Critical Issues in the 21st Century

Avondale College
Monday, 15 November 2010
It is with great pleasure that I introduce the inaugural conference Critical Issues in the 21st Century.

The brain-child of Dr Jane Fernandez, this conference "raises the bar" in paving the way for undergraduate students to reach for a personal potential previously unperceived. We hope presenters receive a positive experience that inspires and empowers them to communicate and disseminate their thoughts, personal positions, and research findings at future conferences.

Staff support for such a venture is essential and we thank those staff who provided the topics, and who encouraged their students to produce publishable products.

Given the current debate on standards, I am proud to introduce this conference to you as a good example, not of minimal standards, but of aspirational standards.

Thank you all.

**Dr Vivienne Watts**
Vice President (Administration & Research)
Welcome to Critical Issues in the 21st Century. This initiative is in line with Avondale College’s vision to foster a culture of research which supports a meaningful and authentic engagement with quality learning.

The guiding principle of this Conference is our quest for excellence in our commitment to effective and meaningful teaching and research. The keystone of research is its contribution to building a healthy, safer and progressive community/nation. To this end, we welcome you together with our presenters to reflect today on how our learning and work addresses Australia’s National Research Priorities.

In line with Australia’s National agenda for research in ensuring a safer, environmentally sustainable and healthier nation, we applaud our undergraduate presenters for engaging with a vision for change, innovation and improvement. In their investment of time and labour today, they have committed to a spiritually, emotionally and psychologically safer vision of the world?

Great teachers like Mahatma Gandhi teach us that if we must shake the world, we must do so with diligence, conviction, gentleness and compassion.

Today, we are honoured because our students are our teachers and we receive their gift and their counsel with gratitude.

Thank you to our presenters.

Thank you to staff and participants of this conference for your support.

Thanks to Dr Vivienne Watts for encouraging us to reach for excellence in research.

Thanks to the administrative team for their support of this conference.

Dr Jane Fernandez-Goldborough
Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Arts and Theology

"Don’t limit a child to your own learning, for he was born in another time". Rabindranath Tagore
The "Critical Issues in the 21st Century" Undergraduate Conference is a great initiative and offers an excellent opportunity for Avondale College students to share their work with each other and to showcase the College's unique ways to foster a rich learning environment. Having read many of your English papers over the last 18 months I have been very impressed with the quality of the writing, the maturity of the reasoning and the willingness to take risks in your responses to the material. I have really enjoyed my role as moderator of the English program at Avondale College and congratulate you for your participation in this conference. As you prepare to present your ideas at the conference, I wish you a really enjoyable day, intellectually and socially!

Dr Tony Simoes da Silva  
Senior Lecturer, English Literatures Program  
School of English Literatures and Philosophy  
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies  
Faculty of Arts  
University of Wollongong
# PROGRAM

8.30 am  Registration

9.00 am  Opening preliminaries (Lecture Theatre 1)
* A Meditation on Gibran *

10.00 am  Morning tea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room</th>
<th>W109</th>
<th>W111</th>
<th>LT1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Themes in Religion &amp; Spirituality</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Philosophy, Literature, Society</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.20 am</td>
<td>Bethany Turner</td>
<td>Brooke Pellegrino</td>
<td>Josh Stewart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ben Reynolds</td>
<td>Christopher Watson</td>
<td>Reuben Tierney/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nikarri Parker</td>
<td>Rosanna Laredo</td>
<td>Wade Coster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kirsten Bolinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.20 am</td>
<td>Daniel Matteo</td>
<td>Kiel Winch</td>
<td>Joseph Mapour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stephanie Bennett</td>
<td>Lee Hancock</td>
<td>Loata Qarau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brendan Hayes</td>
<td>Anjuli Cruz</td>
<td>Sarah-Jo Huber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.20 pm</td>
<td>Lyndelle Petersen</td>
<td>Zac Rappell</td>
<td>Jotham Kingston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dale Hokin</td>
<td>Kim Sharman</td>
<td>Hannah Bennett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orlando Berry</td>
<td>Mandi Hill</td>
<td>Rebekah Bamford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00 pm</td>
<td>Miranda Leijser</td>
<td>Josh Stewart</td>
<td>Kiel Winch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.20 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Research Profiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00 pm</td>
<td>Afternoon tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15 pm</td>
<td>Student panel and presentation of certificates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**THEMES IN RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY**

**BETHANY TURNER**

**The Torah’s Captive Bride**

Today’s society protects the sexual rights of women, but what was the Torah’s attitude? An inside look at the law of the captive bride will seek to answer this question. Some scholars suggest that this law legitimizes battlefield rape, subjugation and abandonment, but does it? This study sifts through the narrative imagery (pulsating with emotion and puzzling with strange rituals) to argue that the God of the Old Testament was interested in the feelings and rights of women.

**BEN REYNOLDS**

**Junia(s) in Romans 16:7**

In light of the recent and on-going discussions concerning the role of women in ministry both inside and outside the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the identity of Junia(s) in Rom. 16:7 has become increasingly important. The issues regarding the interpretation of this passage can be summed up in two primary questions: first, is Junia(s) to be understood as a man or a woman? Second, was this individual an apostle? The present paper will seek to answer these two questions and issue the challenge to start thinking of the implications of these answers for the 21st century church.

**NIKARRI PARKER**

**A Specialized Ministry**

This paper will address various challenges encountered throughout church ministry focusing on the effects of church expectations upon ministers and their families. The aforementioned challenges include unrealistic expectations, stereotypes, frequent relocations, as well as isolation from support networks. This paper is interested in the pathways that can be negotiated to facilitate support and pastoral care for pastors’ families. How can pastors’ families be valued as a specialized “ministry”?

**DANIEL MATTEO**

**Paul in the 21st Century**

Two of the most variously interpreted chapters in all of the writings of Paul are 1 Corinthians 11 and 1 Timothy 2, and specifically those verses that address the behavior of Christian females. Some resent them, some misapply them and their exegesis (good or bad) holds a degree of sway over the ecclesiology of every Christian denomination on earth. This study is interested in examining the writings of Paul in the context of the roles and rights of Christian women in the 21st century.
STEPHANIE BENNETT

Recreating Community

Christian churches tend to focus on theological positionings and traditions as a means of building community and celebrating worship. But such models tend to exclude and leave little room for debate and controversy. This paper is interested in exploring how Christian communities can benefit from focusing on the example of Jesus to develop communities that are open and inclusive. How can the church benefit from building communities that value dialogue, debates and even controversy?

BRENDAN HAYES

Existentialism and Biblical Truth—Can they Co-exist?
A Study into the Effect of Existentialism in terms of Biblical Inspiration, Christology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology and Eschatology

What is the effect of existentialism on Biblical truth and can they co-exist? Given that the premise of both contemporary theology and existentialist philosophy seek to understand the reality of man, many scholars have sought to bring these two concepts together. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how existentialism interacts with theology, based on the writings of Rudolf Bultmann, John Macquarrie and Paul Tillich. By understanding existentialism in and of itself, and analysing the arguments of these theologians in terms of the specific branches of theology—Inspiration of Scripture, Christology, salvation, eschatology and the purpose of the church—this study will demonstrate why/how a refocus on Scripture is beneficial to a 21st century culture.

LYNDELLE PETERSEN

Implications of Jesus’ Masculinity

Attendance rates in Christian Churches across Australia are dominated by professional women over 40, which begs the questions, where are all the men? The aspect of church that men find least appealing is the churches portrayal of Jesus. This research paper discusses the overemphasis of the stereotypically feminine characteristics of Jesus leading to a comparison and analysis of an ancient Jewish male gender ideology with the portrayal of Jesus in the gospel of Matthew. A five-point model is developed from an in-depth look at different examples and references to masculinity in Jewish literature of the second temple period. The model is then contrasted with examples and excerpts from the Gospel of Matthew that reveal not only cohesion with the model but also extends to reveal that the message of Jesus is distinctly masculine. The implications of Jesus masculinity is then discussed in terms of faltering male attendance in the Australian Christian church.
DALE HOKIN

Developing a theology of judgment from the Old Testament
Judgment is commonly misunderstood and misrepresented, producing fear of death and distortion of God’s character. Throughout the Old Testament a pattern emerges when God judges. This pattern is first identified in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah. This study will critique this pattern in an attempt to understand the process and motivation of God’s judgments in the Old Testament.

ORLANDO BERRY

A Reading of Isaiah 21:1-10
Isaiah 21:1-10 is a prophecy foretelling the outcome of Israel’s abandonment of trust in God by placing their trust in Babylon. The prophecy ends with God assuring them that he will not forget them despite their infidelity. It is through God that they will eventually receive restoration. The prophecy continues to speak to issues of trust and worldly power in the contemporary world.

MIRANDA LEIJSER

Stewardship and Ecological Awareness
This paper is interested in the role that Christians can play in leading out in modelling ecological awareness. What motivation do we have as Christians to put out the recycling bin, drive a small car or better still catch public transport, purchase local, organic produce or even establish our own food garden? The average ecological footprint for people living on planet earth is 2.2ha. The average Australian’s is 7.7ha. This paper proposes a holistic model of worship based on stewardship as a daily act of worship. It seeks to affirm that the principle of Christian love must extend to care for the environment and to moderating our consumption of the planet’s finite resources?
BROOKE PELLEGRINO

Building Bridges: A Holistic Approach to Education
The core tenet of Christian education is to scaffold and support each student’s discovery of identity, meaning, and purpose in life and to empower students to think critically and act responsibly within the framework of a Christian worldview. Christian schools tend to reflect a special and indispensable character, but unfortunately not all children will benefit from its distinctive spiritual emphasis. This distinctive spiritual dimension is expressed in alternate curricula and extra curricula activities that are designed to enhance holistic development. State based ethos may be somewhat restrictive in terms of traditional modes of delivery and parameters for teaching values and ethics; but these conditions also provide an extraordinary opportunity for dedicated Christian educators to provide an alternate form of holistic education. I wish to explore ways in which these practitioners can adapt standard pedagogical practices to maximise their students’ exposure to outcomes contingent with a generic model or philosophy of spiritual education.

CHRISTOPHER WATSON

Fantasy and Christianity
Thie genre of fantasy is frowned upon often by Christian group. This study is interested in examining this distrust of fantasy from a non-religious perspective. It will examine how fantasy shapes children’s imaginations and how this gives them the ways to further their worldview. It will look at the main fantasy texts of the 21st century including Harry Potter and Twilight. This paper will argue how children need a larger worldview in the 21st century and that the study of fantasy can support rather than inhibit the social values and norms held within the Christian church.

ROSANNA LAREDO

Unique qualities of Christian Education
Christian Education is unique. While all schools make an effort to provide an opportunity and means by which students can develop a holistic well-being, it is the Christian schools that include the vital dimension of spiritual influence in a student’s life. This study offers practical means by which such influence can be promoted in a Christian school.

KIEL WINCH

‘Dead, White, Males?’ or Something More
The public image of a history class is much maligned in the popular consciousness. As a subject intimately associated with The Past, history lessons are likewise usually linked to aged professors, musty old textbooks and irrelevant facts about ‘dead, white, males.’ This paper explores issues surrounding the teaching of History in Australia, highlighting the key arguments, positions and debates within the field, and exploring the potential for a more effective and innovative pedagogy in a frequently undervalued subject.
LEE HANCOCK
“Nature and Education, Chalk and Cheese?”
“Nature deficit disorder” is a term used to describe the negative effects such as, depression and attention difficulties, as a result of the loss of connection with nature. Within education there is an ever increasing push to embrace and integrate ICT, but the natural world seems to have been pushed to the side in terms of the upcoming national curriculum. The integration of what is beyond the four walls of the classroom within lessons, along with ICT, develops not only a technology literate, but an “ecologically literate student.” This paper will explore how an outdoor classroom may provide a safe setting for students to engage with nature as well as an opportunity to fulfil outcomes difficult to achieve within the constraints of a conventional classroom.

ANJULI CRUZ
God in the 21st Century
In the earlier years of the world’s cultures mythology was the method used to explain and understand fundamental issues of the world and life. Today, most of those issues can be explained through science and technology; but myths still exist in today’s world. My paper is interested in one fundamental issue present today: the role of God in the 21st century.

ZACHARY RAPPELL
Can Evolution Fit into Christian Theology?
This paper is interested in exploring how God can be positioned within the boundaries of evolution, or to be specific, Natural Selection. In this context, this paper will explore arguments made by both fundamental Scientists and Christians. This study will propose a critical approach to Theistic Evolution and Evangelical Christianity, discussing the logical approach one must take in arguing the divine within biological evolution.

KIMBERLEY SHARMAN
The use of interactive white boards in government primary schools
Technology is an integral part of all our lives. As educators, we must embrace new technologies as our students grow and develop around them. Current technologies allow us to communicate, record and engage more effectively. One such technology allowing us to do this is the interactive whiteboard (IWB). IWBs are quickly being introduced into schools across the nation and worldwide and, as such, educators need to explore the implications of having them in the classroom. It is also important to explore student attitudes to IWBs. As attitudes play an important part in student interest and engagement levels, it is important to determine current attitudes towards IWB use in the classroom and explore links between background factors and attitudes.
Through a mixed methods approach, the current study used questionnaires
to ascertain current attitudes towards IWBs and classroom observations were used to measure student engagement and teacher approaches. Students’ attitudes towards IWBs are positive and can be positively linked to student engagement. Contrary to initial expectations, one type of IWB use was not more effective in terms of engagement than another. However, what proved to be most effective in terms of student engagement occurred when teachers alternated between teacher-centred approaches and student-centred approaches.

IWBs can be used to engage students in learning and the findings of the study indicate that teachers should alternate between student-centred and teacher-centred approaches in short clumps of time, thereby facilitating student interaction and high engagement levels.

MANDI HILL

Cross-age peer tutoring in a Christian school from a rural district: A case study.

Cross-age peer tutoring involves the partnering of students from different age levels in a tutor-tutee relationship. A review of literature relating to cross-age peer tutoring revealed potential benefits for participants. This case study gathered data from a Christian school in a semi-rural district which ran a cross-age peer tutoring program (the ‘Buddy Program’). A mixed method approach was adopted to gather data by way of observations, questionnaires, interviews and a focus group. The data revealed that in this particular case a great majority of students enjoyed the program with student tutors perceiveing their role as that of a ‘helper’ or ‘teacher’. Evidence suggests that the program contributed to enhanced confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy among participants. It was perceived by teachers, parents and participants that students benefited academically, socially and personally from the program. The research also shows the program to have contributed towards enhanced metacognitive understanding among student tutors. Finally, the study suggests that a cross-age peer teaching program will be more beneficial if teachers carefully plan and prepare for it.

JOSH STEWART

Curriculum, Creativity

This Paper outlines a brief history of Australian Curricular Development, with emphasis on the recent push for an Australian National Curriculum highlighting issues raised by the current A.C.A.R.A. Consultation Phase and scheduled implementation. Discussion is centered on the draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, and the experiences of Arts subjects in the United Kingdom and United States when exposed to federal funding models. The paper argues that a continued space of dialogue is of vital importance to achieving positive outcomes for teachers, students and the nation at large.
THEMES IN PHILOSOPHY, LITERATURE, SOCIETY

JOSH STEWART

Performing the Twilight

This Paper explores the creation and performance of a ‘twilight’ theatrical space as advocated by Derek Walcott’s ‘What the Twilight Says’, with a specific emphasis on Churchill’s Cloud 9, and Walcott’s Dream on Monkey Mountain. Key to the exploration of a ‘theatre of twilight’ is recognition of the palimpsestuous nature of individual and national identity. This study reopens a space of dialogue rejecting the binary oppositions of race, gender and power to achieve an appreciation of the fluid nature of identity.

REUBEN TIERNEY AND WADE COSTER

Transition from College to University: An Appraisal

This paper is written from a perspective concerned about higher education. Do universities create inspiration in its students or do they cause inspiration to be crushed? Avondale College, a Christian Higher education institution has the motto ‘find your inspiration’, but as the College pushes for University status, is it losing its ability to inspire and thus becoming like the mainstream production lines of universities across the world. How much of Avondale’s history and early ethos is it willing to lose to become just another cog in the higher education wheel? A conclusion is formed: Why can’t Avondale be both, and thus be a step above the rest?

KIRSTEN BOLINGER

Sustainable Event Management

This paper discusses the idea behind sustainable event management and what a green event entails. After explaining what some of the environmental problems in the event industry are, the paper goes on to provide information and examples of what some event managers are doing to change their events into “green” events. This paper deals with the environmental issues presented in the event industry and provides sustainable solutions to some of the problems, covering issues as diverse as green house gas emissions to audience.
JOSEPH MAPOUR

The Millennium Development Goals
There have been numerous calls and campaigns to end poverty, hunger and diseases that have plagued the developing world. In September 2000, the United Nations formulated a framework to persuade citizens of this world into action. This paper presents a critical discussion on how well this framework, known as The Millennium Development Goals (with some references to 18 targets and 48 indicators), have worked in terms of making the world a better place to live. To illustrate the progress of this development programme, this paper examines each goal in light of its importance, attainability and necessity.

LOATA QARAU

Virtual Communities and Facebook
There is an increasing number of organisations who have realised that having a Facebook presence and building a virtual community is beneficial to their organisation. This paper investigates the role of communication traffic in the Facebook environment for developing and maintaining virtual communities with specific reference to humanitarian aid organisations such as ADRA and World Vision.

SARAH-JO HUBER

A Christian View of Climate Change
Care for the environment (and in particular, climate change) is one of the critical issues of the 21st century that has often been poorly dealt with by the Christian church; the major viewpoints have often swung between outright denial and apocalyptical environmentalism. Both of these approaches have led to a “do nothing” response, which has neither a strong Biblical or scientific basis to support it. This paper attempts to challenge this past and prevalent Christian attitude towards climate change by presenting an alternative approach that is more compatible with scientific findings, the Bible’s admonition, and societal attitude developments.

JOTHAM KINGSTON

A Subversion of the Hero’s Journey: A Postcolonial Reading of Around the World in Eighty Days
Around the World in Eighty Days, published in 1872 just prior to the height of the British Empire has been regarded as a source of “common notable English and extended British attitudes.” (Butcher, 2008). This paper proposes a postcolonial reading of Around the World and sees, through the schema of circumnavigation, a critique of colonialism. Verne’s representation of America as ‘East’ married with ‘West’ subverts Orientalism, the underlying colonial paradigm. By employing his “extra day”, Verne envisions for us a conceptual framework of “globalism”.
HANNAH BENNETT

A critique of *The Prophet*

This paper is a critique of Kahlil Gibran’s *The Prophet*. This paper seeks to establish how the study of Gibran’s poems can help provide a fresh concept of spirituality for the twenty-first century. Through his treatment of paradoxes, Gibran’s poems interrogate traditional essentialist notions of religion, and instead opens up for us a new discourse of spirituality. In doing so, Gibran destabilises notions of spirituality as fixed and rigid and opens the door to a more fluid understanding of spirituality.

REBEKAH BAMFORD

*Lagaan* and the Third Space Theory

Many people live, strive and suffer within borders as a result of the imposed realities of historically mapped spaces. However, these borders and boundaries are actually imaginary constructions that must be contested or negotiated for a more authentic experience of self, community and even justice. This study is interested in critiquing Gowariker’s *Lagaan* in the light of Homi Bhabha’s theory of the Third Space, to negotiate a more authentic experience of self and community.

KIEL WINCH

Delusions and Illusions—Atheist Conceptions of God

This Paper explores the various ways Atheists and non-believers have conceived of religious belief. Focussing on three key historical theorists; Freud, Marx, and Durkheim, the author compares and contrasts the explanations of god with the views of two New Atheists—Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens. Each of these Atheistic thinkers share certain understandings of God, centring on god as a reductionist inheritance from earlier stages of civilisation.
AUSTRALIA’S NATIONAL RESEARCH PRIORITIES

1. AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE AUSTRALIA
2. PROMOTING AND MAINTAINING GOOD HEALTH
3. FRONTIER TECHNOLOGIES FOR BUILDING AND TRANSFORMING AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIES
4. SAFEGUARDING AUSTRALIA


REFLECTION

How can I contribute to Australia’s National Research Priorities in choosing my assignments and research areas?

How can I turn what I do in my learning/teaching into research items?

Who can I collaborate with for a significant research item?

How can I extend my research skills as a undergraduate/graduate?

How can I change my place of study/employment through research?

How can I invest in community goodwill and growth through my research?

How can I make my work constructive and meaningful in benefitting community through research?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to thank my student committee for their investment of time and vision into this project.

My thanks to Kiel Winch, Brooke Pellegrino, Joshua Stewart, Bethany Turner, and Jotham Kingston for their enthusiasm, reliability and willingness to share themselves so positively and constructively. A special thanks to my Postcolonial Literature and Literature and Religion students for their passion and enthusiasm and their unfailing support.

MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE

Dr Cedric Grieve was supposed to be our keynote speaker for this event. Sadly, Cedric’s brother-in-law passed away and we wish to send Cedric and his family our deepest condolences.

God Bless

Dr Jane Fernandez-Goldborough