

2018 AC COLLOQUIA

6 March 2018: Speakers - Karen Pack and Carissa Henriksson

Embracing Vulnerability: A Case Study on Educational Experiences and Social Integration of Migrants and Immigrants in a Swedish School

Carissa Henriksson

Over the recent decade, Sweden's social and cultural climate has rapidly changed due to their relatively high intake of asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, and immigrants. This study addresses some of the issues that have arisen in Sweden, through an anthropological lens applied to a school-based integration program focusing on



school-aged children. What is happening in the minds and 'worlds' of immigrant and migrant youths in Sweden? The answer will shed light on what may cause them to successfully integrate or to retaliate ('dis-integrate') in some form. How does the educational and school experience aid or hinder the social integration of these youths? This case study, in one Swedish school, considers the dynamics and nuances of transnational movement, identity, social and behavioural factors, gender roles, religious issues, bullying and discrimination, language barriers, and cultural interactions playing a role in sojourner social integration journeys.

Issues of educational policy, equal rights, and classroom dynamics are also considered, as participants' experiences through schooling impact on their social interactions. Within and around each area of

concentration lies the perplexing theme of 'vulnerability' and how this trait is inflected either as a productive resource or a barrier to integration.

Between two pillars: How unmarried, evangelical Christian women in Australia responded to sacred and secular norms in the period 1890-1970

Karen Pack

In light of the increasing sexualisation of society, the evangelical church's focus on marriage and domesticity, and the large numbers of single women engaged in missional and justice work, what can be said about the role of unmarried Christian women in evangelical churches from 1890-1970? To what extent did unmarried Christian women conform to the apparent ideals of society and Church regarding their ideal and expected role in home and church? This thesis aims to examine understandings of what was considered "proper" for unmarried women throughout the period 1890-1970, and then to compare the lives of unmarried evangelical Christian women throughout the period, to determine whether they conformed to or challenged dominant ideals of femininity and purity, and their motivations for doing so.

3 April 2018: Speakers - Ps Allan Davis and Ps Phillip Webb

What is "successful" religious acculturation? A case study of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East in diaspora in Australia.

Ps Allan Davis

The dilemma facing migrants in maintaining home culture traditions while adapting to new ones, has been the subject of study for decades, particularly as multiculturalism has become a relevant topic for Governments, policy makers, service providers and citizens. There is still room for study of diasporas whose acculturation processes are impacted by ancient religious and cultural conventions. Large numbers of Syriac Orthodox migrated to the West in the 20th Century; many are now doing so as refugees. Australia has a small but growing community. Migrants settling in multicultural Australia face acculturation challenges. Religion often plays a part in helping them resettle, self-identify and connect socially. In the Syriac Orthodox Church community, these issues are complicated by the need to establish a new cultural identity while retaining Syriac liturgy and praxis.

Findings from this project so far (based on qualitative research involving interviews, focus groups and ethnographic fieldwork) confirm the importance of heritage values, religious identity, effective intergenerational transmission of tradition and belief, and sympathetic government policies, in their acculturation in Australia.

The project will enhance understanding of acculturation issues facing new cohorts of immigrants and refugees in Australia; provide better information for decision makers; and offer evidence to equip service providers helping them.

Policy makers and church leaders are interested in the findings, given continued refugee outflows from the Middle East.

Pentecostal Sacramentalism and the Australian Christian Churches

Ps Phillip Webb

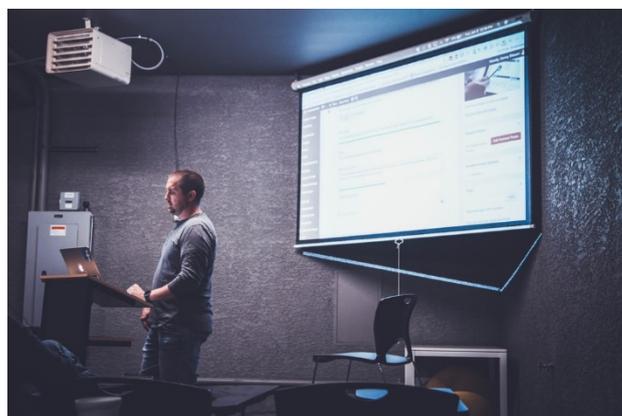
Since the early 1990's, Pentecostal theologians have begun to explore the possibility of a Pentecostal sacramentalism. Building upon the early ecumenical work of David du Plessis and Walter Hollenweger, these theologians have sought to understand the Pentecostal identity through sacramental language, some going so far as to describe Pentecostalism as having been an unrealised sacramental tradition from its inception. This paper is the preliminary research of a PhD and will 1) describe the proposed methodology to be undertaken in this research, following Bernard Lonergan's functions of meaning, grounded and participatory ethnography, and the triological theological method of Amos Yong; 2) present an overview of the developing, though at times contradictory, body of literature concerning Pentecostal sacramentalism to date; and 3) demonstrate the importance of this current research through grounding the literature, which has been largely conceived in the abstract, within the broader ecumenical understandings of sacramentalism and in the real life practices of Pentecostal worship, especially in their practices concerning the Eucharist. This paper concludes that an under-developed sense of Pentecostal sacramentalism is to the detriment of a Pentecostal self-understanding and that deliberate ethnographic research in Pentecostal congregations will provide a significant contribution to a Pentecostal theology of sacramentalism.

5 June 2018: Speaker – James Rengger

Transformational Caregiving: Integrating the 'Head' & 'Heart'

James Rengger

Christian caregiving must be a dynamic and transformational process that requires the progressive integration of a caregivers 'head' and 'heart' knowledge to ensure caregiving remains within the boundaries of God's overriding caregiving actions. According to the 2016 National Church Life Survey, 70% of surveyed churchgoers have an appetite for innovative approaches that seek to develop new ways to make better connections internally and externally of the Church environment. Furthermore, 32% of respondents reported that developing spiritual growth along with facilitating unity through building a strong sense of community are priorities for them in the short-term. What this means is that there is currently an opportunity for integrating an innovative process that seeks to combine the outlined priorities into the life of the local church. The action-reflection-corrective action model of caregiving is one such approach that can support these priorities. Therefore through the structured process of critical analysis and reflection of caregiving encounters, combined with intentionally engaging with the wisdom of the Christian tradition offered through an action-reflection-corrective action model can go a long way to satisfying the desires churchgoers are craving.



7 August 2018: Speakers - Rev Dr Phillip Hughes and Christopher Cat

The Economic Contribution of Church Attenders to Australian Society

Rev Dr Philip Hughes

SEIROS (Study of the Economic Impact of Religion on Society) commissioned the Christian Research Association to conduct a national survey of Australians in 2016 to explore volunteering.

Analysis of the 6,702 usable responses to the survey showed that church attenders did more hours per month than non-religious in volunteering. Some of those extra hours were spent within their churches. However, 60 per cent of the hours spent in their churches were spent in activities and programs for the wellbeing of the wider community. The survey showed that, on average, Australian adults volunteered about 7.1 hours per month for the sake of the community. On average, church attenders contributed 10.2 hours per month. When those additional three hours per month are multiplied by the 2.7 million Australian adults who attend a church monthly or more often, their additional contribution to the community per year is about 86 million hours and worth about \$2,587.8 million when a rough estimate of the skill level of the volunteering is taken into account.

Pastoral Care in Dialogue with Social Sciences

Christopher Cat

This paper examines how some social-psychological models of expectancy, self-efficiency and coping can dialogue

with some principles of pastoral care to inform ministry research into pastoral care strategies for people with chronic somatic, situations that cause suffering. The paper first shows how challenges to day to day functionality are perceived as suffering and then how engagement with models of self-efficiency can engage with expectations to empower day to day living and coping with suffering. This engagement will then be considered in dialogue with some pastoral care agendas showing both how pastoral care can be enhanced by the dialogue and the unique contribution Christian pastoral care can make for people experiencing suffering. Throughout each section the facilitative roll of human relationships in forming expectations, and aiding (or hindering) self-efficiency and coping will be considered.



4 September 2018: Speaker – Professor Shane Clifton

Disability as mediator between the right and left in the ethics of abortion and voluntary euthanasia

Professor Shane Clifton

In the polarised debates about beginning and end of life ethics, disability advocates, who normally align with left-wing social and political forces, have tended to side with conservative religious voices in expressing concerns about the impact of abortion and euthanasia on disabled futures. This paper draws on

the theory of transformative choices, as well as the virtue ethics tradition, to explain the alignment between the religious and disability perspectives, and outlines the consequences and prejudices of the legislative and cultural developments that have embraced the free choice logic. Yet it also recognises the inherent contradiction of disabled advocates taking a paternalistic position against the personal agency of women and people facing terminal illnesses. It goes on to argue that a disability perspective can help to mediate between the polarised perspective of free choice and religious pro-life advocates.

2 October 2018: Speaker – Dr Lyn Kidson

Fasting, Bodily Care, and the Widows of 1 Timothy 5:3–15

Dr Lyn Kidson

Abraham Malherbe in his essay, “Medical Imagery in the Pastoral Epistles,” argued that medical terminology was used polemically to describe the heretics or opponents. In relation to 1 Timothy, the opponent’s teaching is described as “diseased” and their minds “are corrupt...[and the opponent’s] diseased condition is exhibited in their demeanor, in their preoccupation with controversies, verbal battles, and wranglings (1 Tim 6:4–5).” In this paper Malherbe’s identification of this medical schema is the starting point to explore the connections between the opponents commands not to marry and abstain from foods (1Tim 4: 2-3) with the instruction to younger widows to marry in 1 Timothy 5: 3–15. This exploration will begin by first noting some structural elements in the letter, then will define the word didaskalia (1 Tim 4:1) to be clear on what type of teaching the opponents are doing and how this might sear their consciences. It is this searing which enables them to abandon the faith and pay attention to spirits and demons. The imagery of the seared conscience appears to be medically inspired and this suggests a link between the “other instruction” (didaskalia), fasting, sexual continence, and ancient medical advice about care for the body. Ancient medical advice on health focused on balancing the humors within the body. The excess of some humors was believed to be the underlying cause of sexual desire. Expelling the excess sperm, a humor, was seen to bring the body back into balance, restoring health. However, since the humors were generated by nutrition it was possible to a certain extent to regulate sexual desire through diet. From the evidence of Tertullian it appears that Christians utilised this theory in an attempt to balance the humors and therefore remain healthy while being sexually continent. It will therefore be argued that the command of the opponents, which forbid marriage and fasting, relates directly to the instructions to the young widows to marry in 1 Timothy 5:3-15. Drawing on the work of Methuen (1997), who argued that the term widow (chera) could overlap with the idea of an unmarried women, it will be argued that the young woman in 1Timothy 5:11 is a virgin rather than a woman whose husband had died. Founding his instructions on the current medical advice, the writer of 1 Timothy is pessimistic about young women keeping their vows of celibacy (1 Tim 5:12) and is thus opposed to them entering into the order of widows (1 Tim 5:11) .