



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
School of Divinity

NEW COLLEGE

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EDITOR'S NOTE



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Welcome to this year's edition of *New College*, the School of Divinity's annual magazine.

Our cover image—a striking aerial shot of the New College quad by PhD student Andrej Zeman—has been chosen for the way it presents a familiar place from an unfamiliar perspective. It marks one of this year's major events: the completion of a multiple-year building renovation project here on the Mound. While those works have safeguarded the long-term use of our unique building, they have also given us the chance to add to it in ways that reflect our rich and diverse history, as seen in our article on sculptor Tim Chalk's work on our new Mary of Guise plaque (p. 7).

We are proud to bring stories of success from members of the New College community. This year's stories cover alumni now working in the Smithsonian Institute, the British Army, and the Prison Service. I hope they inspire you.

As ever, we are glad to celebrate all the successes of our alumni community, and are always pleased to hear from former students about developments in their own lives.

Dr James Eglinton
Editor



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NEW COLLEGE
NEWS



Principal Jack

Prof. Alison Jack has been inducted as Principal of New College, succeeding Prof. Susan Hardman Moore. Her installation was presided over by the Moderator of the Presbytery of Sterling, with Prof. Hardman Moore serving as preacher.

HRH Queen Elizabeth II

The New College community was honoured to have two prominent participants in the funeral of HRH Queen Elizabeth II at St Giles' Cathedral: Prof. David Fergusson, our former Chair of Divinity, and now Honorary Professorial Fellow, in his capacity as Dean of the Chapel Royal in Scotland, and Sam Nwokoro, a current PhD student and assistant minister at St Giles'.



AHRC Success

Dr Arkotong Longkumer has received a major grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council for a multiple-year project on 'Decolonising the Museum.' This award, in excess of £1 million, will explore items taken from Nagaland and now housed in the Pitts Rivers Museum, in Oxford.

Tutor of the Year

Final year PhD student Stephen Dolan won the Student Teacher of the Year at the 2022 EUSA Teaching Awards. This is the second year in a row in which a New College PhD student has won this award.



Science and Theology

Prof. Mark Harris has been elected president of the European Society for the Study of Science and Theology—one of the longest-running and most distinguished international scholarly societies for the study of the relationship of the natural sciences and theology.

Theological Promise

Two recent New College PhD graduates have won one of the world's most prestigious academic prizes for early career theological scholars: the Manfred Lautenschlaeger Award for Theological Promise. The awards recognised the outstanding quality of the PhD dissertations of Dr Matthew Sharp, now a Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellow at the University of St Andrews, and Dr Ryan Collman, now a Research Assistant at the University of Sheffield.



British Academy Fellowship

Dr Anja Klein has been awarded a £100k Mid-Career Fellowship by the British Academy. This award will enable her to work on 'Theology born from Crisis: Resilience Discourse in the three Major Prophets.'

Black History

This year's New College Black History Month Lecture was given by Imam Mustafa Briggs, on 'Beyond Bilal: Black History in Islam,' and was jointly sponsored by the School of Divinity, the University of Edinburgh Islamic Society, Race.Ed, and the Edinburgh Race Equality Network.



60 SECOND INTERVIEW



Dr Pedro Feitoza is Lecturer in Latin American Christianity, and joined the School of Divinity in 2022.

Where are you from?

I was born in Goiânia, in the centre of Brazil, but moved to Brasília as a child.

How did that shape you?

My parents were musical evangelists. I spent a lot of my childhood travelling around Brazil in a VW Kombi with their band. That gave me a great interest in music, and in Brazilian evangelicalism.

What kind of student were you?

I was more interested in music than studying, but I became fascinated by social history in the last year of my undergraduate degree.

What's the biggest misconception about your field?

That Brazilian evangelicals in history were all conservative and imperialistic, and served foreign interests to disrupt local cultures.

What drew you to New College?

The intellectual community, especially the Centre for the Study of World Christianity.

Tell us about someone who has influenced your career so far.

My PhD supervisor at Cambridge, Prof. David Maxwell. I was shy about my ideas, but he encouraged me to have confidence in them.

How would you like to be remembered?

As a teacher who encourages his students to feel confident in their ideas, and make their own contributions to the field.



MARY OF GUISE

Visitors to New College will be well familiar with the statue of John Knox that looms large in the quad—a memorial that vividly depicts his dramatic place in Scottish history.

The building renovation work of recent years has given us occasion to consider the place of others in

“She was quite a complex person, an astute political operator, with a clear vision of the art of ruling and a strong sense of personal survival.”

that history, and in particular, prominent women whose stories also form the backdrop to our school. Under the leadership of Prof. Susan Hardman Moore, that reflection led to the celebrated Scottish sculptor Tim Chalk being commissioned to create a bronze plaque of Knox's contemporary, Mary of Guise (1515-60), for the quad. The mother of Mary, Queen of Scots, her palace on the Mound fell into ruin, before eventually being demolished in 1845, when New College was built.

Chalk, who had previously contributed work to John Knox House, reflects on his new subject: “She was quite a complex person, an astute political operator, with a clear vision of the art of ruling and a strong sense of personal survival. I'm pleased by the juxtaposition of her with Knox because, generally, women's place in history hasn't been recognised. This adds a balance to that.”



**BRIGADIER
BEN WRENCH**



then spend three years in the Army, then complete theological college and serve the church after that. That was my life plan at 17!

“One of the highlights of my time at New College was that in my third year I was an exchange student at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I lived in the Old City, and stayed in the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim quarters. I used this time to collect material for my dissertation on two Jewish extremist groups in modern Israel. I also studied forms of Christian and Islamic extremism. Little did I know that my career in the Army would be dominated by conflicts connected with extremist ideologies.

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“I went from New College to Sandhurst, and then my first operational tour in Northern Ireland. I needed to understand the religious dynamics there.”

Ireland. I needed to understand the religious dynamics there. I then worked in Hong Kong, where the dynamics of Eastern and Western religions were important. Then I found myself in Kosovo, where we were protecting Muslims against Christians. After that, I served in Iraq and Afghanistan. In all of my operational and command experience, studying religions, cultures, and civilisations gave me empathy. It made me look at things differently.

“My fellow students were an interesting group. Some were 18, but others had come from a previous career. One had been a lighthouse keeper! They came from all walks of life. I also joined the University’s Savoy Opera Group. These all gave me lifelong friendships. I always tell people that if I could do my academic journey again, I would’ve done exactly the same degree.”

Brigadier Ben Wrench is Commander of the 51st Infantry Brigade and Army HQ Scotland.

RELIGION ON THE FRONTLINE



Former New College student Brigadier Ben Wrench graduated with an MA (Hons) in Religious Studies in 1993, following which he embarked on a career in the British Army. We sat down with him to discuss his time here, and its influence on his work in often complex situations across the globe.

“From the age of 13, I thought I would work for the Church of

England. At the age of 17, and receiving career advice from school and others, it was recommended that after studying theology or religion at university, I should gain more life experience, and then turn to serving the church. For this, a chaplain at my school recommended the Army—it’d show me a lot of, and a lot about life, even in a short space of time. I opted to read Religious Studies,



“My faith was a big factor in studying theology. As a Christian I wanted to study my faith in a context where I’d be challenged by people who thought differently from me.”

S O P H I E

CHANGING THE PRISON SERVICE

Our students go on to many different careers. We spoke to Sophie (MA Hons, Theology) about her path from New College to the Prison Service.

“My faith was a big factor in studying theology. As a Christian I wanted to study my faith in a context where I’d be challenged by people who thought differently from me.

“I’d never visited Edinburgh before, but as soon as I came here I was sold. When I visited New College it was so friendly. There was a community feel that I hadn’t experienced when visiting other universities.

“I loved the choice to decide what you want your degree to look like. Alongside theology I took outside courses in Mandarin and Criminal Justice. Working in small groups with students from different backgrounds helped me interact with people, and stretched my thinking. The staff were so personable as well.

“In my workplace I need to find points of connection. Relating to people from different backgrounds and creating space for their ideas, and being able to pull out the gold in other people, are all things I

developed at New College. I did a year abroad in Sydney, Australia, which was great.

“I’m on a two-year graduate programme called Unlocked Graduates for people who are interested in changing the prison system for the better. I work full-time as a prison officer in a men’s prison in London, and I’m also studying for a Masters in Applied Custodial Leadership.

“At New College, I was inspired by a friend who worked with offenders as they left prison. I wrote my dissertation on John’s Gospel and rehabilitation in English prisons. After university I took a year out to work in another job, and one of my friends started in a graduate scheme working in a women’s prison. I then applied, and loved the assessment process.

“The job is hard. You see people at their lowest moments. But the small wins are really worth it. You see violence, but also acts of kindness. Showing care to vulnerable people is my faith in practice. A lot of men explore faith for the first time in prison. I can engage with them on that level as well. Next year I’ll be on placement with the Ministry of Justice. Long term, my goal is to make changes so that people have a different life when they leave prison.”

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DR ERIC LEWIS WILLIAMS

TELLING STORIES THAT SHOULD BE TOLD

New College alumnus Dr Eric Lewis Williams graduated with a PhD in Religious Studies in 2015. Following a first academic appointment at Harvard University, where he was Lecturer in African and African American Studies, his career took a surprising turn when he became Curator of Religion at the Smithsonian National Museum's Center for the Study of African American Religious Life, in Washington, DC—the first to occupy this role in the renowned institution's history.

Having begun with a BA in sociology at the University of Illinois, Williams progressed to a Master of Arts in Theological Studies at McCormick Theological Seminary, and then on to the MDiv at Duke Divinity School. "That's where I became exceedingly interested in the sociology of religions. I learned how to use categories from the history of religions to understand the Pentecostal experience." (Williams grew up as the son of a Pentecostal pastor.) "After Duke, I worked for a church in New York City. There, I became interested in African and diasporic Christianities. I came into contact with scholars in the U.K., and eventually ended up reaching out to Afe Adogame at Edinburgh. I applied and was accepted. It was a wonderful context for my work.

"Edinburgh is so beautiful. To be confronted by that beauty on a daily basis, it affects you. I was around people from all over the world who were raising questions on contextual realities. It was wonderful in every way.

"Every day is different in my job. My work is primarily focused on the collections, on acquiring objects for the museum. There, my job is about telling stories that should be told. It requires a lot of travel, and the cultivation of relationships. I'm also involved in public programming: we believe our museum belongs to the world, so we take the museum around the country, and the world, through conferences and exhibits. Alongside that, teaching invigorates me." (Williams is a regular guest lecturer at a host of other seminaries and colleges.)

"I work with journalists in helping them understand religious artefacts. In 2017, the New York Times was planning a story on the discovery of a hymnal belonging to the abolitionist Harriet Tubman. Of course, Tubman was illiterate but could sing every hymn in the book. Talking through the liberative power of that kind of book with the journalist changed the direction of the article. It's an example of the different angles that religion scholars bring to the museum."

NEW STAFF



Dr Peter Atkins is Teaching Fellow in Old Testament and Hebrew Bible. He is a graduate of the Universities of Sheffield and Chester. He is also co-founder and co-chair of the 'Animals and the Bible' research group for the European Association of Biblical Studies.



Dr Alys Ghose is Lecturer in Religion and Decolonisation. A graduate of the University of Edinburgh (PhD 2019), she formerly held lectureships in the anthropology of race and decoloniality at the University of Edinburgh, and in social anthropology at the University of Manchester.



Dr Sneha Roy is a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow. Her postdoctoral research deals with women's participation in the Hindu-right in the borderland between India and Bangladesh. Her PhD was taken at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.



Dr Pedro Feitoza is Lecturer in Latin American Christianity. He joins having completed a PhD at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and a postdoctoral fellowship at the Brazilian Centre of Analysis and Planning in São Paulo.



Dr Felicity Loughlin is Lecturer in the History of Modern Christianity. An Edinburgh graduate (MA Hons 2012, MTh 2013, PhD 2018), she was formerly a Research Fellow in St Andrews, and a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in Edinburgh.



Dr Walaa Quisay is a Leverhulme Postdoctoral Fellow. An Oxford graduate, she was formerly a Teaching Fellow at the University of Birmingham. Her postdoctoral research is on carceral theology and prison literature in Egypt.

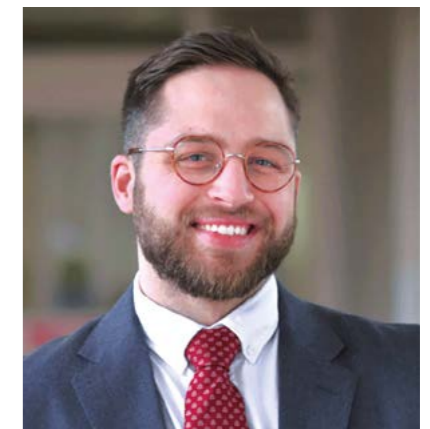


Ellie Ashton (MA Hons 2022) is now the Sustainability Advisor for a Hulu television production with responsibility for the production's carbon footprint. Before this, she was an Environmental Assistant for Netflix.

Dr Cory Brock (MTh 2014, PhD 2018) and Dr Nathaniel Gray Sutanto (PhD 2018) recently co-authored *Neo-Calvinism: A Theological Introduction* (Bellingham: Lexham, 2023). Together with their former doctoral supervisor Dr James Eglinton (PhD 2010), they have also co-translated and published Herman Bavinck's *Christianity and Science* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2023).



Dr Cameron Clausing (PhD 2020) is soon to publish *Theology and History in the Methodology of Herman Bavinck: Revelation, Confession, and Christian Consciousness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023).



Dr Greg Parker (PhD 2022) is Assistant Professor of Theology at Cairn University. With Dr Cameron Clausing, he translated and edited Herman Bavinck's *Guidebook for Instruction in the Christian Religion* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2022).



Dr Ryan Collman
(MTh 2016, PhD 2021) and
Dr Matthew Sharp
(MTh 2016, PhD 2020)

were both winners of the Manfred Lautenschlaeger Award for Theological Promise. Dr Collman has recently published *The Apostle to the Foreskin: Circumcision in the Letters of Paul* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023), and has been appointed Research Assistant on the Reimagining Paul project at the University of Sheffield.



Dr Elena Dugan
(MSc 2014)

is Instructor in Religion at Phillips Academy Andover, and a Research Associate at Harvard University.

Eleanor Glynn
(MA Hons 2022)

is Communications Officer at Migrant Help, a charity that helps refugees, asylum seekers, survivors of trafficking and modern slavery.

Morgan Haddow
(MA Hons 2022)

is currently taking a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) in secondary English teaching at the University of Strathclyde.

Dr Daniel Jackson
(PhD 2019)

is Researcher in New Testament at the Freie Theologische Hochschule Gießen.



Dr Tore Johnsen
(PhD 2020)

was nominated for the Petter Dass Prize—an award that recognises outstanding Christian contributions to Norwegian public conversation.

Dr Laura Mair
(MA Hons 2010, PhD 2016)

is the Creese Lecturer in Modern Scottish History at the University of Aberdeen.

Seren McCormack
(MA Hons 2022)

is a Supervisor at Office Shoes in Newcastle.

Amy MacKinnon
(MA Hons 2022)

is a Learning and Teaching Assistant in the Professional Services team at New College.



Jamilla Mohammed
(MA Hons 2022)

is a Youth Engagement Officer for Beacon Counselling, and runs a 12 week early intervention course for teenagers struggling with emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Dr Dieter Roth
(PhD 2009)

has been promoted to Associate Professor of New Testament at Boston College.

Casey Scott
(MA Hons 2022)

since graduating has travelled through sixteen countries and is currently living in Australia. Next year, he plans to begin a Masters in Psychology and Therapeutic Practices.



Dr Jowita Thor
(MA Hons 2015, MTh 2016, PhD 2022)

is Research Assistant in the School of Social Work and Social Policy at the University of Strathclyde. She is working on a project on mass decarceration funded by the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research.



Tommie Trelawny-Vernon
(MA Hons 2022)

is a journalist and documentarian. His first multi-part podcast series, *The Interruption*, has just been released. He has over 747,000 subscribers on YouTube channel, *hochelaga*.



EDINBURGH BUDDHIST STUDIES

Led by Dr Naomi Appleton, Senior Lecturer in Asian Religions and co-director of the Edinburgh Buddhist Studies network, the study of Buddhism continues to grow at the School of Divinity.

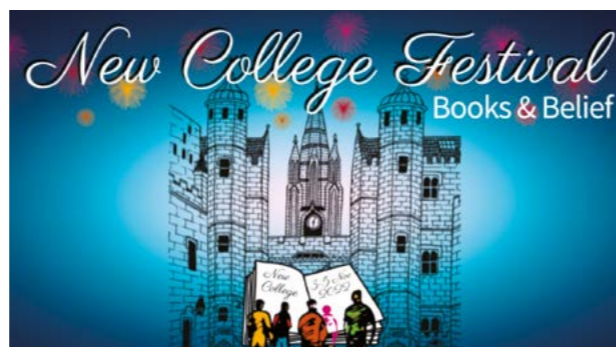
Supported by the Khyentse Foundation, Dr Paul Fuller has been appointed the network's first schools outreach officer. Over the past year, this has included a Buddhism Discovery Day for school pupils, and 'Who is the Buddha?' CPD workshops and online resources for school teachers. This year's Khyentse Lecture in Buddhist Studies will be given by Dr Rita Langer on March 29.



BOOKS AND BELIEF



18 Following their critically acclaimed Winter Tales book festival in 2021, Professors Alison Jack and Jolyon Mitchell welcomed a range of outstanding speakers and writers to the Mound in November 2022 for Books and Belief—a two-day event on the creative range of ways in which writers explore a diverse array of beliefs. Over 800 people came to hear a cast of speakers including Devi Sridhar, N.T. Wright, Chitra Ramaswamy, Dina Nayeri, Leila Aboulela, S.J. Parris, and the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams. This year's festival will take place from Nov. 2-4.



“Books and Belief was a wonderful event. We’re very much looking forward to welcoming the public back at this year’s festival, and to hearing from another group of speakers—including the historian Tom Holland of *The Rest is History and Dominion* fame.”

Prof. Mitchell

READING MATTERS

A SELECTION OF RECENT BOOKS BY ACADEMIC STAFF



- Peter Atkins*, *The Animalising Affliction of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4: Reading Across the Human-Animal Boundary* (London: T&T Clark, 2023).
- Alexander Chow (ed)*, *Scottish Missions to China: Commemorating the Legacy of James Legge (1815-1897)* (Leiden: Brill, 2022).
- James Eglinton (ed and tr)*, *J.H. Bavinck*, *Personality and Worldview* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2023).
- James Eglinton and George Harinck (eds)*, *Neo-Calvinism and Roman Catholicism* (Leiden: Brill, 2023).
- Michael Fuller (ed)*, *Science and Religion in Western Literature: Critical and Theological Studies* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022).
- Michael Fuller, Dirk Evers, and Anne Runehov (eds)*, *Issues in Science and Theology: Creative Pluralism?* (Cham: Springer, 2022).
- Mark Harris (ed)*, *God and the Book of Nature: Experiments in a Theology of Science* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2023).

- Suzanna Millar, Katherine Dell, and Arthur Keefe (eds)*, *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Wisdom Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022).
- Suzanna Miller, Jolyon Mitchell, Francesca Po, and Martyn Percy (eds)*, *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Religion and Peace* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2022).
- Mona Siddiqui and Nathanael Vette (eds)*, *A Theology of Gratitude: Christian and Muslim Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022).
- Brian Stanley (ed), Andrew F. Walls*, *The Missionary Movement from the West: A Biography from Birth to Old Age* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2023).
- Walaa Quisay*, *Neo-traditionalism in Islam in the West: Orthodoxy, Spirituality and Politics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2023).

ATTRACTING THE BRIGHTEST AND BEST

On average around 50% of Divinity postgraduate students are awarded some level of scholarship funding, all based on academic merit.



Otto Bam

Originally from South Africa, Otto received a School of Divinity scholarship for the MTh in Religion and Literature.



Miriam García Jiménez

Miriam, from Wahaca, Mexico, received the Kirby Laing Award. She is a student in the MTh in Theology in History programme.



Daisy Andoh

A graduate of the University of Exeter, Daisy is a PhD student in New Testament, and is the first recipient of the Larry Hurtado Scholarship.

Thank you for your support

We are grateful to alumni and friends who support our scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships, and to all whose donations support the scholarship funds set up in memory of Larry Hurtado, Lloyd John Ogilvie, and John McIntyre. Donations can be made at www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/support-us or by contacting the Head of School.

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