**Susan J. Palmer, Affiliate Professor**

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**Website(s):**

Team Member on MCRI (SSHRC) Project at University of Ottawa

[www.religionanddiversity.ca/](http://www.religionanddiversity.ca/)

Member of the Scientific Board of Freedom of Religion and Belief (FOREF)

[http://www.foref.eu/](https://owa.concordia.ca/owa/redir.aspx?REF=ocGXrtr9IezzD-qOWFgZtZZ2imNAXmiv3VRjphlyo08VTk5LpozUCAFodHRwOi8vd3d3LmZvcmVmLmV1Lw..)

Cochercheure (CEFIR) Centre d’expertise sur les intégrismes religieux et la radicalisation [www.cegepmontpetit.ca](http://www.cegepmontpetit.ca)

Author of Profiles on World Religions & Spirituality, Virginia Commonwealth

University [www.wrldrels.org](http://www.wrldrels.org)

Radio interview on OPEN MINDS [www.openminds.tv/alejandro-rojas](http://www.openminds.tv/alejandro-rojas)

Podcast interview on [www.religiousstudiesproject.com](https://owa.concordia.ca/owa/redir.aspx?REF=Wq55jyVMEM6RPhQZqgQp5TmdnRT3E0ZUeICFRvdBK3AjdG9plozUCAFodHRwOi8vd3d3LnJlbGlnaW91c3N0dWRpZXNwcm9qZWN0LmNvbS8.)

**Academic Biography**

Susan J. Palmer received her Ph.D. from Concordia University in 1992. She was Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Dawson College from 1974 to 2013. She has taught courses as a Part-time Lecturer in the Department of Religion and Cultures at Concordia University since 1992 as Adjunct Professor, and in 2011 became an Affiliate Professor. She has also been an Affiliate Member of the Religious Studies Faculty at McGill University since 2013. She is currently Co-researcher with the Centre d'expertise et de formation sur les intégrismes religieux et la radicalization (CEFIR) at Cégep Édouard-Montpetit in Longueil.

**Research Interests:**

New Religious Movements (NRMs)

Women and Gender Studies

Apocalyptic and Millennial Movements

Religion, Law and Public Policy

Qualitative Research Methods

Communal/Utopian Studies

Children in New Religions

**RESEARCH**

Susan J. Palmer’s research has been supported by six Standard Research Grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). In April 2017 she was awarded a SSHRC Insight Grant for her five-year “Children in Sectarian Movements and State Control”. Her research on NRMs has also been funded by the Canada Council, les *Fonds de Recherche du Québec,* and by grants from the Association for the Sociology of Religion and the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion in the USA.

**Publications**

**Books**

“Quebec’s New Religions:  *Sectes* and Spirituality since the Quiet Revolution,” edited by Susan J. Palmer, Paul Gareau and Martin Geoffroy. (Forthcoming with Palgrave Macmillan).

*Storming Zion: Exploring State Raids on New and Non-Traditional Religious Communities*, by Stuart A. Wright and Susan J. Palmer. 2015. N.Y.: Oxford University Press.

*The New Heretics of France: Minority Religions, la Republique, and the Government-Sponsored ‘War on Sects',* 2011*.* N.Y.: Oxford University Press.

*The Nuwaubian Nation: Black Spirituality and State Control.* 2010. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

*Aliens Adored: Rael’s UFO Religion*. 2004. N.J. Rutgers University Press.

*Qiannian wangguo yu baiyang shijie* [*The Coming of the Millennium and the Turning of the Kalpa*]. David Ownby, Susan J. Palmer and Qin Bao. Beijing: The People’s Press, 2000 (available only in Chinese).

*I Raeliani*. 2000. Torino, Italy: Editrice ELLDICI (available only in Italian).

*Children in New Religions*. 1999. Susan Palmer and Charlotte Hardman (eds.). 1999. New Brunswick, N.J., Rutgers University Press.

*Millennium, Messiahs and Mayhem*. 1997. Thomas Robbins and Susan Palmer (eds.) New York, Routledge.

*AIDS as an Apocalyptic Metaphor*. 1997. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

*Moon Sisters, Krishna Mothers, Rajneesh Lovers: Women’s Roles in New Religions*. 1994. New York: Syracuse University Press.

*Moon Sisters, Krishna Mothers, Rajneesh Lovers: Women's Roles in New Religious Movements*. 1994. Syracuse University Press.

*The Rajneesh Papers*. 1993. Susan Palmer and Arvind Sharma (eds.) New Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass.

**Recent Chapters**

“Religion or Sedition? The Domestic Terrorism Trial of a Michigan-based Christian Militia”, in *Legal Cases involving New Religious Movements and other Minority Faiths,* edited by James T. Richardson (INFORM/Ashgate Series). London, U.K.: Ashgate Publishing, January 2015.

“La Mission de l’Esprit-Saint: One Hundred Years of Prophecies and Schisms in a Quebecois NRM”, in *Revisionism and Diversification*, edited by Eileen V. Barker (INFORM/Ashgate Series). London, U.K.: Ashgate Publishing, 2014.

“Rael’s Angels: The First Five Years of a Secret Order”, in *Sexuality and New Religions,* edited by Henrik Bogdan and James R. Lewis. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

“Cult Wars on the Internet: Virtual Battles and the Challenges of Cyberspace” in *Cultural Dialogues, Religion and Communication*, edited by Isaac Nahon-Serfaty. Ottawa: University of Ottawa, 2013.

“Mandarom: The Limitations of Liberté in the Laicité”, in *Spiritual and Visionary Communities: Out t Save the World*, edited by Timothy Miller. Ashgate INFORM Series: London, U.K.: Ashgate Publishing, 2012.

Susan Palmer and Bryan Sentes, “The Raelian Movement International,” in *The Cambridge* *Companion to New Religious Movements*, edited by [Olav Hammer](https://webmail.dawsoncollege.qc.ca/owa/redir.aspx?C=9tNuqYIsFU6nZAGsIFXmHtL6wt-fPNAIue8OObLAU7yvMF4ikCPHQGalkfBU0uUIuf4WdQjY5ck.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.cambridge.org%2faus%2fcatalogue%2fsearchResult.asp%3fipcode%3d236923%26sort%3dY) and [Mikael Rothstein](https://webmail.dawsoncollege.qc.ca/owa/redir.aspx?C=9tNuqYIsFU6nZAGsIFXmHtL6wt-fPNAIue8OObLAU7yvMF4ikCPHQGalkfBU0uUIuf4WdQjY5ck.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.cambridge.org%2faus%2fcatalogue%2fsearchResult.asp%3fipcode%3d242785%26sort%3dY). Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

“Rescuing Children: Raids on Religious Communities”, in *Saints Under Siege The Texas State Raid on the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints,* [edited by Stuart A. Wright](http://nyupress.org/authors.aspx?authorID=3251) [and James T. Richardson](http://nyupress.org/authors.aspx?authorID=3237). N.Y. New York University Press, 2011.

# « Quebec, a New Plymouth Rock for France’s *Sectes*? » in *Prophéties et utopies religieuses au Canada*, edited by [Bernadette Rigal-Cellard](http://www.decitre.fr/auteur/601692/Bernadette+Rigal+Cellard/) : Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 2011.

“The Church of Scientology in France: Legal and Activist Counterattacks to the War on *Sectes*,” in *Scientology*, edited by James R. Lewis. Oxford University Press, 2009.

“The Church Universal and Triumphant: Shelter, Succession and Schism.” Susan Palmer and Michael Abravanel, in *Sacred* *Schisms,* edited by James R. Lewis. Cambridge University Press, 2009.

“Deliberate Heresies: Myth and Ritual in NRMs,” by Susan Palmer and David Bromley, in *Teaching New Religious Movements*, edited by David G. Bromley, Oxford University Press, 2007.

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“Purity and Danger in the Solar Temple, “in *The Order of the Solar Temple*, edited by James R. Lewis, Ashgate Publishing, 2006. (Reprinted article from *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 11/3, 1996.)

**Work as an Expert on NRMs with Law Enforcement and the Courts**

Palmer has often been called to appear court (Family or Criminal Courts in Europe and North America) as an expert witness in cases involving children and custody disputes in NRMS; in England, Germany, France, the U.S. and Canada. She also testified at the *Teamsters versus UPS* trial of a Rastafarian who was denied a promotion because he refused to cut off his dreadlocks. She has been an invited speaker for the [United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States)' [Federal Bureau of Investigation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Bureau_of_Investigation)) in workshops held at the AAR meetings or at the FBI headquarters in Quantico, VA. She was a consultant in the [1999](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1999) “Project Megiddo” under FBI [Director](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Director_of_the_Federal_Bureau_of_Investigation) [Louis Freeh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Freeh), as part of the CESNUR team of international scholars.

**Recent Conferences; Keynote Speaker/Visiting Lecturer Engagements**

Susan Palmer was a Keynote Speaker at the CenSAMM Symposia Series in the April 2017 at Bedford, U.K. She was **Invited Speaker at the London School of Economics (INFORM seminar on *New Religious Radicalisms*) in** May 2016. She was the Keynote Speaker at Karoli University, Prague, Czech Republic for the ***NÁBOŽENSKÁ KOMUNITA A DEMOKRATICKÝ STÁT*** conference organized by Professor Zdenek Vojtišek in May, 2016. In the same month she was also an Invited Speaker at the *Barn und Sekts* conference at Dalarna University College, Falun, Sweden, organized by Professor Liselotte Frisk.

### This year, 2017, Susan Palmer will be an Invited Speaker at Wuhan University (China), at the University of Sydney (Australia) and the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture (Canberra), and at Daejin University in the Republic of Korea.

**Research Methods Workshops**

Susan J. Palmer has a strong interest in Qualitative Research Methods and has been invited to conduct workshops or give lectures on “Researching NRMs” at the following universities:

Université de Montréal.(organizé par Barbara Thériault, Département de sociologie, Centre canadien d¹études allemandes et européennes), October 2013.

University of Stockholm, “Spying on Cults: “Ethics and Etiquette in Research” organized by Professor Liselotte Frisk, May 2011.

University of Windsor, Ontario, workshop on “Researching New Religious Movements: Qualitative Methods in Practice”, organized by Professor Martha Lee, November 2008. t

Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario. “Researching New Religious Movements: Qualitative Methods in Practice”, for the class of Professor Lori Beaman, October 2008.

*l’École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS),* Paris, France. Workshop on “Research and New Religions” for the class of Nathalie Luca, chargée de recherche au CNRS,July 2007.

University of Lausanne (*UNIL*), Switzerland. Invited by Professor Jorg Stolz to offer a workshop on *"Méthodes qualitatives en sociologie et sciences des religions"* for *l’Observatoire des religions en Suisse* (ORS), la Société suisse de sociologie (SSS) et de la Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Religionswissenschaft (SGR), in December, 2006.

**Professional Association Offices**

Member of the Scientific Board of *Freedom of Religion and Belief*, on the phenomena of New Religious Movements, directed by Dominiqe Zoehrer, Austria.

2009-2013 - General and Acquisitions Editor with New York University Press, for the *New and Alternative Religions* Series, with Timothy Miller and Jennifer Hammer.

2010-2013 - Member of the Editorial Board of the *International Journal for the Study of New Religions,* Equinox Publishing (Sweden).

2004-2008 - International Member of the Editorial Board for the *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, (King’s College, University of London), U.K.

1996 - Member of the Editorial Board for Syracuse University Press *Religion and Politics Series*, edited by Michael Barkun.