ANNOUNCEMENT

New Media and Public Humanities Postdoctoral Fellow, 2020-2021

Melissa J. Gismondi

Melissa J. Gismondi is a writer and journalist, who holds a PhD in American history from the University of Virginia. Her current work-in-progress is a monograph titled *Quiet Canadian, Angry American: Separating Fact from Fiction About What Makes Us Different*. Her writing has appeared in major media outlets, including *The Washington Post, Salon, Toronto Star*, and *The Walrus*, among others. As a radio and podcast producer, she contributes to national network programs on CBC Radio and the podcast *BackStory*. Gismondi was selected as a Writers' Trust Rising Star by Charlotte Gray.

Melissa’s project looks at the relationship between Canadian and American culture and identity. As part of her argument, she investigates how Anglo-Canadian identity has been defined in opposition to the US. She argues that this has distorted Canadians’ and Americans’ image of our country, often creating an apathetic outlook that hampers the kind of deep self-reflection Canada needs on race, on reconciliation, on climate change and much more. As American politics, culture and geopolitical power undergo profound changes since the 2016 election of President Donald Trump, Melissa questions how these changes will impact Canadians' sense of themselves and how we define our imagined national communities.

**JHI Annual Theme, 2020-2021: Collectives**

From political parties to literary coteries, from fan groups to sports teams, from terrorist organizations to online groups, our collectives, associations, and communities are multiform and complex. How do we band together and why? In teaming up, how does membership of a collective affect one’s own agency and standing – what do we lose, what do we gain? Can collectives truly be agents and how do group dynamics emerge? How do we balance the interests between collectives, of individuals and collectives, and of the individual within the collective?

More information about Melissa J. Gismondi: [https://www.melissajgismondi.com/](https://www.melissajgismondi.com/)

More information about the Jackman Humanities Institute: [https://humanities.utoronto.ca](https://humanities.utoronto.ca)

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