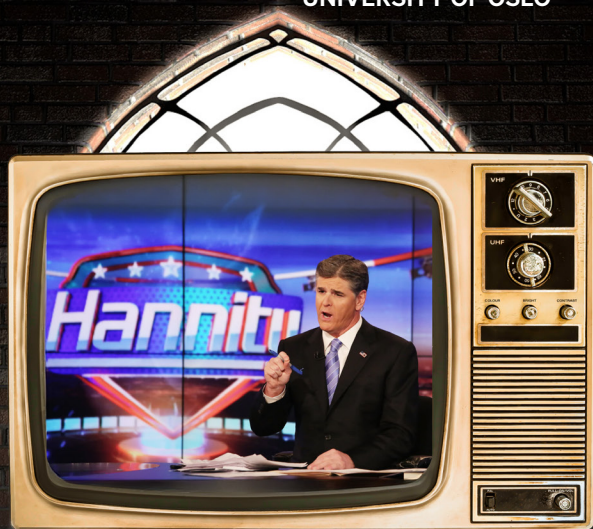


UNIVERSITY OF
LUCERNE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

CENTRE FOR RELIGION, ECONOMY AND
POLITICS

THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF OSLO



PUBLIC KEYNOTE LECTURE

FALSE PROPHETS AND CLIMATE CULTS

HOW CLIMATE CHANGE BECOMES RELIGIOUSLY MEANINGFUL
TO GRASSROOTS CONSERVATIVES IN THE US

PROF. DR. ROBIN VELDMAN, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

15TH JUNE 2026, 18:15 H

FROHBURGSTRASSE 3, 6002 LUZERN, LECTURE HALL 7



Prof. Dr. Robin Veldman

Robin Veldman is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Texas A&M University, and serves on the advisory board of the Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture.

With a background in Religious Studies from the University of Florida, her research focuses on religion, politics, and climate change, primarily in the United States. She is the author of *The Gospel of Climate Skepticism: Why Evangelical Christians Oppose Action on Climate Change*, the co-edited volume *How the World's Religions are Responding to Climate Change* and a number of articles and book chapters. More recently, her research has focused on the role of conservative media in coordinating religious traditions in the U.S.

The Greening of Religion and Spirituality Conference

This public keynote lecture is part of the international conference “The Greening of Religion and Spirituality – Exploring Beliefs, Practices and Organisations in Times of Environmental Change”. The conference is held from 15th to 17th June 2026 at the University of Lucerne and is organised by the SNSF research project ‘What are the greening dynamics of religion?’. This project studies under what conditions religious organisations become more environmentally friendly. The conference is a collaboration between the Faculty of Theology at the University of Oslo, the Centre for Religion, Economy, and Politics (ZRWP) at the University of Lucerne, and the Network ‘SONA – The Sociology of Sustainability. The conference is financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Research Committee of the University of Lucerne.

False Prophets and Climate Cults: How Climate Change Becomes Religiously Meaningful to Grassroots Conservatives in the US

In 2008, Barack Obama successfully campaigned for the US presidency on a platform that included the introduction of national-level climate change legislation. By 2025, the head of the US government's top environmental agency was celebrating "driving a dagger straight into the heart of the climate change religion."

To understand this reversal, and religion's role in it, requires exploring how US conservative media has shaped Americans' religious sensibilities, and how these sensibilities have increasingly been deployed against climate change. In this public keynote lecture, Robin Veldman moves beyond the climate literature's "media effects paradigm," which understands conservative media in essentially propagandistic terms. She explores how conservative media is made meaningful in the lives of conservative activists in the US, drawing on extensive field research in the US-states of Texas and Michigan.

In the keynote, Veldman argues that conservative media should be understood not simply as a natural counterpart to "liberal media", but as an arm of the conservative movement. She goes on to show how grassroots activists interpret the religious messages and affective modes of conservative media as authentic and meaningful. This helps to explain their mobilizing power. Finally, she calls upon scholars of religion and the environment to pay attention to religiosity that transcends traditional conceptions of religion, not only on the pro-environmental side (i.e., nature spiritualities, dark green religion), but on the anti-environmental or sceptical side as well.

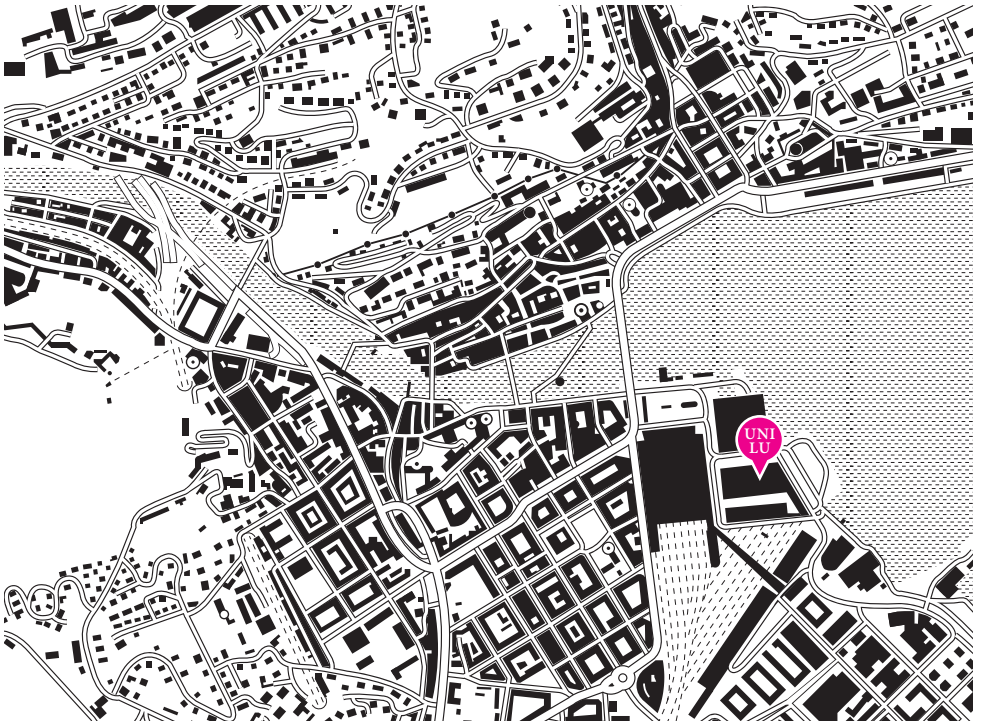
Keynote Lecture

15 June 2026, 18:15 | Frohburgstrasse 3, 6002 Lucerne | Lecture Hall 7

The Keynote Lecture is open to the public and free of charge. An apéritif ("Apéro riche") is offered after the lecture.

Your registration on www.unilu.ch/falseprophets helps us to organise the evening.





INFORMATION

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