



A-HA!

The Association of Heythrop Alumni

Edition One

June 2006

Message from the Principal

Welcome to the 'new look' Alumni Association, A-HA!, and its magazine!

It is my hope for the large numbers who graduate each year having had a good experience at College, that the Association will offer a chance to all of you to continue the process of growth when you have left.

Given the complexity and fragmentation of people's lives today, it is necessary to avoid exclusivity and religiosity and be constructive, accepting and enabling. The College's mission is to foster people's good in the context of our fluid culture. This is the world in which we live and work, and a world which is shaped by so many forces that can seem to be destructive.

I can see so much in what Heythrop offers that can be taken out into the world, and skills and talents learned at Heythrop being nurtured and developed in the wider context in which we live. In all this we do well to recognise our shared experiences and values, our history and our future. By maintaining and forging links with those we knew at

Heythrop our experiences continue to live on, and we find a common value in that which unites and strengthens us.

The Association is an instrument within the College's purpose, run *by graduates for graduates*. Its mission is to bring together and build up, to allow an exchange of ideas and a forum for friendship and discussion. The College will facilitate with this, and is glad to be able to continue to foster the family of the College not only whilst students are here, but also long after they have left.

Long may the Association flourish!

*Dr John McDade, SJ
Principal*



Extra Funding for Heythrop

HEFCE Funding - the story so far....

Virtually all of UK higher education is funded by the Higher Education Funding Councils for England & Wales, for Scotland and for Northern Ireland. Heythrop's decision 18 months ago to seek HEFC(E) funded status and its successful admission therefore brings it into mainstream HE activity in a significant sense. The official entry date is 1 August but the College has been preparing for HEFCE funding in many areas over the past 12 months.

Public funding inevitably brings with it a lot of accountability and the need to be scrupulously "transparent" in policies

and procedures. Because small institutions face much the same demands as very large institutions, there is a sense in which the College is now carrying a bureaucratic burden that once, in some former golden age, it didn't need.

But on the other hand, membership of the HEFCE "family" has already brought many advantages. For example:

- we are now able to participate in educational and professional networks that were previously restricted; for example, postgraduate students are about to gain access to university libraries, nationally;
- the need now to be fully in line with legislation for publicly-funded organisa-

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Welcome to this first edition of the new look Magazine of the new look Association of Heythrop Alumni!

Since the last newsletter was sent out the College and the Association have been in negotiations over the future of the Association. The result is an Association funded by the College (so no more membership fees!) and fully franchised so that all former students, back to 1970, together with past and present staff and governors are now full members.

This opening up of the Association has only been possible thanks to the generosity of both the College and members of the Association Committee, and so I'm both proud and pleased to be able to thank here all those who have made this expansion possible. Our first event, the Study Evening last month, saw more than 120 people coming together to hear Drs Hughes and Vardy speak. If you weren't able to attend, read on for a full account.

Later in this magazine you'll see details of the BBQ planned for September. Also planned is our AGM with guest speaker, to be held in early November (check the website for the date-www.heythrop.ac.uk/association/index).

For now, see what's happening in the College, and I look forward to meeting many of you in the months ahead.

*Simon Gillespie
A-HA! President*



Extra Funding for Heythrop College

tions has brought a requirement to develop "conventional" HR procedures which are already helpful to both religious staff and attractive to newly recruited staff;

- we have new obligations for disabled people which, though expensive to implement, will be of great help to students, staff and visitors with different kinds of disability;
- a requirement to revise our systems of governance has lead to an unprecedented number of talented and hugely experienced people, with a sympathetic but external perspective offering to join the Governing Body;
- HEFCE has rigorous planning expectations and we have started to respond to them by preparing our first full Strategic Plan. www.heythrop.ac.uk/documents

We have also started to receive additional funding (over and above the basic annual grant) which is designed to support special projects for which we have to submit very focussed plans. These allocated funds are "ring-fenced" so that they can only be used for the purpose for which they are granted - but they make some things possible that we would otherwise never have been attempted and they leave other funds free for other developments.

So far these special grants have included:

- £150,000 for capital investment, which will be devoted to the installation of a lift in the Main Building. Plans are at a very early stage but we hope to site the lift so that it will give access (including wheelchair access) to the whole "Admin Block" and to all but the top floor of the Main Building. If all goes 100% smoothly (hah!) the lift will be operational from autumn 2007...but watch this space!
- £200,000 from the Higher Education Innovation Fund, designed to support a numbers of projects which involve the wider community at a regional level.

Our selected projects, running over two years, include:

Centre for Christianity and Interreligious Dialogue

Working with faith community leaders in Southall (principally Muslim but also Sikh, Hindu and small Buddhist communities) to establish a "School of Faiths". The principal aims are to share information and understanding on faith traditions, explore ways to engage with neighbouring communities and explore educational issues particularly for younger generations of communities living in a Diaspora.

Pastoral Studies

A project to support church agencies and local church community groups engaged in church-community renewal and the outreach work of engagement with and mission in and to society. The work is concerned to sustain and improve the contribution church communities make to other groups and the wider society, and the contribution of religious faith values.

Institute for Religion Ethics and Public Life

One project aiming to help improve dialogue and understanding between politicians, faith leaders, policy makers and members of the public in London, and two smaller projects to develop the existing "Business Conferences" and to support the joint work of the Centre for Human Rights at LSE and the Jesuit Refugee Service.

A further grant of £80,000 over three years has also just been received which is earmarked for improving the quality of teaching and learning, and is likely to be reserved for work in research-led teaching, development of students' research skills, and professional development especially for younger staff.

Maureen Boylan

*Director of Administration &
Clerk to the Governing Body*

Help us to help each other

?????

Included with this magazine is a Questionnaire. Please spend a few minutes completing it, and then return it to Heythrop College, marked for the attention of A-HA!

The Association Committee have some ideas, and some events in the pipeline, but would welcome ideas and suggestions from near and far. Nothing's too strange to be considered!

Also, we're keen to keep our database up-to-date, and so if your details are not correct, or you have current contact details for other former students, please jot them down and send them in.

As an added incentive—as if one were needed—there's a bottle of champagne on offer for the first reply (received before the end of July) drawn out of the hat at our BBQ in September.

All you need is a stamp . .



Alumni Barbeque

Come and join us for an Alumni BBQ!

Meet former Class-mates - Revisit Heythrop - Catch up with Staff
Enjoy a Steak and Salmon Feast!

Vegetarian Options also Available

Sunday 24th September 2006

In the Gardens of Heythrop College (Maria Assumpta Centre)
Arrivals from 12.30pm - Lunch Served from 1.00pm

The BBQ is FREE for Alumni,
with subsidised places for guests at £15 per head

Places are limited, so please return the enclosed form as soon as possible



Goodbye and Good Luck!

Heythrop bids farewell this year to.....

Janice Thomas, who retires this year, having served the College with faithful dedication for 32 years. Janice joined the College in 1974, four years after it moved to London from Oxfordshire. For eight years, Janice - with Gerry Hughes - carried out all the Philosophy teaching.



For the next two decades the College and the Philosophy Department grew considerably. In 2001 Janice became Head of Department and two years later, she led her 'team' through the Quality Assurance Subject Review with great success. Many generations of former students owe a great deal to Janice's care and commitment and will remember her fondly.

Kathleen O'Connor who has returned to her native Australia after five years as Programme Convenor of the unique degree that is MA Psychology of Religion.

Bernie Devine SP who is leaving her post as Chaplain/Student Support after five years, to join the chaplaincy team at Mildmay Hospice in East London. Bernie is a former student herself, having graduated from the MA Pastoral Studies programme in 2001. She has been, and will continue to be, Programme Convenor of the College's Catechesis and Evangelisation Certificate.

Anna Wheeler, also a former student with a First Class BA in Theological Studies in 2003, is leaving the College's administration after three years, to follow her new passion and train at the London Centre for Theatre Studies. We look forward to seeing her treading the boards in the West End!

And is pleased to announce news of.....

Paul McPartlan who left the College in 2005 after ten years on the staff, to move to the Catholic University of America, in Washington DC and where he has recently been appointed the Carl J. Peter Professor of Systematic Theology and Ecumenism.

We would like to carry alumni news in future editions of the magazine. All contributions welcome - to Annabel Clarkson, a.clarkson@heythrop.ac.uk.

Does God's knowledge cause things to happen- but that is determinism or does God know because we do something?

Hughes: If this was true, God must depend on us to know what is happening. God is simple. Therefore He is not dependent on human beings. Aquinas says therefore "God's knowledge has to be causal". Death and pregnancy are sure. Aquinas believes that God is a necessary being but not all God's attributes perceived by Aquinas are necessary. We have to get to something that has to exist. Therefore we need a necessary being. This does not mean that God exists of necessity as he is not in time/space. He is therefore unchanging and not in time. God is not affected by anything we do nor is He waiting for us to know what we do. God timelessly knows what we freely do.

Not everything we say about God is truly necessary. God created the universe but He did not need to have done so. Nothing finite can force God to love it. He decided to do it.

God does this once and for all- as Creator God for all eternity.

God can decide out of time and space without changing.

God is free. Hughes illustrates this by asking Peter Vardy to pass his pen. He does so according to Gerry willingly by nature and upbringing etc.- but could not have done anything else. It is not incompatible with God's determining the character of Peter.

Vardy: Immanuel Kant - we have to assume we are free in a non-deterministic sense. Either we are free or there is no morality.

Hughes: Sometimes we are free: how does this tie in with God's knowledge concerning everything about Peter, his character etc. ?

He is free. He still does not know until Peter does the action. How does God know?- timelessly. He can see. Therefore, according to Aquinas He can modify- if He wants.

God's knowledge is an attribute with God. God's knowledge is identical in nature to Him. No overlap in essence but God's attributes are different to ours.

According to Aquinas- We do it because God knows. If God's knowledge is necessary as God exists, there is nothing we can do to change it.

Yet, we cannot give up our non-determined freedom.

Vardy: If God's knowledge is dependent on us, therefore His knowledge is not omniscient. Therefore God is in time which is contrary to the Aquinas model.

Knowledge and freedom are messy attributes.

Creation must be from the Creator- Creation must be a necessary part of God?

Doesn't have to be like that.

He needn't have created it but because of Knowledge, therefore it is necessary.

There is the question of dependency.

If God can do other than He can? Consequence from Aquinas' view: He can't because He is simple - but can we?

Alumni Study Evening

Many of you were able to come to the recent Study evening held at Heythrop but for those of you who weren't below is a summary of what was talked about!

11th May 2006

God: Not quite so simple ?

Peter Vardy and Gerry Hughes opened the debate on the question posed by Aquinas "Is God simple" (ST.1a.3).

Aquinas in his question posed eight points of inquiry:

Whether God is a body? Is he composed of 'form' and 'matter'? Is God to be identified with his own essence or nature, with that which makes him what he is? Can one distinguish in God nature and existence? Can one distinguish in him genus and difference? Is he composed of substance and accidents? Is there any way in which he is composite, or is he altogether simple? Does he enter into composition with other things? (ST.1a.3 McDermott, T, 1963, Vol.2, p.19)

Peter Vardy opened the debate with an overview of the lines of the debate as posed by Aquinas above. Aquinas according to Herbert McCabe was absorbed with questions about God. His five ways of proving the existence of God are well known (ST.1a 2,3, Vol.2, pp.13-17)

A brief summary is that everything changes, therefore there must be a first cause of that change, a prime mover to quote Aristotle, and a necessary being, which exists of itself to bring about that change (ibid 1963 p.202). The fourth way is by reflection on degrees of being necessarily implies a noblest being and the final way is the teleological that everything has a purpose, that which loves (ibid 1963 pp.204,208).

Vardy then started on the attributes of God. God is not spatio-temporal. If He is inside, he is just another object. God is actual, not potential. God does not change: I am who I am (Exodus). God necessarily exists. There is no potential other than God is. All attributes in God are identical. In God there is no distinction. God's knowledge is part of the nature of God. Past, present and future are all present to God. All time is present to God. Because God knows, God is omniscient. His knowledge depends on no one.

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Study Evening

Heythrop Postgraduate Philosophy of Religion Circle Annual Conference

Let there be light- potential. Therefore this is true.

Hughes: I am not sure they necessarily follow one another.

Vardy: referring to Gerry's article on Prayer- examines relationship with the nature of God.

Petitionary prayer- Is this incompatible as how would God respond to prayer? With Aquinas's model, it is incompatible- there is no second act- morals or miracles, e.g Red Sea parting.

Hughes considers: God can respond.

Vardy: Hold on to God responding in prayer but..

Hughes: For Aquinas, God is not a material object- Time/ space/ gravity/ indivisibility are linked. God finds out because we do it- in creation, that is if He does not build in a response.

Vardy: Christians view that God responds to prayer. What do we mean by petitionary prayer? God would understand our petitions as He created us. Jesus response to request to his disciples- he taught them 'The Our Father'.

Petitionary prayer must be for the Kingdom of God to be united with God. God can respond generously, e.g. child dying. Therefore, this is not the Aquinas model.

Hughes: God creates things the way we are. He responds to us whether we pray or do not pray all the time. God implicitly or explicitly knows which.

Wittgenstein- I/thou relationship with God- needs a possibility of response.

Vardy: Coherent but does away with freedom. God cannot chose. Therefore God is in time but He is not a space/ temporal object. There is something mysterious about prayer.

However in Hughes' mind Aquinas should be seen as out of time, space and eternity. Therefore petitionary prayer is not possible. The extensive question time that followed reflects the hugeness of the debate - whatever views are held the debate at the very least showed it's complicated.

Alan Rainer

This year the annual conference was held at the All Saints Pastoral Centre, London Colney from 31 March - 2 April. The theme was *Contemporary Approaches to God*.

We started with 'Creationism - An Investigation into the Roots of the North American Experience' and Pat Mitchell explored the background and some of the reasons behind the conflict between the theories of Creationism and Evolution. In doing so she drew attention to some of the laws passed in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Oklahoma and subsequent trials.

After morning prayers on Saturday and breakfast we reassembled to hear Jane Mather present 'A Jewish reading of Kierkegaard's commentary on the binding of Isaac as told in Fear and Trembling'. Although the story is told in the Qu'ran, Jane restricted her paper to Jewish commentary, using Kierkegaard's interpretation as a Christian foil. She also explained some of the differences in understanding and practice within Judaism and gave examples of how Jewish understanding of the story has modified over several centuries. She considered Kierkegaard's understanding of the central story to be nearer early Jewish midrash, than contemporary Jewish interpretations.

Stefanie Hugh-Donovan presented the next paper, on 'Infinity and Inconceivability'. Taking a theological slant, she drew on Rahner's concept of an individual's relatedness to God, to argue that, in a period of rapid and tumultuous change, holiness exists outside the Church and outside Christianity.

In the afternoon, Magali Nicole spoke on 'Wittgenstein's Approach to Philosophy: An Unbiased Approach to Religious Belief?' She considered Wittgenstein's background and the importance of his

approach to Philosophy and Religion, some aspects of his approach to language and the difficulties of translating some of the language he used. She then compared the methodologies of Science and Philosophy and considered the relevance of this to Philosophers interested in Religion.

On Sunday morning, Alan Gadd spoke about, 'Another kind of Natural Theology: Learning about God from the things God has made'. Alan drew on Aquinas, Calvin, the Anglican hymnal and the Bible to suggest that, although natural theology has a place in both Reformed traditions and Roman Catholicism, both are defective. He suggests 'another kind of natural theology', based on perpetual dialogue between natural theology and revealed theology, mutually correcting one another, could be developed. Learning to read and integrate learning from 'both of God's books', may lead to a more mature religion.

The final paper was presented by Denise Cook who looked at 'Everything flows - towards a poetic vision of God'. Denise drew on poets, artists and Teilhard de Chardin to illustrate the paradox of violence, fragmentation and flow in life. She suggested a poetic vision of God is panentheistic and pantheistic, manifesting in paradoxical states of separation / return, individualisation / totalisation, relationship of collective / individual and individual / individual and fragmentariness / uncertainty.

I have only been able to give a taste of the papers presented. Thanks are due to all those who presented them and to Jonathan, Moira, Rodney and James for their respective roles. It was a stimulating weekend.

Georgina Forbes

What's Coming Up?

A new film about the Carthusian Order called 'Into Great Silence' is being released and we are hoping to have a private screening of the film in London, possibly in January but can only make this possible if there is enough interest!

Would members who may be interested in attending please register their interest by emailing alumni@heythrop.ac.uk so that when details are finalised we can get back to them.

The synopsis follows:

The Grande Chartreuse, the mother house of the legendary Carthusian Order, is based in the French Alps. "Into Great Silence" will be the first film ever about life inside the Grande Chartreuse.

Silence. Repetition. Rhythm. The film is an austere, next-to-silent meditation on monastic life in a very pure form. No music except the chants in the monastery, no interviews, no commentaries, no extra material.

Changing of time, seasons, and the ever repeated elements of the day, of the prayer. A film to become a monastery, rather than depict one. A film about awareness, absolute presence, and the life of men who devoted their lifetimes to God in the purest form. Contemplation.

An object in time.

See also the website for further details:

<http://www.diegrosse stille.de/english/>

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