

# Postgraduate Seminar Presentations

Friday 8 November 2019, 1:00 – 2:30pm, Lecture Room 3, Henderson Campus

**Fiona Sherwin (1:00 – 1:20pm)**

**Title:** What needs to be done to make the church a place of belonging?: A case study in disability.

**Abstract:** Brian Brock in his recent publication, *Wonderously Wounded: Theology, Disability and the Body of Christ*, states that “Disability is so much more than a medically diagnosed impairment, a social stigma, or a political activism engaged in the fight against manifest injustice: it is an existential struggle.” There are two primary models that people with disabilities are understood first the medical model – what is *wrong* with the person, and how can they be “fixed” in order to participate in life; secondly, the social model that came out of a political movement of people with physical impairments – it is society that needs to be fixed in order for people with disabilities to participate. Both models carry benefits and challenges. The question for my thesis is what needs to be done to make a church a place of belonging? In this presentation I will consider the two models and also engage with some theological concepts of how we view people with disabilities. Does the church value differentness, for example, or does the church feel the need to “fix” the person in order that they belong?

**Paula Simpson (1:30 – 1:50pm)**

**Title:** Beyond John’s Gospel: A Bibliodrama Creative Works Thesis with Critical Exegesis and Creative Works Artefact.

**Abstract:** I take on an interdisciplinary approach where Jesus and Mary are invoked, remythologised and re-inscribed in a bibliodrama through a selection of pericopae from John’s Gospel. The mystical hermeneutic key of “seeing” is one of the leitmotifs that is drawn out from the Gospel. The critical exegesis (Part I) explores and interacts with the subject of Merkabah mysticism, theory (of drama and performance), and a dramaturgical methodology (a creative works i.e. a script of the bibliodrama). The selection of texts chosen are intertextually combined with other biblical and non-canonical texts as a bricolage for the script of the creative works artefact. The creative works artefact (Part II) culminates in a gedanken experiment. This is an experiment of pure thought using imagination to evoke a mystical cosmic journey for Mary’s own Merkabah ascent on her passing from this life into the next, clearly going beyond John’s Gospel.

**Ryan Lang (2:00 – 2:20pm)**

**Title:** A song in the night: A reflection on singing in scripture and social vocation.

**Abstract:** “When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives” (Mk 14:26). In my early twenties, days after I joined a team working against slavery, I had a formative experience—of the power of a hymn sung in the night. I believe now that Scripture gives meaning to this experience. This paper will be a simple reflection, a figural interpretation of three images of song: at the Red Sea (Exod 15:1-21), during the Last Supper (Mk 14:26; Mt 26:30), and beside a sea of glass and fire (Rev 15:3-4). We will explore these biblical images, consider how they may be connected, and then contemplate two moments in my own life, from a season in social vocation, in light of what surfaces in our reading.

