

MA Defence: “Coastal Church: Community through Connectivity” **By Adam Bajan**

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Our dear colleague, Adam Bajan, will defend his MA Thesis on Friday, September 17th, 2015 at Harbour Centre, Room 1700 (10 am -12 noon). Here is the abstract of his thesis “Coastal Church: Community through Connectivity”:

Abstract

The thesis presents an ethnographic survey of the mediatization of religion at Coastal Church, a non-denominational Christian institution located in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Coastal seamlessly integrates digital media into its approach to worship, scripture dissemination as well as the proselytization of new members. Study findings suggest that digital media integration at Coastal allow for more interpersonal connections among worshippers as well as the fostering of deeper in-group solidarity in the Coastal community. Digital media integration further allows for heightened levels of hierarchical control and efficiency in message transmission by Coastal’s pastoral team to its congregation. However, results also indicate that a reliance on digital media by Coastal may foster a learned distraction among worshippers, producing an arguably shallower relationship with religious materials and values.

On balance the thesis argues that mediatization of religion at Coastal is reflective of a long standing trend in Christian religious observance to evolve in a technologically integrated manner so as to not lose relevance, an aspect of the religion hearkening back to its earliest days.

Keywords: Christianity; Community; Digitization; Mediatization; Banal Religion; Hierarchical Control