

# The Faraday Institute Summer Course 2024

# Programme

## Monday

9am	Graham Budd – Opening Words
9.30am	Dr Pui Him Ip – What Lies Beyond Science in Human Health? In Search of the ‘Spiritual’ between ‘Secular’ and ‘Religious’
10.45am	Tea and coffee, Bookstall
11.15am	Prof. Ben Doolittle – Priest, Prophet, Physician: Situating the New Age of Medicine.
12.30pm	Lunch, Free time
3pm	Tea and coffee, Bookstall
3.30pm	Steph Bryant: Introduction to Faraday Youth and Schools Programme
3.45pm	Dr Tim Howles – Living within Planetary Boundaries: Religion, Ethics and Earth System Science
5.15pm	Theme Panel: Philosophy
7pm	Dinner, Bar

### Dr Pui Him Ip – What Lies Beyond Science in Human Health? In Search of the ‘Spiritual’ between ‘Secular’ and ‘Religious’



We all know that life, death, illness, and well-being are not reducible to physico-biological realities. Yet we struggle to find a language to frame the meaning arising from, and the variety of responses to, these basic parts of our experience. How shall we speak of this dimension of our existence? My presentation will address this overarching question through reflecting on four themes: (1) the limit of science in relation to human health, (2) the definition

and use of “spirituality” in recent research on religion, existential meaning, and human health, (3) problems with the typical approach of conceiving the “spiritual” as what lies in-between “secular” and “religious”, (4) the interdependence between our operative understanding of “human health” and “spirituality”.

### Prof. Ben Doolittle – Priest, Prophet, Physician: Situating the New Age of Medicine

Through history, the science of healing has been the domain of priests and philosophers. They prayed to the gods, interpreted dreams, manipulated humours, cast astrological charts. The scientific age of medicine did not arrive until the late 19th century. Are we still in the age of science? Or something else? What does this mean for people who are healers?



### Dr Tim Howles – Living within Planetary Boundaries: Religion, Ethics and Earth System Science



In recent years the disciplinary field of Earth System Science has provided us with an extraordinary description of how our planet functions. It has shown how the different physical, biological and chemical processes that take place around us are able to generate feedback mechanisms that enable planetary conditions to be maintained in a steady state. Within this narrow window of equilibrium, life itself can flourish. But if these mechanisms are disrupted or exceeded, the earth system can tip over into margins that are not conducive to life.

But what does all this mean for us? Is this primarily of scientific interest? Or might the language and concepts of Earth System Science have broader application for how we think about our current situation? After all, talk of planetary boundaries, of tipping points, of thresholds and of feedback mechanisms seems to be “in the air” at the moment. And especially as we consider the nature and extent of human impacts on the world around us at the time of the Anthropocene.

In this presentation, we will consider how these ideas might intersect with contemporary politics, culture, ethics and society – as well as religion and spirituality. For as British climate scientist and engineer James Lovelock put it, “I believe an understanding of the earth as a system is the only thing that can generate sufficient moral, political and spiritual renewal to face the ecological crisis of our time”.



The  
**Faraday  
Institute**  
for Science and Religion

# Tuesday

- 9am** Prof. Per T Sangild – Science and Faith to Understand Health Effects of Milk for Infants
- 10.30am** Tea and coffee, Bookstall
- 11am** Dr Michael Burdett – Death and Glory In a Technological World
- 12.30pm** Lunch, Free time
- 2pm** Discussion Groups (In-person or online Zoom meeting with breakout rooms for all participants)
- 3pm** Tea and coffee, Bookstall
- 3.30pm** Dr Ruth Bancewicz – Introduction to Faraday Churches Programme
- 3.45pm** Prof. Brandon Rickabaugh – Who Are We Now? Subversive Effects for a Science of the Soul of AI
- 5.15pm** Theme Panel: Technology
- 7pm** Dinner, Bar

# Wednesday

- 9am** Prof. Søren Holm – Medical Biotechnologies: Philosophical and Ethical Perspectives
- 10.30am** Tea and coffee, Bookstall
- 11am** Graham Budd – The Future of AI in Healthcare: Better than Humans?
- 12.30pm** Lunch, Free time
- 14.30pm** Optional Outings
- 4.30pm** Tea and coffee
- 5.15pm** Prof. Ben Doolittle – Poetry Workshop on The Joy of Medicine
- 7pm** Dinner, Bar

## Prof. Per T Sangild – Science and Faith to Understand Health Effects of Milk for Infants

Milk bioactivity refers to the specific health effects of milk components beyond nutrition. These effects can be studied scientifically and verified by empirical data. Conversely, 'faith in milk bioactivity' can be defined as personal opinion, meaning, value, trust, and hope for health effects that are beyond investigation by natural, social, or human sciences. The aim of this talk is to show that scientific knowledge is frequently supplemented with faith convictions to establish personal and public understanding of the health effects of certain foods – including milk. Honesty and transparency about the potentials and limitations of both scientific knowledge and faith convictions are important when informing individuals and society about the (possible) health effects of milk.



## Dr Michael Burdett – Death and Glory In a Technological World



What role ought reflection on death play in any vision of the good, glorious life? This seems an odd question - after all, doesn't death represent the absence of life, glorious or otherwise? I will approach this question by engaging the Christian tradition with technological culture, and with the ideologies of secular humanism and futuristic transhumanism. I argue that one of the most significant faultlines between these three major ideologies/religions in technoscientific

culture is the relation between death and glory. Throughout I will demonstrate the importance of the death-glory relation for assessing human flourishing in a technological world.

## Prof. Brandon Rickabaugh – Who Are We Now? Subversive Effects for a Science of the Soul of AI

Recent advances in AI research and its deployment are most popularly predicated on a mechanistic view of human nature. This assumption influences the evaluation criteria in AI research and our understanding of the human person. However, recent developments in consciousness studies call for reevaluating this assumption. I contend that the inadequacy of mechanistic views to account for the phenomenal unity of human consciousness undermines the assumption that AI can achieve human-level mental life. This leads to a person-first approach, which reorients our understanding of ourselves and makes intelligible the vision of human flourishing as exemplified by Jesus.



## Prof. Søren Holm – Medical Biotechnologies: Philosophical and Ethical Perspectives



This talk will initially provide a brief overview of the history of modern medical ethics / bioethics and the role of ethical theory and mid-level ethical frameworks in the field, including the so-called 'four principles of biomedical ethics'. The role of argument by analogy will also be discussed. The second part will consider a number of philosophical and ethical issues raised by medical (bio)technologies, focusing on the role of philosophical anthropology, and on the distinction between treatment and enhancement.

## Graham Budd – The Future of AI in Healthcare: Better than Humans?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the most powerful technology yet developed by humankind. The use of AI in healthcare for research, diagnosis, patient care, and improving efficiency is creating transformational new opportunities and ethical challenges. Exploring these medical AI applications in a theology-engaged way helps to illuminate the differences between our embodied human intelligence and machine intelligence, which in turn informs a response to the ethical questions. What should be our approach to using superhuman AI capabilities to improve healthcare?



# Thursday

- 9.00am Dr Pavlína Kašparová – Art, Spirituality and Healing
- 10.30am Tea and coffee, Bookstall
- 11am Dr Férdia Stone-Davis – Knowing Through Music: Insights for Scientific and Religious Understanding
- 12.30pm Lunch, Free time
- 2pm Workshop: Creating with Words: AI and Art
- 3pm Tea and coffee, Bookstall
- 3.30pm Dr Pui Him Ip – Intro to Faraday Tutorial Courses Programme
- 3.45pm Revd Dr Charlotte Sleigh – Art as Mediator between Science and Religion: Awe Or...?
- 5.15pm Theme Panel: Arts
- 7pm Group Photo and Reception
- 7.30pm Dinner

# Friday

- 9.30am Dr Sarah Qidwai – Science and Religion through a Colonial Lens
- 10.30am Tea and Coffee, Bookstall
- 11am Prof. Judith Wolfe – A Narnian View of Technology
- 12 noon Graham Budd - Closing Words
- 12.30pm Lunch and Departure

## Dr Pavlína Kašparová – Art, Spirituality and Healing

This talk explores the integral role of healing in the creative process, especially in visual art. Grounded in a transdisciplinary approach that combines theology, visual arts, and cognitive science, Pavlína's recent research investigates how Christian artists materialise their spiritual and religious experiences through their work. The talk presents how the act of creation itself serves as a form of (spiritual) healing and narrative construction. This understanding contributes to broader discussions on the interplay between personal beliefs, cultural influences, and creative expression, ultimately enriching the dialogue within science-engaged theology and the construction of narratives in science and religion.



## Dr Férdia Stone-Davis – Knowing Through Music: Insights for Scientific and Religious Understanding



This talk will offer some thoughts about musical meaning and its relationship to 'knowledge'. I will begin by showing how the paradigm of scientific knowledge is often taken to be the standard for knowledge acquisition in the emerging field of artistic research, where it tends to serve as a model in relation to which musical knowledge is defined. Acknowledging that the modelling perpetuates a caricature of both science and music, I will explore another route for musical meaning, one that is forged through the ways in which music enables a 'soulful reality', that is, the ways in which music provides a point of orientation in the world (and indeed a means of world-making). It is this, I will suggest, that contributes to music's role within health and well-being.

## Revd Dr Charlotte Sleigh – Art as Mediator between Science and Religion: Awe Or...?

This lecture opens with the famous 'Blue Marble' NASA photograph of 1972, exploring how such art-forms have recently been used as part of an awe-centred discourse for mediating between science and religion. I argue that awe is at best a partial unifier of science and religion, taking examples from different kinds of science, and different kinds of art, that suggest a more troublesome set of connections. Such examples include Luke Jerram's *Gaia* (2018) in the 'climate cathedral', as well as the work of the SPACER\_ studio in East Kent.



## Dr Sarah Qidwai – Science and Religion through a Colonial Lens



This talk explores the intricate relationship between science, religion, and colonialism, with a focus on British India during the nineteenth century. During this period, science underwent significant transformations. Concurrently, European imperialism, particularly British colonial rule, used science as a tool for control, often clashing with indigenous knowledge systems and religious practices. Scholars have long worked to dispel the notion of an inherent 'conflict' between science and religion, while historians have highlighted the role of science in Western imperial expansion. Despite their intertwined histories, these fields have largely developed separately. This presentation aims to bridge this gap by examining colonial intersections in the historiography of science and religion. It argues that the binary framework of science versus religion is inadequate for a global understanding and that insights from the colonial context are essential.

## Prof. Judith Wolfe – A Narnian View of Technology

Scientific possibilities are spurs not only for technical innovation but also for the human imagination. Science fiction authors, including C.S. Lewis, use the prospect of scientific innovation as a springboard for imagining what human life and flourishing might look like, and what threatens them. This talk will discuss Lewis's multi-faceted views about science, literature, and human flourishing, and draw conclusions for our own life and reading.

