

# NEXT PSYCHIATRY AND SPIRITUALITY SIG MEETING

Open to all Members and Associates  
of the Royal College of Psychiatrists

Friday November 20th 2009

Venue: Society of Chemical Industry  
15 Belgrave Square, London, SW1X 8PG

## **‘Spirituality and Religion – Friends or Foes?’**

- 10.00 Registration and Coffee
- 10.45 Notices: **Prof. Chris Cook** (Chair)
- 11.00 **‘Spirituality and religion: views from the orthodox Jewish community’**  
**Professor Kate Loewenthal**
- 12.00 **‘Spirituality and religion: a necessary dichotomy?’**  
**Professor Patricia Casey**
- 1.00 Lunch
- 2.00 **‘Salvation with Spirituality in Mind’**  
**Professor Douglas Davies**
- 3.00 **Plenary**
- 3.50 **Close of programme.**
- 4.00 **‘Spirituality and Psychiatry’: Book Launch and Reception**  
**- to be held at the Royal College of Psychiatrists**  
**Introduction by the editors: Professor Chris Cook,**  
**Dr. Andrew Powell and Professor Andrew Sims**  
**Reception with wine and canapés, and book signing**
- 5.00 **Close**

*Closing date: 13<sup>th</sup> November. Places at the reception are limited to 70 because of restrictions on space at the College, and will be offered on a first come first served basis. See booking form (below).*

## **Programme Notes:**

### **Spirituality and religion: views from the orthodox Jewish community**

#### **Professor Kate Loewenthal**

The topic of spirituality emerged strongly on the scientific scene in the 1990s, sharply distinguished from religion by some of its advocates. Some commentators have associated the emergence of spirituality with post-modernity.

The topic will be discussed with particular reference to the strictly orthodox Jewish (*chareidi*) community. Some features of the community will be described. Examples will be offered of responses, beliefs and behaviour in relation to the suggested spirituality/religion distinction.

Strictly orthodox Jews may be wary of contemporary spirituality movements. For some, this may be related to the enclave ideology held by many. For others, there is Judaism's distinctive approach to spirituality and its relations to religious ritual. Both these grounds for wariness will be discussed, together with illustrations from research and observations in the UK *chareidi* community, including an outline of rabbinic views on universal spirituality.

#### **About the speaker:**

Kate graduated in Psychology from University College London in 1963 and gained a PhD there in 1967, since when she has held academic posts in the University of Wales Bangor, the City University, Kings College London and Bedford College, now Royal Holloway, University of London.

As an academic psychologist and an orthodox-Jewish mother with a very large family, she was intrigued by reactions to the size of her family and began to examine family size in relation to well-being. This led to investigations of the impact of a range of religious and cultural factors on mental health, involving 28 research awards, 5 books and nearly 100 articles. She is one of the editors of *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, is involved in many writing and research projects, and helps wherever possible with service provision, particularly in improving culturally and religiously sensitive care. She currently teaches Abnormal Psychology at New York University in London, Culture, Religion and Mental Health at Heythrop College, London University, and is Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Royal Holloway, University of London.

#### **'Spirituality and Religion: a necessary dichotomy?'**

#### **Professor Patricia Casey**

Increasingly people describe themselves as spiritual but not religious, and many even deride the idea of religion as an institution that stifles the search for transcendence and meaning. This dichotomy is relatively new and in their original meaning, there was a significant overlap between these terms. However, the distinction came to general prominence in the 60's, although such perspectives had been mooted in the early 20th century by social scientists such as Durkheim and Comte. Several studies have identified differences and similarities between how these are conceptualised; many definitions, particularly pertaining to spirituality, and

concerning the overlap between both terms, have been identified. This poses a problem for researchers interested in the psychological benefits of religion/spirituality, since without a clear understanding of what these terms mean, it will be impossible to reach agreement on what benefits or drawbacks can be ascribed to them in combination or individually. Suggested definitions will be presented based on the current literature.

#### **About the speaker:**

Patricia Casey is Professor of Psychiatry at University College Dublin and Consultant Psychiatrist in the Mater Misericordiae University hospital, Dublin. She has a long involvement with the College, initially as a member of the Collegiate Trainees Committee and now as editor of the Psychiatric Bulletin. She is the author of 6 books, among them the College's best-selling (but not necessarily its most profitable) book - Fish's Psychopathology. She is former chair of the Fitness to Practice Committee of the Irish Medical Council. She is also a weekly columnist with Ireland's largest selling broadsheet newspaper, The Irish Independent, and her column, appropriately enough, is called Mind and Meaning.

#### **'Salvation with Spirituality in Mind'**

#### **Professor Douglas J. Davies**

This paper will explore the notion of salvation as a general category of radical importance for most of the world religions with further reference to other local-traditional forms of cultural meaning-making. In so doing it will explore the mutual relation of affective dimensions of embodiment with its preferred forms of emotions expressed in ritual and ethics on the one hand, with cognitive aspects of systematic theologies and philosophy of religion on the other. It will then evaluate the notion of spirituality in relation to this cognitive-affective spectrum of 'religion' to explore the cultural dynamics that may underlie two sets of models. One in which spirituality is defined as the mood of a religious tradition (deploying Geertz's cultural definition of religion in the process), and the other in which religion is deemed to have been replaced (within a context of formal secularization), by a combination of 'spirituality' and 'ethics'.

#### **About the speaker:**

Douglas Davies is Professor in the Study of Religion within Durham University's Department of Theology and Religion. Prior to this he taught at Nottingham University from 1974-97. His original degree and first research was in Anthropology and the Anthropology-Sociology of Religion after which he read Theology. He is an ordained Anglican. He holds Durham B.A degrees in Anthropology and Theology, a Nottingham Ph.D., the M.Litt. and D.Litt., from Oxford, and an Honorary Doctor of Theology degree from the University of Uppsala. He has published widely, special interests including on the theology of death and the Mormon culture. He is current President of the British Association for the Study of Religion and is on the founding council of the newly established Association for Death Studies.

**Reply Slip to be returned to Sue Duncan, Royal College of Psychiatrists,  
17 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PG**

**I wish to attend the next meeting of the Spirituality SIG on November 20th, 2009**

**on**

**‘Spirituality and Religion – Friends or Foes?’**

**at**

**The Society of Chemical Industry  
15 Belgrave Square, London, SW1X 8PG**

*The registration fee of £70 per person includes lunch and refreshments.*

**Name: (Capitals please).....College No.....**

**Contact phone number.....**

**Please ring your lunch preference: Vegetarian / Non-vegetarian**

**I wish to bring one or more guests: Name(s): (Capitals please)**

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**Please ring your guest lunch preference(s): Vegetarian / Non-vegetarian**

**I enclose a cheque for the registration fee of £ .....payable to the**

**Royal College of Psychiatrists, for myself / myself plus guest(s) (ring as appropriate).**

**I (and my guests) also wish to attend the ‘Spirituality and Psychiatry’ Book Launch and Reception at the Royal College of Psychiatrists, 4 – 5 pm.**

**Tick box: Yes  No  If Yes, state number of guests (if any) .....**

**With confirmation of receipt of your cheque, you will be notified if you have also been registered for the book launch and reception. Please note that numbers for the book launch and reception are necessarily limited to the first 70 applications received because of restrictions on space at the College.**

*The closing date for the programme and reception is November 13<sup>th</sup> 2009.*

*Spirituality SIG meetings are open to members and associates of the College, and their invited guests.*