

CURRICULUM VITAE – DR BETH SINGLER

Currently the Junior Research Fellow in Artificial Intelligence,
Homerton College, University of Cambridge

I am an anthropologist focussing on the cultural and societal response to artificial intelligence (AI), employing both traditional and digital ethnographical techniques. My fieldwork has taken place in Japan, the USA, and the UK, as well as among online communities and on social media. Impactful public engagement work has involved a series of award-winning short documentaries on AI, popular publications, science festival talks, and media appearances.

Qualifications:

2011 - 2016 **PhD Theology and Religious Studies**, Pembroke College, University of Cambridge.
Supervisor, Dr Timothy Jenkins.

Ethnographic thesis: *The Indigo Children: New Age Experimentation with Self and Science* (full monograph published with Routledge in 2017)

2010 – 2011 **MPhil Theology and Religious Studies (Distinction)**, Pembroke College,
University of Cambridge. Supervisor, Dr Timothy Jenkins

1999 – 2002 **MA Hons (Cantab) Theology and Religious Studies (2:1)**, Pembroke College,
University of Cambridge

Employment, Affiliations, and Fellowships

Oct. 2020 - **Director of Studies: Theology, Religion, and the Philosophy of Religion,
Homerton College, University of Cambridge**

- Academic guidance and pastoral care for undergraduates
- Experience of admissions, interviews, EDI, and unconscious bias training
- Administration of exam enrolment, coordinating supervisions, and writing references.
- Member of Homerton college's Governing Body and Equality and Diversity Committee.

Oct. 2018 - **Junior Research Fellow in Artificial Intelligence, Homerton College, Cambridge**

- Anthropological research on conceptions and narratives of AI that have an impact on people's lifestyles, communities, and futures.
- Forthcoming popular book on the dangers of apocalyptic and Singularity narratives, with a guide to the social issues arising out of AI such as algorithmic bias, deepfake technology, and transparency issues in decision making systems.
- Completed a successful and award winning series of short documentaries on the ethical and social issues around AI with *Ghost in the Machine*.

Sept. 2018-
June 2019 **Co-Investigator, 'Global AI Narratives Project', Leverhulme
Centre for the Future of Intelligence (CFI), Cambridge**

One of four original co-investigators on the project proposal.

- Co-wrote the successful grant application.
- Brought an anthropological approach to the variety of accounts of AI from around the world and their cultures and traditions.
- Funded by Templeton World Charitable Foundation (TWCF) and Google DeepMind for £300,000.

May 2017- **Co-Founder, 'Faith and AI' Project, CFI**

- Organised a series of workshops on AI ethics and social issues with faith leaders from a diverse range of faiths, St George's House, Windsor Castle.

Jan. 2017 - **Associate Research Fellow, CFI**

- Bringing anthropological methods and sources to the discussion on AI Narratives and Justice.
- Working with external bodies such as the Royal Society, Royal Society for the Arts, Google Deepmind, and TWCF.
- Co-Author of a report with CFI and Royal Society on "Perceptions and Portrayals of AI and why they matter", as a part of the AI Narratives project.

Feb. 2016 - **Research Associate on the "Human Identity in the Age of Nearly**
 Oct. 2018 **Human Machines" Project, Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, St**
Edmund's College, University of Cambridge

- Ethnographic fieldwork among technologists and experts.
- Surveying technological and pop-cultural sources on AI.
- Produced a series of short documentaries on the future of AI and robots to engage the public, which involved interviews with theologians and philosophers. The first of which, *Pain in the Machine*, won the AHRC Best Research Film of the Year award, 2017.

Academic Publications:

Forthcoming

A popular non-fiction book on the danger of Singularity narratives as a distraction from AI's societal and ethical issues. Proposal soon to be sent out to publishers by literary agent (Aitken Alexander).

Cambridge Companion on Religion and AI, co-edited with Fraser Watts, Cambridge University Press

Radical Change in Minority Religions, co-edited with Eileen Barker, Routledge

"AI Apocalypticism and the Religious Impulse In, and From, the Terminator Franchise", book chapter for *Religion and Film*, eds Rebecca King and Tenzan Eaghill, Bloomsbury.

"Origin and the End: Artificial Intelligence, Atheism and, Imaginaries of the Future of Religion", book chapter in an edited collection, *Emerging Voices in Religion and Science*, eds Bethany Sollereeder and Alistair McGrath.

"Left Behind? Religion as a Vestige in 'The Rapture of the Nerds' and Other AI Singularity Literature", book chapter in *Science and Religion in Western Literature: Critical and Theological Studies*, ed Michael Fuller, Routledge

2020

"'Blessed by the Algorithm': Theistic Conceptions of Artificial Intelligence as Entanglements of AI and Religion', in *AI and Society*

"The AI Creation Meme: A Case Study of the New Visibility of Religion in Artificial Intelligence Discourse", for a special issue on 'the New Visibility of Religion' for the journal *Religions*

"Artificial Intelligence and the Parent/Child Narrative", a book chapter for *AI Narratives: A History of Imagining Thinking About Intelligent Machines*, eds Stephen Cave, Kanta Dihal and Sarah Dillon, OUP.

2019

“Conceiving AI: Creation and the Parent/Child Narrative in Blade Runner 2049”, book chapter in *Blade Runner 2049 and Philosophy*, eds Robin Bunce and Trip McCossin, Open Court Publishing Company.

“An Ethnographic Discussion of Existential Hope and Despair in AI Apocalypticism”, in *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*.

2018

Edited a special issue on AI and Religion for *The Journal of Implicit Religion*, including authoring articles: “An Introduction to Artificial Intelligence and Religion for the Religious Studies Scholar” and “Roko's Basilisk or Pascal's? Thinking of Singularity Thought Experiments as Implicit Religion”.

2017

The Indigo Children: New Age Experimentation with Self and Science, an ethnographic monograph with Routledge.

2016

“No Leader, No Followers: The Internet and the End of Charisma?” in Inform's 25th Anniversary Conference Volume, edited by Eugene Gallagher, Routledge.

“The New Age Movement and the Definition of the Child”, in *The Bloomsbury Reader in Religion and Childhood*, edited by Anna Strhan, Stephen G. Parker, and Susan Ridgely. Bloomsbury.

2015

“Big, Bad Pharma: New Age Biomedical Conspiracy Narratives and their Expression in the Concept of the Indigo Child”, in *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions*.

“‘My Brother, the Insect’: Researching the Indigo Children and their New Age Cosmologies and Spiritual Guides”, in *DISKUS: Journal of the British Association for the Study of Religion*

“Internet-based New Religious Movements and Dispute Resolution” in *Religion and Legal Pluralism*, edited by Russell Sandberg. Ashgate

Teaching Experience:

- November 2020 - **PhD Supervision Committee Member, KU Leuven**
Supervising a PhD thesis on “(Post)Human Encounters: Imaginations of and interactions with the ‘Technological Other’”
- November 2018 **Guest Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Cambridge.**
For SOC 8: Religion and Contentious Mobilization
- October 2012 - **Affiliated Post-Doc and Supervisor, Faculty of Divinity, Cambridge**
Supervising and lecturing undergraduates and postgraduates on numerous topics: classical sociological and anthropological theorists, technology and society, film and broadcasting, contemporary diet culture, and responses to the Anthropocene from online groups and social media influencers.

Funding and Awards:

- 2018 - 2021 **Co-Investigator for Global AI Narratives’ Project, CFI**
£175k funding from Templeton World Charitable Foundation and £125k from Google DeepMind

November 2017	AHRC Best Research Film of the Year Award for <i>Pain in the Machine</i> Short documentary on AI and robotics, involving interviews with theologians and philosophers (£2000 for next film)
April 2016	Cambridge Shorts/Wellcome Trust Short Film Scheme (£4,000) for the production of <i>Pain in the Machine</i>
July 2011	Faculty of Divinity Graduate Award for Distinction in the MPhil (£300)
June 2011	The Bethune-Baker Graduate Studentship – Pembroke College, Cambridge (£5,700 p.a. for three years)
June 2011	Pembroke College Graduate Award (£1,000 p.a. for three years)

Impact, Public Engagement, and Outreach

- Winner of the AHRC Best Research Film of the Year for *Pain in the Machine*
- Gave evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on AI, with research cited in their final report.
- Co-Author of a report with CFI and Royal Society on “Perceptions and Portrayals of AI and why they matter”, as a part of the AI Narratives project.
- Contributor to white paper on AI ethics for the European Academy of Religion and Society.
- Member of the UK Advisory Board for “Citizenship in the Digital Age”, a Templeton project
- Co-Chair for the advisory board for RSA/Google DeepMind Forum on Ethical AI
- Popular Articles on AI published by Aeon Magazine in both 2017 and 2018.
- Editorial Board member for Cambridge University's Research Horizons - special issue on AI
- Rising Star 2014, University of Cambridge
- One of the East of England's *21toWatch* for 2020
- Chosen as one of the 'Progress 1000' for 2017 and 2018 – the 1000 leading figures in a variety of fields selected by the Evening Standard.
- Sifted's Top 30 AI People in Europe to Follow on Twitter

Media appearances: The Today Programme BBC Radio 4, The Sunday Programme BBC Radio 4, Beyond Belief BBC Radio 4, The Essay BBC Radio 3, BBC Click and BBC Click Live, the BBC's Inside Out documentary series, BBC News, LBC radio, CNBC, and Radio 5 Live.

Podcast Interviews: The Radical AI Podcast, AI and You, Mind over Chatter (University of Cambridge), Desert Island Discworld, Naked Reflections, Naked Scientists, Royal Anthropological Institute, and the Hay Festival Podcast.

Press Interviews: New Scientist, BBC, Forbes, CNBC, Techworld, Alphr, OneZero

Public talks: CogX Festival of AI and Emerging Technology, London Science Museum, Munich AI Summit, New Scientist Live, Hay Festival (as one of the Cambridge Series and the Hay 30 thinkers to watch), Edinburgh Science Festival, Norwich Science Festival, Cheltenham Science Festival, Cambridge Festival of Ideas, Cambridge Literary Festival, Sutton Trust Summer Schools, Cambridge Short Film Festival, and Ars Electronica.