'Making memories in post-Reformation English Catholic musical miscellanies'

For sounds and sights are messengers assygn'd
To bring lost memory unto the mynde
- Richard Verstegan, *Odes in Imitation of the Seven Penitential Psalms* (Antwerp, 1601), 98.

Richard Verstegan, in a poetic exposition on the Ave bell, strikingly captures the way that early modern individuals imagined memory in explicitly physical terms. For exiled English Catholics like Verstegan, memories were vital for the consolidation of their displaced and dispersed community. This has been recognised in work on Catholic manuscript transmission by scholars such as Gerard Kilroy, but broader attention to the distinctive ways that Catholics remembered the past, and particularly the seismic religious changes of the sixteenth century, is lacking. This talk will add to our understanding of popular memory by considering how English Catholics memorialised the effects of the Reformation through music, and focuses on songs that were preserved and circulated in manuscript miscellanies. The integration of commemorative texts with musical performance reveals memory in action - an embodied behaviour, and firm evidence of 'lived religion', as well as an intellectual and emotional phenomenon. For as well as thinking about song-texts, melody made songs exceptionally well suited for memorial purposes due to their mnemonic power.