



2019 SCIENCE: Wonder, Gift & Challenge

THE
EBOR
LECTURES
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2019 | SCIENCE: Wonder, Gift & Challenge

BE PART OF THE CONVERSATION

This free series of lectures aims to promote a conversation between theology and public issues and to contribute to the creation of personal and collective decision making in economic, political and social spheres. Speakers range from leaders in their fields to those with an important story to tell. The lectures provide people with an opportunity to engage with current issues such as politics, economics, contemporary culture, religion, spirituality, and globalisation. The Ebor lectures also offer a space for dialogue between theology and a range of communities such as educational institutions, public interest groups, religious groups and anyone with an interest in contemporary issues within society.

The Ebor Lectures is a project jointly organised by York Minster, York St John University, The Order of Carmelites, The Yorkshire North and East District of the Methodist Church and The C. & J. B. Morrell Trust.

SCIENCE: Wonder, Gift & Challenge

If you have ever seen the 1995 film, Apollo 13, dramatising the true story of the aborted lunar mission in April 1970, which had been intended to land human beings on the moon for the third time, and in which Tom Hanks plays Commander Jim Lovell, you may recall that the computer used to direct the whole expedition was the size of a large room. Although such a computer today would not be quite the size of a mobile phone, it would undoubtedly be much smaller and more efficient than what would seem to us to be the rather clunky machine used then.

The so-called modern world has seen a revolution in the way we understand and engage with the world and much of this is due to science and technology. Thanks to Galileo and others, we no longer believe the sun revolves around the earth. While the aspiration to land more people on the moon remains, that vision has been superseded by ideas – unimaginable even just a few years ago – of sending people to Mars. In our everyday lives we happily speak of DNA, algorithms, MRI scans, climate change, GM crops, solar panels, smart phones, evolution, artificial intelligence and driverless cars. The revolution continues at an ever faster pace, raising huge questions about what it is to be human, what our responsibility to the earth is, and what the purpose of life is, all requiring creativity, adaptability, courage, excitement, hope and imagination.

This Ebor lecture series seeks to embrace such questions, issues and possibilities with enthusiasm and alacrity. If you wonder what the future holds, come and be moved to wonder at the extraordinary possibilities offered by science, to wonder at the beauty, fragility and complexity of the world, and to consider what it means to be human in a rapidly changing world.

WEDNESDAY

3 APRIL 2019 | DR VALERIE SHRIMPLIN



THE BEGINNING AND THE END: Image of the Universe

7.00pm | Temple Hall, York St John University



Dr Valerie Shrimplin will discuss how the beginning and end of the universe have been portrayed visually, by considering examples from ancient times, through Michelangelo's depiction of the Creation and Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel, up to the present day.

Dr Valerie Shrimplin has lectured extensively on Byzantine, Medieval and Renaissance Art and Architecture and published widely on the influence of astronomy and cosmology on art and architecture. Recently stepping down from her position as Registrar & Secretary at Gresham College London in order to pursue writing and research full time.

WEDNESDAY

5 JUNE 2019 | PROF TOM MCLEISH



SCIENCE AS GIFT NOT THREAT: An Essential Culture-Change for the Church

7.00pm | Temple Hall, York St John University



Tom McLeish, a physicist, professor of natural philosophy at the University of York, and an Anglican lay reader, draws on Biblical Wisdom tradition to propose a theology of science that resources the church to get onto the front foot with science

A 'perfect storm' of factors over the last century has left the church largely disengaged from science, at best reacting to it as a perceived threat, with a library of apologetics and defensive thinking. But a world faced with changing climate and deep possibilities in technology, such as genetic medicine and artificial intelligence, cannot afford to bury this God-given talent in the ground. Humanity needs the light and truth of Christian thinking and action to ensure a fruitful future, rather than an impoverished one.

WEDNESDAY

3 JULY 2019 | DAME OTTOLINE LEYSER



“SCIENCE: Sheep, Goat or Unicorn?”

7.00pm | Temple Hall, York St John University



We are in an age of uncertainty and insecurity and our reaction is often to build walls in an attempt to shut out the perceived enemy. A wall of particular concern to me is the one that we have built over many years between science and society. Professor Leyser will discuss these two areas and how dismantling the wall between science and society must be a priority.

Prof Leyser is a Professor of Plant Development and Director of the Sainsbury Laboratory at the University of Cambridge. Professor Leyser received her BA (1986) and PhD (1990) in Genetics from the University of Cambridge. In 2017 Prof Leyser was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for services to plant science, science in society and equality and diversity in science.

WEDNESDAY

21 AUGUST 2019 | BROTHER GUY CONSOLMAGNO



ADVENTURES OF A VATICAN ASTRONOMER

2.30pm | Temple Hall, York St John University



Brother Guy Consolmagno SJ, is a Jesuit brother, Director of the Vatican Observatory and the President of the Vatican Observatory Foundation whose research studies meteorites and asteroids. Along with more than 200 scientific publications, he is the author of six popular astronomy books. In 2014 he received the Carl Sagan Medal from the American Astronomical Society Division for Planetary Sciences for excellence in public communication in planetary sciences.

ADVENTURES OF A VATICAN ASTRONOMER: No scientist is a Spock-like android; a scientist’s work is as intuitive, and just as full of human foibles, as a painting, a symphony, or a prayer. Br Guy will discuss being a planetary scientist at the Vatican, how he collects meteorites in Rome and his his work in Arizona using the Vatican telescope.

TICKETS

ALL EBOR LECTURES ARE FREE TO ATTEND.

To book your ticket please visit

www.yorks.ac.uk/eborlectures

or write to Conference and Events Office, York St John University, Lord Mayors Walk, York YO31 7EX

Tel: **01904 876654** | Email: events@yorks.ac.uk

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WEDNESDAY

21 AUGUST 2019 | BROTHER GUY CONSOLMAGNO



ASTRONOMY, GOD & THE SEARCH FOR ELEGANCE

7.00pm | York Minster



This lecture will discuss how scientific theories must do more than merely satisfy the data; they must do so in a way that is (to use a term much favored by mathematicians) “elegant.” Kepler, Maxwell, and Einstein are examples of scientists who found that a sense of aesthetic “rightness” helped them to direct their scientific intuition toward theories that could then be expressed rationally, mathematically; theories that could then be tested against nature. By looking closely at a handful of astronomical images, we’ll explore the way that one proceeds from an emotional appreciation of the beauty of the stars and planets, to a deeper understanding that satisfies both reason and emotion. Ultimately, this link between “elegance” and rational truth has profound theological implications.

WEDNESDAY

6 NOVEMBER 2019 | REVD PROF DAVID WILKINSON



‘TITLE TO BE CONFIRMED’

7.00pm | York Minster



David Wilkinson is President of St John’s College, Durham University. He is also Professor in the Department of Theology and Religion. His background is research in theoretical astrophysics, where he gained a PhD in the study of star formation, the chemical evolution of galaxies and terrestrial mass extinctions. He is a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society. After this research he trained for the Methodist ministry, serving in a variety of appointments. His current work at Durham University involves the relationship of the Christian faith to contemporary culture, from science to pop-culture.