



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London

Faculty of Education,  
Theology, & the Arts



### **FETTA Newsletter October 2023**

Welcome to the historic first edition of the Education, Theology, and the Arts staff and student newsletter! FETTA includes disciplines at the heart of St Mary's identity, ethos, and heritage – and this newsletter gives a snapshot of life in the schools, and some of the things going on this month.

We will include a monthly profile of staff member and a different student each month, along with news about upcoming events. Our aim is to include students at the centre of what we do – so students are encouraged to keep an eye on events that might be of interest, because we're all members of the St Mary's University community - staff or student.

Things have got off to a good start this semester in our three schools – with a raft of impressive league table results, further fostering our culture of excellence. Highlights include a rise of 5 places for History in the Guardian University Guide, where Education rose 6 places and is now in the top range of the table. There was 100% for 'Teaching on My Course' in the NSS for the BA English Literature, and the BA History reached an overall average of 96.8%. The BA Theology, Religion, and Ethics came 3<sup>rd</sup> nationally in the overall NSS average scores.

So the age of FETTA is underway, and it is an age already overflowing with excellence from the three wellsprings of Education, Theology, and the Arts.

Jacob

**Prof Jacob Phillips**

**Interim Dean of the Faculty of Education, Theology, and the Arts**

**Professor of Systematic Theology**



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**This month we spoke with Missy Richardson a recent graduate of the BA Theology, Religion and Ethics, in the School of Theology**

**Tell us a bit about yourself and why you choose to study at St Mary's**

I'm a mature student, a single mum of three, my Mum used to work in registry, so I knew of the University already.

**What inspired you to study for a degree and why did you pick your particular programme?**

I was really interested in counter terrorism in the Middle East and had watched a documentary where this incredible guy on it was in Government liaison and he had studied Theology, and I thought right, that's what I need to do! I found the BA in Theology, Religion, and Ethics and it encompassed all sorts of things I was interested in, including military ethics and children of war - it ticked a lot of boxes. At that time, I was heavily involved with a charity which was working with displaced people in Syria, Iraq and Jordan and I realised how important it was to understand the religion, history and culture of the people I was supporting. The degree brought all my interests together and I couldn't believe this degree, in this amazing place, was right on my doorstep.

**Is there a particular staff member you would like to give a shout out too, who particularly inspired or supported you?**

Prof Stephen Bullivant, phenomenal, hilarious, encourages open speech, but holds you accountable in your work, and I love that. Also, the Theology admin team, I felt the team were next to me, not pushing me, but right with me and that's a rare feeling.

**You studied modules across our three schools, Theology, Education and the Arts how was your experience of studying across the FETTA disciplines?**

I picked a variety of optional modules because I really valued the opportunity to do something different. What blew me away was the way in which I found out how everything is connected. The Philosophy I studied in Theology in year one turned up in a history module about the French Revolution, and then there was more Philosophy in the Gothic Literature module in English. So, every single class I took that was outside of the core Theology modules linked back, it was fascinating and it also meant I had plenty to contribute to class discussion.

**Can you tell us about a memorable moment during your time here?**

For me it was passing my first exam, and then passing my dissertation. They were the biggest things ever. I found out I passed my degree whilst on holiday; I was in tears in the queue for ice cream! I'm only the second person in the family to get a degree, this is a big deal for the Richardsons.

**What have you been up to since graduation, what's next for you and what are your goals for the future?**

I've been accepted at London Metropolitan University to study the MA in Women and Child Abuse, which starts soon. My goal is to set up a Women's Centre, a safe place for women to socialise and get support and advice. I have a business plan, an amazing mentor, I've had positive meetings with my MP, the Surrey Police Commissioner's office, and my local council are helping me to identify premises. My intention is to offer the Freedom programme, a legal clinic with employment workshops, sessions that debunk jargon, but I also want to offer a drop in café and social hub.

**If you were leaving us a review, what would it be?**

Five stars for sure. The support has been amazing, not just from the lecturers, but from the central services teams too. As a mature student I felt hugely comfortable in the St Mary's environment.



**This month we spoke with Farhana Irshad, Recruitment Co-ordinator for Primary Education**



**Tell us a bit about yourself and what you do at St Mary's**

I joined the Primary Education team in 2021. I support and lead on recruitment activities for all Primary teaching routes. This includes liaising with internal and external partners to promote our courses, supporting the candidate application journey from enquiry, to interview, and finally to induction. I also support our students in choosing their next course with us.

I'm a St Mary's graduate, I studied English and Media Arts here, graduating in 2017. I went on to work in publishing, and to complete an MA, before returning here to start my PhD in 2020, one week before the first lockdown! My PhD is looking at platform mobility and digital hybridity within the true crime and horror genres. In essence I'm looking at why we binge watch horror and true crime and the journey audiences go on into various parts of our digital culture such as Twitter, TikTok etc. I also guest lecture on the Digital Cultures and Paradox of Horror modules within BA Film.

I also work with Dr Maria Mellins and Nancy Bentley to deliver stalking awareness training, and this will include providing training to the Metropolitan Police which begins this later month.

**Tell us about a hobby or activity you do when not at work**

As an antidote to all the TV and Film, I love reading fiction and can sometimes be found reading in my car before work.

Along with my family, I look after a few stray cats in our neighbourhood, they like to relax on our garden chairs, to be fed and fussed over.

### **If you could do another job for a day, what would you do?**

A Barista. I have no doubt I'd be horrible at it, but I've always wanted to have a go at coffee art.

### **Who inspires you?**

I'm always inspired by my colleagues, friends and family. I love to talk to people around me and see how they go about their day. If I was to pick an inspirational celebrity, it would be Steve Irwin.

### **What has been your most memorable moment at St Mary's so far?**

My graduation. Particularly as I had had a wobble at the end of the first year and was not sure that academically I was ready to go forward. The BA Film and Media lecturers were amazingly supportive and encouraging at that point, I came back after that summer and have not looked back.

### **October Events**



**Book launch of**  
**One-Armed Jack:**  
**Uncovering the Real**  
**Jack the Ripper**  
**By Sarah Bax Horton**



Sarah Bax Horton is a former government researcher who was educated at the University of Oxford. A former civilian volunteer with the City of London Police, she is a keen genealogist. She lives in South West London and is a member of the Society of Authors, the Whitechapel Society, and the Crime Writers' Association.

**Tuesday 3rd October 2023**  
**6.30-8pm**  
**The Waldegrave Drawing Room**  
**St Mary's University**

For more information and to book please visit  
[stmarys.ac.uk/one-armed-jack](https://stmarys.ac.uk/one-armed-jack)









## **Spirituality and Health**

Postgraduate Seminar | 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023 | 1-7 PM  
Sarum College, Salisbury and online via Zoom



featuring keynote address by  
Prof. Susannah Cornwall  
'Spiritual Care for Trans People'

If you would like to present a short paper, please contact:  
Michael Hahn – [mhahn@sarum.ac.uk](mailto:mhahn@sarum.ac.uk)  
Peter Tyler – [peter.tyler@stmarys.ac.uk](mailto:peter.tyler@stmarys.ac.uk)





## Message to Staff and Students from the SU

### The SU Pantry in K Block

#### To our students:

Please give what you can and take what you need. If you're struggling to afford food, groceries and/or sanitary products, the SU Pantry can help. Find it outside the Student Union Office in K block.

#### To our staff:

The Student Union's cost-of-living report revealed that 53% of students struggled to afford food and groceries last year.

In response The SU have launched the "SU Pantry". Located outside the SU office, the pantry will provide

free food, groceries and sanitary products to any students who need them.

**Donations are very much appreciated- please donate via the SU Office.**