



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH  
School of Divinity

# New College Bulletin 2017

**New College News**

**Remembering  
Prof. Duncan Forrester**

**Spotlight On Research**

**Reading Matters**

# In this issue...

This year's New College Bulletin highlights the international scope of our students, staff, and activities. Deeply rooted in Edinburgh and Scottish history, New College is a centre of excellence known for attracting students and supporters from around the world.

In the current year, we have students from all corners of the world including Ethiopia, Jordan, Cyprus, Australia, United States of America, Canada, Italy, England, Hungary, India, Scotland, Romania, Netherlands, Cameroon, Hong Kong, China, Zimbabwe, France, Denmark, South Korea, Norway, Indonesia, Taiwan, Sweden, Singapore, Brazil, Greece, Guatemala, Poland, Japan, Slovakia, and Switzerland.

Many of you asked for interviews with academic and support staff. So, in this year's Bulletin we hear from Dr Naomi Appleton, Senior Lecturer in Asian Religions.

In the last couple of years, some of our major developments have been in the area of Science and Religion, which include both degree programmes and a more recent academic animal called a 'MOOC'!

We also feature information on our scholarships, which are increasingly important as fees and living costs continue to rise. As you'll see elsewhere in these pages, we are able to offer a significant number of scholarships each year. Thanks to the ongoing philanthropic support of our alumni and supporters we have been able to grow existing scholarship funds and establish new ones.

On a sad note, we include a few words on Professor Emeritus Duncan Forrester's death, and a brief review of some of his many contributions to New College.

In addition, we feature some activities and accomplishments of present students and alumni/alumnae. But let us know about what is happening in your life: employment, relationships, children, further studies, accomplishments, recognition, whatever. We like to keep up with former students, and your fellow former students would like to hear about you as well. Email: [I.hurtado@ed.ac.uk](mailto:I.hurtado@ed.ac.uk).

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# New College news

For more on the following and other news items about staff activities and New College events, go to the School's website: [www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/news-events](http://www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/news-events).

## Update on recruitment 2016-2017

**As illustrated in the following pages, New College (School of Divinity) continues to thrive.**

This academic year, New College welcomed once again undergraduate and postgraduate students from around the globe. As in previous years, our undergraduate intake for 2016/17 remained strong with over 80 new students enrolling in the School.

Likewise, our postgraduate enrollment continues to thrive, with 56 students starting PhD and masters courses.



## New College to Light Up!

**Plans are under way for new lighting to be put into place to illuminate New College again.**

The building was illuminated for many years, but some time ago this lighting became inoperative. Now, thanks to the generosity of a former student, Dr Robert Funk, this historic structure will again stand forth illuminated on the Mound by night! Opened in 1846, its location and towering dimensions make the New College building one of the most iconic structures among the many in Edinburgh. In addition to the lighting, essential repairs are taking place to the stonework and improvement are being made to the main entrance.

We hope to see all this work completed by July 2017.

As well, over the last year a new entry to the College foyer was installed, new carpeting was laid, and the foyer was completely re-designed, with a new lounge space where students and visitors can sit to read, study and/or chat.

Photographic impression of New College once lighting works have been completed.





From left to right, Melanie McConnell, Prof. Dirk Evers and Sarah Lane Ritchie.

## Science and Religion in New College

Under the leadership of Dr Mark Harris (email: [Mark.Harris@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Mark.Harris@ed.ac.uk)), the study of Science and Religion has progressed, attracting postgraduate students at both MSc and PhD levels. An article

on ‘Science and Religion in the United Kingdom’, in the June 2016 issue of *Zygon: Journal of Science and Religion*, identifies our Science and Religion programme as ‘the most creative and vigorous British training ground for new researchers in the science–religion debate’. The article also singles out key figures here in that programme: Dr Mark Harris, Professor David Fergusson, Professor Michael Northcott, Dr Michael Fuller, and Dr David Grummet, for their work in the field.

We also congratulate two of our recent students in Science and Religion who have won the 2016 Student Prize from the European Society for the Study of Science and Theology (ESSSAT). Prize winners Melanie McConnell (MSc student in Science and Religion), and Sarah Lane Ritchie (PhD student) were presented with their awards at the ESSSAT conference in Lodz, Poland by Prof Dirk Evers (President of ESSSAT). Melanie and Sarah join a growing list of award winners from the Edinburgh Science and Religion programme. Previous winners are Jaeho Jang (Peacocke Prize 2015) and Jenna Freudenberg (ESSSAT 2014).

For more information on our degrees in Science in Religion, check our web site here: [edin.ac/msc-science-religion](http://edin.ac/msc-science-religion).

## New Online Masters Degree and MOOC in Philosophy, Science and Religion – now recruiting

This academic year has seen the launch of two new study opportunities exploring the relationship between Philosophy, Science and Religion.

Both programmes will be available online and are the product of a collaboration between the University of Edinburgh’s Department of Philosophy and School of Divinity.

### MSc Philosophy, Science and Religion:

This masters allows students in any location to pursue the subject at their own pace, fitting their studies around other commitments such as employment. The programme involves attention to key scientific developments in areas such as quantum mechanics, evolutionary biology, and neuroscience; fundamental theological issues, such as creation, evil, and the soul; and the philosophical analytical tools needed to understand the relationship between them.

### MOOC on Philosophy, Science and Religion:

Our Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) is openly available and no prior qualification is required for enrollment.

MOOCs allow students to progress at their own pace and are free of charge. The course is available on the Coursera platform and will be delivered in three self-contained units:

- Science and Philosophy: exploring the limits of scientific knowledge and the implications for philosophy and religion.
- Philosophy and Religion: focusing on religious disagreement and comparing religious and scientific fundamentalism.
- Religion and Science: exploring whether eastern religions offer insights into the study of the mind, and examining the social and political consequences of the public debate about science and religion.

For more information, please visit our website or contact the Programme Director, Dr James Collin: [James.Collin@ed.ac.uk](mailto:James.Collin@ed.ac.uk)



## New College Inaugural Postgraduate Colloquium

In April 2016, New College hosted its inaugural, student-organised Postgraduate Colloquium. With fourteen papers from all areas of theology and religious studies, it was a celebration of the rich and diverse research conducted at the University of Edinburgh's School of Divinity.

The purpose of the colloquium was to allow masters students and first year PhD students to have a shot at presenting material from their dissertations. It was designed for those at the beginning of their academic journey, to provide them a less intimidating space to present their ideas.

The featured papers covered a variety of areas, including gender and sexuality, as well as

sessions dealing with the larger theoretical questions facing theology and religious studies—the nature of God, the relationship between revelation and reason and lastly, the use of newer methods and approaches to probe older questions and open up new vistas in research. The day ended with a panel discussion chaired by Ph.D. student Simeon Burke and featuring five New College academics

(Dr Naomi Appleton, Dr Alexander Chow, Dr Jamie Collin, Dr Anja Klein and Dr Lydia Schumacher). All in all, it was a day to reflect on the future of our disciplines, to celebrate current interdisciplinary projects and to reflect on ways that we might open up discussion within and beyond New College. Plans are underway to hold another colloquium this April.

## New College Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon

Only about 15% of the entries in Wikipedia are devoted to women. So, in early November 2016 staff and students gathered to help rectify that situation. The afternoon began with a rousing keynote speech from Rodger Bamkin from the movement 'Women in Red', who explained the importance of what was about to happen, followed by Dr Lesley Orr, a historian who talked of her experiences when researching and writing about prominent women in the history of religion.

After a bit of technical training, our twelve budding editors devoted the afternoon to creating and updating 16 Wikipedia pages highlighting the lives of key women in religion. Each editor has also committed to continue to update or create new pages on Wikipedia on an ongoing basis with a view to increasing the percentage of women focused entries.



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## In memoriam: **Professor Duncan Forrester** (1933-2016)

Sadly, the Reverend Professor Duncan Forrester passed away 29 November 2016 at the age of 83 after a long period of illness.

Professor Forrester will be remembered well by many students and former colleagues. He was Professor of Christian Ethics and Practical Theology 1978-2000, and founded the Centre for Theology and Public Issues in 1984, the first of its kind, an inter-disciplinary body that brought together people from universities, churches, politics and other areas of life to focus on social and political challenges. Today, a network of 24 similar centres operates around the world. He also served stints as Dean of the Faculty of Divinity and Principal of New College.

After studies in politics and theology at the universities of Glasgow, Chicago, and Edinburgh, he taught politics in Madras Christian College (South India), 1962-1970. During his time in India, he met and married Margaret McDonald, who shared his passion for the involvement of churches in public life. From 1970 to 1978, he was Chaplain and Lecturer in the School of African and Asian Studies in Sussex University. Then, in 1978 he was appointed to the Chair in Christian Ethics and Practical Theology in New College.

He attracted and welcomed postgraduate students from around the world, and was the author of ten monographs and essay collections. Prior to his illness, he exhibited seemingly boundless energy and enthusiasm, both in his academic work and in activities such as cycling, jogging and hill-walking.

Professor Forrester lectured widely in various countries, served on the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, and chaired the Theology and Religious Studies panel in the 2001 UK Research Assessment Exercise. He was awarded honorary doctorates by the universities of Glasgow, St. Andrews and Iceland, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 2007. He made an indelible contribution to New College, and will be remembered fondly by all who knew him. He is survived by his wife, Margaret, their two children, Donald and Catriona, and their families.

## Duncan Forrester's Legacy: The Centre for Theology and Public Issues

The Centre for Theology and Public Issues, established in 1984, was one of Professor Duncan Forrester's most significant and enduring contributions to New College, the University and to wider society. He imagined the Centre as a forum including people in the academy, public life and in the churches, attending with care to the voices of those who were marginalised, ignored or impoverished in diverse contexts – and attempting to exert some positive influence on public affairs. Justice was a prevailing concern – in his thinking and crucially as praxis, and he was determined that neither theology nor public policy should be done 'behind people's backs'. With characteristic energy, discipline and imagination, Duncan developed the Centre as a productive model of public theology, tackling a wide range of issues and building an ever-expanding network of interdisciplinary colleagues, practitioners and supporters. The Templeton Prize, awarded in 1999, for his commitment to 'extending theology into public life', was recognition of Duncan's groundbreaking leadership of CTPI.

We believe that the Centre's continuing work reflects the spirit and intention of its founder. Throughout the past year CTPI has engaged with some of the pressing issues of our time and context, creating space for people from different circumstances and perspectives to facilitate productive listening and dialogue. Different styles, participants and methods for such encounters have stimulated new insights and

challenges. Early in 2016 a series of seminars explored hard questions of justice and human rights, including presentations by Prof Alison Phipps (University of Glasgow), "'Where Were You": Hard Words for Hard Times – Languages and Justice in a Time of War on Refugees'; Dr Eurig Scandrett (Queen Margaret University) and New College graduate Elspeth Strachan, 'Justice and Rights in Israel/Palestine'; and Emma Ritch, Executive Director of Engender – the feminist organisation working in Scotland to advance equality between women and men – on 'Engendering Human Rights', about the challenges of using rights-based approaches to tackle gender inequalities.

Three significant and high profile public events highlighted the Centre's current interest in the legal and political dimensions of efforts to tackle gender-based violence and its impacts. Co-sponsored by CTPI and the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships (CRFR), Sheriff Principal Derek Pyle's lecture, 'Domestic Abuse, Criminal Justice and the Scottish Courts – New Directions?' stimulated lively debate by an expert panel and audience of practitioners, and made front page news in The Glasgow Herald. Another CTPI/CRFR collaboration offered a platform for discussion around the

theme 'Domestic abuse, child contact and the courts in Scotland: what needs to change?' And in November 2016, in partnership with Scottish Women's Aid, CTPI hosted a meeting at which Dr Eilidh Whiteford MP spoke about her Private Members Bill (passed with cross-party support to Second Reading stage in December) for the UK Government to ratify the Istanbul Convention on Violence Against Women and Domestic Abuse.

Collaboration has always been an enlivening feature of CTPI's modus operandi and it has been a pleasure to work with partners on diverse projects and events. These have ranged from 'My Neighbourhood: the Zabbaleen Rubbish Collectors of Cairo' (a unique multi-media performance by Christian Stejskal, and organised with Dr Jamie Furniss, lecturer in International Development in the School of Social and Political Science) to 'Creating a New Vision for an Old City' (a conference and workshop in collaboration with Edinburgh City Centre Churches Together). Following the death of Dr Elizabeth Templeton, CTPI organised a roundtable for people who knew this remarkable 'freelance theologian' to share stories and reflect on Elizabeth's unique legacy. There is a group working toward a publication arising from this event.



# Academic staff news

Here are some recent items about members of academic staff. You can keep acquainted with all our academic staff on the School of Divinity web site here: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/our-people>.

## Professor Mona Siddiqui



Professor Mona Siddiqui, OBE, continues to be leading commentator on interfaith relations and has delivered a number of prestigious lecture series over the past year, including:

- The Gifford Lecture Series at the University of Aberdeen - 'Struggle, Suffering and Hope: Explorations in Islamic and Christian Traditions'.
- A lecture series at Charles Sturt University in Sidney, Australia, based on her book 'Christians, Muslims and Jesus (Yale University Press 2013)
- The Vincent Strudwick Lecture at Kellogg College at the University of Oxford - 'The Politics of Piety: Voices, Values and Public Life'.

We also congratulate Professor Siddiqui on receiving an honorary doctorate (DLitt) from King's College London in 2016.

## Professor Stewart J. Brown



(Professor Brown and his wife, front row centre, at the Sinlau Lectures)

During Professor Stewart J. Brown's term as President, the annual summer conference of the UK Ecclesiastical History Society was hosted by New College in June 2016. Professor Brown delivered the initial paper as his presidential address, 'Providential Empire? The Churches and the Nineteenth-Century British Empire in India'. International in scope, the theme of the conference was 'The Church and Empire', and papers explored the relations of the Church to empires throughout Christian history. The conference attracted the largest number of papers in the history of the EHS, with nearly 80 papers and plenary lectures, including presentations by leading scholars from various countries. The winter conference, held in Cambridge, January 2017, continued the same theme, with an additional 40 papers presented. A selection of the papers of the summer and winter conferences will appear in a themed volume in the 'Studies in Church History' series, published by Cambridge University Press.

On 21-22 November 2016, Professor Brown presented the Sinlau Lectures at the Tainan Theological College and Seminary in Tainan, Taiwan. The Sinlau Lectures are supported by the Sinlau Christian Hospital, and his four lectures on 'The European Enlightenment, Religious Awakenings and Overseas Missions', explored the links between the Enlightenment, the awakening movements during the period of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, and the revival of the Protestant mission movement from the 1790s.

## Professor Timothy Lim



Professor Timothy Lim gave an invited lecture in Yale University, sponsored by the Yale Divinity School and the Judaica Studies Program in November 2016, 'An Indicative Definition of the Canon'.

## Dr Joshua Ralston



Dr Joshua Ralston took part in a special two-day conference focused on the eminent German theologian, Jürgen Moltmann, held in Emory University (Atlanta, USA) in October 2016. Dr Ralston's presentation addressed ways of reframing Muslim-Christian debates. In November 2016, he was awarded a \$425,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, to establish a Global Network of Christian/Muslim Studies.

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### Dr. Alison Elliot



Dr. Alison Elliot, OBE (Associate Director of the Centre for Theology and Public Issues), received a Scottish Public Service Lifetime Achievement Award in December 2016 in a ceremony held in the Scottish Parliament. She was also the first woman Moderator of the Church of Scotland, and has a long record of public service.

Created in 2014, the Awards recognise the wider contribution made to Scotland's civic society from within the Scottish Government, the civil service, the Scottish Parliament, the Third Sector and the wide-ranging and diverse responsibilities of public agencies. Dr Elliot is the third person to receive the Lifetime Achievement award (following Sir Harry Burns and Sir Neil McIntosh).

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### Dr Matthew Novenson



Dr Matthew Novenson gave invited seminar presentations in the universities of Yale, Columbia, and Princeton in February 2017.

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### Professor David Fergusson



In the Queen's birthday honours list (May 2016), Professor David Fergusson was awarded the OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) for his services to education, the arts, and the Church of Scotland.

He also received an award from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, which enabled him to do research as a visiting scholar at Princeton Theological Seminary. While at Princeton, he worked on a volume on providence and on the three-volume History of Scottish Theology, which he is co-editing with Marc Elliott (St. Andrews). While in the USA, he lectured in Austin Theological Seminary and spoke at the congregations of three former New

College students, Chris Currie (now in Shreveport, Louisiana) and Tasha and Phil Blackburn (now in Fort Smith, Arkansas). He also visited with former student Robert Funk in Oklahoma City, and with former student Lloyd Ogilvie in Los Angeles.

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### Dr David Grummet



Dr David Grummet (Lecturer in Christian Ethics and Practical Theology) has been appointed to serve a four-year term on the Peer Review College of the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). The Council is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), along with the other UK Research Councils. Each year it distributes £100 million of research funding to academics and postgraduates to enable cutting-edge research. Dr Grummet said: 'Because of the current prominence of religion in the public sphere, the AHRC was looking for more reviewers in theology. By serving in this way, I hope to help direct resources to where they will make the greatest scholarly and public impact'.

# Student news

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## Elijah Hixson

Elijah Hixson, PhD student in New Testament and Christian Origins, was one of two recipients of the 2016 Edwin M. Yamauchi Award for Excellence in Textual Studies. The award, given annually by The Museum of the Bible Scholars Initiative is presented to young scholars who have demonstrated rare aptitude in biblical language studies, shown exceptional academic performance and are pursuing terminal degrees.

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## Sarah Lane Ritchie



Sarah Lane Ritchie, PhD candidate in Science and Religion, has been appointed Research Fellow in Science and Theology at the University of St Andrews. This 33-month postdoctoral fellowship is funded by the Templeton Foundation and is part of a larger project involving Fellows in Science and Theology across the UK, the United States, and Europe. Working with Dr John Perry, Sarah will be researching the science and theology of human consciousness, with special emphasis on the science of belief and human wellbeing.

This research project is in continuity with Sarah's doctoral thesis, which focuses on theological and scientific issues surrounding divine action in the human mind. In addition to

her own research project, Sarah will be facilitating and enabling the international network of scholars involved in the larger project.

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## Jamie Lockhart

Jamie Lockhart, fourth-year MA Theology student, has been appointed the Chairman of YMCA Scotland. At twenty-four, he is the youngest Chairman to lead the organization. Jamie served for three years on the YMCA Executive Committee, and is enthusiastic about his new leadership role.

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## Ruth Foster



(Ruth appears in the picture above, fifth from left.)

Ruth Foster, MA student in Religious Studies, was one of four youth delegates representing the UK and Edinburgh in special sessions in the recent G20 meeting in China. She travelled to Beijing and Shanghai for the week of meetings where future leaders from the member nations met to create a proposal of practical actions to present to G20 leaders in the form of a written communiqué.

One of the youngest delegates at the event, she was chosen after a rigorous selection process by the Future Leaders Network. While in China Ruth discussed the topic 'Poverty Elimination and Joint Development',

focusing on sustainable and innovative approaches to poverty. These included access to Internet through improved communications infrastructure. The final communiqué and other information about G20 can be found here: <http://www.g20-youthsummit.org/en/index.html>. We are very proud of Ruth's contribution to such an important event!

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## Emilie Wiedemann



Emilie Wiedemann's MA Religious Studies honours dissertation, 'Processes of Narrative Construction and the Politics of Memory in the Interpretation of Holocaust Art', won the 2016 Undergraduate Essay Prize offered by the British Association for Jewish Studies. The Association awards annually one prize for an undergraduate essay and one for a postgraduate essay to students in universities in the UK and Ireland.

# Alumni news



**Former students, undergraduates and postgraduates, like to hear about one another. So, let us know what is happening in your life. Send your information to the Editor (Professor Larry Hurtado, email: l.hurtado@ed.ac.uk). Here are some reports sent in this year, which illustrate the international scope of our students, especially our postgraduates.**

**Bernardo Cho (PhD 2017)**

defended his thesis in November 2016, and in January 2017 took up a post as Lecturer in New Testament in the Seminario Teologico Servo de Cristo in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

**Joshua Coutts (PhD, 2016),**

married July 2016 to Mary (nee Cox). His thesis under contract for publication with Mohr-Siebeck (Tübingen, Germany). Currently,

course instructor for online learning, Regent College (Vancouver, Canada).

**Josaphat Tam (PhD, 2015),**

Associate Professor of Biblical Studies and the Librarian of Evangel Seminary in Hong Kong.

**Lonnie Bell (PhD, 2014),** Lead Preaching Pastor of Four Corners Church in Newnan, Georgia. Their second child was born January 2017.

**Carlos Sosa Siliezar (PhD, 2014),**

Visiting Assistant Professor of New Testament, Wheaton College (USA, 2016). Recent publication: *La condición divina de Jesús: Cristología y creación en el evangelio de Juan* (Biblioteca de Estudios Bíblicos Minor 24; Salamanca: Sígueme, 2016).

**Joyce Wai-Lan Sun (PhD, 2012),**

Assistant Professor and Librarian, China Graduate School of Theology, Hong Kong. New book: *This is True Grace: The Shaping of Social Behavioural Instructions by Theology in 1 Peter* (Langham Monographs, 2016).

**Brandon D. Crowe (PhD, 2010),**

Associate Professor of New Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary (Philadelphia, USA). Recent book: *The Essential Trinity: New Testament Foundations and Practical Relevance* (co-edited with Carl R. Trueman; Inter-Varsity Press, 2016). Forthcoming volume: *The Last Adam: A Theology of the Obedient Life of Jesus in the Gospels* (Baker Academic, 2017). We have four children, with the most recent addition arriving August 2016: daughter Eliza Catherine.

**Holly Carey (PhD, 2007),**

Professor of Biblical Studies in Point University (West Point, Georgia, USA), and Affiliate Instructor in Asbury Theological Seminary (Wilmore, Kentucky). Holly and her husband, Warren, have four children: Aidan (9), Cameron (8), Landon (3), and Chloe (1).

**Robert MacSwain (MTh, 1996),**

promoted to Associate Professor of Theology with tenure, School of Theology, University of the South (Sewanee, Tennessee).

# Staff interview

One of the requests that came from those who responded to the alumni survey was for articles featuring members of New College academic and support staff. So, in this issue, we feature a brief interview with one of our newer members of academic staff, asking her to respond to a few questions about being a part of New College.

**Dr Naomi Appleton is Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies, and one of several colleagues who have joined New College in the last few years.**

**When did you come to New College, and what made you interested in doing so?**

I arrived at New College in September 2012, initially on the University's 'Chancellor's Fellowship' scheme, which was a new 'tenure track' post with a research focus at the start. I had held a postdoctoral fellowship at Cardiff University for three years before that, and was looking for the next step in my career. I initially didn't want to apply for the job.

To be honest, I was put off by the name of the School (Divinity? What does that mean to a Religious Studies scholar?), and by the fact that the job was not (initially) on an open-ended contract. I also preferred the idea of a standard lectureship, as I had been on a research-intensive route already for some years. Actually, it was my partner who persuaded me to apply, as his work made it possible to move to Edinburgh. And then, the more I looked into the profile of Religious Studies here, the more I felt sure I could fit in well and make a contribution.

I also love Edinburgh as a place, and cannot believe how lucky I am to have landed here. I've now been given a regular Lecturer post, and recently promoted to Senior Lecturer.



**“MY ACADEMIC BACKGROUND IS BUDDHIST STUDIES, BUT IN THE LAST EIGHT YEARS I HAVE BECOME MORE AND MORE INTERESTED IN THE WAYS IN WHICH BUDDHISM TOOK SHAPE IN DIALOGUE WITH OTHER EARLY INDIAN RELIGIONS.**

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**What is your research/scholarly focus, and what are recent and/or current research projects?**

My main research interest is the role of stories in the construction, communication and challenge of religious ideas in South and Southeast Asia. My academic background is Buddhist studies, but in the last eight years I have become more and more interested in the ways in which Buddhism took shape in dialogue with other early Indian religions, namely Jainism and early Hinduism. Ancient India was a fascinating melting pot of religious ideas, and narrative was a major way in which different traditions explored what made them distinctive.

I have just finished my third monograph, this one on characters that are shared between the three narrative traditions of early India. Now I'm busy translating an Indian Buddhist text (from Sanskrit) and also researching the role of “solitary Buddhas” (pratyekabuddhas) in early Buddhist narrative.

**What unexpected things did you find after joining New College?**

I wasn't really sure what to expect from New College, though I had got a great feeling about the School from my interview. I was warmly welcomed by my new colleagues, and for the first time in my career I was thanked by my line manager for my contributions to the School, which meant a lot.

The sense of community here is wonderful, and I do enjoy the beautiful setting too. Having to wrap myself in a blanket in my office is amply compensated for by that view as you leave the building! Less pleasant surprises have included the sense of relative isolation I feel here in research terms. I was spoilt in Cardiff with several colleagues working in very close fields, and I just don't have that here, so I increasingly feel I work in two separate worlds – my research community (nationally and internationally) and the university community. Both are excellent, however, so I don't feel I can complain.

# Spotlight on research: The Wode Psalter and Singing the Reformation



*Thanks to the ideas and drive of Martin Ritchie (PhD student at New College and probationer minister at St Mary's Parish Church, Haddington), we were once more Singing the Reformation in the spring of 2016. This was different from the live music and recordings made by the Wode Psalter Project in 2011 [see [www.wode.div.ed.ac.uk](http://www.wode.div.ed.ac.uk)].*

We wanted to understand more about how, after the adoption of Protestant worship from 1560, the first generations of Scots might have experienced the singing of psalms and worship in a typical burgh church. In particular, we wanted to test how they coped with the new metrical versions of the psalms in the *Psalmes Buik* and how that affected a congregation's entire experience of worship. The project involved a series of workshops and training that culminated in a recording weekend which had as its finale a recreation of worship c1600 in the Scots language held in St Mary's Parish Church, Haddington.

For the workshops, recording weekend and the worship recreation we were based in Haddington's medieval parish church where as a boy John Knox had sung the Latin psalms and then after 1560 the building had echoed with metrical and vernacular versions of those same psalms. Susan Hamilton, the present Director of Music, trained

a dozen members of the Junior Choir of St Mary's who led the treble (soprano) part for the metrical psalms. Iain McLarty acted as Precentor and coached eight other trained singers who took the lead for the alto, tenor and bass parts, just like members of an early modern 'Sang Schule' would have done.

**"IT WAS EXTREMELY MOVING TO HEAR SETTINGS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN SUNG SINCE THE MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY COME TO LIFE.**

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The 'congregation' was represented by 60 enthusiastic singers. In the workshops they received musical direction from Susan Hamilton alongside coaching in early modern Scots pronunciation by Jamie Reid-Baxter. To provide a break from the hard musical work, I gave a lecture on the historical background of the Reformation period and the significance of the metrical psalms.

On April 17 to conclude the recording weekend, we created a worship experience containing the key elements of Sunday morning worship condensed into the space of one hour. As Martin explains, 'In the circumstances, an exact recreation was not possible, but we felt that it was important to place some of the Psalms in their liturgical context and to open up the experience to a wider public. Around 180 people gathered in the nave of St Mary's, Haddington to catch a glimpse of the prayer, praise and preaching experience of the Reformed Kirk. As significant as the content was the layout of the building. Rather than facing towards

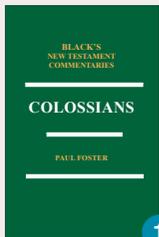
the east end, the congregation gathered around the pulpit, half-way down the nave in a manner typical of the converted medieval kirks after 1560. The intimacy and corporate feeling generated by this layout was a crucial part of our glimpse into the dynamics of Reformed worship. The roles of Reader and Precentor were taken by Martin Ritchie and Iain McLarty, while Jamie Reid Baxter took the role of Minister and preached a condensed version of a late sixteenth century sermon by Robert Rollock, first Principal of the University of Edinburgh.

It was extremely moving to hear settings that have not been sung

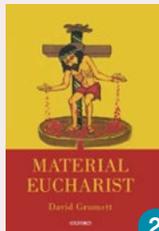
since the mid-seventeenth century come to life in this way – the notes on the page were transformed into the ephemeral sound of devotional music. We hope that you will take the chance to listen to these recordings, freely download and copy the sheet music editions and sing the thirteen different psalms on any occasion. They are in the public domain, so there are no copyright issues. A recording of the worship is also available on the Singing the Reformation 2016 page, along with an order of service.' <http://www.churchservicesociety.org/singing-reformation-2016>



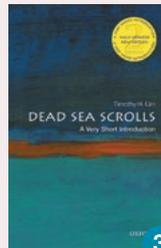
# Reading matters: latest books by our academic staff



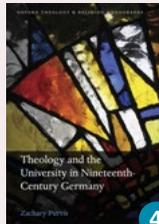
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**1 Professor Paul Foster (Head of the School of Divinity) saw his commentary published, *Colossians: Black New Testament Commentary Series* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).**

**2 Dr David Grummett's new book, *Material Eucharist* (Oxford University Press, 2016),** examines the theological significance of the bread and wine used in Christian worship and their place in daily life. David presents worship as active and transformative, and sets it within the whole created order. He also shows how the bread and wine bring communicants to share in Christ's resurrection and may build social bonds.

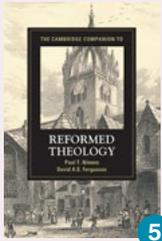
**3 Professor Timothy Lim's very successful work, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Very Short Introduction*, originally published in 2006,** has now appeared in a second and fully revised edition (Oxford University Press, 2016). The updates include discussions of the advances of Qumran research regarding the archaeology of Khirbet Qumran and

how the findings relate to the communities reflected in the Scrolls, and the Essenes, as well as cutting-edge research on the concept of authoritative scriptures and the canonical process. The first edition of this book was translated into several languages, and has been made into an audio-book by Audible.co

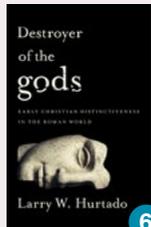
In addition, he edited a collection of papers on the Biblical Canons originally presented at a conference held in New College (May 2015). The contributions to the volume, *When Texts are Canonized* (Society of Biblical Literature, 2017), by leading scholars in the subject explore a variety of questions. How did canonization take place and what difference does it make to a text once it is canonized? Some of the papers probe the canonical process: Why were certain books, but not others, included in the canon? What criteria were used to select the books of the canon? Was canonization a divine fiat or human act? What was the nature of the authority of the laws and narratives of the Torah? How did prophecy come to be included in the canon?

Others reflect on the consequences of canonization: What are the effects in elevating certain writings to the status of "Holy Scriptures"? What happens when a text is included in an official list? What theological and hermeneutical questions are at stake in the fact of the canon? Should the canon be unsealed or reopened to include other writings?

**4 Dr Zachary Purvis published *Theology and the University in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016),** which examines the dual transformation of institutions and ideas that led to the emergence of theology as science, the paradigmatic project of modern theology associated with Friedrich Schleiermacher. It offers a comprehensive investigation of German university theology, weaving its story into the broader tapestry of German and European intellectual culture. In doing so, the book presents a substantially new way to understand the relationship between theology and the university, both in nineteenth-century Germany and, indeed, beyond.



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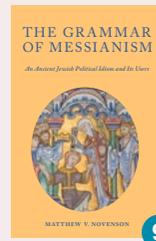
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**5 Professor David Fergusson co-edited (with Professor Paul Nimmo, Aberdeen), *The Cambridge Companion to Reformed Theology* (Cambridge University Press, 2016),** which offers an introduction to Reformed theology, one of the most historically important, ecumenically active, and currently generative traditions of doctrinal enquiry, by way of reflecting upon its origins, its development, and its significance. This is a particularly timely work in this 500th anniversary year of the Protestant Reformation.

**6 Professor Emeritus Larry Hurtado had two books published in 2016. *Destroyer of the gods: Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World* (Baylor University Press),** focuses on several features of early Christianity that made it unusual, even odd and objectionable to many, in the first three centuries. In February he learned that this book was accorded the 2017 PROSE Award in Archaeology and Ancient History by the Association of American Publishers.

In another, smaller volume arising from his 2016 Père Marquette Lecture, *Why on Earth Did Anyone Become a Christian in the First Three Centuries?* (Marquette University Press, 2016), he explores the social and political costs of Christian faith in the earliest centuries.

**7 Dr Naomi Appleton's new book, *Shared Characters in Jain, Buddhist and Hindu Narrative: Gods, Kings and Other Heroes* (Routledge, 2017),** explores key religious and social ideals, as well as points of contact, dialogue and contention between different worldviews, focusing on three main types of figures: gods, kings, and heroic individuals that are of particular importance in South Asian narrative traditions. She shows the similarities and noteworthy differences in the way these religious traditions portray these figures.

**8 Professor Mona Siddiqui edited a four-volume collection of essays, *Muslim-Christian Encounters* (Routledge, 2016),** comprising sixty-one contributions by a galaxy of scholars to this important subject. As well, her general-reader book, *50 Islam Ideas You Really Need to Know*, appeared (Kindle book, 2016).

**9 Dr Matthew Novenson's new book, *The Grammar of Messianism: An Ancient Jewish Political Idiom and its Users* (Oxford University Press, 2017),** probes the ways that ancient Jewish tradition expressed messianic hopes, and what forms

# Scholarships update

The School of Divinity is fortunate to have been supported over the years by many alumni and friends who have generously given to a wide range of scholarship funds and endowments.

Scholarships enable us to attract the most talented students from around the world and allows us to provide financial assistance to these students during their time at the University.

In the 2016/2017 academic session we were able to offer £156,000 in scholarships. These went to twenty-three new postgraduate students. The strong international dimension of our postgraduate students is evident. Sixteen of the twenty-eight new PhD students, and twenty of the twenty-eight new masters students were 'overseas' students.

**“KIRBY LAING FOUNDATION TO BE SPENT OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS ON AWARDS TO STUDENTS FROM OUTSIDE THE NORTH ATLANTIC AREA**

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In the last year or so, our scholarships funds have been enriched through contributions from various individuals. The most recent developments include a significant donation from the Kirby Laing Foundation to be spent over the next several years on awards to students from outside the North Atlantic area. This year, these awards



went to three students from India and Brazil. In addition, there were two new scholarship endowment funds established and a significant increase to one of our funds established some years ago.

Following her very generous bequest, we have now established the Ruth Page Scholarship Fund. Dr Page was a long-time member of academic staff, specializing in Systematic Theology, and was also a former Principal of New College. According to Dr Page's wishes, this fund will support postgraduate students from New Zealand, Australia, the islands of the South Pacific, Indonesia and Japan.

A new Thomas F. Torrance Scholarship Fund has been established to support Church of Scotland candidates. In memory of one of New College's most distinguished theologians and church leaders, the fund has been endowed initially by the Scottish Journal of Theology, a journal that he founded. We intend to grow this fund in



the years ahead. The Principal of New College would be glad to speak with anyone interested in making a gift in memory of Professor Torrance, who will have many former students and others who admired his scholarship.

#### **“A NEW THOMAS F. TORRANCE SCHOLARSHIP FUND HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO SUPPORT CHURCH OF SCOTLAND CANDIDATES**



A substantial donation has been made to increase the amount of the J. S. Stewart Scholarship Fund by Mr Robert Funk from Oklahoma City. James S. Stewart was Professor of New Testament Language, Literature and Theology (1947-1966), and also a widely-respected preacher. Mr Funk's continued support of New College in various projects is deeply appreciated. Together with Dr Lloyd Ogilvie, he has greatly enhanced this important source of funding for our postgraduate students. We welcome further gifts to this fund as well.

If you would like to make a contribution to any of our scholarship funds, or wish to discuss establishing a new fund, contact Professor Paul Foster (Head of the School of Divinity; email: [Paul.Foster@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Paul.Foster@ed.ac.uk)) or Professor David Fergusson (Principal of New College; email: [David.Fergusson@ed.ac.uk](mailto:David.Fergusson@ed.ac.uk)). One option is to include the School of Divinity in your will, and we can offer advice in how to do this. UK taxpayers can get tax-relief for any such contributions, and tax-payers in other jurisdictions may be eligible for similar benefits. For example, American tax-payers can contribute via the University of Edinburgh Development Trust (more information here: [edin.ac/development-trust](http://edin.ac/development-trust)).

# Upcoming events

## April

5 April. 17.30 – 18.30

### Public lecture – New College

#### Asian Religions Network: Khyentse Lecture in Buddhist Studies

Khyentse Lecture given by Professor Bernard Faure, Columbia University, focusing on the death of the Buddha, as seen from Japan.

## May

5 May. 14.00 – 16.00

### CPL event for Scottish Schoolteachers – New College

#### Approaching Religion Through Story: A CPL Event for Scottish Schoolteachers.

A primary teacher and a secondary RMPS teacher will share the ways they have used the resources in their classrooms. We will invite discussion about further ways to integrate stories from religious traditions into the curriculum.

1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11 May.  
17.30 – 18.30

### Gifford Lecture Series – Business School Auditorium, 29 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh

#### Religion Unbound: Ideals and Powers from Cicero to King

Professor Jeffrey Stout (Princeton University) will give six lectures under the series title 'Religion Unbound: Ideals and Powers from Cicero to King'

Monday 1 May

Lecture 1 – Religion since Cicero

Tuesday 2 May

Lecture 2 – Early Modern Critics of Tyranny and Oppression

Thursday 4 May

Lecture 3 – Why Religion, Faith, and Freedom Proved Hard to Reconcile

Monday 8 May

Lecture 4 – Abolitionism, Political Religion, and Secularism

Tuesday 9 May

Lecture 5 – Slavishness, Democracy, and the Death of God

Thursday 11 May

Lecture 6 – Religion and the Politics of Explanation

25 May. 13:00

### Alumni Lunch – New College

An opportunity to meet other alumni in an informal setting. The event will take place in the New College Garden (Weather permitting)

## June

29 June – 1 July

### Yale/Edinburgh History of Missions Consultation, Yale Divinity School, New Haven, USA

The annual consultation sponsored by the Centre for the Study of World Christianity (University of Edinburgh), the Yale Divinity School, and the Overseas Ministries Study Center alternates meetings between Edinburgh and Yale Divinity School (New Haven, USA). This year the consultation will be held in Yale Divinity School on the theme 'Migration, Exile, and Pilgrimage in the History of Missions and World Christianity'.

## July

10 – 12 July

### British Association for Jewish Studies Annual Conference 2017 – New College

The title for this year's conference is 'Jews on the Move: Exploring the movement of Jews, objects, texts, and ideas in space and time'.

## September

20 September. 12.30-17.15

### CPD event for Ministers and Worship Leaders

#### Biblical Resources for Year B

Academics from the School of Divinity will explore issues raised by the readings for Lectionary Year B. Topics include current scholarship on the Gospel of John and Advent themes in the Hebrew Bible. The cost is £12.

## November

Dates to be confirmed

### Conference

The Centre for Theology and Public Issues is planning to host a conference related to Professor Duncan Forrester's work in late November 2017 at New College. More details will appear on the News section of the School Website in the Summer.

10 November 2017 –  
8 March 2018

### Open Exhibition

The New College Library and the University Main Library will open an exhibition in observance of the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation, 10 November 2017 to 8 March 2018. The exhibition will draw upon the rich Special Collections of the two libraries, focusing on the role of books of various kinds in the rapid geographical spread of the Reformation.

Please visit our events page to find out more.

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)