

**Methodist Studies Seminar**

**Friday 20 April 2018**

**The John Rylands Library, Manchester (Christie Room)**

**Organised by Cliff College and the Manchester Wesley Research Centre**

*The Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Oxford Brookes University, and the Manchester Wesley Research Centre have worked in partnership for several years. In 2012, the centres established a bi-annual seminar series that has now extended to include the Wesley Study Centre, St John’s College, Durham University; Wesley House, Cambridge; Cliff College; and The Queen’s Foundation, Birmingham. The seminars provide an opportunity for established and emerging scholars of Methodist Studies to present the findings of their research. We conceive of Methodist Studies broadly and aim to provide opportunities for students of history, theology, literature, art, material culture and other fields related to Methodism.*

This year is the 50th anniversary of the final reports of the Anglican-Methodist Unity Commission being published for consideration by the two churches. In light of this, and looking forward to a conference on this subject to be hosted later this year by the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Oxford Brookes University, reflection on Anglican-Methodist union is a theme of this seminar.

**9.45-10am Arrivals & Welcome** (Drs George Bailey and Geordan Hammond)

Please arrive in the foyer on the ground floor of the Rylands by 10am for a prompt start.

**10.00am** *Talk about and Viewing of Select Materials from the Methodist Archives Special Collections and Tour of the Library*

Jane Gallagher, Special Collections Librarian (Rare Books and Digital Humanities) and Dr Gareth Lloyd, Archivist, John Rylands Library

**11.00am**  **Tea & Coffee**

**11.20am** *‘The ghost of John Goodwin’? Seventeenth-Century Perspectives on John Wesley’s Arminian Theology*

Dr Andrew Ollerton, Honorary Research Fellow, University of Leicester

(Chair: Dr Stephen Wright)

**12.00pm** *Anti-Methodist Uses of History, c.1738-c.1760*

Dr Simon Lewis, Institute of Historical Research, University of London

(Chair: Dr David Bundy)

**12.40pm** *Digitised Resources for the Study of Methodism and World War 1: Westminster Training College ‘Roll of Men in the King’s Forces’ (Oxford Brookes University)*

Dr Peter Forsaith, Oxford Brookes University

**12.50pm Lunch**

There are a range of local options at which participants can have lunch.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**2.00pm** *Reading and Religious Community*

Dr Rachel Cope, Brigham Young University

(Chair: Dr Judith Rossall)

**2.40pm** *Will Perfect Love Predestine us to accept Lay Presidency? Theological Conversations English Anglicans and Methodists must have*

Revd Charles Read, Eastern Region Ministry Course and Diocese of Norwich

(Chair: Dr Jane Craske)

**3.20pm Tea & Coffee**

**3.45pm** *Anglican-Methodist Union: The Long View*

Dr Martin Wellings, Superintendent Minister of the Oxford Methodist Circuit

(Chair: Dr George Bailey)

**4.45pm Closing Announcements**

Registration:

There is no cost for attending the seminar; however, please register by 12 April by emailing

MWRC Assistant, Helen Stocker at: [hstocker@nazarene.ac.uk](mailto:hstocker@nazarene.ac.uk)

Venue:

The John Rylands Library (Christie Room)

150 Deansgate

Manchester M3 3EH

Directions: <http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands/visit/getting-here/>

Recording:

We are not able to livestream the seminar on this occasion, but we are planning to record and

make as many of the presentations available as possible on the [MWRC YouTube page](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv7KRNuHwpW3CJgNuOJB1bA).

Annual Methodist Research Conference:

The Methodist Church will hold its Annual Methodist Research Conference at the Rylands on the day before the Methodist Studies Seminar: Thursday 19 April 2018. [Details are available here](http://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/learning/scholarship-research-and-innovation/conferences-study-tours-lectures/). To register email David Harmer at: <harmerd@methodistchurch.org.uk>.

*\*\*\*The second 2018 seminar will be at The Queen’s Foundation, Birmingham (organised by Queen’s and the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History), on Saturday 8 December.*

**Abstracts of Papers**

*Talk about and Viewing of Select Materials from the Methodist Archives Special Collections and Tour of the*

*Library*

Jane Gallagher, Special Collections Librarian (Rare Books and Digital Humanities) and

Dr Gareth Lloyd, Archivist, John Rylands Library

The John Rylands Library, now part of the University of Manchester, has a longstanding association with Methodism. Its founder, Enriqueta Rylands, was eager to represent Nonconformist denominations in her library and included a statue of John Wesley in the main reading room. Since 1977, the Library has held on deposit the Methodist Archives and Research Centre (MARC) of the Methodist Church of Great Britain, which houses the Connexional records of the Church.

  This session will offer attendees with a tour of the Victorian Gothic building, and an opportunity to encounter some of the treasures in the collections.

*‘The ghost of John Goodwin’? Seventeenth-Century Perspectives on John Wesley’s Arminian Theology*

Dr Andrew Ollerton, Honorary Research Fellow, University of Leicester

In the eighteenth-century, Augustus Toplady alleged that John Wesley had ‘raised the ghosts’ of seventeenth-century English Arminians, including the regicidal puritan John Goodwin. This paper will consider surprising forms of English Arminianism, which paradoxically flourished throughout a decade characterized by puritan rule. During the Cromwellian 1650s puritan, Episcopal and sectarian strains of Arminianism were propagated on an unprecedented scale, in print and public debate. This paper will consider political motivations and theological arguments that developed within these distinct ecclesial styles. The paper will then consider evidence of later reception and adaptation, as John Wesley drew on Arminian works published during the English Revolution in order to formulate his rebuttal to Calvinist theology. Particular attention will be given to marginal notes in Wesley’s personal copy of *Ειρηνομαχια: The Agreement and Distance of Brethren,* published by John Goodwin in 1652. This will enable an original perspective on sources that informed John Wesley’s Arminian theology and will help to join the dots between episodes of doctrinal controversy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

*Anti-Methodist Uses of History, c.1738-c.1760*

Dr Simon Lewis, Institute of Historical Research, University of London

The history of history has long been a contested field. Did historical scholarship witness a ‘revolution’ during the eighteenth century? To what extent did the so-called ‘Enlightenment’ lead to a more objective and less overtly polemical approach to history? This paper will address these questions by discussing the various ways in which anti-Methodist authors utilised history in their works. It will be shown that anti-Methodist polemicists often attempted to convey a sense of objectivity by citing a diverse range of primary sources in their historical discussions. Ultimately, though, these historical discussions were decidedly partisan, and, in many cases, reminiscent of earlier High Church attacks on schism and Dissent. By comparing the differing ways in which High Church Tories, such as Zachary Grey, and ‘ultra-Protestant’ Whigs, such as Bishop George Lavington, utilised history in their anti-Methodist polemics, this paper will illuminate the varying ways in which Methodism was perceived during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Not only will this paper show that Methodism meant different things to different Anglicans, it will also display the differing ways in which eighteenth-century divines interpreted the history of the Reformation and the origins of the Church of England.

*Reading and Religious Community*

Dr Rachel Cope, Brigham Young University

Hoping to experience communion with the divine, Catherine Livingston committed herself to a more ascetic life and engaged in acts of “spiritual literacy,” or “regular, repeated practices of reading and writing that occur in the private, communal, and institutional life of the spirit.”[[2]](#footnote-2) Specifically, she read the Bible and other religious works, reflected, and prayed. With her prayer book functioning as a powerful converting instrument—indeed, as an agent of change—she finally encountered what she believed to be the grace of God.

Engagement with religious texts continued to transform Livingston’s life. Upon being introduced to the writings of John Wesley, she embraced Methodism, and then continued to rely upon an array of religious texts to fill her spiritual emptiness. The act of reading, pondering upon, and writing about devotional literature and theological works allowed her to imagine herself into a religious community and to thereby create ties with a transatlantic network of Saints. Indeed, religious texts fostered, cultivated, and nurtured her ongoing religious life and made her a participant in what Candy Gunther Brown calls a “textual community”—an imagined community that “connected authors, publishers, texts, and readers in an interlocking ‘web of relationships.’”[[3]](#footnote-3)

In this presentation, I look at the year following Livingston’s conversion (1788)—a seemingly isolated period of her life—and contend that her early participation in textual communities reveals how books fostered significant spiritual ties in transatlantic Evangelical contexts.

*Will Perfect Love Predestine us to accept Lay Presidency? Theological Conversations English Anglicans*

*and Methodists must have*

Revd Charles Read, Eastern Region Ministry Course and Diocese of Norwich

Following the debate at the Church of England General Synod in February 2018, what theological issues need to be addressed before Anglicans and Methodists can recognise each other’s ordained ministries? This paper scrutinizes the proposals put to Synod and analyses the debate to elucidate whether the issues have been identified correctly on the Anglican side of the partnership and to elicit initial responses from Methodist practitioner theologians. Key issues are ordination, episcopacy and Eucharistic presidency but the debate touched on lay presidency and ‘Christian perfectionism’.

*Anglican-Methodist Union: The Long View*

Dr Martin Wellings, Superintendent Minister of the Oxford Methodist Circuit

This paper sets the 2003 Anglican-Methodist Covenant in an historical perspective, starting with the Wesleys’ movement and the subsequent separation of Methodism from the Church, and then tracing relations through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, reflecting on causes of tension and the development of ecumenical contacts and formal conversations. Attention is paid to changing definitions of unity, to evolving priorities and to the contexts in which conversations took place, with conclusions about the need for a ‘broad’ view as well as a ‘long’ view.

1. There are dozens of lunch options within a short distance of the Rylands. The Rylands is in the Spinningfields area of the city centre. Information about places to eat in Spinningfields can be found at: [https://www.spinningfieldsonline.com/](https://www.spinningfieldsonline.com/%20%20) . The following map lists some options in the area: [https://www.visitmanchester.com/dbimgs/New%20Map%20Layout%20Oct%2016\_LOW.pdf](https://www.visitmanchester.com/dbimgs/New%20Map%20Layout%20Oct%2016_LOW.pdf%20). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Vicki Tolar Burton, *Spiritual Literacy in John Wesley’s Methodism* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2008), 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Candy Gunther Brow, *The Word in the World: Evangelical Writing, Publishing, and Reading in America, 1789–1880* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 9–10. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)