



Centre for the Study of Science, Religion and Society Write Workshop Program

Breakfast and dinner are provided free of charge for grant recipients and guests of Emmanuel College.

Thursday 9 July 2015 – CSSRS Event, *Optional*

07:00–9:00pm An evening with Professor Kevin Hart and his poetry
Drinks and nibbles provided

Friday 10 July 2015

07:00–08:30am *Breakfast*
Registrations open from 8:30am in Riverview Room

09:00–09:30am Director Welcome & Introductions

09:30–11:00am Professor Kevin Hart, *Must a Belief in Revelation Severely Limit the Creative Freedom of Christian Artists?*

11:00–11:30am *Morning Tea*

11:30–12:00am Paul Tyson, *Science, Ontology and Faith; Should, and Can They, Be Integrated?*

12:00–12:30pm Associate Professor Philip Burcham, *The “Therapeutic Injunction” and the Moral Foundations of Pharmaceutical Innovation*

12:30–1:00pm Dr John Shellard, *A Problem with Public Reasons*

01:00–02:00pm *Lunch*

02:00–03:00pm Dr Tom Aechtner, *Religion and Science: Perspectives on the Conflict Model and Christianity*

03:00–03:30pm Natalie Swann, *Christianity and Cosmopolitanism: A Case Study from Suburban Melbourne*

03:30–04:00pm *Afternoon Tea*

04:00–04:30pm Dr Robert Wiles, *Introducing an Information Model of the Universe*

04:30–05:00pm James Dunk, *Reading Prayers to the Mad: Faith in Secular History*

05:00–05:30pm David Furst-Roberts, *Evangelising the Academy: Charles Simeon (1759-1836) and his Impact on Australia*

05:30–06:00pm Break

6:00–07:00pm *Dinner*

Saturday 10 July 2015

- 07:00–09:00am *Breakfast*
- 09:00–10:00am Marty Rice, *Modelling the Genesis of Hominin Bipedalism: Theological and Philosophical Consequences of the Model Preferred*
- 10:00–10:30am Cassie DeFillipo, *Patriarchal Masculinity, Sex Work, and Servants of God: A Theological Perspective of the New-Age Gomers in Thailand*
- 10:30–11:00am *Morning Tea*
- 11:00–12:00pm Professor Ross McKenzie, *How Might I Move towards a Christian Perspective on my Academic Discipline?*
- 12:00–12:30pm Associate Professor Neil Foster, *Freedom of Religion and Balancing Clauses in Discrimination Legislation*
- 12:30–01:00pm Rev Dr Robert Brennan, *Opps! Christian Hope in the Face of Professional Error*
- 01:00–02:00pm *Lunch*
- 02:00–02:30pm James Ungureanu, *Rethinking the Conflict Thesis: John William Draper and the History of Religion*
- 02:30–03:00pm Dr Ross Jansen-Van Vuuren, *Does Christianity Have a Part to Play in Conservation and Prevention of Extinction of Species?*
- 03:00–03:30pm Lewis Jones, *The Australian Bargain: Multiculturalism or Cheap Take-away?*
- 03:30–04:00pm *Afternoon Tea*
- 04:00–04:30pm Dr Sandy Clarke, *Same-Sex Parenting: Statistical Power and Powerlessness*
- 6:00–9:00pm *Dinner*

Sunday 11 July 2015

- 07:00–09:00am *Breakfast*
- 09:00–03:00pm Simeon Network Event – *Optional*

Provided Abstracts

Professor Kevin Hart

Must a Belief in Revelation Severely Limit the Creative Freedom of Christian Artists?

On the face of it, the question is counter-intuitive; after all, the Western imagination has been nourished precisely by Judeo-Christian revelation. Yet we can advance our understanding by asking ourselves, first, about “revelation”: the history of the concept, and how we might talk about it. Further, we need to inspect the notion of “creative freedom” and the understanding of “revelation” that is in play when that freedom would be curtailed. And finally, we need to investigate what it would mean for someone to be a “Christian artist” as distinct from an “artist.” These various threads lead to a conclusion that is perhaps surprising.

Associate Professor Philip Burcham

The “Therapeutic Injunction” and the Moral Foundations of Pharmaceutical Innovation

Talk Summary: Christ's evocative Parable of the Good Samaritan likely played a catalytic role in the emergence of healthcare systems in societies that came under the influence of his teachings, first in the East and then in the West. Yet while the importance of "the Good Samaritan ethic" to the birth of hospitals has been acknowledged, its possible role in forging a cultural mood that is sympathetic towards pharmaceutical innovation also deserves attention. By drawing from the creative insights of great works of Christian imagination from authors as diverse as Bunyan, Lewis and Tolkien, as well as a potted survey of historical Christian attitudes towards the medicinal use of plants, this presentation will explore the possibility that Christ's commendation of the Good Samaritan's use of the botanically-based pharmaceutical measures of his day to alleviate human suffering (Lk 10:37) was a potent "Therapeutic Injunction" with rich implications for the pharmaceutical sciences. A comparison with the ambiguous attitude towards "medicaments" within the writings of the Nihilist philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche will canvas possible challenges to the propagation of “pharmaceutical know-how” in a post-Christian setting.

David Furst-Roberts

Evangelising the Academy: Charles Simeon (1759-1836) and his Impact on Australia

This paper will explore the life and ministry of the Anglican clergyman, the Reverend Charles Simeon (1759-1836) and his impact upon Australia. After outlining Simeon's background and guiding Evangelical theology, this paper will focus on Simeon's lengthy and fruitful ministry at Holy Trinity, Cambridge, where he became highly esteemed as a preacher, pastor, missionary pioneer and evangelist to university students. Turning to Australia, the paper will evaluate Simeon's influence on the course of Evangelicalism in Australia, particularly in the areas of preaching, pastoral ministry and outreach to universities.

Natalie Swann

Christianity and Cosmopolitanism: A Case Study from Suburban Melbourne

Christianity is often seen as a cosmopolitanising force (or perhaps a form of Appiah's ‘toxic cosmopolitanism’). It frequently demands primary allegiance above other identifications and binds believers into the imagined church universal. This narrative of cosmopolitanism stands in contrast to the Australian experience of a multiplicity of churches accommodating ethnic and theological difference; a church landscape which reflects Australia's migration heritage (Bouma 1997). Unlike other studies which invoke ethnicity as an organising principle (e.g. Ata 1988a, 1988b, 1990), this study sought to move beyond the ‘ethnic lens’ (Glick-Schiller et al 2006). It sought to walk alongside believers in one Australian locality

irrespective of their migration background. I conducted participant observation and interviews with members of three churches in one suburb of Melbourne; a two multicultural churches that worship in English (one Roman Catholic and one Seventh Day Adventist) and one Arabic speaking Baptist congregation that is mostly Egyptian and Iraqi. This paper explores the way multicultural community is celebrated in each of these three congregations and it contrasts the faith and migration journeys of a number of individuals to explore the way their faithful practice has been transformed through movement, simultaneously fostering an awareness of the universal and particular.

Dr Robert Wiles

Introducing an Information Model of the Universe

We live in the Information Age and information is now becoming recognised as a fundamental entity within the Universe. This paper shows how meaningful, non-material digital information is required to build DNA, the Laws of the Universe and even the fabric of the Cosmos itself. And yet, meaningful information can only be created by an intelligent entity which must have been composing this information at or before the formation of the Universe. The only known entity that fulfills these requirements is the God of the Judeo-Christian Bible.

James Dunk

Reading Prayers to the Mad: Faith in Secular History

This paper offers some initial reflections on the difficulty, and promise, of writing about faith historically. I draw on my main field of research, the history of madness, to show the ways in which faith has been written out of secular history. I suggest that this is an instance of E. P. Thompson's 'enormous condescension of posterity', and offers some thoughts on what might be gained from a more humble approach to the faith which shaped historical subjects.

Paul Tyson

Science, Ontology and Faith; Should, and Can They, Be Integrated?

Modern science is grounded in the separation of mathematic-experimental science from church endorsed metaphysics and theology. The modern life-form which arises out of the scientific revolution is thus premised on the demarcation of objective facts from subjective meanings. Here power is readily separated from meaning, and becomes equated with 'mere' instrumental effectiveness. This paper argues that amoral power is the central pathology of the modern 'technological society' and that the socio-cultural demarcations that make this possible are philosophically and theologically unsupportable functions. However, how we might effectively integrate science, ontology and faith today is no easy question to answer. This paper makes a few suggestions towards integration.

Marty Rice

Modelling the Genesis of Hominin Bipedalism: Theological and Philosophical Consequences of the Model Preferred

Increased and diversified cognition - of the sort required for the causal speculations that prepared the brain for aesthetic, philosophical, scientific, and theological adventures - follows from one model of early hominin evolution. A consideration of the phylogenetic constraints that hold chimpanzees and other hominids in an evolutionary cul-de-sac raised the question of how such blockages were first circumvented to permit the hominin evolutionary radiation that eventually produced *Homo sapiens*. Recent work on primate physiology and behavior, and on fossil hominin anatomy, suggests a role in early hominin evolution for complexification of material culture. Novel adaptation of a common facility with wooden cultural objects is inferred as the most parsimonious explanation for punctuating evolution in the last common chimpanzee/hominin ancestor species. Wooden

defensive weapons (poignards) act as a reverse-gear, permitting escape from the advanced sociality of jaw-led, agonistic hierarchism. Is this the first instance of a personal possession in evolutionary history? Poignards opened the way to self-will and initiated positive selection of the bipedal and orthograde adaptations that eventually produced the sorts of fossil morphologies found in *Orrorin*, *Sahelanthropus*, *Ardipithecus*, and our australopithecine ancestors. Today: human genetics, physiology, and socio-political behaviours appear to show several illustrations of what Charles Darwin (1874: 62) called “indelible stamps of humanity’s early origins” that we may refer to the poignard model of bipedal evolution. There are also unexpected philosophical and theological implications.

Cassie DeFillipo

Patriarchal Masculinity, Sex Work, and Servants of God: A Theological Perspective of the New-Age Gomers in Thailand

Global research has shown that men who purchase sex are not a homogenous group; they represent all ages, nationalities, races, and social classes (Jõe-Canon 2006; Hughes 2004). Sex trafficking, on the other hand, primarily involves females as victims. Women and girls comprise 98% of the victims trafficked for sexual exploitation (Equality Now 1). This disconnect is largely due to patriarchal structures that have created a demand for women as commodities. While women as commodities is a subject that has been highly researched and debated, the various ideologies of masculinity that lead men of all ages, nationalities, races, and social classes to demand sex trafficking is still a topic in need of further research. According to David Gilmore (1990), “Most societies...ha[ve] some idea about ‘true’ manhood...the explosion of feminist writing on sex and gender...has advanced our knowledge of women’s roles but have left these manhood cults and codes untouched” (xii). Through my research, I aim to identify how ideologies of masculinity develop and are maintained among boys and men in Thailand. I also aim to address how these ideologies contribute to the demand for sex work in Thailand. At the WRITE conference, I will present my current findings and address the questions that have arisen for me from this research as an academic and as a Christian. I will discuss 1) how I have questioned and continue to question the patriarchal structures evident in the bible 2) the modern attitudes about sex work and how they relate to Christian text and 3) my struggle to balance my Christian desire to effect change with the perspectives and values of academia.

Associate Professor Neil Foster

Freedom of Religion and Balancing Clauses in Discrimination Legislation

Religious freedom is an important human right protected in varying ways in Western jurisdictions. In some forms of anti-discrimination law, prohibitions on discrimination on various grounds may have an impact on religious freedom of believers. This paper examines the role of balancing clauses in discrimination laws designed to limit the operation of such laws in the interests of religious freedom, and recent cases of the courts dealing with these issues.

Dr Sandy Clarke

Same-Sex Parenting: Statistical Power and Powerlessness

One of the ways that Christians are seeking to engage with the same sex marriage debate is through the lens of same sex parenting and the impact of family structure on children's wellbeing. It is difficult to approach this subject neutrally; however, many researchers have tried to claim this kind of objectivity with the use of statistics. This talk will touch on some of the data that are currently available and the challenges and limitations in their use and interpretation. Warning: this may turn into a statistics lesson, but with the aim of equipping listeners to think critically about arguments based on quantitative information.

James Ungureanu

Rethinking the Conflict Thesis: John William Draper and the History of Religion

In this paper I will discuss my recent research at the John William Draper Family Papers at the Library of Congress. Based on this research and other reading, this paper offers a new interpretation of John William Draper's (1811-1882) *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* (1874).

Dr Ross Jansen-Van Vuuren

Does Christianity Have a Part to Play in Conservation and Prevention of Extinction of Species?

What are the origins of the environmental crisis that we are now facing? Why aren't environmental issues and 'creation care' discussed more in church? Should Christians be more involved in care of the Earth? What is a Biblical approach to conservation? These and other related issues will be discussed during this workshop presentation.

Lewis Jones

The Australian Bargain: Multiculturalism or Cheap Take-away?

In Parliament on 22 June 2015, Tim Watts, MP, defined Australian multiculturalism in this way, "We respect cultural diversity where it is not inconsistent with the fundamental values of liberal democracy and in turn we expect that all Australians work to become invested in our nation's democratic, economic and social life." The great Australian bargain. This paper will address the following questions. Is this multiculturalism or a recipe for tasty take-away on the high street? What is multiculturalism and how does it relate to western liberalism? Is there a fundamental incompatibility of these two visions for Australia? As the diversity of our citizenry increases, answers to these questions become more and more important for navigating life in the suburbs, and, perhaps more urgently still, for the policy-makers who are striving to balance basic freedoms and basic protections.

Rev Dr Robert Brennan

Opps! Christian Hope in the Face of Professional Error

One of the most daunting aspects facing the scientific community is how should we best act, particularly in situations where our research or recommendations may lead to significant changes to society or public policy. When dealing with the highest stakes such as health or the environment too often it seems these are the times when our intellectual grasp of the realities is limited, uncertain, confused or (usually discovered after the event) ultimately simply wrong. There are processes for helping people to decide when to act, how to act and how to avoid mistakes. These issues are not new. During the development of Natural philosophy, the precursor to modern Science, these concerns were known and the discipline of cautious humility was developed and became one strength of the scientific enterprise. We need to remind ourselves that it needs to continue to be part of the essential culture of scientific rationality. The development of scientific humility has Christian theological roots in Francis Bacon. These roots remind us humility does not exclude decisiveness. When linked with a desire to compassionately best understand and serve God, other and the world, we have the foundations of way to act. Is the certainty of correct action guaranteed? Absolutely not! Nonetheless, it is a better strategy than a number of others. We may, for example, invest in a strategy and later be faced with consequences. But can we live with the consequences? While much has been written about how to avoid making mistakes, there is little discussing how to live or endure the consequences. Mistakes can be and will be made. Even so, a Christian theology always retains hope.

Author: Lewis Jones and colleagues

Event organizer: Simeon Network, Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students

Event topic: Write 2015

Location: Emmanuel College, University of Queensland, Brisbane

Country: Australia

Participants: Faculty, Graduate Students

Language: English

