



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH  
School of Divinity

# New College

## **Bulletin 2015**

**Celebrating and empowering  
the women of New College**



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“OUR VISITING LECTURES PROVIDE IMPORTANT STIMULUS EACH YEAR – I THINK WE UNDERESTIMATE THEIR VALUE.



# Welcome to the New College Bulletin

We asked Prof Paul Foster (Head of School) and Prof David Fergusson (Principal of New College) to reflect on the previous year and give us their thoughts on what is next for the School of Divinity. This is what they told us:

**Q. In your opinion, what are the School’s main achievements in this last year?**

**DF:** Our record undergraduate recruitment, particularly amongst students from Moray House School of Education, and the strong REF performance have been recent highlights. A varied visiting lecture programme provides important intellectual stimulus each year. I think that we sometimes underestimate their value. They are also a great link between the School and the wider community. We’ve had excellent

contributions this session from John Hedley Brooke on the history of science and religion, Jeremy Waldron on the basis of human equality, and Linda Woodhead on the changing religious complexion of the UK.

**PF:** The School continues to provide a supportive and stimulating environment for the study of theology and religion for all students. This is reflected in the high ratings of student satisfaction received by the school on the National Students Survey.

The global impact of the research conducted in the School was recognized in the REF2014 exercise, with the School achieving excellent results.

**Q. What do you think are the main challenges the school needs to tackle in the near future?**

**DF:** We need to continue to attract students to our courses from across the wider University. There is scope for further development here, particularly in offering introductory

and comparative courses on Christianity and Islam, at a time when the cultural memory of religion has largely disappeared amongst a younger generation.

I would also like us to address student financial hardship by generating more scholarship funds. We are fortunate at New College in the generosity of previous benefactors, particularly in the late 19th century, but more work needs to be done both for home students and those from overseas.

A major upgrade of the Rainy Hall is long overdue after more than a century of constant use. We need to ensure that the portraits of elderly Scottish divines (all men) are balanced by other artworks, while some better insulation in the winter months and a decent PA system would be very welcome!

**PF:** The School needs to maintain its commitment to trialling the use of new teaching methods to lead the way in

educational practices in the study of theology and religion.

**Q. How do you think the School needs to evolve to ensure the study of theology and religious studies remains relevant?**

**DF:** We need to develop more comparative courses although we are doing much of this very successfully already, e.g. in theology and science, Bible and literature, and religion and ecology. I would personally welcome the development of further modules devoted to inter-faith dialogue.

**PF:** A number of recently appointed colleagues work in fields relating to the contemporary impact and relevance of religion in the modern world. Alongside more historical approaches, this provides students with an excellent grounding for understanding the origins of religions and their continued impact on global societies.

**Q. What does the School need to do differently to achieve these ambitions?**

**DF:** We might need to think about whether there is further scope for the team-teaching of courses that cut across traditional disciplinary boundaries. This can be very time-consuming but rewarding for all concerned.

**PF:** One possible development could be to provide students with more opportunities to work in the community during their studies, or to have courses that provide placement opportunities. Not only would this allow students to use their studies in an applied way, but it would create a positive engagement between the University and the wider community.

**Q. This New College bulletin issue features an article on the changing role of women in New College through the years. In your opinion, how has the increasing involvement of women changed New College?**

**DF:** It’s hard to remember the time when women were only a tiny minority within the student body, although this was largely the case when I studied here from 1977-80. The much improved gender balance within the academic staff has made the faculty more diverse and more harmonious – that’s a dangerous generalization but at least it’s been my own experience.

There is still some way to go however, particularly in terms of achieving a much better gender balance within the graduate student community. And we have yet to appoint the first woman Head of School.

**PF:** The most straightforward way to illustrate the growing role of women in the New College community is simply by looking at our numbers. Over sixty percent of undergraduate students are women, and a third of academic staff are women. The School recently became the first academic department of theology or religion in the UK to be awarded the Bronze Award from the Gender Equality Charter Mark. We are now working towards the silver award.

While external awards are pleasing, the real mark of success is the inclusive and supportive environment that makes New College a positive place for women to study and work. We are aware that we are on a journey, and while the direction of travel is encouraging, the process is ongoing.



# New College news



## Africa for the Africans

The Centre for the Study of World Christianity hosted a well-attended symposium on Saturday 7 February to mark the centenary of the 'Nyasaland Native Rising' of 1915.

The Malawian Baptist John Chilembwe, inspired by the slogan, 'Africa for the Africans', led his followers in an abortive protest against labour exploitation by white settlers and the colonial state. A Christian gentleman who was proud to wear European clothes, but declined to remove his hat before every European he met, Chilembwe found himself driven to violence.

He lost his life in the Rising, and is now revered in Malawi as a nationalist martyr. Speakers at the symposium included the veteran doyen of Malawi historians, Prof George Shepperson, formerly of the University of Edinburgh.

The papers shed valuable new light on the Rising – the only example in Africa of an anti-colonial rebellion that drew its primary inspiration from Christian teaching.

## Duncan Forrester Fellowship: Dr Lesley Orr appointed

Dr Lesley Orr was appointed as the first Duncan Forrester CTPI post-doctoral fellow in January 2015. For the next two years she will be working on a range of CTPI related ventures, including the next phase of the Peacebuilding through the Arts project.

Dr Orr is a feminist historian, theologian and writer, most recently co-editor of *Scottish Women 1780-1914: A Documentary History* (Edinburgh University Press 2013). She has worked at the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, and on the gender justice programme at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh.

She has extensive experience of work in the third sector and with the Scottish Government's Strategy to Address Violence Against Women. Her current research focuses on peace activism and resistance in

Scotland during the Great War. Lesley has been involved for many years in movements challenging gender based inequality, abuse and violence in faith communities and wider society. She was consultant to the World Council of Churches Decade to Overcome Violence 2001-2010 and currently serves on the Boards of Zero Tolerance Trust and Common Weal. Lesley is also a longstanding member of the ecumenical Iona Community.

The CTPI is currently fundraising for a second Duncan Forrester CTPI Fellowship to follow later in 2016.



## Research update from the Centre for Theology and Public Issues

The Centre for Theology and Public Issues (CTPI) celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2014 with a number of public events. These brought academics and practitioners together through lectures, seminars and conferences. Several of these events related to a couple of CTPI's major international research projects.

First, Religion and Ethics in the Making of War and Peace (RELWAR) is a wide-ranging project led by Dr George Wilkes which focuses on all aspects of the relationship between ethics and religion in war and in peace-building. The project focuses on military ethics education, on ethics in peacebuilding and humanitarian initiatives, and on truth and reconciliation processes. It aims to provide quality research on the impact of religion on war and peace-making, with a particular focus on changing approaches to ethical problems in Christian, Muslim and Jewish traditions. RELWAR's research on 'Religion and Reconciliation' in Bosnia-Herzegovina is widely cited as a model for peacebuilding there.

Second, the Peacebuilding Through Media Arts project, led by Dr Theo Hawksley and Prof Jolyon Mitchell, has two strands.

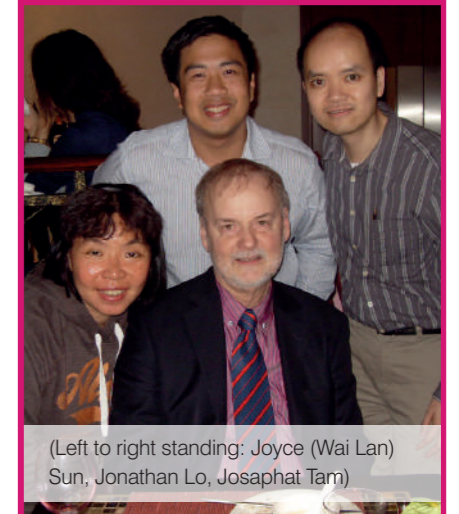
In the first strand, project researchers analyse the presentation of religious violence in media arts, researching the connection between religion and violence in order to provide depth and complexity to simplistic media portrayals. The second strand of project research focuses on the use of media arts for peacebuilding.

This research has been disseminated through staging exhibitions, performances and public events around the theme of practical peacebuilding. Several publications are currently being worked upon.

## Hong Kong Lectures

Prof Larry Hurtado delivered the 2015 Josephine So Lectures in China Graduate School of Theology in Hong Kong, 21-22 January, on "What Made Early Christianity Different in the Roman World." He plans to produce a book on this topic for publication in 2016.

During his visit to Hong Kong, he met up with some of his former PhD students who now hold academic posts in various Hong Kong theological colleges.



(Left to right standing: Joyce (Wai Lan) Sun, Jonathan Lo, Josaphat Tam)

## Student Intake for 2014/2015

The undergraduate new student intake this year was much larger than in previous years, 94 new students (54 female and 40 male).

New Masters degree students: 40 (22 female and 18 male).

New PhD students: 30 (9 female and 21 male).





### New College Library welcomes the donation of Gorbals Group Ministry's papers

Revd Dr John Harvey, pictured with Dr Sandy Forsyth, has kindly donated the papers of the Gorbals Group Ministry to the New College Library.

The Gorbals Group Ministry was a bold, exploratory attempt to 'bridge the gap' between Christianity and those in poverty. Founded by three Church of Scotland ministers in 1957 and active until the early Seventies, at its height it consisted of ten members, including social workers, teachers, and the later Bishop of Edinburgh, Richard Holloway.

John Harvey was an integral member of the group throughout the sixties, and later leader of the Iona Community and parish minister.

New College is a particularly apt location for the papers. The co-founder of the Gorbals Group was Geoff Shaw, who graduated BD from New College in 1953. Having been influenced by the early lectures of T.F. Torrance on Barth, he studied for the STM at Union Theological Seminary in New York in 1953-4. This led to a life-changing experience for Shaw. He was sent on placement to the newly instigated East Harlem Protestant Parish, along with his Trinity College friend, Walter Fyfe.

The inspiration from the work of the EHPP in the East Harlem ghetto led both men to seek its replication in the Gorbals on their return to Scotland, with colleague John Jardine.

### The School of Divinity joins Old Testament Network

In 2014, the School of Divinity was accepted as a new member in the Old Testament Network OTSEM (Old Testament Studies: Epistemologies and Methods). OTSEM is a network of Old Testament scholars connected to PhD programmes in a number of Northern European university institutions.

The object of the network is to improve the environment for Hebrew Bible / Old Testament research, especially doctoral and post-doctoral research, by inspiring contact and cooperation between members and departments throughout the network.

In September 2014, a group from the School participated for the first time in the network's traditional Annual Meeting, which is an opportunity for younger scholars and PhD students to present their work. Our students' papers were very well received. In keeping with longstanding OTSEM tradition, during the final dinner Mr. James Mulrone (PhD) and Dr Anja Klein (DHabil) were presented with a rose for having recently completed their research project. For further information contact Dr Anja Klein, who is the local contact person at the School of Divinity, or see the OTSEM website [www.otsem.uni-hamburg.de](http://www.otsem.uni-hamburg.de).

### Update on our fundraising efforts

The John McIntyre Scholarship Fund has now exceeded £90K. We wish to express our appreciation to alumni who have donated so generously, as well as to the Scottish Journal of Theology for its substantial contribution.

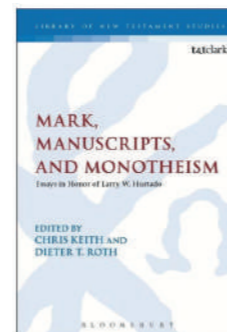
We hope to achieve a sum of £100K during the coming year. The fund will be used to support students training for the ministry of one of the Scottish churches. In addition we are pleased also to report that the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) has clarified that it will provide a fee waiver for all MDiv students who are recognized candidates of any Scottish church; this promises to enhance New College as an ecumenical centre for ministerial formation.

### Prof Hurtado is honoured with a new book of essays

In Nov 2014, Prof Larry Hurtado was presented with a "Festschrift" (a multi-author volume in somebody's honour) by former PhD students and colleagues in the field of New Testament studies

Mark, Manuscripts, and Monotheism: Essays in Honor of Larry W. Hurtado, edited by Chris Keith & Dieter T. Roth (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015).

The editors and authors of the essays are former students and colleagues of Prof Hurtado. The title and the essays address major areas of Prof Hurtado's own research over the years.



### A busy year for the Centre for the Study of Christian Origins

The Centre for the Study of Christian Origins (CSCO) has put on a number of events this year, particularly to enrich the experience of postgraduate students in New Testament and Christian Origins.

Star billing goes to Dr Margaret Williams, an Honorary Fellow, who presented a two-day workshop on Jewish Epigraphy in the Graeco-Roman period in June. Participants learnt all about where to find inscriptions and how to use them in research – and also had the opportunity to decipher some themselves at the end!

Dr Williams' lectures are to be published by Bloomsbury T&T Clark in their Guides for the Perplexed series. The CSCO Kennedy-Wright Lecture this year was given by Prof Philip Esler (University of Gloucestershire) who spoke to a packed Martin Hall on 'The Heavenly Abode in 1 Enoch 1-36' (an ancient Jewish text). Also of note were talks by our own Prof Hurtado on 'Performance Criticism' and the New Testament, Prof Claudia Setzer (Manhattan College) on the 'blame game' in Matthew's Gospel, and Prof Bob McIver on memory and the gospels.

Further details of all our events, including audio recordings of most of them, can be found on our website, [www.christianorigins.div.ed.ac.uk](http://www.christianorigins.div.ed.ac.uk)

## School of Divinity ranked number one in Scotland for Research

**We are delighted to report that we have been officially ranked as the top place for research into Theology and Religious Studies in Scotland and the fourth in the UK. The ranking comes from the government's Research Excellence Framework (REF), and is based on the quality and volume of our research. Dr Helen K Bond, Director of Research at the School, explains:**

All university departments in the UK have a periodic inspection of research activity. Staff are asked to submit their four best pieces of work which are then graded by a panel of experts, using four categories. The general research environment of each department is also assessed, taking into consideration the number of postgraduates, research centres, grant income and so on. Almost 70% of our academic-staff publications were rated in the top two categories, which reflect work of high international

quality. Some institutions try to skew the figures by only including a handful of top academics. What makes the Divinity scores particularly pleasing is that we submitted 90% of all colleagues – making us the second largest Theology and Religious Studies submission in the UK, behind Oxford.

Our 'research environment' also did very well, achieving grades exclusively in the three and four star range, and putting us second in the whole UK in this area. This is the aspect of REF that potential postgraduates need to take note of, and demonstrates the vibrancy and scope of the research culture in our School.

This most recent audit also added a new category: research impact, that is, evidence that research has effects in the wider society. We put forward four "case studies" of projects led by New College academic staff:

- Prof Jane Dawson's Singing the Reformation exhibition (based on the Wode Psalter), which brought together choirs, church groups, embroiderers and history enthusiasts in a series of workshops and events.
- The impact surrounding Prof Michael Northcott's book on climate change, A Moral Climate: The Ethics of Global Warming (DLT/Orbis, 2007), which included public lectures in five countries.
- The Centre for the Study of World Christianity's events commemorating the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910.
- Interdisciplinary work organised by the Centre for Theology and Public Issues on the theme of Religion and Ethics in the Making of War and Peace. Of particular interest were ethical approaches to communications, conflict, the laws of war, media, peacebuilding, reconciliation, sectarianism and violence.



# New College Library: an ever expanding resource

The New College Library is one of the largest specialist libraries for theology and religious studies in the UK, with over a quarter of a million items and rich special collections of rare books. Our collections are continuously developed, providing our students and academics with privileged access to our up-to-date collection of contemporary titles, alongside a wealth of historical editions.

Our librarian, Christine Love-Rodgers, explains how our collection has grown in the last year and how you can access it.

## Alumni access to our collections

New College Alumni are welcome to visit New College Library, where reference access is free (registration visitors' card requires a photograph, proof of address and photographic ID.) Borrowing access is also available to University of Edinburgh alumni at a discounted fee. More information about New College Library can be found at [www.ed.ac.uk/is/new-college-library](http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/new-college-library). You can also find news about New College Library collections, new and old, in the New College Librarian's blog <http://libraryblogs.is.ed.ac.uk/newcollelibrarian>

## Supporting academics

We are currently buying various new materials to support Divinity's new Chancellors' Fellows, such as Dr Lydia Schumacher, Chancellor's Fellow in Historical and Systematic Theology, whose research and teaching are in Medieval Religious Thought.

## The Andrew Walls library: strengthening our resources in World Christianity

The summer of 2014 saw the final move and integration of the Andrew Walls Library, formerly housed in the Centre for World Christianity, into New College Library. This collection contains nearly eight thousand items unique to the University of Edinburgh, and it is an invaluable research resource for the School of Divinity's research and teaching into the history and contemporary reality of Christianity as a world

religion. Collection development in this area continues, with new journals purchased including the Journal of African Christian Thought, Logos & pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology and Sino-Christian Studies, and a number of recent book acquisitions as well, such as the Oxford Encyclopedia of South Asian Christianity, and A History of Korean Christianity.

## Students recommendations and participation

Our students have always played an active part in recommending books for New College Library.

Today, students are able to recommend books for New College Library online, and over 140 books were purchased on their request last year, at a cost of over £7,500.

Divinity students also play their part in supporting New College Library by staffing and supporting our regular Book Sales of withdrawn and duplicate publications. These sales raise vital funds to support the preservation of our Special Collections and also enable us to purchase rare items to enhance our collections.

# Should we put limits to freedom of expression?

Prof Siddiqui reflects on the Charlie Hebdo attacks

“FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION WITH ALL ITS MESSY BOUNDARIES LIES AT THE VERY CORE OF LIBERAL SOCIETIES; IF YOU LOSE THIS FUNDAMENTAL AND HARD FOUGHT PRIVILEGE, YOU'VE LOST THE VERY SOUL OF WESTERN FREEDOMS.

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The defence of free speech is again at the forefront and while freedom of expression may never be absolute, let it set its own limits rather than be frightened into submission. I've heard many say that just because you can say something doesn't mean you should and at a purely pragmatic level that may sometimes be true. But it is free speech which gives minorities the right to practice their religion, groups to hold anti-war rallies and journalists to expose the tyrannies and hypocrisies of power.

Freedom of expression with all its messy boundaries lies at the very core of liberal societies; if you lose this fundamental and hard fought privilege, you've lost the very soul of western freedoms.

These actions will only entrench social tensions about Islam in Europe. The irony of course is that more people will now see the very cartoons these gunmen wanted banned. They will also see that their actions killed 12 but brought together thousands across the world, waving a pen in their hands, holding vigils and showing that if gunshots try to divide us, the simple act of being with one another can still unite us.

Prof Mona Siddiqui, an expert in Muslim theology and Christian-Muslim relations and a regular contributor to the media, offered the following reflection on BBC Radio 4 the day after the recent Paris attacks.

'Je suis Charlie' was all over social media yesterday in widespread condemnation of the tragic killing of the Charlie Hebdo journalists and policemen in Paris; a show of solidarity with the dead and the injured and an act of defiance against the Islamist perpetrators. This was a cold and carefully planned attack after years of threats against the satirical magazine for its cartoons of the Prophet.

The editor Stéphane Charbonnier, known simply as "Charb," was one of the victims paying the ultimate price for a magazine which refused to be silenced especially in its portrayal of religions. For some people the magazine was outrageously bold, overstepping the boundaries of

decency and taste while others saw it as clever and inspirational, challenging anything and everything, central to the establishment, with its own history and ideals of the French republic. It's been closed down before, it's run out of money, warned for being too provocative but it stood resolute with the editor once saying, "When activists need a pretext to justify their violence, they always find it." And in 2012, he bravely told Le Monde, I would rather die standing than live on my knees.'

For Charb, there was never any intention of giving into fear, telling the New Yorker, that mocking Islam must continue "until Islam is just as banal as Catholicism."

Ridicule against extremism was his weapon and it angered those who could only confront satire with guns. But in using the prophet as an excuse to kill, the gunmen chose to ignore the Qur'anic reprimand of Muhammad himself that he had no right to impose his belief on others.



# School awarded gender equality mark

The School of Divinity has achieved a Bronze Award in a new UK-wide gender equality charter mark scheme run by the Equality Challenge Unit.

We are the first theology and religious studies department in the UK to achieve this award. Across the UK, awards have gone to five universities and seventeen individual departments in the arts, humanities and social sciences.

The process involved an audit and analysis of the gender balance among staff and students, of the career progression of staff and students in academia, and of the working environment in the School. This was a valuable exercise: it allowed us to highlight some aspects of School life that we had known of but not had a channel to express; it also led us to identify issues that had gone unnoticed.

## Our new initiatives to address inequality

While this award shows the School's strong commitment to equality and diversity, we are aware that work remains to be done. To help us move in the right direction we have introduced a number of initiatives to address outstanding issues

### Have your say..!

If you would like to share your memories or thoughts on this subject we would love to hear them!

 /edalumni

 /EdinburghAlumni

### Café Couthie

('couthie' is a Scots word meaning 'snug', 'friendly')

Café Couthie has been set-up to foster a better sense of community amongst the female postgraduate students, who are in the minority at New College, and to offer them informal contact with female role models on the academic staff.

### Mentoring of Postgraduate Research Students

This new mentoring scheme pairs postgraduate research students with a staff mentor from outside their subject area. Mentors offer them informal support and conversation about the wider experience of postgraduate work and academic life. The scheme is open to all students, male and female.

### Focus groups

We have also set up a focus group looking at the reasons behind the "leaky pipeline" (the lower number of female students who move from undergraduate to postgraduate studies and then on to appointments as academic staff), which should result in more initiatives to address this.

## Being a woman at New College: our Alumnae share their experiences.

We asked four New College alumnae to reflect on their time as students to illustrate how things have changed for our female students in the last decades. This is what they told us:

### Q. How was it to be a woman at New College?

**LO:** I loved my time as a BD student, and appreciated the friendly collegial spirit among staff and students. But it was a community rooted in traditions, assumptions and practices of masculinity – the norm in university and church contexts. The experience of being a woman taught almost entirely by men, learning theology and history almost exclusively shaped by, for and about men, certainly sharpened up my feminism!

**MO:** I was one of the few women at New College; a lay woman and Catholic not planning becoming a minister.

There was an eclectic mix of students of all ages: a few Jesuit, Dominican candidates; but more. Episcopalian, CofS, Methodist, Congregationalist candidates for ministry.

Fascinating discussions on ecclesiology and Sacramental theology. Lunch in Rainy Hall and a sense of community in the midst of diversity.

**KG:** My time there was very positive. It was a safe, friendly and respectful community that welcomed and celebrated diversity. There were more female academics teaching religious studies than on the divinity courses – but I never heard any of my female friends at New College (even the



**Lesley Orr**

MA in 1979, BD in 1987 and PhD in 1995



**Mary O'Duffin**

Bachelor of Divinity (Hons)1985  
Christian Ethics and Practical Theology



**Kate Grencross**

MA Religious Studies (2005)



**Sarah Lane**

MSc Science & Religion (2014)

ones doing divinity) complain that it was harder being female there.

**SL:** Being a female in a theoretical area of higher-level academia is still a minority experience, so I have been very much aware of that dynamic while at New College. Because I could not slip into the pre-formed "male academic" mold still prevalent I have felt a lot of responsibility (and freedom!) to ignore social norms or expectations and shape my own experience.

### Q. What was the best thing about being a Woman in New College?

**LO:** We organised a women's group which created space for sharing experiences, mutual support and for engaging in discussion of issues and themes from feminist perspectives. It was also fun to get dressed up in our finery for the New College Gala Nights! The worst aspect was to encounter a few fellow students who made it clear – politely or rudely – that they thought women were alien invaders in a place which should remain a male preserve.

**MO:** As a Catholic laywoman, study at New College gave me the opportunity to develop my faith and reason in a climate of increasing tolerance and dialogue. St John Paul

II met Prof John McIntyre (Moderator) on New College steps in early June of my first year! A momentous occasion. The first visit of a Pope to Great Britain in 400 years.

**KG:** The best thing about being a woman at NC was all the brilliant women I met – inspirational female academics and friends that 10 years on, I am still really close to.

**SL:** New College has been a remarkably supportive environment for me, first in my Master's program and now during my PhD. A new mentoring scheme has paired students with various lecturers and professors, and I have certainly benefited from this. Moreover, Cafe Couthie is a regular event at which female students and staff can have coffee, talk, and generally work to create a more open and friendly community for the women at New College.

### Q. What gender specific challenges did you face in your time at New College?

**LO:** Gender specific challenges encountered included occasional overt misogyny, but more commonly a kind of benign lack of awareness that gender matters; that theology, religion and educational

institutions are all contexts which have constructed and sustained inequalities rooted in gender. Women's voices and perspectives were largely absent, and certainly not central to the story we learnt, or the everyday realities of our lives as students. But there were a few signs of change afoot!

**MO:** None! I am sure my time at New College increased my confidence in the role of women in the Church. I now work as the religious education adviser for Catholic primary schools in the Archdiocese of Glasgow. New College was empowering and a great place of debate and learning.

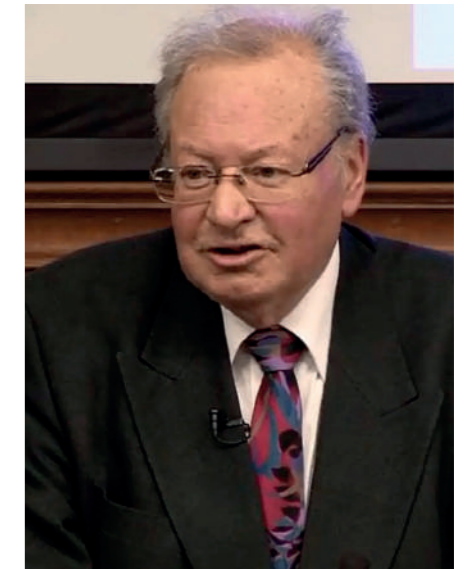
**KG:** I can't think of any gender specific challenge I encountered at my time in NC. My dissertation supervisor actually encouraged me to pursue a postgraduate degree, and he mentioned that being female could work to my advantage in the field – because of the shortage of female academics in religious studies generally.

**SL:** Most of the postgraduates are men, and many are from conservative North American backgrounds where women are not accepted as intellectual equals. At times, this makes things difficult.



# Interview: Prof John Hedley Brooke explores the **relationship between Science & Religion**

The School had the honour to welcome Prof John Hedley Brooke earlier in the year. In three lectures, he explored the interface between science and religion and the role played by eminent scientists in defining this relationship. This short interview introduces some of the key points covered in his lectures, which can also be viewed online in our website.



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**For those who assume that science and religion are inherently at odds, how would you best encapsulate an alternative way to approach the relationship?**

"I'm very keen to look at the way in which scientific ideas and religious beliefs have come into contact in the past. What one discovers is an enormous variety of ways in which scientists have held religious beliefs. One looks at the reception of new scientific ideas and discovers that representatives of the churches were sometimes hostile and sometimes perfectly accommodating.

In other words, when we think of science and religion as inexorably or inextricably at war with each other, we're basing that on a highly selective set of examples from past history. We mustn't allow streamlined master narratives of the past to delude us into thinking that that's the whole story."

**"WHAT ONE DISCOVERS IS AN ENORMOUS VARIETY OF WAYS IN WHICH SCIENTISTS HAVE HELD RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.**

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.....  
**How do you think theologians should best appropriate scientific concepts, especially when those scientific concepts can change so drastically in a short time?**

"I'm immediately reminded of that great Scottish scientist James Clerk Maxwell, because he has a very strong line on this:

Science does change far more quickly than theology can change, and if you base your theology on some recent insight in science, and that science changes and produces an entirely different understanding of the world, you've tied your theology to something ephemeral. You've built an edifice on shifting sand. There are dangers in trying to bring theology and the science too close."

.....  
**It seems that many of the controversies in the science and religion conversation have less to do with the actual science involved and more to do with the presuppositions that we bring to the table.**

"If you are convinced that you are bringing the right metaphysics and methodological principles to bear on the issues, you're not going to be easily persuaded that an alternative offers something. We have to be very careful to tease out what those presuppositions are so that we can then ask questions about what makes one set of presuppositions more plausible, and what it is about them that actually produces advocates.

It's a very prevalent part of modern scientific culture to adopt the principle of methodological naturalism. Why? It's because the [scientific] methodology has been so fertile. But the idea that it is legitimate to give an account of natural phenomena in terms of natural causes is part and parcel of the Christian tradition. There is no straightforward dichotomy between naturalism and supernaturalism."

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# Meet our scholarships recipients

Thanks to donors and benefactors over many years, the School of Divinity is able to provide scholarships to students from around the world. Last year alone our awards benefited more than 30 students, and amounted to a disbursement of over £250,000. The contribution of alumni and friends in donating to our scholarships funds is invaluable and very much appreciated.

Scholarships are essential to attract talented students of various countries and irrespective of their own financial resources. These awards keep our School the diverse and multicultural institution we want it to be. Scholarships are also life-changing for our students, providing them with unique opportunities that many otherwise wouldn't be able to experience.

We've asked a couple of recent recipients of scholarships specifically designated for overseas students to share with us what their awards mean to them.

## Supporting our students

We want to ensure that the most talented students are able to pursue their vocation at Edinburgh – and this is where you can help. There are a variety of ways in which you can pledge your support to our scholarship programmes, such as the John McIntyre, John Ross Scholarship or J.S. Stewart funds.



**Dan Too**  
From Kenya  
Desmond Tutu Masters and T F Torrance Scholar  
**Research interests:** science and religion and more specifically ecotheology.



**Stanley Okeke**  
From Nigeria  
Desmond Tutu and T F Torrance Scholar.  
**Research interests:** I am currently working on "A Theological Assessment of Homosexuality".

### Q. What are you enjoying best about studying at the School of Divinity?

**DT:** Unlimited access to a specialist library for theology and religious studies which has deepened and broadened my understanding in addition to enhancing my critical thinking skills.

**SO:** The privilege of learning from top-notch tutors, the library, and meeting new friends from different nationalities.

### Q. What are you enjoying best about living in Edinburgh?

**DT:** I would say the vibrant social life and the many beautiful places which are within walking distance from the city centre. They include Edinburgh Zoo, Edinburgh Castle, Arthur's Seat etc.

**SO:** Living in Edinburgh is a great experience. I enjoy most of all the culture of my new home. Edinburgh is a very beautiful and vibrant city.

### Q. In which way/s has your stay in Edinburgh influenced your work/research/life/views?

**DT:** It has helped me to embrace an ecumenical approach to church ministry, develop a more critical mind, an optimistic perspective of life and made me more accommodating of divergent views.

**SO:** My stay in Edinburgh has greatly added meaning to my work as a Minister, given me more insight in my research, added value to my life and improved my perception of things.

### Q. How has the scholarship affected your life and plans ?

**DT:** Without a scholarship I wouldn't be as confident and ambitious as I am now. My abilities and potential would not have developed. I would just be a clergy in my rural home.

**SO:** Without the scholarship I would have been doing my work as a parish minister. The scholarship has brought me this far for improvement.

### Q. What do you plan to do when you finish your studies?

**DT:** I plan to go back to contribute towards environmental causes through teaching, research and development of strategic plans in conjunction with various Christian denominations in Kenya.

**SO:** After my MSc I plan to proceed to a PhD if another chance of funding is available; alternatively, I will be going back to my pastoral work.

### Q. What would you say to encourage alumni to contribute to fund scholarships?

**DT:** Dear alumni, you can change the world by contributing funds towards scholarships. A single beneficiary will change a family which will in turn change a society. That society will change a nation and that nation will change the world. You will have changed the world!

**SO:** To educate a person is to empower a nation. I encourage our alumni to continue contributing in funding scholarships because without your contributions I wouldn't be here asking you to do more.

## Giving to the School of Divinity

Whether large or small, your contribution can help us to continue to provide an outstanding centre for study and research in Theology and Religious Studies.

## New College Library

In the heart of New College the library is one of the largest dedicated theological libraries

in the UK, and this was recently enhanced by the creation of a bespoke, temperature-controlled reading room for fragile bibles and manuscripts. A regular gift towards our library, no matter at what level, will contribute to the preservation and growth of our collection for students for generations to come.

You can give in various ways: by direct gift toward an established fund, by including New College in

your will, and other arrangements. For more information on the ways in which you can make a donation, please visit:

[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/divinity/alumni/support](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/divinity/alumni/support)

Or for more details, please contact: **Emma Lacroix**, Development Manager – Humanities and Social Science [Emma.lacroix@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Emma.lacroix@ed.ac.uk)



# People news

## Farewell to friends

In 2014 two members of academic staff retired, and one of our post-doctoral fellows moved on to new duties.

### Dr Cecelia Clegg



Dr Cecelia Clegg served at New College for over ten years (2004-2014), for several years as Director of the Centre for Theology and Public Issues (CTPI). Throughout her time at New College Dr Clegg pursued her interest in the theme of reconciliation, in particular how to help individuals and communities to learn to live positively with differences of religion and culture. At New College she continued to work as a facilitator in church settings in Britain and Ireland, drawing on her extensive experience as a conflict transformation practitioner in Northern Ireland, at the Irish School of Ecumenics where she also taught 'Conflict Transformation' and courses on Religious Sectarianism.

Her practical experience in peacebuilding and psychological counselling combined with her expertise in theological anthropology and reconciliation enriched all her courses. Students lucky enough to be in her classes (e.g. Conflict Transformation and the Theology of Reconciliation) were inspired and challenged by her teaching. Dr Clegg continues as an Honorary Fellow at New College.

### Dr Elizabeth Koepping



Dr Elizabeth Koepping retired in August 2014. She joined the School in October 2001 as Lecturer in World Christianity (Asia). At undergraduate level she has been a dedicated teacher of the Christian tradition within the Religious Studies Subject Area. Among graduate students she gained a reputation as a passionate, highly committed and deeply caring supervisor. Many students, as well as the School's Visiting Fellows, will remember with gratitude partaking of her generous hospitality in her Bruntfield home. An ordained Anglican priest, Elizabeth is currently serving the Anglican congregation in Heidelberg. We are delighted that Elizabeth will maintain her links with the School as an Honorary Fellow, and wish her a happy and productive retirement.

### Dr Theo Hawksley



Dr Theo Hawksley completed her PhD in 2011 at New College, having also served as a tutor in Theology and Ethics from September 2009 to July 2011. She was appointed a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre

for Theology and Public Issues (CTPI) working primarily on the Peacebuilding through the Media Arts project, from October 2011 to December 2014. She left New College to join an apostolic order of sisters, called the Congregation of Jesus (CJs). It was founded in 1611 by an English woman, Mary Ward. It has approximately 2000 sisters, mainly based in Europe, India and Latin America.

### In memoriam

Very Rev Prof Robin Barbour died on 18 October, 2014, aged 93. He lectured in New Testament studies at New College from 1955-71 prior to taking up a chair appointment in Aberdeen. A former Moderator of the General Assembly and Dean of the Chapel Royal he was a distinguished ecumenical churchman and scholar. Amongst his many activities, he served as a translator of the New English Bible.

## New members of staff

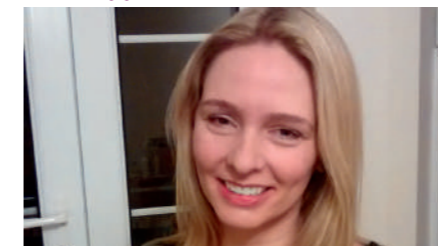
### Dr Lydia Schumacher



Dr Lydia Schumacher is a Chancellor's Fellow focused in systematic and philosophical theology with special interests in medieval theology and philosophy, the medieval reception of the Church Fathers and the philosophy of antiquity. She was previously Tutor in Doctrine at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford University, and she held a prestigious

British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Faculty of Theology and Religion at Oxford. After working extensively on the medieval thinker Thomas Aquinas for the purpose of preparing the latter two volumes, Lydia is currently conducting research on the founders of the medieval Franciscan intellectual tradition, as well as specific topics in systematic and philosophical theology.

### Dr Philippa Townsend



Dr Philippa Townsend is a Chancellor's Fellow specialising in the New Testament and early Christianity. She studied Classics at Cambridge and University College London before leaving for the US to do her

graduate work in religion at Harvard and Princeton. After postdoctoral research in Jerusalem, she took a teaching post in Philadelphia. Her publications have dealt with the communities of the apostle Paul, Manichaeism, Neoplatonism, and the controversial 'Gospel of Judas'. Her current book projects are on the relationship between sacrifice and kinship construction in early Judaism and Christianity, and on the New Testament book of Revelation.

### Dr Alexander Forsyth



Dr Alexander (Sandy) Forsyth, newly-appointed Hope Trust Post-doctoral Research Fellow, recently completed his PhD at New

College. His PhD thesis focused on mission in contemporary Scotland, concentrating on dynamic modes of mission exercised in the quarter-century after World War II such as those of Tom Allan, the Gorbals Group Ministry and Ian Fraser. He is also an ordained minister in the Church of Scotland. His interests are therefore in practical theology, and the interaction of theology with public life. As well as his more recent theological studies, Sandy has worked for over two decades as a Scots lawyer: initially as a court solicitor, and as an advocate at the Scottish Bar since 1999. The research project he now works on fuses both law and theology, considering whether dispute resolution in civil litigation could be better informed by restorative justice and mediation, drawing on theological concepts such as reconciliation, forgiveness and mercy.

# Alumni news

### Prof Peter Balla

Prof Dr Peter Balla has been re-appointed by the President of Hungary to a further five-year term as Rektor of the Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Budapest.

### Rev Angus Morrison

Congratulations to Rev Dr Angus Morrison on his nomination as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for 2015/16. Formerly of the Free Presbyterian Church, Angus is currently parish minister in Orwell and Portmoak Church (in Perth and Kinross). In 2001, he completed his doctorate at New College on Augustine and the Donatist controversy under the supervision of Prof David Wright. We wish Angus and his wife Marion well as they embark upon an arduous year of service to the wider church, and we look forward to his participation in our annual Advent carol service in December.

### In memoriam

Prof Alasdair Heron died in Erlangen after a long illness on 7 May, 2014. A lecturer at New College from 1974-81, he moved to Erlangen University as Prof of Reformed Theology where he taught until his retirement. His New College students will recall his lectures for their clarity, insight and scholarly rigour. These qualities are reflected in several textbooks which are still widely used by students today including *The Holy Spirit* (1983) and *Table and Tradition* (1983). Alasdair also served for many years as editor of *The Scottish Journal of Theology*. We extend our condolences to Helen, their two daughters and grandchildren.



# Reading matters: Review of publications by staff and Alumni

**1 Jane Dawson, John Knox** (*New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2015*). With advance acclaim as the definitive biography of the leader of the Scottish Reformation, and drawing on previously unpublished sources, Dawson challenges stereotypes of Knox and presents more fully this complex figure.

**2 James Eglinton and George Harinck (eds.), Neo-Calvinism and the French Revolution** (*London and New York: T&T Clark/Bloomsbury, 2014*). This multi-author volume charts the historical emergence of neo-Calvinism as a response to the French Revolution, and explores a range of issues in contemporary neo-Calvinist thought (including film studies, fashion theory, sociolinguistics and Christian-Muslim relations) against that backdrop.

**3 David Fergusson, Creation** (*Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014*). The book has arisen from many years teaching the doctrine of creation. In addition to exposition of classical theories of creation out of nothing, coverage is provided of recent debates about the

environment, animals and extra-terrestrial life. The aim is to present the theology of creation, not merely as a statement of cosmic origins or a prelude to the story of sin and redemption, but as a capacious article of faith that requires much fuller attention today.

**4 Anja Klein, Geschichte und Gebet. Die Rezeption der biblischen Geschichte in den Psalmen des Alten Testaments** (*Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014*). A new literary and theological analysis of the historical-narrative psalms: Exodus 15, Psalms 78, 105, 106, 114, 135 and 136, focusing on the history of these texts and their connection with one another, and showing how ancient Israel developed a national history initially in the forms of poetry and prayer.

**5 Michael S. Northcott, Place, Ecology and the Sacred: The Moral Geography of Sustainable Communities** (*London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015*). Forthcoming June 2015, it explores the history, politics and environmental consequences of human conduct, giving analysis of the historical role of wealthy individuals, transnational corporations, and the

government officials they influence variously, along with efforts to achieve a healthy and employment-producing environment.

**6 Mona Siddiqui, My Way: A Muslim Woman's Journey** (*I.B. Taurus, 2015*). A personal theological journey reflecting on crucial issues of faith and identity within society at large. While speaking from within a particular tradition, the book draws on a wide array of religious and philosophical thinking, touching on matters of universal concern. Who are we? The place of love and sex, how do we cope with growing older? What kind of world will we leave to our children? The author is concerned with exploring what makes life worth living.

**7 Judith Becker and Brian Stanley (eds.), Europe as the Other: External Perspectives on European Christianity** (*Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014*). The focus of this multi-author volume is on how non-Europeans viewed Europe and Europeans over the last couple of centuries. Often, Europe was seen as the seat of Christianity, but the contributors show that there was a greater diversity of views.



## Lifelong community

### A message from our editor, Prof Larry Hurtado

As a graduate of the School of Divinity, you are part of a vibrant community with over 220,000 University of Edinburgh alumni worldwide.

We can help you to stay connected wherever you are based. We have alumni clubs and networks across the world, and we host events in the UK and internationally. We can also help you get together with your peers if you'd like to organise a reunion.

### Keep us up to date with your news

This bulletin is produced for you and we are keen to give our alumni a platform to share your news and accomplishments. Don't hesitate to drop me a line if you want to share anything with us.

[L.Hurtado@ed.ac.uk](mailto:L.Hurtado@ed.ac.uk)

### Join our mailing list

We produce a quarterly electronic newsletter featuring recent news from the School of Divinity and details of upcoming events, seminars and public lectures. To be added to our mailing list, visit [www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/news-events/newsletter](http://www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/news-events/newsletter).

### Keep us posted!

Please let us know when you move home or change email address so we can keep you informed with what's happening at the School of Divinity and across the University. By keeping your contact details up to date you'll receive our publications, and you can also make the most of your exclusive alumni benefits and services package, which includes careers support and ongoing access to many University facilities, often at a special rate.

To find out more about how you can keep in touch and get involved, please visit [www.ed.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.ed.ac.uk/alumni) or email [alumni@ed.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ed.ac.uk)

### Help us improve your bulletin – Prizes to be won!

We need your views to make this bulletin and indeed other communications better and more suitable to your needs. Please fill-in our short online survey to have your say:

[www.surveymonkey.com/s/Newcollegebulletin](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Newcollegebulletin)



All respondents will be entered in a prize draw to win a fantastic Scottish food hamper. Don't forget to leave your contact details so we can post it in case you are the lucky winner!

Please note: due to customs restrictions any alcohol will be substituted for products of the same or higher value if the winner is based outside the EU.



### Connect with us

You can also find us on:

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# Upcoming Events

## April

29 April 2015 – 7pm

### Panel discussion and book signing

#### John Knox & Ministry

Jane Dawson, author of John Knox to be published by Yale UP on 30 April, will be joined by Calum MacLeod, Richard Holloway and Rosalind Marshall in a panel discussion on Knox and ministry at St Giles Cathedral, followed by psalm-singing, a book signing and refreshments. This is a free public event, to which all are welcome and registration is not essential. Held at St Giles Cathedral, High Street, Edinburgh.

## May

5 May 2015 – 5pm

### Gunning lecture

#### The Bible and the Mishnah

#### By Shaye Cohen, Littauer Prof of Hebrew Literature and Philosophy, Harvard University

This is a free event, open to the public, being held at 5pm. Registration is not required. Held at New College.

6 May 2015 – 9am

### Day conference sponsored by the Gunning Fund Power, Authority and Canon

The theme of the conference will revolve around issues of historical, theological and ethical ramifications of canonisation. Why were some texts and not others elevated to the status of “holy scriptures”? What are the effects in conferring authority on these texts? For more information and to register, please visit [www.bit.ly/GunningConf](http://www.bit.ly/GunningConf)

19 May – 4pm

### Afternoon event: 4pm

#### Special Session of General Assembly of the Church of Scotland marking John Knox's 500th anniversary

Chaired by the Moderator, with contributions from Profs Jane Dawson and David Fergusson and Reformation psalms led by the Assembly's Choir and Precentor. This event will be open to the public and live-streamed.

30 May 2015 – 9am

### Day conference

#### The Uniformity in Nature

#### Natural Laws, Natural Powers or Divine Action

This conference will explore a variety of topics, including the laws of nature, divine agency, and the existence of powers and capacities in the natural world, with a view to (re)conceptualising the fundamental origins of order in our universe. Held at New College.

## June

11 – 13 June 2015

### Conference

#### James Legge – Missions to China and the Origins of Sinology

Inside and outside China, there is a growing scholarly debate around how foreigners have contributed to and, at times, maligned prevailing understandings of Chinese philosophy, religion and culture. One of the most important figures in these discussions is James Legge, the Scottish missionary-scholar to China, who received an honorary doctorate from the University of Edinburgh in 1884. The keynote speakers are Professors Lauren Pfister and Yang Huilin. For further information on this conference please visit [www.cswc.div.ed.ac.uk/2014/11/james-legge-conference-june-2015/](http://www.cswc.div.ed.ac.uk/2014/11/james-legge-conference-june-2015/)

## September

3 – 5 September 2015

### Conference

#### British New Testament Conference

The British New Testament Conference is the largest annual gathering of New Testament scholars in the UK. Approximately 200 delegates meet each year to discuss world-leading research relating to New Testament texts, theories and methods. To register, please visit [www.bit.ly/NTestament](http://www.bit.ly/NTestament). Held at Pollock Halls.

Should you require further information on any of these events, please contact Jean Reynolds. [J.Reynolds@ed.ac.uk](mailto:J.Reynolds@ed.ac.uk)