



November 2016

Your monthly update of news, views and interviews from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS).

Welcome to this month's **PodMag**, hosted by Karen Foley.

In this edition we are introduced to three members of the Religious Studies Department who talk about three different religious festivals which occur around this time of year – Halloween, Diwali and Christmas. Karen interviews Professor Graham Harvey, Head of Religious Studies, Professor Gwilym Beckerlegge and Dr Paul-Francois Tremlett.

To listen to the full edition (17 minutes duration) click [here](#).



Graham Harvey

Karen asks Professor Harvey, whether Halloween has become more of a commercial festival rather than a religious one. What are some of the more traditional reasons why

people may celebrate Halloween, and what are we doing to encourage children to celebrate different festivals?

Professor Graham Harvey is Head of Religious Studies in the new School of History, Religious Studies, Sociology, Social Policy & Criminology.



Gwilym Beckerlegge

Professor Gwilym Beckerlegge talks about Diwali, perhaps the most well-known of the Hindu festivals and possibly the most accessible. He discusses the fact that the festival varies

Diary

ISPY, a new drama, launches Monday 28 November

An OU study, undertaken by two psychology academics, found that many people think the internet makes affairs more likely. We've commissioned a five part drama, ISPY, directed by BAFTA-nominated Faye Gilbert, to explore how online behaviours are interpreted and the effects web flirtation can have on real life relationships. It launches on Monday 28 November at 7pm, we'll be asking for your views as the drama unfolds. It will be available from both the central and Faculty facebook pages, YouTube and OpenLearn.

For details of new media released this autumn check out 'Spotlight on new media' on page 2...

across different parts of India depending upon regional history; as most Hindus in Britain are of Gujarati descent they tend to follow the tradition in Gujarat, where the festival honours Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. This interview provides an interesting insight into some of the customs and characteristics of this religious festival.



Paul-Francois Tremlett

Finally Dr Paul-Francois Tremlett, talks about Christmas, particularly the commercial aspects of this festival and to what extent it retains a religious or spiritual element.

Paul-Francoise is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies.

Spotlight on new media:

Take a look at seven new videos made by members of the Religious Studies Department each of which takes a guided tour around some of London's principal religious buildings in full 360 degree detail. You will find them on OpenLearn:

<http://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/culture/religious-studies/exploring-religion-london>

Students – have your say

If you have any suggestions for interviews or features you would like to see either via The PodMag or our student focused Facebook page please feel free to let us know, we'd love to hear from you.

Would you like to be interviewed yourself and tell your story? If so, please contact the Student Connections team.

FASS online community



Twitter

Our new Faculty Twitter handle is @OU_FASS. Follow us to keep up-to-date with Faculty news.



Facebook

Have you visited our student Faculty Facebook page yet? We have over 28,000 followers - why not join us!

Click [here](#) to take a look and feel free to like, comment on and share our posts.

Remember to join us for our weekly **Friday Thinker** on Facebook. Guest academics pose a question on a contemporary issue and engage in debate with students.



You can contact the Student Connections team at connections@open.ac.uk.