







WINCHESTER  
COLLEGE

# Studium for Parents


Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2025

## Session 1: 10.05 – 10.40

Session 1	 <p><i>'I'm sorry, sir, but Dostoevsky is not considered summer reading. I'll have to ask you to come with me.'</i></p> <p>Peter Steiner, <i>The New Yorker</i>, 2013</p>	<p><b>Mr James Livingstone</b> <i>In Defence of Dostoevsky</i></p> <p>Nineteenth-century Russian novels have a reputation in the West for being unremittingly gloomy and interminably long. Basic character and place names - seemingly unpronounceable and confusingly written in ever-changing shortened and diminutive forms and nicknames - can be enough to deter even the most enthusiastic reader. And yet, behind this facade of sorrow, tedium and linguistic bafflement lie some of the most exciting, creative and colourful works in all of world literature. Exploring some especially lively, original and lesser-known examples, I will offer an impassioned defence of the Russian novel.</p>
Session 1		<p><b>Dr Laurence Guymer</b> <i>Warden Huntingford, the Winchester College rebellion, and the French Revolution</i></p> <p>In 1793, the power struggle between the Warden of Winchester College and the prefects culminated in the school's most significant rebellion. Boys took up arms against the Warden, Headmaster, and Second Master only two months after the execution of the French king, Louis XVI, and one month after Revolutionary France declared war on Britain. This lecture explores the causes of the rebellion and the link to the revolutionary ideas of the late eighteenth century.</p>
Session 1		<p><b>Mr Dan Pounds</b> <i>Doubt: Climate Change. Another COP out?</i></p> <p>There is a near universal consensus on the human causes of climate change. But what can we do about it? In this wide-ranging talk we'll consider the history of obfuscation and misdirection in climate reporting. On the way we'll look at the oil company that led the way in climate research and meet a man credited with saving the lives of over a billion people...</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Session 1</p>		<p><b>Dr Serenhedd James</b>  <i>Prayers and Pith-Helmets: Religious Philanthropy in the British Empire</i></p> <p>Drawing on his recent research, Dr James will engage with the complicated and contested legacy of imperial missionary work and philanthropy, separating fact from fiction in the pursuit of a accurate account of a much-maligned topic.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Session 1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Two Types of Secret</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secrets of nature: information about electrons</li> <li>2. Human secrets: terror from the nucleus</li> </ol> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">    </div>	<p><b>Dr Chas McCaw</b>  <i>Secrets of the Atom</i></p> <p>A talk of two halves:</p> <p>(1) Nature’s atomic secrets: that which is, in principle, unknowable to us about atoms</p> <p>(2) Human atomic secrets: the secret plans to build the Bomb in WW2, in the US mainly and in Germany too – and some secrets about those projects that were declassified long after the war. Finally, a secret project close to home to generate weapons-grade uranium that CSM found out about.</p>

**Session 2: 11.05 – 11.40**

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Session 2</p>		<p><b>Mr Timothy Giddings</b>  <i>The Last of the Romans</i></p> <p>Did Rome and its Empire really end in 476 AD when Romulus Augustulus was deposed by Odoacer? We will examine seven self-proclaimed inheritors of Rome, journeying through Ravenna, Constantinople, Paris, Moscow, the Vatican and Aachen to Aberffraw in North Wales.</p>
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Session 2



**Dr Nikhil Krishnan**

*The Parable of the Partisan and the Stranger*

At least since the time of Darwin, philosophers and theologians have wondered if religious faith could be scientific, or even rational. But in the twentieth century, a powerful set of ideas from a group of European thinkers in Vienna went further, urging that religious claims were not just false but meaningless. Meaningful claims, they said, had to be falsifiable; some piece of evidence should be able to count, in principle, against them. But the devout refused to allow anything to count against their faith, making their beliefs unfalsifiable, and thus meaningless. A now forgotten philosopher at Oxford, Basil Mitchell, provided a resonant story and a powerful argument against the sceptics. My talk goes through his defence of faith and asks: does it work?

Session 2



**Mr Rupert Mercer**

*More lovely than a man: the art of seduction in Shakespeare's 'Venus and Adonis'*

'Venus and Adonis' was Shakespeare's first published work and centres on Venus's failed seduction of the handsome youth Adonis. The inversion of the customary sexes of the wooer and their object teaches us a lot about the art of seduction in Elizabethan England.

Session 2



**Mr David Hurley**

*Music, Murder and Madness*

Renaissance composer, Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa, is best known for murdering his wife. His extraordinary chromatic compositions can also be seen to be the result of a psychotic mind. This talk will explore both his life and his music, with musical examples that provide a glimpse into the mind of this troubled genius.

Session 2



**Mr Matt King**

*Meet the animals*

Meet the snakes, cockroaches, lizards and other beasts and some of the historical specimens. We will also feed a snake!

Session 2



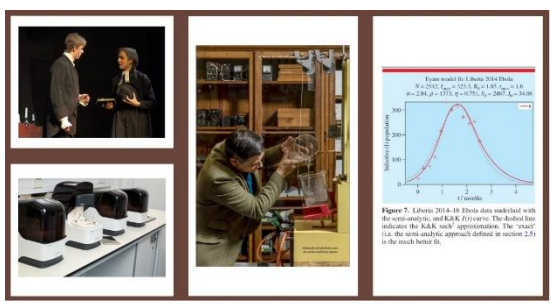
**Dr Richard Foster**

*Why was Charles I executed?*

In 1649 Charles I became the only English king to be tried and executed. This talk examines the events of the 1640s, and underlying historical developments, to explain how this extraordinary event took place. There will also be a chance to see books and documents from the College's collections that relate to Charles I.

Session 3: 11.45 – 12.20

Session 3

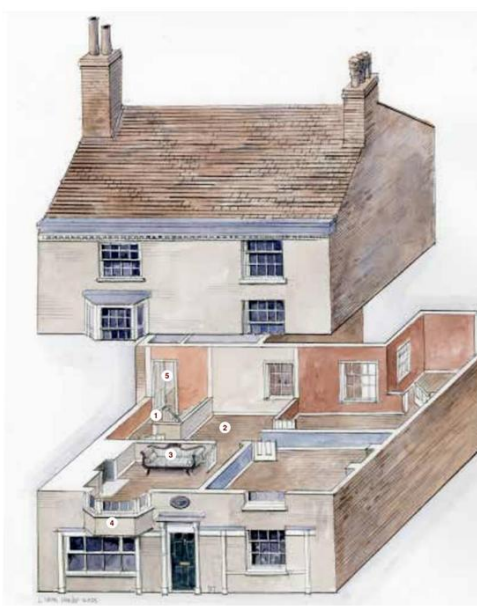


Mr Dominic Rowland

*Prime puzzles*

Prime numbers are some of the most basic building blocks of mathematics, and mathematicians have been asking questions about them for millennia. These questions range from straightforward school level exercises, to conundrums that have perplexed professionals for centuries, and telling one type from the other is not always easy. Some familiarity with adding and multiplying whole numbers, and a curious mindset will be useful during the talk.

Session 3



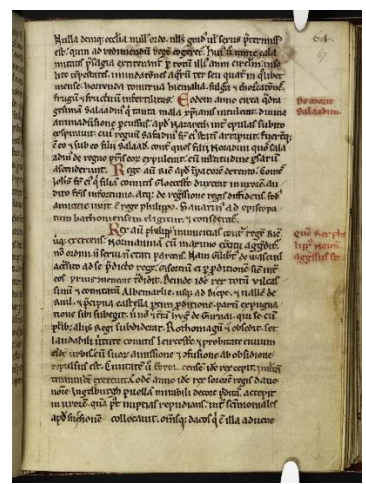
Mr Adam Rattray

*Restoring the house where Jane Austen died*

This summer, Winchester College briefly opened No. 8 College St. the house where Jane and her sister Cassandra died, to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth.

Join Adam Rattray, Head of History of Art, on a tour of the rooms. Adam will explain the history of the house, why Jane came here in 1817, and the discovery of original paint schemes that allowed us to better understand the lodgings that Jane and Cassandra rented.



Session 3



Dr James Willoughby

*Bad King John and His Chronicler: Publication and Censorship in Angevin England*

The chronicle written by Ralph, abbot of the Cistercian monastery at Coggeshall (Essex), is that vanishingly rare thing: a contemporaneous account of the reign of King John. Remarkably, the chronicle happens to survive in what was the author's first draft, replete with additions and second thoughts. These adjustments have much to reveal about contemporary perceptions of 'Bad King John'.

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Session 3</p>		<p><b>Mr Christian Schofield</b>  <i>The Conclusion to Shakespeare's Measure for Measure: text, film, and in the classroom</i></p> <p>How should we respond to the ending of Shakespeare's famous problem play? We will read and analyse the text, watch a number of different film versions, before acting out your interpretations in the classroom. Active participation required for this session!</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Session 3</p>		<p><b>Revd James McKinnel</b>  <i>Heroism and Beowulf</i></p> <p>In this lesson we will look at how themes of heroism are explored in the Old English epic of Beowulf. A founding text of the English literary canon. He will explore themes of heroism, loss and boastfulness.</p>

To book lessons, please click on the [link](#).