

Susanna Wesley Foundation 10th Anniversary Symposium

Wednesday 26th March, Southlands College, University of Roehampton

Biographies of contributors

The Rev'd Dr Stan Brown is a retired Methodist minister who served as a University Chaplain and then worked in the Connexional Team and Learning Network to develop chaplaincies. A member of the Southlands Methodist Trust he continues to be engaged with the SWF research community and has become particularly interested in Theological Action Research. He recently co-authored a [journal article](#) with Graham Jones and Sue Miller on faith learning in Methodist practice.

Dr James Butler is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Roehampton and an MA Lecturer at Church Mission Society (CMS). He has held both of these roles since 2017. His research and teaching find their origins in his experience of engaging in mission, both in Latin America, and in the UK in pioneering and fresh expressions. He has worked on a number of theological action research projects as part of the Theological Action Research Network (TARN) at the University of Roehampton. These have focused on [learning](#), discipleship, faith, and [ecumenical social action](#). In both his research and teaching he has seen the power of getting people to spend time paying attention to their own practice, listening carefully to others, and engaging in open conversations about what they are noticing and hearing.

Dr Ash Cocksworth is a Reader in Theology and Practice at the University of Roehampton in London, having previously taught at Durham University and the Queen's Foundation in Birmingham. His most recent publications include *From the Shores of Silence: Conversations in Feminist Practical Theology*, and *Glorification and the Life of Faith*. You can hear Ash on an SWF podcast [here](#).

Katie Deadman-Vernall is a Learning and Development Manager with the Methodist Church, having previously worked as a teacher. She has recently completed her MA in Reconciliation and Peacebuilding at the University of Winchester, and engages in research around truth and reconciliation.

The Revd Dr Jonathan Dean is a District Chair in the Methodist Church, overseeing half the circuits in London. Previously, he was the Director of Learning for Ministry for the Methodist Church in Britain. A Methodist presbyter, he has served in local church ministry, in chaplaincy in a range of contexts, as a university lecturer and in theological education. He has enjoyed living and working both in the USA and the UK, and in places of great diversity and human variety. Among Jonathan's publications are *To Gain at Harvest* and *Nicholas Harpsfield and English Reformation Catholicism. The Charity of Unity*.

Dr Ayse Demir is Senior Lecturer in Economics and Finance in the Faculty of Business and Law at the University of Roehampton. Her areas of research include Development Economics, Applied Economics, Sustainable Development Goals, Development Finance and Energy Economics. Read more about her project supported by the Southlands Methodist Trust [here](#).

Cristina Gangemi holds a master's degree in Pastoral Theology and catechesis, with a special focus on Disability. She is Co-Director of [The Kairos Forum](#), which focuses on enabling communities to be places of belonging for people with a disability. She has had extensive experience in teaching, training, and delivering Special Education and pastoral support. As well as a primary academic in the field of Disability Theology, she has advised the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales and Vatican dicasteries. Cristina has been deeply involved in enabling a

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culture change in the Church, empowering people with disabilities. Her work has formed and informed clergy, individuals, diocesan agencies and parish communities on how to move away from a culture of charity to a model of personhood, value-able care, citizenship and belonging. She is a published author and is currently undertaking doctoral studies in the writings of Edith Stein and a theology of value in conversation with disability. Find an SWF interview with Cristina [here](#).

Himan Heidari is an AHRC-funded PhD student in English Literature at the University of Roehampton. His project brings a fresh look at women's travel writing on Kurdistan from the 19th and 20th centuries. He is collaborating with Dr. Mary Shannon as a Research Assistant to plan, generate ideas, and outline next steps for promoting and measuring Billy Waters' project.

The Revd Graham Jones is an ordained minister in the Methodist Church of Britain. He has a degree in Biblical Studies from the University of Sheffield and an MPhil in Theology from the University of Cambridge. His first appointment as a minister was in Hull, followed by York, as Chaplain to the University. He then became National Rural Officer for the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church based at the Arthur Rank Centre, Warwickshire before moving back to York, joining the Learning Network in the Methodist Church as a Learning and Development Officer. In this role he helps to design, facilitate and deliver learning opportunities for lay and ordained people in the Methodist Church. He recently co-authored a [journal article](#) with Stan Brown and Sue Miller on faith learning in Methodist practice. He is also an accredited pastoral supervisor and an accredited mediator. He enjoys an eclectic range of music and walking the fells, dales, moors and wolds of northern England.

Dr Andrew Orton is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Durham University and is Director of the William Leech Research Fund, which supports research into Christian social action in the North East of England. He has conducted a wide range of research into differing understandings of good practice within Christian and wider community work, including using participatory and dialogical approaches across different local, national and international contexts. Andrew has a professional background in community work as a practitioner, manager, trustee and consultant. He has worked with a wide range of organisations in voluntary, public and faith-based sectors in these roles and through his research.

Sally Rush is a Learning and Development Officer in the Learning Network of the Methodist Church in Britain. She has previously been a community worker with young adults for a church in central London and a university chaplain in the West Midlands. She has also taught Chaplaincy Studies to PG Cert students at Newman University. Beyond work she loves visiting heritage sites and is an Ipswich Town supporter.

Dr Megan Seneque is currently Honorary Research Fellow with the Susanna Wesley Foundation, University of Roehampton, and an Associate with the Presencing Institute, Cambridge (USA). She is also an Associate with Orange Compass, an organisation that works with change makers on their journey to transform systems and build better futures. She has a PhD in Systems Science from the Centre for Systems Studies, University of Hull and deep experience and expertise in bringing together systemic research, with design and facilitation, in order to create the conditions for transformative, systemic change. She has worked in a range of profit and not for profit organisations in South Africa, Australia, the UK and other global contexts. She

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previously carried out work with the then Methodist Church's Discipleship & Ministries Network to build communities of practice; she contributed to a series of events around racial justice, and more recently drew on her experience around systemic change to help inform the development of aspects of the Church's Justice Dignity and Solidarity strategy. Watch Megan's [presentation](#) and read her [written reflections](#) as part of SWF conferences.

Dr Mary L. Shannon is a writer, cultural historian, broadcaster and Senior Lecturer at the University of Roehampton, London. She writes about Regency and Victorian popular culture, fiction, plays, images, and the press. Mary is fascinated by the cultural world of nineteenth-century London and its teeming history: the places, the people, and the streets. Her latest book is the biography of famous 1820s African-American London busker Billy Waters, *Billy Waters is Dancing: How One Black Sailor Found Fame In Regency and Victorian Britain* published by Yale.

Prof. Clare Watkins is a Roman Catholic, lay woman theologian, committed to teaching and research in the areas of ecclesiology, sacramental theology and practical theology, and with a particular concern for working theologically in ways that contribute to ministerial formation and church life and mission. Having previously worked at the University of Roehampton, Clare is now at Durham University. She was instrumental in the development of Theological Action Research project and network. Hear Clare on an SWF podcast [here](#).