

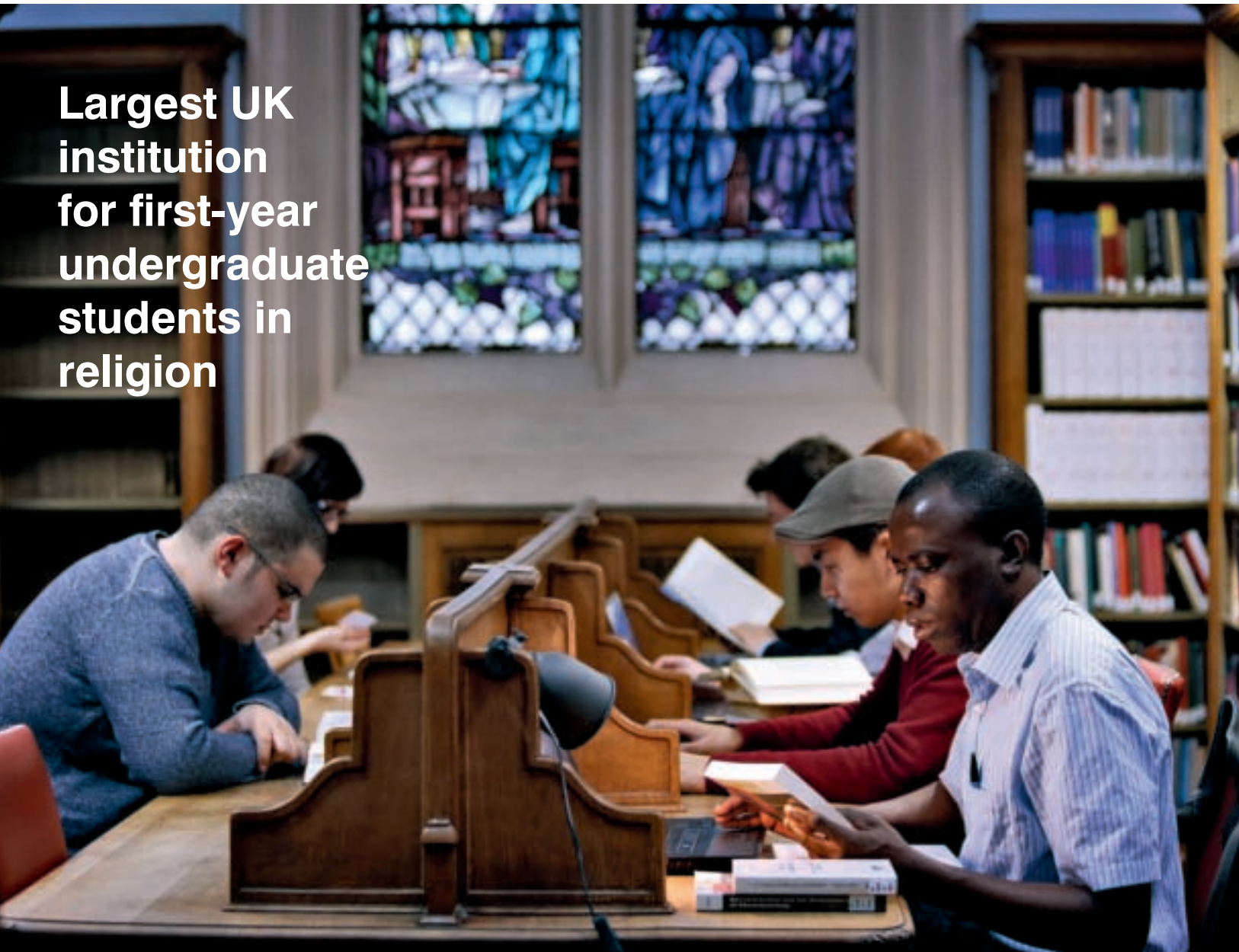


THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
School of Divinity

New College

Bulletin 2014

**Largest UK
institution
for first-year
undergraduate
students in
religion**



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Message from the **Head of School**



Dr Paul Foster

The academic year 2013-2014 has presented excitement and challenge, achievement and surprise, and also times of great joy and others of deep sadness.

The School was greatly heartened to see such strong enrolments this year in all areas. We experienced growth in our undergraduate numbers, while other theology and religion departments around the UK were in decline.

In fact we appear to have recruited the largest cohort of first-year undergraduate students in religion and divinity of any institution in the UK this year.

More surprisingly, the number of postgraduate students outstripped that of undergraduates – something that rarely happens. The sense of community has never been more buoyant or positive, and there is a palpable buzz in New College generated from such a large and engaged group of students.

Apart from participating in lectures and seminars, students and

staff have enjoyed many social or special events in the School. Freshers' Week included a ceilidh in the Rainy Hall – with experienced hands initiating new arrivals to Scotland into the intricacies of a Dashing White Sergeant or an Orcadian Strip the Willow. There was great excitement when the Chancellor of the University, the Princess Royal, visited the School of Divinity on the 8th of October, and many had the opportunity of an informal chat during this two-hour visit. Other notable guests included the Pulitzer Prize winning novelist Marilynne Robinson, who delivered a series of Croall Lectures, and Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, who gave this year's Gifford lectures.

New colleagues have been appointed in various areas and are profiled on pages 16 and 17 of the Bulletin. Together this group of young scholars brings teaching and research skills in new and innovative areas, and they have already contributed much to the School.

Alongside all this growth and excitement, the School experienced a time of great sadness when our highly esteemed and much loved colleague Dr Mike Purcell died unexpectedly on the 18th of October 2013. Mike was a specialist in continental philosophy and theology, with a passion for phenomenological approaches to theology. His early demise is a great loss to theology, but those who knew him will find the absence of his friendship and humour the even greater loss. We

continue to remember his family and loved ones in our prayers.

Alumni, at the heart of what we do

I have received several enquiries about how alumni of New College can continue to support the life of the School of Divinity. In response to that request I offer several suggestions. First, simply by staying in contact, attending guest lectures, and encouraging potential students to study with us. Secondly, by supporting the New College library. With the average price of academic books around £50 each, a donation of that size would enable us to ensure that we maintain the quality of one of the most significant theological libraries in Europe. Lastly, to attract the best postgraduate students we need to fund attractive scholarships. Larger donations can be invested to generate scholarship funds, which in turn will ensure the continued life of New College as a globally renowned centre for theological research.

Thank you to all of you for your continued support of New College. You remain our best advert for what we do here.

Your continued interest, engagement, and financial support enables us to deliver the very best theological education possible. So in a very real way, you are incredibly significant partners for all that we do here.

Dr Paul Foster

Message from the **Principal**



Professor David Fergusson

The findings of the 2011 census indicate that more people in contemporary Scotland ticked the 'no religion' box (37%) than chose to self-identify with the Church of Scotland (32%).

Although this unprecedented shift may conceal a surprising spiritual and religious diversity, it presents the School of Divinity with some important challenges in the years ahead.

The training of ministry candidates will continue to play an important place in the provision of the BD and MDiv degrees, but these will attract only a minority of the students who will study at New College.

Theology can continue in the academy but only in a context that is increasingly ecumenical, multi-faith and inter-disciplinary.

If we are unable to meet these challenges, we will face some of the threats experienced by other established faculties in Europe.

The challenge today and tomorrow is to recruit young people from a wider spectrum of beliefs and commitment, including those who tick the 'no religion' box, while also attracting the interest of students in other disciplines whose programmes can be enriched by closer engagement with the study of religion.

The recent success of courses on atheism, religion in violence and peacebuilding, Bible and literature, and religion and science is greatly encouraging. This suggests that the interaction with other disciplinary approaches and fields of study will increasingly preoccupy our teaching and research.

Elsewhere in the *Bulletin* the new project led by Michael Northcott is profiled; its cross-disciplinary cooperation with other scholars

in the University points to increasingly important alliances and the capacity of theology and religious studies to contribute to key research programmes.

At the same time, the financial hardship of many students continues to be a major preoccupation. One particularly stressed group is the cohort of ministry candidates, many of whom are borrowing heavily from the Student Loans Company. These debts will require to be repaid on modest ministerial stipends in the years ahead.

The launch of the John McIntyre Scholarship Fund last year proved successful and we currently have a promise of a further £10k match funding from the Scottish Journal of Theology if and when individual donations reach that amount.

My thanks to those who have already contributed so generously – we hope to exceed a total of £40K by the end of the 2013/14 session.

Further details are available later in the Bulletin.



New College news

Visit of HRH Princess Anne



HRH The Princess Royal views Edinburgh Jews exhibition

On 8 October 2013, the School of Divinity was delighted to welcome the University Chancellor, HRH The Princess Royal, to meet students, staff and friends of the School and New College.

On arrival The Princess Royal paused in the New College quad at the statue of John Knox. There Professor Jane Dawson, Professor of Reformation History and author of a forthcoming biography of Knox, talked to The Princess Royal about Knox and his role in establishing a Protestant church in Scotland after the Reformation Crisis of 1559-60.

The Princess Royal then visited the New College library, where she viewed several of the treasures held in the collection, including early printed Bibles, an early modern Torah scroll, and several other printed books dating from before 1500.

The Princess Royal was introduced to Rev. Dr Robert Funk, alumnus and benefactor to the New College Library, whose generous donations have supported the cataloguing of over 20,000 items to date from the pamphlets collection, hymnology collection, early Bibles and incunabula in the Special Collections.

Then The Princess Royal met many

of the School's students and staff in the Rainy Hall. Putting students at their ease, The Princess Royal asked students about their studies and their choice of degree programme. On leaving the Rainy Hall, The Princess Royal had the opportunity to view an exhibition on 'Edinburgh's Jews', curated by Dr Hannah Holtschneider, Senior Lecturer in Jewish Studies at the School. This exhibition offers an introductory overview of the long history of Edinburgh's Jews and, with topographical and global mapping, reveals the significant influence of this comparatively small community on the city.

Next, in the Martin Hall, The Princess Royal was introduced to the students who are candidates for the ministry in Scotland, accompanied by Dr Alison Jack, Assistant Principal of New College and Very Rev Professor Iain Torrance, Honorary Professor of the School and Dean of the Chapel Royal. There was also a recital by the University Organist, Dr John Kitchen, on the recently refurbished Martin Hall organ. Finally, The Princess Royal was invited to the Senate Room where friends and guests of the School had gathered.

The occasion was a memorable one for the School, and students were excited to have had the opportunity to meet The Princess Royal.

The visit was one of the highlights of the current academic session, and it was a great honour to be able to showcase the wonderful library, the cutting-edge scholarship, and the world-class students that make the School of Divinity a centre of excellence for the study of Religion and Theology.

*Paul Foster
Head of the School of Divinity*

Photos ©Maverick Photo agency



The Princess Royal examines library's treasures



Students and staff meet The Princess Royal



The Princess Royal in a light-hearted moment of her visit

New College news

Edinburgh Jews – An innovative exhibition

New College hosted an exhibition offering a unique insight into the history Edinburgh's long established Jewish community.

A Jewish presence in Edinburgh can be traced back to the middle of the eighteenth century. *Edinburgh Jews* gives an overview of a fascinating history which encompasses both local interest and the impact of global conflicts on the city and Jewish population.

Focusing on the development of the community from the late nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth century, the detailed topographical mapping of Jewish life in Edinburgh identifies homes, places of work, types of professions,

and public spaces. The mapping reveals the demographic shift from the 'Jewish quarter' near what is now the University and from the Leith and Dalry Jewish enclaves to Edinburgh's southern suburbs. This is a community whose numbers have been in slow decline since the 1920s.

Each display combines informative text, newspaper articles, personal recollections, historic maps, paintings, drawings and photographs. A number of sources are from private family collections, which have never before been on public display.

Cameos of world famous figures, such as author Muriel Spark,

Nobel Prize winner Max Born and the founder of the Edinburgh International Festival Sir Rudolph Bing, bring a further dimension, complementing the exhibition's broader portraits of the geography and of the social and political history of Edinburgh Jews.

The exhibition was funded by the University of Edinburgh's College of Humanities and Social Science Challenge Investment Fund 2012 and through the support of the Research Network in Jewish Studies at the University of Edinburgh.

For further information and an online version of the exhibition please visit: <http://jewishstudies.div.ed.ac.uk>

The Centre for Theology and Public Issues celebrates its 30th anniversary



Professor Jolyon Mitchell

Founded by Professor Duncan Forrester in 1984 it is probably the world's first centre for research, reflection and discussion on public theology.

Centre for Theology and Public Issues (CTPI) has established a broad range of projects that have brought together theologians, other academics, religious leaders, policy makers and the wider public. CTPI has close connections with local, national and international groups and institutions.

After Professor Forrester retired in 2000, Will Storrar took over as CTPI director. Among his other contributions, Professor Storrar created the *Global Network for Public Theology* to unite other public theology research centres from around the world.

When the directorship passed to Dr Cecelia Clegg, she brought expertise in reconciliation and conflict transformation in Northern Ireland, and she initiated a two year project called 'Theology in the Public Square'. Professor Jolyon Mitchell took over as director in 2009, and has hosted numerous public events and developed several new research projects.

For publications and further information visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centre_for_Theology_and_Public_Issues

Happy 500th birthday to the ‘wee man in the quad’



Five hundred years ago, probably in 1514 or early 1515, John Knox was born in Giffordgate by the banks of the River Tyne in Haddington.

Everyone who comes into New College encounters Knox's statue standing tall in the quad, and Knox and New College have often been regarded as belonging together like bread and cheese.

Many of those who read this piece will have walked past that statue many times, had their graduation photo taken close to it or even supplied some of the additional accoutrements the statue acquires from time to time.

As its inscription declares, the 1896 statue was, 'Erected by Scotsmen who are mindful of the benefits conferred by Knox on their native land'. It illustrates Knox as the iconic Scottish Reformer, the prophet and preacher clutching the bible in his left hand and with this right arm gesturing towards heaven.

With Knox reaching a special birthday, there is an opportunity to take another look at this man and evaluate the myth so well portrayed in our statue.

His popular image is of the bearded man in a black preacher's gown who ranted at Mary, Queen of Scots.

Having recently finished writing a new biography of John Knox [to be published by Yale University Press at the start of 2015] I discovered an even more complex individual than I had thought. Knox was a man of many faces, public and private, generous and vindictive, angry, smiling or tearful. However much Scots, like those who raised the statue, wanted to concentrate upon Knox and his achievements within Scotland, the man himself was important far beyond his native land.

He played a significant part within the English Reformation and was active in Switzerland, Germany and France. Knox was always conscious

and proud of his membership of the international Protestant movement.

In my researches I was fortunate to find the first new material from Knox's pen to be discovered since 1872. These new letters helped reveal the more private face of Knox and what he was like in the final years of his life when he was ill, tired and depressed. During those times it was hard for Knox to continue his task of preaching to 'unthankfull (yea allace miserable) Scotland' and he longed for his last battle to be finished in death.

The new letters underlined how important Knox's friends were to him, especially his ministerial colleague, the Englishman, Christopher Goodman. One surprise they revealed was how nearly Knox came to joining Goodman in a major evangelical tour in Ireland in 1567 under the patronage of the English Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, the father of the poet Philip Sidney. Instead, Knox ended up travelling to England and becoming caught up in the Vestments Controversy whilst in Scotland Mary, Queen of Scots, faced the major crises that led to her deposition.

Though Knox has been part of my research in one way or another since my undergraduate days, writing his biography has brought quite a few more surprises. The 'wee man in the quad' will be having the last laugh because he probably has more surprises up his sleeves.

Jane Dawson

New College news

A study tour of Luther's Germany

In February 2013 a party from New College (Church of Scotland and Episcopalian ministry students, and some staff) set off on a whistle-stop study tour of Luther's Germany.

Our journey began at the Wartburg Castle, high above the town of Eisenach. Here Luther – in hiding after the Diet of Worms in 1521 – translated the New Testament into German. We walked up through the woods in the snow and had the castle to ourselves.

Next stop: Erfurt, where Luther attended university and entered the Augustinian community in

1505. Here we also heard about Meister Eckhart, the 13th century philosopher, theologian and mystic – and, in the process, found out just how cold it can be to sit in a medieval church in midwinter.

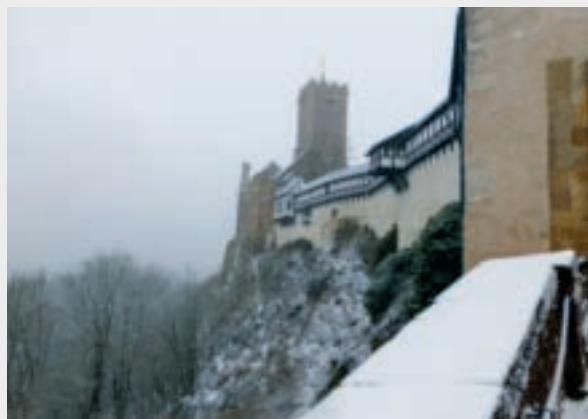
After this we travelled on to Leipzig, where we had an opportunity to attend a rehearsal of the Thomanerchor, the world-famous boys' choir dating back to 1212.

For an insight into the recent past, many of us visited the *Museum in der Runden Ecke*, where the district headquarters of the 'Stasi' (the secret service of the former GDR) are preserved just as they were in 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell.

Last but not least, we spent a day in Wittenberg with the Reformation expert Dr Martin Treu, who took us around the splendid exhibitions at the Lutherhaus and Melanchthonhaus. We had the privilege of celebrating communion at the town church of St Mary's, where Luther preached regularly both before and after his 'Reformation breakthrough'.

We returned to Edinburgh somewhat weary but definitely wiser, with a new perspective on our own history and traditions.

*Susan Hardman Moore
Professor of Early Modern Religion*



Professor Stewart J. Brown receives honorary doctorate



(From left to right) **Professor Richard Horcsik**, Professor of Church History at the Reformed University of Debrecen and a prominent member of the Hungarian Parliament, who studied at New College in the 1980s with Professor Alec Cheyne; **Professor Stewart J. Brown**, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Edinburgh; **Professor Botund Gaal**, Professor of Christian Dogmatics and Systematic Theology at the Reformed University of Debrecen, who has long-standing connections with the University of Edinburgh especially in the fields of religion and science; **Dr Abraham Kovacs**, Associate Professor of Dogmatics and Historical Theology, who completed his PhD at the University of Edinburgh under the supervision of David Kerr in 2003, and is currently a visiting fellow at New College.

Professor Stewart J. Brown BA MA PhD FRHistS FRSE, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Edinburgh, was awarded the degree of Doctor of Theology honoris causa by the Reformed University of Debrecen at a ceremony on 21 November 2013.

The ceremony took place to mark the 475th anniversary of the Reformed University of Debrecen (founded 1538), and there were several honorary degrees awarded in the different theological disciplines.

The Reformed University of Debrecen is a historic centre for theological teaching and research in Hungary, and it has

long standing connections with Scotland, in part through a bursary programme established by the Free Church of Scotland in the 1850s and subsequently taken over by the Church of Scotland.

Through the bursary programme, a large number of Hungarian students were able to study for a year at one of the Scottish universities, with New College the main Scottish host. Many of these bursary students went on to positions of leadership in the Reformed Hungarian Church, the Hungarian universities or Hungarian civic society.

The Reformed University of Debrecen values its historic links with New College.

Doctor of Ministry Degree

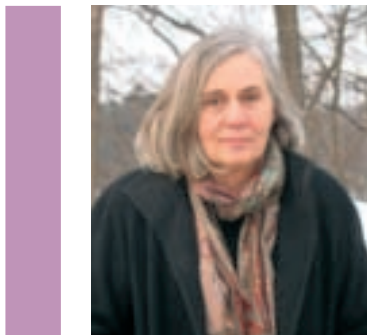
The School of Divinity is collaborating with Pittsburgh Theological Seminary to deliver a Doctor of Ministry degree from 2015-18.

An exploratory seminar with Dr Susan Kendall (Pittsburgh) will be held in the Senate Room, New College at 2pm on Friday, 30 May, 2014.

Anyone interested in attending should contact Dr Alison Jack (A.Jack@ed.ac.uk).



Acclaimed author, Marilynne Robinson delivers Croall lectures



In September last year, the novelist Marilynne Robinson delivered three engaging Croall Lectures under the title of ‘Son of God, Son of Man’.

Robinson is the author of three highly acclaimed novels: *Housekeeping* (1980), *Gilead* (2004, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction) and *Home* (2008). She has also published in the field of

theology and philosophy, including the series of essays entitled *Absence of Mind: The Dispelling of Inwardness from the Modern Myth of the Self* (2010). In her lectures, Robinson ranged widely across issues in biblical studies, theology and ethics to explore what it might mean in today’s society to talk about Jesus as human and divine.

She also invited her audience to consider the implications of such beliefs for an understanding of the universal human condition. In the question and answer sessions after each lecture, she related some of her arguments to the writing of fiction. The lectures generated much interest from the wider community and from the media in Scotland.

Dr David Grumett appointed to UK government advisory committee

Dr David Grumett, Chancellor’s Fellow in Christian Ethics and Practical Theology, has been appointed to the Farm Animal Welfare Committee as an ethicist.

This expert committee of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales provides advice to Defra and the Devolved Administrations on the welfare of farmed animals, including on agricultural land, at market, in transit and at the place of killing.

Dr Grumett said: “Each year in Britain we consume around one billion farmed animals. Despite consumer pressure for cheaper food it is essential that animals be reared and slaughtered ethically and have a good life. By contributing research and expertise I hope to promote this objective.”

To find out more about the work of the FAWC, visit

www.defra.gov.uk/fawc

Dr Hardman Moore promoted to Personal Chair of Early Modern Religion



Dr Susan Hardman Moore has been promoted to the Personal Chair of Early Modern Religion, in recognition of her significant achievements in research, teaching and leadership.

Her research and teaching focus on early modern religion - in particular, Puritanism in England and New England, and Reformed theology and spirituality in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Since re-joining the School of Divinity in 2000, she has led the very successful Master of Theology (Theology in History) degree programme which has produced over 100 graduates since its inception. Susan was also ordained a minister of the Church of Scotland by the Presbytery of Edinburgh last

summer at a service held in the Martin Hall. We congratulate on her achievements this year. Professor Hardman Moore’s inaugural lecture, entitled ‘Time’, can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZREj8_iheM

Professor David Fergusson elected to the British Academy

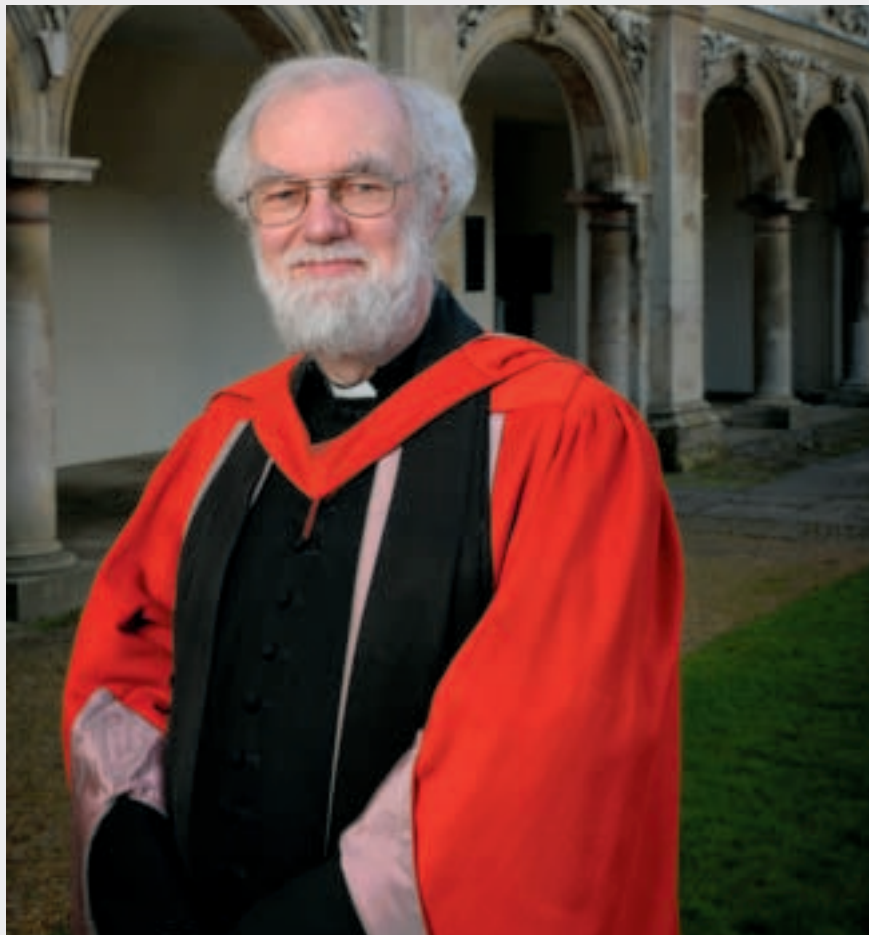
Professor David Fergusson, Professor of Divinity and Principal of New College, has been elected as a Fellow of the British Academy in recognition of his outstanding research and work across the humanities and social sciences.

Trained in philosophy and theology, David worked for several years as a parish minister in the Church of Scotland. Prior to returning to Edinburgh where he held a

lectureship from 1986, he was Professor of Systematic Theology in the University of Aberdeen (1990–2000) and is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Established by Royal Charter in 1902, The British Academy is an independent national academy of Fellows elected for their eminence in research and publication. David is the first Church of Scotland theologian to be elected to the Academy since Professor T. F. Torrance in 1982.



Lord Williams delivers Gifford Lectures



The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Rowan Williams of Oystermouth delivered the Gifford Lectures in November 2013 at New College.

Lord Williams is acknowledged internationally as an outstanding religious leader, thinker, writer, scholar and teacher. He spent ten years as the Archbishop of Canterbury, the senior bishop and principal leader of the Church of England. He stepped down in December 2013 and entered the House of Lords as a life peer in January 2013.

His lectures explored the links between nature, religion and the language habits our society has developed. They are available to watch online at www.ed.ac.uk/about/video/lecture-series/gifford-lectures

Research in focus

Caring for the Future Through Ancestral Time

In May 2013, Michael Northcott, as Principal Investigator won a research grant of £878,000 over three years, jointly funded by the AHRC and BBSRC. The project is entitled 'Caring for the Future Through Ancestral Time: Engaging the Cultural and Spiritual Presence of the Past to Promote a Sustainable Future'.

The project brings together researchers from Divinity, Geosciences, History and Politics at the University of Edinburgh in partnership with the staff of Ecocongregations Scotland. It commenced in September 2013 and investigates the relationship between the Christian theology of intergenerational time - what the project team call 'ancestral time' - and investment decisions made by churches and other organisations concerning energy use and infrastructure.

Climate change science indicates that there will be growing long run costs from a failure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from human activities to the atmosphere. However businesses, governments and NGOs make their decisions about investment in infrastructure and energy use on relatively short payback time scales.

Ecocongregations Scotland is a



network of local churches which are committed to reducing their carbon footprint in the light of the injustice of destabilising the earth's climate for future generations. The Christian Church in Scotland has a lineage of 1500 years, which far exceeds that of modern secular institutions, and this gives the churches an intergenerational perspective which

is significantly different from secular society, as also does the Christian theology of time and eternity.

The project will investigate the potential role of beliefs about time in promoting long-term care for creation among the member churches of Ecocongregations Scotland.

The project, which is based at New College, represents acknowledgement by UK Research Councils of the importance of the scholarly study of ecology and religion which is Professor Northcott's principal research area. Jeremy Kidwell was appointed in September 2013 as post-doctoral researcher on the project, and the project also appointed a doctoral researcher, Alice Hague, who is co-supervised in the Schools of Divinity and the Social and Political Sciences.

The project also represents a valuable partnership between New College and Ecocongregations Scotland, which is the largest community-based environmental organisation in Scotland.

News of project events, blogs and research results are posted on the project website at <http://ancestraltime.org.uk>

Faith and Belief Scotland

Professor Mona Siddiqui has secured funding to conduct a collaborative one-year project involving the School of Divinity and the Scottish Government.

The project, entitled 'Faith and Belief Scotland,' seeks to map attitudes of religion and belief in communities throughout Scotland. Additionally, it seeks to understand better the challenges that councils face in providing for religion and belief communities – particularly, as Scotland's demographics continue to change. To that end, focus groups have been held with representatives of a range of religion and belief communities throughout Scotland.

Dr Anthony Allison, the project researcher, has met with people in locations ranging from the Orkneys to the Borders, Aberdeen to the Western Isles. Council workers have been interviewed while a nationwide online survey has secured an excellent response rate.



In October 2013, New College hosted a dialogue between various religious, secular, and humanist groups on a range of current issues such as faith schools, same-sex adoption, and the interface between religion and the judicial system. It was a successful day and a number of the parties involved noted how it had challenged their presuppositions concerning other

groups. We hope to continue to facilitate such dialogue within Scottish civic life. The project is currently in its closing phases with a final report presently being drafted. The findings of the report will be discussed at the Scottish Parliament in June 2014 and will be available for download via the Scottish Government's website.

Religion, war and peacebuilding

Directed by Dr George R. Wilkes, the *Religion and Ethics in the Making of War and Peace (RELWAR)* project published a landmark study on popular attitudes to reconciliation in Bosnia Herzegovina.

The study, which is housed within the New College's Centre for Theology and Public Issues recently made national news in a

number of countries in the Balkans, and is available online at <http://relwar.org>.

The RELWAR project was also the central impetus behind the second international conference of the Edinburgh Peace Initiative, 'Voice in Conflict'. This event brought together 100 participants from the University and city with speakers from the UN, specialist conflict transformation

initiatives, indigenous rights organisations and groups with experience of involving armed groups in peace processes.

RELWAR is supporting an international conference on *Religions and Ethics in the Use of Armed Force* in Edinburgh, while also developing research into military chaplains and ethics education.

Research in focus

Non-Religion among Australian Aboriginal Peoples



James Cox

James Cox, Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies and Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Divinity, was the recipient of an award under the sponsorship of the International Research Initiative Scheme (IRIS) of the University of Western Sydney, Australia.

This award enabled him to conduct research in September and October 2013 in association with Professor Adam Possamai, Professor of the Sociology of Religion in the University of Western Sydney, on the topic 'Non-Religion among Australian Aboriginal Peoples'.

The project was motivated by the seemingly surprising result obtained from the 2011 Australian National Census, in which 27% of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders marked 'No Religion' in response to Question 19: 'What is the person's religion?' Between the prior census in 2006 and the 2011 census, there was a 40.75 per cent increase in the number of Aborigine and Torres Strait Islanders in the No Religion

category, whereas for the whole Australian population the increase was somewhat less (29.41%).

The aim of the project was to investigate why such a seemingly high percentage of indigenous people referred to themselves as non-religious, and why this percentage had increased so markedly in the past five years.

The project sought to establish if the indigenous population, like the wider Australian society, is becoming increasingly secularised or whether there are other explanations for the unexpectedly high percentage of Aboriginal people stating they have 'no religion'

In order to address these questions, Professors Cox and Possamai conducted a series of individual interviews and organised focus groups in the urban setting of Mount Druitt, a suburb west of Sydney with a high Aboriginal population, and in Ampilatwatja, a remote Aboriginal settlement approximately 325 kilometres north-east of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory. In both settings, local leaders and linguists were involved in the research in order to facilitate access to the communities and to ensure that accurate translations into English were made when interviewees used indigenous languages.

Preliminary conclusions suggest that Aboriginal people living in remote locations maintain a loyalty to traditional culture, but do not think of this as 'religion'; religion seems to refer to 'the church'. This does not fully explain why so many put 'no religion' on the 2011 census or did not answer the question on religion. Cox and Possamai also found that in general urban dwellers, like the wider Australian population, either are becoming increasingly secularised or are non-church-going but consider themselves as 'spiritual'.

These preliminary conclusions are complicated in the rural setting by the fact that the long-established Lutheran mission in Ampilatwatja is currently being challenged by the newly-founded Pentecostal church, which opposes traditional rituals. Another factor, which the researchers did not expect, resulted from the discovery that some urban interviewees, who were active Christians, put 'no religion' on the census because they did not consider their Christian faith as 'religion'.

The theme of this research project, including the findings from the field studies, is being developed into an edited book by Cox and Possamai for the Vitality of Indigenous Religions Series of Ashgate Publications, with the expected publication date sometime in mid-2015.

Peacebuilding through Media Arts

The *Peacebuilding through Media Arts (PMA)* project aims to encourage arts-based approaches to peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

April 2013 saw the second in a series of international workshops, which bring together peacebuilders, artists and academics to critically explore the theory and practice of peacebuilding through the arts.

Hosted by project partners at the *Kroc Institute of International Peacebuilding* at the University of Notre Dame, the workshop focused on literature and music, and included musical performance from a veteran of the American civil rights movement, and a paper on sound trauma in the Iraq War.

The third workshop, organized by Dr Theodora Hawksley, was held in Edinburgh, amid the energy of the August festivals, and gathered a diverse group to explore peacebuilding through film, theatre and dance.

Material from these workshops will be used in an edited volume on peacebuilding and the arts, a valuable resource for academics and practitioners alike.

The PMA project's second exhibition, *In Sight of Peace*, was curated by Dr Geoffrey Stevenson. It brought together photographs by renowned Magnum



Photograph by Ian Berry, 'child with nanny at National Party meeting, Harrismith, Orange Free State, South Africa, 1994', Magnum Photos from In Sight of Peace exhibition.

photographer Ian Berry, exploring South Africa's journey over the last forty years through apartheid, to the free election of Nelson Mandela and the post 'Rainbow Nation' attempts at reconstruction. This exhibition, accompanied by a panel discussion

on photojournalism and peace building, attracted thousands of visitors over the period of the festivals. PMA is in its fourth year, having received generous funding from the Binks Trust.

A warm welcome to our new colleagues



Dr Alexander Chow is the new Chancellor's Fellow in World Christianity. At New College he will contribute to the Centre for the Study of World Christianity with his expertise in East Asian Christianity, with a particular focus on indigenous theology as it has developed in mainland China.

Born and raised in Southern California, Dr Chow received his MA in Biblical Studies and Theology from Fuller Theological Seminary, ThM in Theology from Regent College in Vancouver, Canada, and a PhD in Theology from the University of Birmingham. Prior to joining New College, he was a Postdoctoral Fellow at Renmin University of China where he was doing research in contemporary Chinese Christianity and teaching in the School of Liberal Arts.

Dr Chow's first book, a revision of his PhD thesis, explores historical types of indigenous theology in China and constructively uses

the Eastern Orthodox doctrine of theosis as a point of dialogue with the Chinese context. The book was published through Palgrave Macmillan in 2013 under the title: *Theosis, Sino-Christian Theology and the Second Chinese Enlightenment: Heaven and Humanity in Unity*.

Aside from his work at New College, Dr Chow has a background as an engineer, with a first degree in computer science and a continued fascination with all things related to technology. When not working or playing with gadgets, Dr Chow enjoys spending time with his wife and son, and looks forward to a second child, expected in July 2014.



Dr James Eglinton is the recently appointed Meldrum Lecturer in Reformed Theology. He comes to New College having spent three years in the Netherlands, where he was senior researcher in systematic and historical theology at the Theologische Universiteit Kampen (2010-2013). Prior to this, he gained a PhD in systematic theology at New College (2010) under the supervision

of Prof David Fergusson. He also holds degrees in theology (BTh Dist, Glasgow, 2007) and law (LLB Hons, Aberdeen, 2004).

His research has two central foci: the life and thought of the Dutch neo-Calvinist theologian Herman Bavinck; and the relationship of Scottish and Dutch Reformed traditions. A passionate multilingual, Dr Eglinton also maintains an active interest in the relationship of theology to multilingualism. He is the author of *Trinity and Organism* (T&T Clark/Bloomsbury, 2012) and co-editor of *Neo-Calvinism and the French Revolution* (T&T Clark/Bloomsbury, 2014). He has given guest lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, the University of St. Andrews, and the Faculté Libre

de Théologie Réformée d'Aix-en-Provence.

Dr Eglinton is enthusiastic about theology's place in public discourse: his written work has appeared in the *Nederlands Dagblad*, a national Dutch daily newspaper, and he has contributed to broadcasts on both *BBC Alba* and BBC Radio *nan Gàidheal*.

Born and raised in the Highlands of Scotland, Dr Eglinton is married to Eilidh, also an Edinburgh graduate (MChB, 2007). They have two small children and are pleased to have returned to Edinburgh.



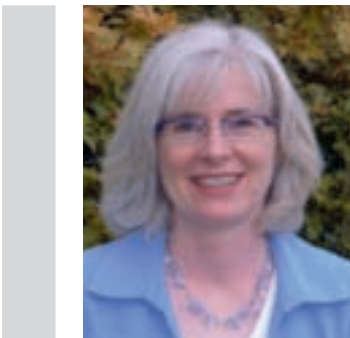
Dr Anja Klein is the new Chancellor's Fellow in Hebrew Bible. She comes from the University of Göttingen, Germany, where she worked as part of the teaching and research staff in the Hebrew Bible Department from 2008-2013.

After studies of Protestant Theology in Bethel/Bielefeld, St Andrews and Göttingen, Dr Klein wrote her doctoral thesis on innerbiblical exegesis in the Book of Ezekiel (2008). She then moved on to pursue her habilitation, which dealt with the reception of biblical history in the Old Testament psalms (2014).

As these two research projects demonstrate, she is fascinated by the literary development of the books of the Hebrew Bible that bears witness of an ongoing process of innerbiblical exegesis. Apart from her keen interest in the prophetic books and the psalms,

she comes with experience in the study of Dead Sea Scrolls, focusing on the links between Qumran biblical interpretation with the innerbiblical interpretation. She is looking forward to sharing this passion for exegesis with her students and colleagues at New College.

Though having signed a 13-year-contract for a (German) commentary on the book of Ezekiel, there are some shorter-term projects that keep her busy. When not working, she enjoys playing the violin, reading crime stories and exploring the city by bike. She also has a dream one day of owning an Icelandic horse.



Dr Alison Jack, Assistant Principal of New College, will take up a full-time lectureship in the School of Divinity from September, 2014. She will become Director of Undergraduate Studies, while continuing her teaching and research. Her most recent book *The Bible and Literature* was

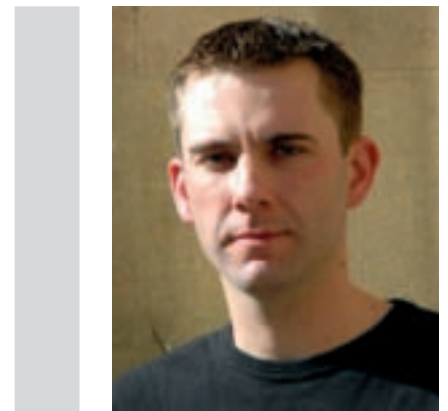
published by SCM Press in 2012. In addition, Alison will also oversee the introduction of a new collaborative Doctor of Ministry degree with Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (see details elsewhere). The School is delighted that such a popular teacher and colleague is now joining us in a full-time capacity.

Farewell to colleagues

Dr Paul Nimmo, Meldrum Lecturer in Reformed Theology from 2008-13, has been appointed to a chair in systematic theology at the University of Aberdeen.

A very popular teacher and colleague, Paul received an Edinburgh University Student Association Award for outstanding feedback during his time at New

College. He is a leading interpreter of the theology of Karl Barth and has recently become editor of *The International Journal for Systematic Theology*. He is currently co-editing (with David Fergusson) *The Cambridge Companion to Reformed Theology*. We thank him for his distinguished contribution to the life and work of New College and we wish Paul, his wife Jill and their two sons many happy years in Aberdeen.



People news

Farewell to colleagues

Professor Hans Barstad retired from the chair in Hebrew and Old Testament Studies in September 2013.

As holder of the established chair since 2006, Hans's energy and vision made an immediate impact with the formation on his arrival of the Edinburgh Prophecy Network. This network gathered scholars from around Europe and beyond in several thematic conferences. To date, proceedings of two of them have been published, and further volumes are in preparation. The way in which junior scholars and research students were integrated into these events

and publications is one of many signs of Hans's concern to nurture the academic development of early career researchers.

Beyond this, Hans's scholarly acumen has been appreciated across the whole spectrum of university teaching. His *Brief Guide to the Hebrew Bible* (Westminster, 2010) connects in significant ways with his distinctive concerns for undergraduate teaching. It is no wonder he was eagerly sought out as a supervisor for undergraduate and masters dissertations alike. He has also overseen the work of a steady stream of doctoral students,

a couple of whom still enjoy his supervision as retirement begins.

There is a tradition of very *active* retirement from New College life, and Hans shows every sign of conforming to this pattern. He is already deeply involved with organizing the two conferences that will take place under his presidency of the Society for Old Testament Studies in 2015, with the summer meetings due to take place here in Edinburgh. We look forward to enjoying the further fruits of his research and writing in the years to come.

In Memoriam



Dr Michael Purcell

The School of Divinity was deeply saddened by the death of Dr Mike Purcell on Friday 18 October, after a brief illness.

Mike was a devoted teacher and supervisor, who was much cherished by students and colleagues alike. His loss is keenly felt in the School, and we extend

our condolences to Mike's family and friends.

Dr Jason Wardley, one of Dr Purcell's last PhD candidates, writes 'Michael originally trained as a doctor, but it was as a theologian and philosopher that he made his greatest contribution. Theology, it seemed, sometimes troubled him: in the words of William Langland's *Piers Ploughman* (which Mike was given to quote): 'The more I ponder and delve into it, the darker and mistier it seems to me to be. It is certainly no science for subtle invention, and without love it would be no good at all. But I love it because it values love above all else; and grace is never lacking where love comes first.'

Mike was a popular figure with students and colleagues alike and he became a fixture of the Leuven conference schedule. In addition, his ministry as a priest marks Mike as a theologian whose thought was invested in the life of the Church.

His most recent essay, part of a collection that redefined the concept of 'saintliness' as it appears in contemporary French philosophy looked at how, from the mid to the late 20th century, various French thinkers applied that label to friends and colleagues. As a theologian Mike offered new ways of thinking about holiness, and what makes a saint. He leaves behind him an international collection of colleagues, students, friends and keen readers. He will be sadly missed.'

Alumni updates



Right Reverend Dr Nigel Peyton
(BD Hons 1976).

The current Bishop of Brechin tells us how his time at New College contributed to shape his vocational and academic journey.

'I joined New College in 1971 to pursue ecclesiastical history in

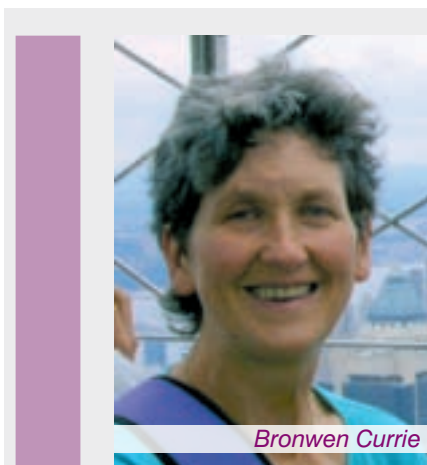
my honours years as a History undergraduate.

Matheson's Reformation Studies and Alex Cheyne's 19th Century Church History course excited me just as God and the Scottish Episcopal Church were beckoning me towards the ordained ministry. I enjoyed my BD (Hons) in Christian Ethics and Practical Theology during 1973-6 whilst training at Edinburgh Theological College. The growing presence of women and ecumenical engagement which we now take for granted made New College special in that period. As well as benefitting from the professorial greats of the day, younger faculty like Elizabeth Maclaren (later Templeton) and Robin Gill inspired a life-long interest

in the place of faith, theology and the church in society and culture.

In 2011 I was elected Bishop of Brechin, returning to Dundee where my ministry and family life began. In addition to the fresh challenges of encouraging growth and outreach in the diocese I have oversight of a residential home for the elderly and write a regular comment piece for the *Courier*, a widely read Scottish daily newspaper'.

Right Reverend Dr Nigel Payton is also an Honorary Teaching Fellow at Lancaster University where he gained his doctorate for research about contemporary priesthood. *Managing Clergy Lives: Obedience, Sacrifice, Intimacy* was published by Bloomsbury in 2013.



Bronwen Currie

Bronwen Currie, recently retired to Islay, writes 'I have been appointed to serve as an Ecumenical Accompanier with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), and following intensive training late last year, I will be leaving Scotland at the beginning of April to spend three months in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.' We will provide a fuller report from Bronwen in the 2015 Bulletin.

Dennis Duncan (1943) died aged 94 on 7 January, 2014. After parish ministries in Kelso, Glasgow and Edinburgh, Denis served as editor of *British Weekly* for thirteen years. He was later Associate Director of Westminster Pastoral Foundation where he set up the training arm of

its counselling work, and, following that, Director of the Churches' Council for Health and Healing. He served as Chair of the World Association for Pastoral Care and Counselling. His last book *100 Prayers where YOU are* was published by PenPress, Brighton in 2013.

Dr Jason Wardley

After a long illness, Dr Jason Wardley died on Friday 4 April, 2014. Jason had been a deeply committed member of the New College community for many years, taking his BD in 1995, before continuing to study for the MTh and PhD degrees. Supervised by Dr Mike Purcell and examined by Professor David Jasper of Glasgow, his doctoral thesis provided an important study of the French phenomenologist and theologian, Jean Yves Lacoste. *Praying to a French God* has recently been published as a monograph by Ashgate Press.

Jason's funeral service was held at St Andrew's and St George's West Church, where he had served as an elder. We extend our deepest sympathies to Jason's wife, Morven Cross.

Reading matters

A selection of recent publications by New College Staff

Sean A. Adams, *The Genre of Acts and Collected Biography*. (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 156. Cambridge University Press, 2013).

This investigation combines a flexible view of genre with a detailed, original reading of the Acts narrative, arguing that the best genre category for Acts is collected biography. This study shows how goals of the author shape the construction of the text through the use and adaptation of specific, characteristic genre features.

Naomi Appleton, Sarah Shaw and Toshiya Unebe, *Illuminating the Life of the Buddha: An illustrated chanting book from eighteenth-century Siam* (Bodleian Libraries, 2013).

This book showcases a manuscript, now housed in the Bodleian Library, which depicts scenes from the past lives and final life of the Buddha in miniature paintings, all of which are reproduced here in full colour. The book retells the stories behind the images, and explores the textual contents of the manuscript as well as its intriguing history.

Stewart J Brown, Frances Knight and John Morgan-Guy (eds.), *Religion, Identity and Conflict in Britain: From the Restoration to the Twentieth Century. Essays in Honour of Keith Robbins* (Ashgate, 2013).

The book brings together a team of authors who explore the interactions of religion, politics and culture that shaped and defined modern Britain. The various chapters highlight the vital role of religious faith and institutions for an understanding of the modern British state.

Alexander Chow, *Theosis, Sino-Christian Theology and the Second Chinese Enlightenment: Heaven and Humanity in Unity* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

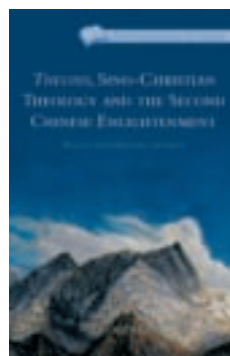
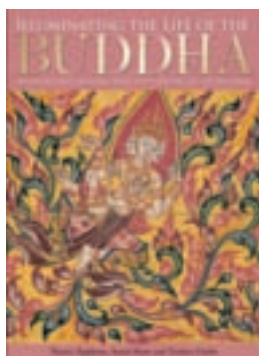
For a millennium and a half, Christianity in China has been perceived as a foreign religion for a foreign people. This book examines indigenous theologies developed in China's past and present, and shows the potential role of Eastern Orthodox theology in today's development of an authentic Chinese contextual theology.

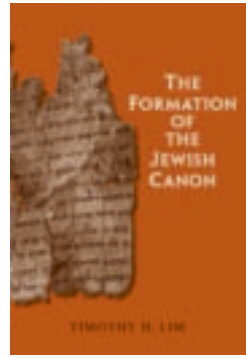
James L. Cox (ed.), *Critical Reflections on Indigenous Religions* (Ashgate, 2013).

This book furthers our understanding of indigenous religions by first considering key methodological issues related to defining and contextualizing the religious practices of indigenous societies, both historically and in socio-cultural situations. Two further sections of the book analyse cases derived European contexts, which are often overlooked in discussions of indigenous religions, and in two traditional areas of study: South America and Africa.

James L. Cox, *The Invention of God in Indigenous Societies* (Acumen, 2014).

This book argues that the interests of indigenous societies are served best by carefully describing their religious beliefs and practices using historical and phenomenological methods, just as would be done in the study of any world religion. The discussion is illustrated with case material from indigenous peoples in Alaska, Australia, Zimbabwe and New Zealand.





Mark Harris, *The Nature of Creation: Examining the Bible and Science* (Biblical Challenges in the Contemporary World. Acumen, 2013).

It is generally assumed that science and religion are at war. *The Nature of Creation* addresses this complex debate by engaging with both modern science and biblical scholarship together. It presents a sustained historical investigation of what the creation texts of the Bible have to say and how this relates to modern scientific ideas of beginnings. The book aims to demonstrate what science and religion can share, and how they differ and ought to differ.

Timothy H. Lim, *The Formation of the Jewish Canon* (Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library Series. Yale University Press, 2013).

Proposes that the canon of the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament gradually closed between 150 and 250 CE when the majority of those who founded Rabbinic Judaism were Pharisees. This majority canon had 22/24 books and was not closed by central a conciliar fiat; it grew from the bottom-up as the same books came to be regarded as authoritative.

Michael Northcott, *A Political Theology of Climate Change* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, United States and Canada, 2013 and SPCK, UK and Europe, 2014).

Bruno Latour, the University of Edinburgh Gifford Lecturer for 2013, said that Northcott “continues to bring alive the most implausible hybrid - carbon theology. By reawakening the dormant meaning of Incarnation, he also provides new energy for an ecological movement that could learn to thrive on the long tradition of political theology. This book helps us understand how all the outdated values of the past might be our last chance to still have a future.”

George Wilkes et al. *Factors in Reconciliation: Religion, Local Conditions, People and Trust. Results From A Survey Conducted in 13 Cities Across Bosnia and Herzegovina in May 2013* (The University of Edinburgh/ Project on Religion and Ethics in the Making of War and Peace, and the Centre for Empirical Research on Religion in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013).

Shows the strength of grassroots support for reconciliation across the different regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Religious citizens are shown to be particularly supportive of reconciliation initiatives, as are pensioners and war veterans. A pilot survey previously published in 2012 was used as evidence in support of the unveiling of a multi-million dollar USAID programme funding new reconciliation activity in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Alumni publications

Duncan S. Ferguson, *Lovescapes – Mapping the Geography of Love: An Invitation to the Love-Centered Life* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2013). *Lovescapes* introduces the reader to the various meanings and manifestations of love and its many cognates such as compassion, caring, altruism, empathy, and forgiveness. It addresses how love and compassion have been understood in history and the religions of the world. It goes on to explore the ways that our environments and heredity influence our capacity to love and suggests ways to cultivate love and compassion in one's life.

Andrew Parker, *The Bible as Politics: The Rape of Dinah and other stories* (Circle Books, 2013).

The main difficulty with the Bible is not that it was written in a foreign language by people culturally and historically very different from us. The real difficulty has to do with something we never discuss: the fact that the Bible, as a text produced by people on the margins of society, reveals aspects about us which we, as civilisation folk, don't want to know. In this book, Parker gives us marginal readings of a number of well known texts so that we can test his hypothesis and debate the subject.

Scholarships and giving

The John McIntyre Scholarship Fund



Following the launch of the John McIntyre Scholarship Fund last year, we are pleased to report that donations have now exceeded a total of £40K. We are fortunate to have received the offer of a matching gift of a further £10k from the trustees of the Scottish Journal of Theology if individual donations reach a total of £10K by April 2014

Established in honour of a distinguished church and university leader, the McIntyre Fund will provide annual bursaries for students training for the ministry of one of the Scottish churches.

To make a donation please visit www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/alumni/support. An online Gift Aid facility is available.

TF Torrance Scholarship Awarded

The School of Divinity has been pleased to receive substantial scholarship funding in honour of Professor T. F. Torrance from the Scottish Journal of Theology.

This has provided essential support for overseas students studying for one-year Masters degrees.

This year we have welcomed three holders of the T. F. Torrance Scholarship. These are Neil Boniface from India (MSc in Science and Religion), Gift Eliezer from India (MTh in Biblical Studies), and Colby Kumwenda from Malawi (MTh in World Christianity).



Colby Kumwenda, Gift Eliezer, Neil Boniface

Giving to the School of Divinity

The study of theology and religion has been integral to the life of the University of Edinburgh since its foundation in 1583. Based at New College on the Mound, the School of Divinity today comprises a community of 450 students and around 30 academic staff, making this one of the largest units for theology and religious studies in the UK.

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.

Student Support

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 and J.S. Stewart Scholarship funds.

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.

For more information on the ways in which you can make a donation, please visit:

www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/alumni/support

Or for more details, please contact: Chloe Kippen, Development and Alumni Officer chloe.kippen@ed.ac.uk

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Lifelong Community

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.

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** or email **alumni@ed.ac.uk**

Shape Your Bulletin

If you have any comments about this issue of Bulletin, or would like to see more please do let us know. We'd be delighted to hear from you!

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Events and conferences

You can keep up-to-date with all of our public lectures, events and conferences using our online calendar at www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/news-events/events

New College Annual Alumni Lunch

22 May, 12.30PM, New College garden

This even coincides with the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and is open to all alumni. This is an opportunity to meet friends and current academic staff. Sunshine guaranteed! No booking required.

Public Lecture: Gertrude van Tijn and the Fate of the Dutch Jews during the Second World War

16 June 2014, Lecture Room 1, New College

Bernard Wasserstein, Professor Emeritus of Modern European Jewish History at the University of Chicago, presents a public lecture on his new book, *The Ambiguity of Virtue: Gertrude van Tijn and the Fate of the Dutch Jews during the Second World War*. For further information visit

<http://jewishstudies.div.ed.ac.uk>

Cunningham lectures

20, 21 October 2014, New College

Miroslav Volf, Henry B. Wright Professor of Theology at Yale Divinity School will give the 2014 Cunningham Lectures at New College in October 2014. One of the most celebrated theologians of today, Professor Volf will speak about Faith and Globalisation on the 20th and 21st October and take part in a panel discussion on Religion and Public life on the 22nd October.

School of Divinity Seminars 2014

New College

Regular seminars are held in New College throughout the academic year across the school's various research disciplines. Visitors are warmly invited to attend. For further information visit www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/school-seminars

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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

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