

**Dr Leslie Baynes** is Assistant Professor of New Testament at Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri, USA. She is currently revising a dissertation about the heavenly book motif for publication.

**Kevin Mills** writes: "Reason's Disciple" is an experimental performance paper, engaging with the idea of discipleship in both religious and philosophical contexts. It is structured as a series of short, interrelated meditations on what it means to follow – to follow an argument, to follow a master. It might also be thought of as a prolonged meditation on the Biblical trope of *anacoluthon* (meaning a following which does not follow – a trope of broken or incomplete syntax). The paper also (implicitly) asks what it means to follow Derrida – both to come after him and to adopt his work as a philosophical model.'

#### **Selected Reading**

Augustine, *Confessions* (Bk. VIII), trans. J.G. Pilkington (T&T Clark, 1876).

Jorge Luis Borges, 'Three Versions of Judas,' in *Labyrinths* (Penguin, 1970).

Jacques Derrida, 'Plato's Pharmacy,' in *Dissemination*, trans. B Johnson (Athlone, 1981).

René Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, in *Descartes: Philosophical Writings*, trans. & ed. E. Anscombe & P.T. Geach (Thomas Nelson & The Open University, 1970).

Immanuel Kant, Preface to 1st edn. of *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. N.K. Smith (Macmillan, 1929).

Friedrich Nietzsche, Selections from *Human, All Too Human*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. & trans. Walter Kaufmann (Penguin, 1976).

**Dr Kevin Mills** is lecturer in English Literature at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. His teaching and research interests focus on the Victorian era. He has published essays on a range of writers from the period including Darwin, Christina Rossetti and Florence Nightingale. A book on Victorian literature and the Apocalypse (Bucknell University Press) is nearing completion.

**Valentine Cunningham** is Professor of English Language and Literature and a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He is author of, inter alia: *In the Reading Gaol: Postmodernity, Texts and History* (1994) and *Reading After Theory* (2002).

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DAY CONFERENCE

# Beyond Derrida: states of play in literary studies

Saturday 12 November 2005

The Seminar Room  
Corpus Christi College  
Merton Street  
Oxford  
OX1 4JF  
Tel. (lodge) 01865 276700

## Programme

- 10.00 Arrivals and coffee  
10.30 Introductions
- 10.45 **John Schad**  
*Derrida via Oxford:  
Barely a Life*
- 12.00 **Leslie Baynes**  
*At Play in the Fields of the Lord:  
'Plato's Pharmacy' and God's  
Heavenly Book*
- 1.00 Lunch
- 1.45 **Kevin Mills**  
*Reason's Disciple*
- 2.30 **Valentine Cunningham**  
*Derrida before the Law*
- 3.15 Tea  
Work in progress  
Plans  
Prayer
- 4.00 Close

Introducing his paper **Professor Schad** writes:

"Our life, barely a film' (Jacques Derrida).

'Even after the recent film *Derrida, the Movie* Jacques Derrida's life is (or was) barely a life. He was a philosopher, and philosophers barely have lives; to quote Derrida quoting Heidegger: they are born, they think, they die. This paper will begin to find a life for Derrida, or rather a life within Derrida, within his writings. In particular, it will find the life and, indeed, death of my father, a man who was neither famous nor eminent and whom Derrida never knew. But then, as Derrida writes, "I sing of someone who is dead whom I do not know." In my paper I will attempt to listen to this singing – in doing so, it will investigate the mystery that surrounds the death of this someone who is dead. My investigation begins and ends with Derrida in Oxford.'

## Selected Reading

- Jonathan Culler, *Eduardo Cadava*, Columbia University Press, 1986.  
Jacques Derrida, *Mémoires: For Paul de Man*, tr. Cecile Lindsay.  
— 'Envois,' in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, tr. Alan Bass, University of Chicago Press, 1987.  
— 'Circumfession,' in Derrida and Bennington, *Jacques Derrida*, University of Chicago Press, 1993.  
— *The Gift of Death*, tr. David Wills, University of Chicago Press, 1995.

**John Schad** is Professor of Modern Literature at Loughborough University. He is author of *Arthur Hugh Clough* (British Council), *Queer Fish: Christian Unreason from Darwin to Derrida* (Sussex Academic), *Victorians in Theory* (MUP) and *The Reader in the Dickensian Mirrors* (Macmillan); editor of *Writing the Bodies of Christ* (Ashgate), *Thomas Hardy's A Laodicean* (Penguin), *Dickens Refigured* (MUP); and co-editor of *life.after.theory* (Continuum). Professor Schad is currently writing an experimental book called DERRIDA VIA OXFORD: BARELY A LIFE.

**Leslie Baynes writes:** 'Writing is always involved in questions of life and death. Jacques Derrida made this observation in his deconstruction of Plato's *Phaedrus*, but it is also quite appropriate as an overarching statement about the function of heavenly books in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. This paper applies Derrida's work to an investigation of the heavenly book, a common but largely neglected motif that appears throughout the Bible and in other ancient Jewish and Christian texts. It demonstrates how Derrida's approaches to play, to speech and writing, and to memory and forgetting, allow us to come to an increased understanding of the concept heavenly book, especially as it mediates life and death for those whose names or deeds are contained in it.'

## Selected Reading

- Loveday Alexander, 'The Living Voice: Scepticism towards the Written Word in Early Christian and in Graeco-Roman Texts', *The Bible in Three Dimensions: Essays in Celebration of Forty Years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield*, D. J. A. Clines, S. E. Fowl and S. E. Porter (eds.), Sheffield Academic Press, JSOT 87 (1990), pp. 220-47.  
Jacques Derrida, 'Plato's Pharmacy', *Dissemination*, University of Chicago Press, 1981, pp. 65-171.  
Leo Koep, *Das himmlische Buch in Antike und Christentum: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur altchristlichen Bildersprache*, Bonn, Peter Hanstein Verlag, 1952.  
Plato, *Phaedrus*.

## Booking Form

CLSG Conference 12 November 2005

Please return before 5 November 2005 to:  
Dr Roger Kojecký, CLSG Secretary, 10 Dene Road,  
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- I enclose my fee for the conference (includes refreshments and sandwich lunch in college):
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