



Introduction

Welcome to the Undergraduate Conference 2011.

This second Undergraduate Conference says volumes about a coming of age; for both the presenters and Avondale College of Higher Education.

Often while marking student essays I said to myself, "This paper and its ideas should have wider circulation!" Mind you, there were other times when I said, "Don't ever let this assignment out of captivity!" Now there is actually a venue for the presentation of serious research and reflection by our undergraduate students. And, if the standard of last year's presentations is anything to go by, the 2011 Conference will be outstanding.

The Undergraduate Conference is also a sign of Avondale's increasing maturity. Avondale aspires to be a Christian private university of the highest quality. That will mean a continuing focus on outstanding learning and teaching as well as a deeper emphasis on research. This Conference is a symbol of the fact that all of us—students and staff alike—are buying into that vision.

Congratulations to the student presenters, staff who have encouraged them, student Conference organisers, and Dr Jane Fernandez who has fostered the concept.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray Roennfeldt', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Ray Roennfeldt

President



In the spring (late May) of 1990, I walked the streets of Norway where the melting snow indicated the vestigial remains of winter. It was 'schoolies week' and I was informed by locals that the young people in orange overalls were the matriculating students. Besides the obvious 'uniform' I noticed that these young people were very visible and vocal in expressing their concerns about the environment - electric busses, preservation of pristine environments, and a delegation of their number heading to the Environment Summit in Brazil with a petition, signatures and arguments. These young people were concerned about the environment as the most pressing contemporary issue facing them. And they were doing something about it.

Also, I joined the festivities on the gazetted National Holiday (the Norwegian version of Australia Day). Rather than a 'big Ozzie BBQ' the celebrations centred around families. Children were the focus. Dressed in their Sunday best, the children with their families began the day early with breakfast at a motel/hotel. The boiled eggs at breakfast soon became hot dogs and tomato sauce at the local fair for lunch. At the end of the day, very tired, but still well-dressed, children with food encrusted clothes went home for a well-earned rest. This country saw families as the centre of their society and dedicated their National Day to reinforcing the critical message to families that children are important. The young families in this country were concerned enough about families as a contemporary issue to act to reinforce this message to their children.

Today, I congratulate all the young university students here for your interest in the contemporary issues facing our society. In preparing for this event, I know you have done the thinking. I offer my best wishes as you present your topics at the conference today. I hope that this day will serve as a catalyst for future actions you might consider taking to address the critical issues you have identified.

Even though this conference is very important and a unique opportunity not available to students in other Australian higher education institutions, I hope you will see the work that you begin today, potentially has a more far reaching effect. May I suggest that you see your future career and engagement in the local community as a challenge that includes heights you may not have considered to this point? If you have not considered postgraduate research, or the publication of your ideas on contemporary topics in journals (see for example the Journal of Contemporary Religion), today may be an opportunity for you to consider this path.

In short, think big. Think ahead. Think of what will be needed by the young people of your generation in future years? What needs to be done now to overcome current challenges and prepare for the future?

Although I can't be with you on this day, I look forward to reading your papers as they are published.

Dr Vivienne Watts,

Vice-President (Administration and Research)

The Undergrad Conference is aimed at enabling students to reflect on global concerns and participate in collaborative learning. We value the wisdom of young people who gift us with their ideas, their enthusiasm, their energy and their openness to new vistas of thought.

My congratulations to all students who are participating today in the Undergrad Conference 2011. We look forward to your thoughts on 'Critical Issues in the 21st Century'.

My special thanks to the Undergrad Conference Committee for their invaluable support in putting this program together. This year, the committee was run by students, supported by staff, and I was inspired by the passion, diligence and enthusiasm of the team. To the organising committee, thank you for your vision, your willingness to take a risk and to give yourself lovingly to this shared purpose.

And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's inmost secret'.

Gibran

Best Wishes

Dr Jane Fernandez



Program

8:30	Conference Registration Outside LT1	
9:00	Introduction	Dr Jane Fernandez
9:05	Keynote Address	Troy White - Compassion Australia
9:25		Dr Ben Thomas - Vice-Chancellor Pacific Adventist University
9:45 – 9:55		Discussion

Presentations

TIME PIAGET ROOM CS LEWIS ROOM E SAID ROOM

10:00 Amy-Lyn Marks Matej Vrancic Jotham Kingston

Return to LT1

10:30	Remembrance Day	Ketannah Hope LT1
10:55	Anzacs	Daniel Reynaud/Josh Dye
11:00	The Last Post	

Morning Tea Break

11:05 Outside LT1

Presentations

TIME	PIAGET ROOM	CS LEWIS ROOM E	SAID ROOM
11:30	Alicia Christie	Bethany Turner	Fraser Catton
12:00	Stephanie Hernandez	Stephen Kilgour	Daniel Matteo
12:30	Brooke Tually	Hayley Blagden	Abel Iorgulescu

Lunch Break

1:00 W 109

Presentations

TIME	PIAGET ROOM	CS LEWIS ROOM	E SAID ROOM
2:00	Andrew Russell	Hannah Bennett	Brendan Hayes

Return to LT1

2:30	Soapbox	What is the solution to Avondale's biggest problem?
2:45	Closing Comments	Committee
3:00	Finish	

Presentation Summaries

The paradoxical phenomenon of the underachieving gifted student: Not all gifted students achieve according to their exceptional potential

Hannah Bennett

Australian statistics suggest that up to half of the gifted population underachieve (Senate Select Committee, 2001). These students are the great minds that will invent the world of the future; however their extraordinary potential remains untapped. It is, therefore, a critical issue in twenty-first century Education to investigate ways in which teachers can facilitate the achievement of potential for underachieving gifted students. To date, significant research has been conducted into identification and characteristics of underachieving gifted students; however, there is a need for current research to use the established theoretical understandings and investigate practical strategies for the reversal and remediation of underachievement in gifted students. This paper investigates the impact of the researcher's Creative Writing Program and, in so doing, identifies successful teaching strategies that facilitated the achievement of potential in two underachieving gifted students.

The symbol of America: Abraham Lincoln

Hayley Blagden

Throughout history Abraham Lincoln has been an important icon for the American people. Lincoln is regarded as one of the richest of American symbols and represents the best of American ideals such as freedom, equality, self-determination and leadership. During his lifetime Lincoln encapsulated the imagery of the frontier self-made man, the saviour of the Union and the Great Emancipator. Lincoln's death catapulted him into becoming an icon that was used to represent the aspirations of the American people through causes such as women's rights movements, worker's rights and continually used to promote social justice and the ordinary man. Lincoln has come to both represent what it means to be American and has become a symbol of America itself.

Christianity, Vampirism and Mission

Fraser Catton

Popular literature, media and culture has witnessed a revival in vampirism in the last twenty years. The success of franchises such as *Twilight* and *The Vampire Diaries* is evidence of society's fascination with vampires. The emergence of a vampire subculture, classified as a New Religious Movement, presents a new mission-field for Christianity. As there is little evidence of evangelism to the vampire subculture, this

paper will discuss the vampire subculture in its different forms and evaluate a variety of methods of evangelism in light of their effectiveness for reaching this unique subculture. It will be argued that the most effective method is the incarnational approach. Possible practical applications of this method are discussed in an attempt to encourage genuine, effective evangelism to those in the vampire subculture.

Senior students' perceptions of the factors positively influencing their faith development within the environment of a school-church nexus. A case study of two schools with campus churches

Alisha Christie

Schools with campus churches can provide an environment where personal faith development and affiliation with a faith community are encouraged. This study investigated senior students' perceptions of the factors positively influencing their faith development within the environment of a school-church nexus. A review of the literature revealed a strong connection between adolescent faith development and social context. This case study gathered data from two Adventist schools with campus churches with a focus on senior students' and staff perceptions. An emergent mixed-method approach was adopted to gather data through the use of a questionnaire, focus group interviews and unstructured staff interviews. The data revealed that student faith development was impacted primarily by elements of the schools' special character as well as social connection and involvement within the school-church nexus environment. Furthermore, the results indicated that attendance at campus church events is also impacted by social connection, involvement and perceived relevance of campus church events to students' lives. The study concluded that faith development is more likely to occur for senior students when the six following key considerations are factored into the planning and implementation of faith-based activities and programs: perceptions about spirituality, social context, positive relationship with school/church personnel, influence of the school's special character, emphasis on discipling through involvement, and relevant content.

The portrayal of Wisdom in Apocalyptic

Brendan Hayes

This thesis investigates specific apocalyptic texts and reveals insights into the way wisdom is portrayed within that apocalyptic worldview - one that has particular relevance in today's religious climate. The insights achieved have been gained by a thorough concordance study undertaken on "wisdom," and this data has been analysed in terms of lexical semantics, attributions and messianic themes. From this analysis, a number of key points relating to the issues of judgment and Christian wisdom have been identified.

By submitting themselves to God, believers are granted wisdom to prepare for the coming Messiah. Wisdom is not only



the granting of special vision and interpretation, but also the assurance of future reward through obedience and righteous living. Through careful analysis, this study challenges previous notions of wisdom and its relationship to justice, as well as expands on recent studies on Christian wisdom.

The ecology of sandy shores

Steph Hernandez

Sandy beaches, while ideal for servicing a variety of recreational activity, are often considered to be ecological deserts; completely devoid of life. In fact, sandy beaches are actually home to over 75 different species of meiofauna and over 67 different species of macrofauna. These invertebrates are fueled by macroalgae brought ashore with the crashing waves. The removal of this macroalgae could potentially disrupt the natural ecological processes that occur on sandy shores. On behalf of the City of Lake Macquarie and Avondale College, a study was presented to investigate whether or not the removal of beach wrack and the use of four-wheel drive vehicles on sandy beaches had any impact on the nitrogen levels, bacteria levels, biological assemblages of macrofauna and meiofauna, and the *Ocypode cordimana* (ghost crab) abundance. It was found that beach cleaning had no impact on the nitrogen levels, bacterial numbers, or biological assemblages of meiofauna and macrofauna. However, the types of species found on the sites experiencing beach cleaning compared to those that do not experience beach cleaning are different. Thus, while the numbers of biota found are the same, the species that appear to be able to adapt to beach cleaning environments are different. It was also found that ghost crab abundance was also not negatively impacted by beach cleaning, however a recent storm event could have impacted these results.

Remembrance Day

Ketannah Hope

Today is Friday the 11th of November, Remembrance Day. It is a day that commemorates the official end of World War I in 1918 and as a peace loving Christian I've always struggled with the idea of war. A question has always niggled and nagged within me, what sort of response did the Christian Church in Australia have to the war? And surprisingly in an effort to uncover the past I have discovered a vision for the future.

What is the truth and can any religion claim to possess the absolute truth?

Abel Iorgulescu

This paper will present a search for the nature of truth in the religious context and it will also evaluate if any religion can make the exclusivist claim to be in the possession of the absolute truth.

Postmodernism as a philosophical movement arose in the aftermath of World War Two, reflecting a transformation in the philosophical notions of society at large and revolutionising the quondam axiomatic structures of the arts, science and even religion. From this undermining of metanarratives have emerged many misunderstandings of postmodernism, principally from the purveyors of the metanarratives themselves. This paper recognises the pertinence of ascertaining the validity of postmodernism in the early twenty-first century, re-examining the application of postmodern ideology as the rapidity of social metamorphosis escalates.

The Kung-Fu of conversation: Towards a speech-based martial art

Jotham Kingston

Fighting theorist Steven Pearlman says the 'Pure Objective' of all martial arts is to generate a victory that is a) instantaneous, b) effortless and c) does not harm the opponent. By extension of these tenets, this paper proposes the theoretical existence of a speech-based martial art that is necessarily superior to Kung-Fu. Though engagement with science-fiction texts, some characteristics of this speech-based martial art become evident. Against a post-literate, postcolonial, post-Christian world, this speech-based martial art, if brought from the realm of theory to practice, would have the power to bring about significant change.

The impact of values education in Adventist schools on the level of knowledge and understanding, and internalisation of values in Year 7 students: A case study of three schools

Amy-Lyn Marks

In 2005, the Australian government introduced the Nine Values for Australian Schooling to the education arena. This study investigated the nature and impact of values education in three Kindergarten to Year 12 Adventist schools in New South Wales. It examined the effect of these approaches on the knowledge and understanding, and internalisation of the Nine Values for Australian Schooling of students in Year 7. Nine primary school teachers across the schools were interviewed in order to determine their approach to values education. Year 7 students from all three schools completed questionnaires to examine their knowledge and understanding, and internalisation of the Nine Values for Australian Schooling. Year 7 students from School 1 and 2 also participated in focus groups to further evaluate the depth of their understanding. Thematic analysis was employed with data gathered from the teacher interviews and student focus groups. Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis was employed with the questionnaire. The study concluded that teachers in Adventist schools are intentional in teaching values and use a variety of implicit and explicit teaching strategies although these strategies tend not to focus on experiential learning. It identified that students have a varied knowledge and

understanding of the Nine Values for Australian Schooling that does not appear to be connected to gender, school or years at school. It also concluded that students generally have a high level of internalisation of values, although girls at this age rated significantly higher than boys.

Bridge building Theology for positive Seventh-day Adventist and Neo-Pagan Relations

Daniel Matteo

Today, many people are abandoning the recognised religions and churches of society to pursue alternate forms of spirituality. The practice of indigenous European Paganism therefore, is a growing trend among Western nations, including Australia. By developing an interest in the spirituality, theology and practices of Neo-Pagans, Seventh-day Adventists can recognise common ground between the faiths that will allow relational bridges to be built and result in mutual spiritual edification.

Religious pluralism and its challenges to the Christian church

Andrew Russell

This presentation will discuss how the church is compelled to engage in pluralism, and how that engagement challenges the church socially, morally and theologically. In conclusion, a number of principles are set forth as a guide to demonstrate how the Christian Church may continue to maintain its distinctiveness and accomplish its mission.

Blindness, seeing and the mind's eye

Brooke Tually

The way teens react to art-creation exercises indicates that while most people can look, very few actually see. This blindness to reality is caused by the 'mind's eye' and the expectations it places on the world. It results in people being 'locked into a small world'. This paper discusses ramifications that go beyond art. In particular, it examines the way mainstream Australian culture looks, but does not see human relationship, sexuality and the natural world.

Apocalyptic praise

Bethany Turner

Revelation is well known for its weird seal opening scenes, trumpets, bowls of wrath, seven headed dragon and the coded number "666." Movies, evangelists and doomsday prophets have used Revelation to propagate fear. But many of these overlook the fact that Revelation is peppered with scenes of praise. In fact, the Apocalypse contains more liturgy than any other book in the New Testament. What role do these praise sequences play in John's apocalypse? what is their message?

“God with us” A Biblical Theology of Wilderness

Matej Vrancic

Theology is our human attempt to understand God based on what He has done in the past as recorded in Scripture. Because what God does tells us who He is. The wilderness is a recurring motif of Scripture; both in the Old and New Testament, and it is also a place where God has revealed Himself to people. As a matter of fact, large portions of Scripture are in some ways associated with the wilderness. The first five books of Moses, most of David's psalms and the book of Revelation were all written in a wilderness. However it is the amazing stories of those bible characters that experienced God in the wilderness that contributes to our theology and inspires us today.

From the first story in the wilderness to the last time it is mentioned in Revelation, I will develop a biblical theology of wilderness and what that means for us in the 21st century.

Committee Members

1. Hannah Bennett
2. Stephen Kilgour
3. Jotham Kingston
4. Bethany Turner
5. Steph Bennett
6. Nikarri Parker
7. Brad Watson
8. Daniel Reynaud
9. Ross Cole
10. Margaret House
11. Jane Fernandez