

## SEMINAR IN CLASSICS AND ANCIENT HISTORY

5.30 pm, Thursday 30 October 2008

A.D. Hope Building, rm G41



### Elizabeth Minchin

*The Words of Gods: Divine Discourse in Homer's Iliad*

In this paper I examine the speech of the gods of Homer's *Iliad* not as a corpus of lexical phenomena nor in terms of production but from a social perspective. I observe the kinds of verbal behaviours that the gods exhibit; the ways in which status, generational distinctions, gender, and divinity itself are reflected in their speech; and how social alignments are managed--and disrupted-- through their talk. My aim is to determine whether Homer attributes to his gods the same speech habits that he attributes to his mortals, or whether his gods exhibit certain speech habits that are peculiar to Olympus, somewhat akin to the remnants of the exotic divine language that the poet reports.

Elizabeth Minchin is Reader in Classics at the ANU. Her research focuses on the Homeric epics as oral poetry: the composition of the epics; the role played by memory in the composition of oral poetry; and the speech Homer attributes to his characters. She has published two books, *Homer and the Resources of Memory* (OUP 2001) and *Homeric Voices* (OUP 2007) and a number of articles on these topics.

*All welcome*