 at 8:15 p.m., Lecture Hall No. 2 in the Woodward Instructional Resources Centre, University of British Columbia.

A Hubble Adventure:
Repairing the Telescope and Its Exciting New Discoveries

Dr. Grunsfeld’s research has covered x-ray and gamma-ray astronomy, high-energy cosmic ray studies, and development of new detectors and instrumentation. He studied binary pulsars and energetic x-ray and gamma ray sources using the NASA Compton Gamma Ray Observatory, x-ray astronomy satellites, radio telescopes, and optical telescopes including the NASA Hubble Space Telescope. Dr. Grunsfeld has logged over 58 days in space, including 58 hours in 8 space walks. In the fifth and final Hubble servicing mission in 2009, he served as the lead spacewalker in charge of the spacewalking and Hubble activities. He performed 3 of the 5 spacewalks on this flight totaling almost 21 hours. For the first time on orbit 2 scientific instruments were surgically repaired in the telescope. The mission was accomplished in 12 days traveling 5,276,000 miles in 197 Earth orbits.

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Speaker's Wikipedia entry

"Grunsfeld appeared on the PBS NOVA episode "Deadly Ascent", which showed him climbing Mount McKinley, the highest peak in North America, in June 2000. Grunsfeld, along with Dr. Howard Donner, (a consultant to NASA) conducted research into the effects of body temperature at
high altitudes by using internal thermometers swallowed in pill form. He was able to climb to an altitude of 17,200 feet before acute altitude sickness forced him to turn back.

"In June 2004, Grunsfeld returned to McKinley while on vacation from NASA and successfully led a team that summited. He is the only astronaut to have climbed all the way to the top of Mount McKinley."

[Shuttle Memories: John Grunsfeld](http://vaninst.ca/VbGrunsfeld.html)

"Astronaut John Grunsfeld, who flew on the shuttle five times and helped service the Hubble Space Telescope on three of those mission, speaks with Miles O'Brien about his memories of the Space Shuttle program."

[John Grunsfeld - Hubble Servicing Mission 4](http://vaninst.ca/VbGrunsfeld.html)

In this 1:24:55 video, Dr. Grunsfeld describes the mission.
Professor Lawrence Krauss Lecture

Professor Lawrence Krauss
School of Earth and Space Exploration and Physics Department
Arizona State University

will be addressing the Vancouver Institute on February 25, 2012 at 8:15 p.m., Lecture Hall No. 2 in the Woodward Instructional Resources Centre, University of British Columbia.

IRVING K. BARBER LEARNING CENTRE LECTURE

Life, the Universe, and Nothing:
A Cosmic Mystery Story

Professor Krauss is an internationally known theoretical physicist with wide research interests, including the interface between elementary particle physics and cosmology. He is the author of over 300 scientific publications and is the recipient of numerous awards for his research and writing. He has helped spearhead national efforts to educate the public about science, ensure sound public policy, and defend science against attacks at a variety of levels. He is the author of many acclaimed popular books, including, The Fifth Essence: The Search for Dark Matter in the Universe which was named Astronomy Book of the Year by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, and Fear of Physics now translated into 12 languages. His book, The Physics of Star Trek, was released in November of 1995 and sold over 250,000 copies in the U.S.

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Speaker's website

Religion is a powerful force, and it has held sway against nature in many cases for millennia. But whenever religious dogma tries to overcome the facts of nature, be it the age of the universe, the existence of a big bang, evolution as the source of biological diversity, or the inner workings of human biology, knowledge and reason will slowly whittle down resistance, and reason will win out. Religious fundamentalism, as powerful a force as it often appears, is unsustainable in a world driven by science and technology.

Ultimately, the fundamental lesson of science is quite simple: the universe is the way it is, whether
we like it or not. Our job as humans is to figure out how it works so that we can tailor our philosophy and our actions as biological entities sharing a planet with the rest of nature, to maximally benefit from our knowledge.

**To the Moon, Newt!**

Gingrich’s wasteful, scientifically unsound plan to put colonists on lunar soil.
by Lawrence Krauss

Newt Gingrich described himself as a visionary when he unveiled plans Wednesday to create a mammoth new space program, including a permanent colony on the moon within the next nine years. Within eight years, he pledges a new Mars rocket program—specifically, a “continually operating propulsion system” capable of getting to Mars within a remarkably short time.” He also reiterated his plan to declare at least part of the moon as U.S. territory, with colonists capable of petitioning for statehood status.

There is little doubt that Mr. Gingrich believes in big ideas. Unfortunately, however, there is a difference between big ideas and good ideas. After all, being a visionary doesn’t mean abandoning practicality altogether but rather harnessing it creatively to make new things happen.

…

**'A Universe From Nothing' by Lawrence Krauss, AAI 2009**

Video, 1:04:52. "Lawrence Krauss gives a talk on our current picture of the universe, how it will end, and how it could have come from nothing."

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Ms. Elizabeth Hay Lecture

Ms. Elizabeth Hay
Canadian Novelist and winner of the Giller Prize, 2007
Ottawa

will be addressing the Vancouver Institute on March 3, 2012 at 8:15 p.m., Lecture Hall No. 2 in the Woodward Instructional Resources Centre, University of British Columbia.

The Writer as Returned Traveller

Author of Late Nights on Air, based on two years she spent working as an announcer and operator in a radio station in Yellowknife, Ms. Hay is perhaps best known for the complex and intimate book Garbo Laughs in 2003 and the passionate A Student of Weather in 2000. The latter was nominated for the Giller Prize, and her 1997 short-story collection Small Change was a finalist for multiple prizes, including the Governor General’s Award. Born in Owen Sound, Ms. Hay began writing poetry at the age of 15, before moving into short stories. She published early work in The Malahat Review and The Capilano Review. After leaving Yellowknife, she continued to work on and off for CBC Radio in Winnipeg, Toronto, and Mexico.
Professor Peter Dauvergne Lecture

Professor Peter Dauvergne
Director, Liu Institute for Global Issues
University of BC

will be addressing the Vancouver Institute on March 10, 2012 at 8:15 p.m., Lecture Hall No. 2 in the Woodward Instructional Resources Centre, University of British Columbia.

UBC Excellence in Research Lecture

The Big Brand Takeover of Sustainability

Dr. Dauvergne is Professor of Political Science and Canada Research Chair in Global Environmental Politics. His research focuses on the politics of global environmental change, including current projects on sustainable consumption and corporate social responsibility. He has published 9 books and over 50 articles. His books include Timber (with Jane Lister), Paths to a Green World (with Jennifer Clapp), The Shadows of Consumption, winner of the Gerald L. Young Award for the best book authored in 2008 in the field of human ecology, Loggers and Degradation in the Asia-Pacific, and Shadows in the Forest, winner of the 1998 Sprout Award from the International Studies Association for the best book in global environmental affairs. Professor Dauvergne is the founding and past editor of the MIT journal Global Environmental Politics.
Ms. Alexandra Morton Lecture

Ms. Alexandra Morton
Marine Biologist
B.C.

will be addressing the Vancouver Institute on March 17, 2012 at 8:15 p.m., Lecture Hall No. 2 in the Woodward Instructional Resources Centre, University of British Columbia.

Bel N. Nemetz Lecture

If We Want Wild Salmon, It Is Up To Us

Ms. Morton moved to the remote Broughton Archipelago in 1984 to study and film killer whales. As a biologist, she began to study the interaction of farmed and wild salmon and together with scientists from around the world measured the significant impact of salmon farms on fish and whales. Ms. Morton has co-published two dozen papers on this controversial subject in scientific journals in Canada, the U.S. and Europe. She has also participated in every government process on salmon farms. Ms. Morton turned her home into the Salmon Coast Field Station and made it available to scientists who wanted to further study the impact of salmon farms. She is director of the Raincoast Research Society, a charitable non-profit society dedicated to science, and she founded the Pacific Coast Wild Salmon Society. Winner of numerous awards for her work, Ms. Morton has also written seven books.
Andrew Wallace-Hadrill Lecture

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill
Master, Sidney Sussex College
Cambridge University

will be addressing the Vancouver Institute on March 24, 2012 at 8:15 p.m., Lecture Hall No. 2 in the Woodward Instructional Resources Centre, University of British Columbia.

Cecil and Ida Green Lecture

Herculaneum:
From Ashes to Ashes

A world-acknowledged expert on Pompeii and Herculaneum, Professor Wallace-Hadrill was awarded the Archaeological Institute of America's James R. Wiseman Award in 1995 for his book, Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum. He has written several other books including, Augustan Rome and Suetonius: the Scholar and his Caesars. Edited volumes by Professor Wallace-Hadrill include (with R. Laurence) Domestic Space in the Roman World: Pompeii and Beyond, and (with J.W. Rich) City and Country in the Ancient World. Professor Wallace-Hadrill was elected the 25th Master of Sidney Sussex College at the University of Cambridge, taking up office in August 2009.
**Professor Stephen Ward Lecture**

Professor Stephen Ward  
Director, Center for Journalism Ethics  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

will be addressing the Vancouver Institute on March 31, 2012 at 8:15 p.m., Lecture Hall No. 2 in the Woodward Instructional Resources Centre, University of British Columbia.

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**Craig Laronge University of Wisconsin Lectures**

**Media Ethics on the Digital Frontier**

Professor Ward is the author of the award-winning *The Invention of Journalism Ethics: The Path to Objectivity and Beyond*. In addition, he is the author of *Ethics and the Media: An Introduction* and *Global Journalism Ethics*. His articles and reviews have appeared in such journals as *Journalism Studies*, *Equid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* and the *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*. He serves on many editorial and advisory boards for ethics organizations and for journals on media ethics and science. He is the media ethics columnist for several leading publications, including the PBS web site, *Media Shift* ([http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/](http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/)), the Canadian portal *j-source.ca* and *Media* magazine. Dr. Ward was a reporter, war correspondent, and newsroom manager for 14 years. He covered conflicts in Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Northern Ireland.
Vancouver Institute Contacts

The Institute

The Vancouver Institute staff may be contacted at this address:

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6201 Cecil Green Park Road  
Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z1

vancouver.institute@ubc.ca  
604-822-8660

(Please note that the email link above was updated December 2014.)

Various officers of the Institute are generally present at the lectures.

The Webmaster

Reports of problems with the web site, and suggestions for additional information to be posted there, may be emailed to Ted Powell.

This address is NOT for suggestions related to so-called "search engine optimization" from any source.

More generally, please note:

1. This address is not intended as a general point of contact for the Institute. Under "The Institute" above I have provided an email address, a phone number, and a street/postal address, and noted that "Various officers of the Institute are generally present at the lectures." This is the only contact information that I consider myself at liberty to provide. Although I might occasionally pass on people's concerns to officers of the Institute, I have not volunteered to be an ombudsman.
2. I am not privy to contact information for current or past speakers.
3. I cannot predict whether upcoming speakers will be available for interviews.
4. I cannot predict whether a transcript of a particular talk will be made available by the Institute, except to note that it is a rare occurrence.
5. I cannot predict whether the Institute and/or a particular speaker will consent to third-party taping of a lecture. All lectures are audiotaped by the Institute, and some (check here) are also videotaped. These tapes are held by the Special Collections Division of the UBC Library.
6. I do not handle suggestions for speakers to be invited.
7. I generally cannot predict when I will receive next season's program from the Program Chair.
8. I do not handle advertising.
9. I have no idea whether the Institute has merchant accounts with any credit card companies, let alone whether any such accounts might be authorized for telephone transactions.
10. I have no involvement with any mailing list(s) maintained by the Institute.
11. I have no idea what topics the speaker may cover, beyond what a reasonable person might surmise from the lecture title and the speaker bio.

Many of these issues can, however, be resolved by contacting the Institute staff, using the information given at the top of this page.
P.S.: It may be that some webmasters are mind readers; I am not. Also, there are times when my mind is not operating at top efficiency, and I may misinterpret a page description which seems perfectly clear to you. If you are writing about a page or pages on this site, or are referring to some other website, please give specific web addresses, e.g. http://www.example.com/some-folder/some-page.html