

Course 1 - Potpourri

10 February – 10 March 2026

Course Organiser: Anne McMurtrie



10 February: Dr Maureen Montgomery, Adjunct Associate Professor, University of Canterbury and author

“Gilded Prostitution”: Transatlantic Marriages and the British Peerage, 1870-1914

William T. Stead, a famous crusading British journalist, who made his name exposing the white-slave traffic between Britain and the Continent, described the marriages of American women into the British peerage as “gilded prostitution . . . when there is no love in the matter” in his 1902 book, *The Americanization of the World*. He decried the idea that American women were looked upon as “a means of replenishing the exhausted exchequer, a kind of financial resource”. This is the starting point for my presentation on this topic which has continued to fascinate novelists and television scriptwriters for over 150 years.



17 February: Alanna Chapman, 27 Seconds Wine

Wine as a vehicle for change

Alanna is the co-founder of 27 Seconds Wine. After encountering modern slavery while travelling, Alanna and her husband were inspired to create a wine label that raises awareness and generates funds to support organisations working in this space. Alanna will share the highs and lows of the journey so far, and the lessons learned along the way.



24 February: Prof Renwick Dobson, Principal Investigator of the Biomolecular Interaction Centre based at the University of Canterbury.

Fake burgers and diagnostic devices

Renwick will present their work on two fields of research: 1) the rise of cellular agriculture as a new source of protein and 2) development of diagnostic devices for the wine industry, workplace drug testing and Alzheimer's.



3 March: Gail Gillon FRSNS FASHA (Ngai Tahu), Founding Director of the Child Well-being Research Institute, University of Canterbury

The Better Start Approach - Evidence of accelerating children's early literacy development.

Gail's presentation will show how effective literacy teaching is a pathway to more equitable education outcomes. The Better Start Literacy Approach (BSLA) is an integrated classroom literacy programme. The approach is based on years of research trials investigating the most efficient, effective methods to support success in children's reading, spelling, writing, and oral language development.