



## Studies of Religion 2016 Conference Program

“The nature and influence of religion” <http://StudiesOfReligionConf.com>

- Wifi Network: Studies of Religion Conference      Wifi Password: Macquarie!
- Resources for schools: <http://bit.ly/ahisforschools>
- Password protected resources for teachers: <http://bit.ly/ahisforteachers>
- Request access for the teacher resource by e-mailing: [denismootz@gmail.com](mailto:denismootz@gmail.com)
- Macquarie University in the Museum of Ancient Cultures, building X5B, level 3.

TIME	ITEM	SPEAKER(S)
8.45 - 9.15	Enrolment and tea/coffee	
9.15 - 9.30	Welcome address	Professor John Simons, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
9.30 - 9.45	Speed dating (networking your colleagues)	
9.45 - 10.15	<b>Keynote:</b> A Short History of “In the Beginning”: New Perspectives on Genesis 1: 1-2	Professor Wayne Horowitz
10.15 - 11.00	<b>Teaching Judaism:</b> Golden mice and Pharaoh’s vice: Monotheism in the Hebrew Bible	Dr Louise Pryke
11.00 - 11.30	Morning tea	
11.30 - 12.15	<b>Teaching Christianity:</b> Divergent Paths: Christians and Jews in the First Century	Dr Simon Holloway
12.15 - 1.00	<b>Teaching Islam:</b> The rise of Islam in the seventh century CE	Dr Meaghan McEvoy
1.00 - 2.00	Lunch	
2.00 - 2.30	<b>Panel Discussion:</b> Teaching Studies of Religion - what works?	
2.30 - 3.30	<b>Choice of demonstrations:</b>	
	1. Teaching technology: Using ‘Minecraft’ to model ancient religious sites Room: W2.4A 2.300 Active Learning Space	Dr Brian Ballsun-Stanton
	2. School outreach teaching: Infecting students with a love of the past	Dr Denis Mootz

Conference attendees are cordially invited to stay and inspect the museum and/or campus.

# Keynote – A Short History of “In the Beginning”: New Perspectives on Genesis 1: 1-2

**By: Professor Wayne Horowitz**

“In the Beginning . . . ” begins some of the most famous words of the English language as translated from the Hebrew Bible into the King James edition. In this lecture, we will briefly examine some of the 5,000+ year history of this famous passage, and consider new ways that the story of creation of Genesis can inform upon both our study of ancient civilizations and our understanding of traditions in our own time and place.

Professor Wayne Horowitz is Professor of Assyriology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem specializing in the cuneiform text tradition of the Ancient Near East. His research interests include ancient astronomy, cosmic geography, and cuneiform tablets from the Land of Israel. Professor Horowitz is a graduate of the University of Birmingham in England, and Brandeis University in the United States. He is also active in the Cuneiform in Australia and New Zealand project, which aims to make available to the academic community and general public editions of all the cuneiform tablets in Australasia.

## Teaching Judaism – Golden mice and Pharaoh’s vice: Monotheism in the Hebrew Bible.

**By: Dr Louise M. Pryke**

The Hebrew Bible is a sacred text which reveals the principle beliefs of Judaism. This paper considers the important principle of monotheism in Judaism. Using examples from Hebrew narrative, we explore how this belief is elucidated, especially in regard to contrasts and comparisons between the worship of the God of Israel, and other deities from surrounding ancient cultures. In the Hebrew Bible, the nature and omniscience of God is expressed through narrative in complicated and diverse ways – from descriptions of wizarding battles, to innovations in god-napping, and through the emphasis on covenant.

### **Syllabus content**

- Abraham and the covenant, promises of people and a land;
- Principle Beliefs: belief in a single God who is the creator and ruler of the universe; the idea of Covenant;
- Sacred Texts and Writings: the Hebrew Bible, identify the importance of the Hebrew Bible.

Dr. Louise M. Pryke is the Lecturer for the Languages and Literature of Ancient Israel, at Macquarie University. Louise’s research is focused on the myths, history and literature of the Ancient Near East, and her first book, *Scorpion*, was published this year. In 2016, Louise was the recipient of the International Association for Assyriology (IAA) Fund - an international award for promising early career scholars in the field of Assyriology.

# Teaching Christianity – Divergent Paths: Christians and Jews in the First Century

**By: Dr Simon Holloway**

The first century of the Common Era was a formative time for both Christianity and Judaism. During those years, traditions that were later to find expression in both the New Testament and the Mishna were collected or composed. Those years saw the life and ministry of Jesus, the destruction of the Temple and its high court, and the rise of the new Sanhedrin in Yavneh. To gain an insight into the attitudes of different Jews during this period requires of us that we consider a broad and varied range of texts. This session provides an overview as to how teachers might introduce their students to key philosophies during this formative stage of Christianity.

## **Syllabus Content**

- The historical and cultural context in which Christianity began;
- Sacred texts and writings of Christianity; and
- Paul of Tarsus

Dr Simon Holloway holds a Masters in Ancient History (Macquarie) and a PhD in Classical Hebrew and Biblical Studies (Sydney). He is an education officer at the Sydney Jewish Museum, where he runs seminars for school students in the History, English, and Studies of Religion curricula. Simon is also a sessional lecturer at the University of Sydney, where he teaches Classical Hebrew and Jewish History.

# Teaching Islam – The rise of Islam in the seventh century CE

**By: Dr Meaghan McEvoy**

This paper will examine the world of the middle east in the seventh century CE, the era of the birth of Islam and its rapid rise as a major religion of the region. The society of pre-Islamic Arabia will be explored, as will its interactions with major ancient world powers such as Sasanian Iran and the eastern Roman empire and their dominant faith systems, as a backdrop to the emergence of Muhammed and his teachings. In addition, the formation of early Islamic teaching and practice, the rule of the Four “Rightly-Guided Caliphs” and the initial expansion of Islamic rule and religion across the region in the seventh century will be considered, providing an overview for teachers of how to introduce their students to study of this major world religion in its earliest stages.

## **Syllabus Content**

- Pre-Islamic Arabia as the historical and cultural context for the development of Islam;
- The Prophet Muhammed; and
- The development of Islam under the Four Rightly Guided Caliphs.

Dr Meaghan McEvoy is Associate Lecturer in Byzantine Studies at Macquarie University. She completed her BA (Hons) in Classics at the University of Adelaide, and then undertook an

MPhil in Greek and Roman Studies and a DPhil in Ancient History at the University of Oxford. Since completing her DPhil she has been the recipient of research awards in Italy, the USA, the UK and Germany, before moving to Macquarie in 2016. Her work focuses on rulership and its ideology in the late antique, Byzantine and early Islamic worlds and she has published a monograph on this topic in 2013, as well as articles in international journals.

## Panel Discussion – Teaching Studies of Religion - what works?

We have three panellists, Mark Case, Kim Goodwin and Louise Zavone. Each will present their Top Teaching Tip, and then we will open it up for questions from the audience and discussion of solutions by the panellist. Dr Gil Davis will moderate the questions.

### **Mark Case**

Originally from the UK, Mark graduated with a degree in Theology from Oxford University and taught Religious Studies in selective boys' schools in London for ten years, which included four years as Head of Sixth Form (Years 11 and 12). In 2010 he moved to Sydney and took up a position in the Philosophy & Religious Studies Department at Newington College, where he is also a Housemaster and rugby coach.

### **Kim-Maree Goodwin**

Kim-Maree Goodwin is the Faith Formation & Religious Education Officer, Religious Education and Curriculum, for the Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn, having previously served as a religious education coordinator and Assistant Principal in various schools. She has a number of qualifications including a B.A. Dip Ed. and a Master of Theology. For many years she has been involved with Studies of Religion in roles including HSC marker, and President and Web Maintainer of Association for Studies of Religion from 2009 – 2012. In 2009 she was the Recipient of the Professional Teacher's Council, NSW, Outstanding Professional Service Award. Kim has been an author for Cambridge University Press and presenter at the annual Association of Studies of Religion Conferences.

### **Louise Zavone**

Louise is the Education Officer for Secondary Religious Education in the Religious Education & Evangelisation team for Sydney Catholic Schools. She has over 25 years of experience in the Religious Education classroom with qualifications that include a Masters of Religious Education Australian Catholic University and a Master of Arts (Theological Studies) Catholic Institute of Sydney, Strathfield. In 2009 Louise was appointed as the Secondary Religious Education Adviser in the Inner Western Region of Sydney, working with REC's and RE teachers to enhance assessment tasks and teaching and learning strategies in Religious Education. Prior to this appointment, Louise was the REC at Brigidine College, Randwick and also at St Patrick's College, Campbelltown. Louise has been a HSC marker since 2002 and a HSC Senior Marker for Studies of Religion since 2009 and she is currently the President for the Association for Studies of Religion, having served as President for the past 3 years. The current focus of her work has been the revision of the Stage 4 and 5 Religious Education Curriculum, providing relevant professional development days and support documents for teachers to use in their classrooms.

# Teaching Technology – Using 'Minecraft' to model ancient religious sites

**Room: W2.4A 2.300 Active Learning Space**

**By: Dr Brian Ballsun-Stanton**

This interactive demonstration will demonstrate some of the material of the Minecraft Archaeology project, demonstrating how ancient sites may be researched, built, participated in, and destroyed in minecraft. Minecraft as a ludic device (toy) which can encourage and motivate independent research in sites of interest is an excellent tool to allow the understanding of the social patterns, organisation, and broad architectural features of ancient cultures and significant sites.

This technology demo will show the current research project and will then instruct teachers how to install, deploy, and participate in modded minecraft. This participation may either use the current research or form the basis of motivated inhabitation and reconstruction of other ancient sites.

The wiki referenced in this presentation can be found at:

<https://faimsproject.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/MCArchaeo/overview>

Brian Ballsun-Stanton (Ph.D. University of New South Wales, 2012) is currently a Research Associate at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. His research interests include exploring how people interact with and understand the nature of data and an investigation into the mechanics of ludic-narrative interactions in games. He is the Technical Director and Data Architect for the Field Acquired Information Management Systems (FAIMS) Project.

# School outreach teaching – Infecting students with a love of the past

**By: Dr Denis Mootz**

This workshop will showcase materials prepared for the Macquarie School Outreach Program and suggest ways that the use of artifacts and material evidence in the classroom can provide unique opportunities for the teacher of History or historical materials.

Denis Mootz was a classroom teacher K-12 for 40 years. His main research concern is pedagogy and classroom practice, particularly in History classrooms. He spent nearly twenty years teaching pre-service History teachers at UNSW. He has been a museum educator for the last decade and has had some experience in archaeology.

