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research forum

a newsletter for the research community

Introducing our new Vice-Chancellor

Professor Janet Beer

succeeded Professor Graham Upton as Vice-Chancellor on 1 September 2007. She was previously at Manchester Metropolitan University where she was Pro Vice-Chancellor responsible for learning and teaching, students and continuing professional development. She was also Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Law and Social Science. She has remained an active researcher and will be included in the Oxford Brookes English RAE submission. In this issue of Research Forum she talks to Professor Diana Woodhouse, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research, about her own research and her research aspirations for Oxford Brookes University.



Professor Janet Beer
Vice-Chancellor



Professor Diana Woodhouse
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)

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Interview on pages 6 and 7

Landscape as conceptual art

Craig Richardson of the School of Arts and Humanities recently completed a study, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, revealing the important legacy left by the late John Latham (1921-2006).

The influential English conceptual artist proposed that the derelict shale ‘bings’ (old Scots for ‘heap’) in Scotland’s Lothian region near Edinburgh were artworks of the highest quality, comparable to the greatest land artworks of the 1960s–1980s. Although seemingly natural forms, these man-made mountains are the waste by-product of a nineteenth-century technology used in the production of paraffin oil. John Latham’s proposal was originally recognised by civil servants and politicians during an innovative ‘Artist Placement’ at the Scottish Development Agency (later Scottish Office) in the late 1970s.

Finding evidence of Latham’s project was a challenge, as the bings had been designated Scheduled Ancient Monuments to ensure their long-term preservation and prevent land owners from using raw material from them for road in-fill. The lack of existing scholarly material also needed to be substantially and

robustly addressed. In the summer of 2007, Craig published referenced photographic images taken at the sites by both Latham and himself in *Map* magazine (a visual art magazine with a wide readership), as well as newly-available uncatalogued archive material recently deposited at Tate Britain. He also introduced the evidence to an audience at a talk at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds.

While documenting the sites and visiting archives, Craig began to develop the view that although the bings are a form of heritage site, and are sites of biological diversity and substantial geological-historical interest, a challenge remains in their comprehension as artworks. They present a fascinating example of the limitations of existing conceptions of art, even of broad-ranging typological models, such as those incorporating gardens, architecture, ecological planning and even non-material art-forms. It is possible to conclude that these artworks are almost unique in existing in a parallel state as artwork, landscape, site of biological diversity, site of geological distinctiveness, leisure space and valuable raw material, without any one ‘value’ annulling any other.

West Lothian’s oil-shale bings – whether art, monument or heritage – provide a reminder of Latham’s continuing, posthumous role in current environmental and aesthetic debates. Craig will be approaching the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art later this year to discuss further publications.



Ecological potential of mitigation banking

Dr Stewart Thompson, Reader in Ecology in the Spatial Ecology and Landuse Unit (SELU), School of Life Sciences, has been undertaking research, funded by the Leverhulme Trust, into whether a strategic 'habitat banking' approach to conservation management would provide greater ecological benefits than those provided by the current ad hoc 'project by project' approach.

Habitat banking involves the establishment of a 'bank' which has a value for nature conservation, expressed as 'credits'. These can be purchased by those responsible for land use change, such as developers, when regulators require them to compensate for losses of habitat. So, essentially, a habitat bank operates in a similar way to a high street bank, although instead of cash credit, they trade in mitigation credits.

Dr Thompson and his team selected the Milton Keynes South Midlands growth area to examine the potential for habitat banking as a response to the large housing expansion that is planned there over the next 25 years. The main objectives of the research were to identify which priority habitats were under threat as a result of the development, and to investigate the likelihood of their recreation elsewhere. To achieve this, an ecological model for mapping optimal habitat bank locations was developed and a cost-effectiveness assessment of the concept was undertaken.

The research built on the principles of landscape ecology to develop a computer model for locating habitat banks into an ecological network. Ecological networks can be thought of as a system of areas bound by ecological and physical links, consisting of core areas, buffer areas and nature conservation creation/restoration areas. Given the composition of the landscape under study, the model examined the functional connectivity of existing patches of woodland, grassland and wetland habitat. The methodology employed relied on two basic inputs: the location of focal habitat patches and the location of different land cover types in the landscape. Once the level of connectivity had been ascertained, the model was then employed to indicate where the habitat bank should be created to increase habitat connectivity and hence functionality.

The findings of the research have been presented to a wide audience, and, perhaps not surprisingly, views remain polarised as to the acceptability of habitat banking as a conservation management tool. On the one hand, developers and some environmental consultants see the habitat bank as a useful mechanism which both developers and conservationists can adopt as a pragmatic tool, allowing development to progress while creating new habitat areas. On the other hand, conservation agencies remain uneasy over the prospect of habitat banking, claiming that the habitat that would be provided does not exactly match that which is being lost. These agencies are adopting a cautious approach to the prospect of habitat banks becoming established, but do so knowing that the concept is picking up momentum in general, and specifically for key aspects of government policy, such as flood defence and port expansion. Habitat banking remains an untested concept; however, an informed decision on its merits can be made only following an examination of its potential ecological efficacy. This research has provided an important insight into the approaches to be adopted if the concept is to become a reality.

The biologisation of national belonging

Dr Marius Turda is a Research Councils UK (RCUK) Academic Fellow in twentieth-century Central/Eastern European biomedicine in the School of Arts and Humanities. He was granted a Marie Curie Fellowship to carry out a study of the biologisation of national belonging between 1918 and 1940 in Hungary and Romania.

As a result of the study Dr Turda is working on two monographs. The first deals with the history of eugenics in Hungary between 1900 and 1940; the second concentrates on the history of anthropology and medicine in Romania between 1860 and 1945. Both monographs will fill an important gap in scholarship, as neither subject has hitherto benefited from academic scrutiny. In addition to conducting archival research and collecting data in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Romania, Greece and the UK, Marius has edited, together with Professor Paul Weindling, also in the School of Arts and

Humanities, a volume dealing with the topics of eugenics and biopolitics in Central and Southeast Europe (*Blood and homeland: eugenics and racial nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe, 1900-1940*) and established a book series with the Central European University Press in Budapest.

An immediate result of the project is a network of young scholars working on racial sciences and biomedicine in Central and Southeast Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which Marius established at Oxford Brookes University in 2006. He is working to transform the network over the next five years into a genuine forum for international collaboration. So far this has enabled the organisation of three workshops in Oxford, Vienna and Berlin, each centred on different geographical areas and themes. For further information see www.bio-medicine.org.uk.

The same rationale is behind the Central European Seminar Series, currently organised by Marius at the University of Oxford. The series brings together students and scholars from the University of Oxford, and eventually beyond, who are interested in topics related to Central European culture and politics in general, including history, sociology, literature, and philosophy, as well

as the history of medicine and the history of science. The seminar also aims to interest the 'national' societies in Oxford, such as the Romanian Society, the Hungarian Society, the Polish Society, the Ukrainian Society, and the Oxford Austrian & Central European Studies Group, in common projects. Further information is available at <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~sant1786/>.

Marius has also established Socrates and Erasmus (education programmes organised by the European Commission) links with the University of the Peloponnese in Greece and Wroclaw Medical University in Poland relating to the teaching of medical sciences and public health.

Dr Marius Turda



Former loyalist paramilitary members' perspectives

on their involvement in past violence and on the current peace in Northern Ireland

As conflicts continue to rage around the world, politicians have become fluent in speaking the language of the 'war on terror'. Despite the popularity of addressing the issue of war and peace in areas of paramilitary conflict, much of the research currently available does not provide a sufficient explanation of key interpersonal dynamics. The majority of the psychological research into paramilitary activity, or terrorism, can be characterised as falling into one of two traditions. In the first the paramilitary individual is driven by an 'evil' natural disposition, while in the second the external situation is the driver of 'evil' behaviour. It is notable that researchers from each of these traditions rarely interact with the very people their investigations seek to explain (they tend to rely on documentary footage, government documents, etc).

Over the last three years **Dr Mark Burgess**, Senior Lecturer in Psychology in the School of Social Sciences and Law, and his colleagues have interviewed a variety of people in Northern Ireland (members of paramilitary groups, civil rights protestors, peace activists, politicians, victims of violence, and members of the security forces) (*Burgess, Ferguson & Hollywood, 2005a; 2005b; 2007*). Initially the interviews with paramilitaries focused on members of the IRA (the Irish Republican Army), but in 2006 Dr Burgess (together with Dr Neil Ferguson of Liverpool Hope University) received British Academy funding to conduct interviews with members of the Loyalist paramilitary group, the UVF (the Ulster Volunteer Force).

They were particularly interested in the transitions people have made with regard to committing to a campaign of violent resistance. They found that many of the interviewees could point to a specific critical incident as fuelling the transition from peaceful resistance (or inaction) to violent resistance. The critical incident (such as running to aid a community member who had been shot dead by a rival group) does not impact the individual in a simple stimulus-response manner, but precipitates a period of self-reflection that helps the individual to determine a boundary demarcating acceptable and unacceptable expectations, treatment, and/or conditions. The individual may also

determine to act in a manner that asserts their discontent. For some this would include becoming involved in a paramilitary group while others would become committed to further peaceful protest. Regardless of the path chosen, the people interviewed acknowledge there would have been a comfort in drawing back to do as the majority do. Interestingly, and in contrast to some laboratory research on interpersonal violence, the key protagonists in the interviews accept responsibility for their actions (while also expressing regret at the circumstances that they found themselves in).

As the two research traditions outlined above do not give a compelling explanation of an individual taking deliberative contemplative action, Drs Burgess and Ferguson have increasingly used an existential-humanistic framework to understand the interviewees' experiences. They are currently working through the transcripts to get a more detailed picture of the decisions and circumstances involved in engaging in paramilitary action, and have recently presented their work at the International Society for Political Psychology, a NATO conference on terrorism, and the American Psychological Association annual convention. They have a paper under review in *Political Psychology*.



Dr Mark Burgess

Research to support the development of good practice in managing age diversity in the Higher Education sector

The Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice (CDPRP) has been awarded a grant of £135,000 by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) under the Leadership, Governance and Management Fund to undertake an action research project to support higher education institutions (HEIs) in implementing age discrimination legislation. The project will be led by **Dr Simonetta Manfredi**, Co-Director of the Centre. Dr Lucy Vickers, Reader in Law in the School of Social Sciences and Law, and Michelle Holliday, Equal Opportunity and Diversity Manager and Co-Director of the CDPRP, are also lending their expertise (as academic and practitioner respectively) to the project.

This research is particularly timely, as the HEFCE report on the HE Workforce in England (2006) draws attention to the fact that, although the HE sector has made progress in relation to equal opportunities, age is an area where 'the situation is not known'. The research undertaken by the CDPRP will generate new knowledge on age-related issues in the sector. It will involve

a two-stage data-gathering process from HE employers and employees which will include:

- A comprehensive survey of staff attitudes across the sector, reviewing a number of key age-related issues and the factors that influence staff attitudes towards career planning and retirement.
- Collection of qualitative data through focus groups with academic managers and administrative middle managers to gain in-depth information about their views and perceptions on age-related issues.

The research findings will inform policy development and staff training initiatives to support HEIs to implement age legislation, to understand how to balance its requirements with other strands of equality legislation, and to gain an understanding of the likely impact of demographic changes on the workforce in higher education.

The project is supported by a wide partnership which includes some of the main HE stakeholders such as the Equality

Challenge Unit, the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA), the University Personnel Association, and the trade unions UCU and UNISON. Jocelyn Prudence, Chief Executive of UCEA, commented in her letter of support for this research to HEFCE that, "this project will enable a full picture to be painted and examples of best practice developed which will not just hasten the process of full compliance with age discrimination legislation but also further move the loci of opinion towards the benefits of age diversity in the workplace."

Since its launch in May 2004, the CDPRP has undertaken a number of externally-funded projects which have made a significant contribution to the development of policies and best practice in the area of equality and diversity in the higher education sector in the UK. These projects have attracted a lot of interest from HE institutions in other European countries. In September 2006 the work of the Centre was highly commended for improving working lives, under the HR Excellence Awards in Higher Education.

Funding successes for carbon-counting research

Dr Rajat Gupta

Over the last few months, **Dr Rajat Gupta**, Senior Lecturer in the School of the Built Environment and Co-Director of the Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development (OISD): Architecture, has received a series of research grants and contracts in the area of carbon-counting and carbon reduction in buildings and cities. Dr Gupta is the developer of an award-winning GIS-based model, called DECoRuM®, which is a toolkit for carbon emission reduction planning in cities (see www.decorum-model.org.uk). His new projects include:

- A six-month research contract worth £30,000 awarded by Homegroup, the second-largest registered social landlord in the UK, to develop the first comprehensive 'toolkit' for the recently-launched Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH), which underpins the UK Government's target for building zero-carbon homes by 2016. The overall aim of the project is to develop a user-friendly tool to help Homegroup assess the carbon impact and financial viability of achieving CSH levels 4, 5, and 6 in a representative sample of new-build homes. The CSH toolkit will use the energy-modelling principles of DECoRuM®, and could have major applications in the housing sector, given the growing impetus towards building low/zero carbon homes.
- A project with Ten Lifestyle Management Group and National Energy Services to support the development of a holistic green concierge service. This initiative involves further developing the DECoRuM® model to measure, model, map, benchmark, reduce and manage carbon emissions from 7,000 homes in London. The project is expected to run for three years, with a funding of about £150,000. Smita Chandiwala, a researcher in carbon-counting, will be joining Rajat on these exciting new projects.
- A 3½-year Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) Case Project, in collaboration with Ice Energy, well-known installers of heat pumps, which aims to assess the potential of ground source heat pumps in reducing energy-related carbon emissions from UK housing in a changing climate. The project, worth about £85,000, has a PhD studentship attached to it which has been awarded to Robert Irving.
- A recently-confirmed project funded by UrbanBuzz (a HEFCE-funded joint venture between University College London and the University of East London), which aims to develop a creative workshop-style training programme for UK local planning authorities on securing sustainable design standards. Dr Gupta will be part of a team of academic fellows which also includes other OISD experts. He will be responsible for providing expert advice on the urban carbon emissions impact of selected live planning applications.

These projects will further expand and strengthen the carbon-counting research capability in OISD.

Dr Rajat Gupta



Spreading the word about counting and reducing CO₂ emissions from buildings and cities

In recent months, Rajat has been involved in a series of international lectures and keynote addresses on carbon-counting and carbon reduction from buildings and cities. These have included:

- Speaking to postgraduate students and staff at the Global Institute of Sustainability at Arizona State University (ASU) on using GIS-based modelling in assessing the carbon impacts of city-centre versus sub-urban developments. Rajat is involved in carbon-mapping buildings at ASU to assess the potential for achieving carbon neutrality by 2010.
- Presenting a scientific paper to an international audience of researchers, academics and policy-makers at the ECEEE 2007 conference in Nice which evaluated three recently-completed carbon-reducing initiatives in Oxford. These include the Oxford Solar Initiative project, the carbon-modelling of Oxford homes using DECoRuM®, and the development of a climate change action plan for Oxford. Oxford City Council has implemented the climate change action plan, and aims to reduce emissions by 25% from City Council buildings by 2010.
- Giving a keynote address with Nicky Gavron, Deputy Mayor of London, and Sir John Lawton, Chair of the Royal Commission on Environmental Protection, on the importance of measuring and reducing the carbon footprint of buildings in tackling climate change.
- An invitation to deliver a public lecture and run a one-day workshop for students, architects and academics at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, on incorporating low-carbon technologies in buildings. The lecture will explain the advantages of low-carbon buildings, how to design them, and how to understand and shrink the carbon footprint of existing buildings.

Rajat says:

"There is now a strong and growing imperative from international and national governments to reduce CO₂ emissions, 50% of which are produced by energy use in buildings. I hope these lectures help to stimulate action among individuals, industry and governments to reduce the carbon impacts of buildings, and lead us towards a low-carbon society."



In conversation with **Professor Janet Beer**

Professor Diana Woodhouse, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) talks with the new Vice-Chancellor about her research and her aspirations for Oxford Brookes.

DW: Your research interests are centred on late nineteenth/early twentieth-century American writing and in recent years you have written extensively on Edith Wharton. What draws you to this period of literature and to American authors, and what makes Edith Wharton particularly interesting?

JB: When I completed my undergraduate degree I had very little knowledge of literatures written in English outside the UK, so I applied for American Literature MAs and decided to accept a place at Warwick. I was immediately captivated by the fact that to read American literature you needed to have a wider grasp of the complex set of influences that were unique to the development of the cultural life of the nation. I had never heard of Edith Wharton before undertaking the course – and I had always been a very catholic and voracious reader – and only realised when I saw how much and how brilliantly she had written that there were whole areas of literature that were simply ignored. This in turn led me to other, mainly women, writers, like Kate Chopin and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, but also to a desire to look again at the conditions in which they published, the audience for their work, and the critical histories of their literary reputations. I have just co-edited another book on Edith Wharton and feel no diminishing of my interest in her or in her endless capacity to surprise and delight me.

DW: You clearly enjoy working with others; many of your books and articles are jointly authored. You have also been an Associate Editor since 1999 of *The Year's Work in English Studies*, published by OUP, and are a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of American Studies*. What benefits do you find such collaborations bring?

JB: Most of my work over the last nine years has been collaborative. This has partly been inclination and partly necessity due to the demands of a variety of management posts. I first collaborated transatlantically, with Katherine Joslin at Western Michigan; she brought expertise on Jane Addams and I brought Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and together we were able to write about their respective textual responses to the white slavery scare in late nineteenth/early twentieth-century America. By adding our specialisms together we were able to come up with much more than the sum of our parts, and this is also true of the work I have done with Ann Heilmann, Elizabeth Nolan, Pam Knights and, latterly, Avril Horner, with whom I am currently writing a book on Wharton's late fiction. I also find writing when I am responding to the preliminary thoughts

of others much more engaging and dynamic a process. I have recently edited and written an introduction for *The Cambridge Companion to Kate Chopin* and it felt very strange to be writing alone. Elizabeth Nolan and Anne-Marie Ford, with whom I have collaborated as editors, were two of my PhD students, and sharing invitations I received to publish in particular areas had the added benefit of getting them into print. Science postgraduates are often able to participate in multiple-authored publications with their supervisors. We should do more of this in the Arts and Humanities.

DW: Moving on, if I may, to research at Brookes: as you know, since the previous Vice-Chancellor took office, some ten years ago, one of the University's goals has been to improve its research profile. RAE 2008 has provided a particular impetus, and over the last few years research has been given a high priority, with considerable investment being targeted at areas where the University can realistically be expected to improve its performance. The RAE is now more-or-less behind us, and although we await the outcome of the exercise, we are moving into a new, but equally important, phase, and it is essential that we do not lose momentum. The University's draft Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy is currently out for consultation, but what do you see as the research priorities for Brookes?

JB: Above all we should not lose the momentum provided – for good or ill – by the RAE. The University should be proud of its research in all its rich variety, both pure and applied, and we need to find ways to ensure that students feel the benefit of working in a research-informed environment. The enabling of early-career staff to develop their research while supporting them as teachers is of primary importance; mentoring by senior researchers is helpful, as are opportunities to talk to research-active staff across a range of disciplines, in order to foster interdisciplinarity. We need to ensure that expertise in securing research grants is shared, and I would see the securing of more external funding, from the research councils, as well as from other organisations, as a priority. I also think that we should be taking full advantage of the opportunities that exist to become more involved in national bodies. External activity provides a broadening and deepening of the home research culture, and work with, for example, subject associations, research council panels and editorial boards also provides opportunities to collaborate across institutions.

DW: What are your longer-term aspirations for research at Brookes, and how should research be balanced with the University's other activities?

JB: Research is no longer really an optional activity. Even when recruiting staff from the professions who have industry but not research experience we need to ensure that they have an appetite to develop their research and scholarship. There is, after all, an ethical case for linking research and teaching when educating those who will have a licence to practise. The University will support research fully but it will support a wide range of research and knowledge transfer activity, and foster an atmosphere in which students benefit directly from staff expertise. To return to the RAE, the exercise has provided a useful focal point around which to decide what our current strengths are and how best to grow them. We need now to find ways in which new areas can grow while ensuring that established areas flourish and consolidate their reputations.

Centre for Health, Medicine and Society: taking research activity to a new level

The Centre for Health, Medicine and Society has recently been granted a Wellcome Trust Strategic Award of £646,626 to support a five-year programme of individual and collective research. This involves 22 projects, coalescing around the theme of Health Care in Public and Private, which will explore the balance of public/private and philanthropic activity in the mixed economy of health care between the eighteenth century and the present day, and in a variety of spatial contexts; how the boundaries between public and private are and were understood and navigated by practitioners and patients; and how certain types of patients and certain types of medical practice come to be marginalised or valorised in health care systems.

The projects, which will be supported by an administrator and an outreach officer, both funded by Wellcome, include:

- Health in East Oxford, 1800-1990.
- Developing expectations: the marginal and their practitioners in Britain, Europe, Africa and Asia.
- Public health care provision and the British poor, 1834-1929.
- Therapeutic trials and human experiments in World War II.

- Philanthropic versus public and private provision in the mixed economy of health care in Europe, America, South America and South Africa.
- Rights, duties and professional standing in the mixed economy of health care.
- Institutions and the public and private spheres.
- Eugenics, medical responsibility and the development of health care systems.

This award caps an excellent year for the Centre during which it secured two three-year Wellcome Trust postgraduate posts. The first, sponsored by Professor Anne Digby, enables Dr Yolanda Eraso to work on philanthropic responses to female cancer in twentieth-century Argentina; the second, sponsored by Dr Elizabeth Hurren, allows Dr Ina Scherder to research anatomy in the public hospitals of nineteenth and twentieth-century Galway. In addition, Professor Paul Weindling received £400,000 from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for his work on the human victims of Nazi experiments during World War II.

Dr Katherine Watson was awarded two years' research leave by the Wellcome Trust to complete her work on medical experts and forensic medicine; and Dr Alysa Levene secured grants from the British Academy and Wellcome Trust to develop her research on the eighteenth-century history of childhood disease and health. The Centre was also awarded two Research Councils UK (RCUK) Fellowships, which will lead on to full-time, permanent positions for Drs Marius Turda and Viviane Quirke. Further smaller grants were obtained from a range of sources by Centre staff to underpin a rich programme of conferences, research outputs and further grant applications during the next couple of years.

The Centre has also achieved success on a number of other fronts. In the past year it has had seven (funded) visiting scholars, and this programme will continue in 2007-08 with year-long visits from Professors from St Mary's College of Maryland and the University of California, and one-semester visits from academics from Umeå University,

Sweden; the University of Haifa; the École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris; and Tokyo Metropolitan University. In addition, PhD student numbers and completions continue to grow, along with the success in securing external funding for MA and PhD students. In recognition of the quality of the training PhD students receive, the Wellcome Trust funded a pilot national training scheme for students in medical history. The scheme uses the Centre's programme and is staffed jointly by colleagues from Oxford Brookes and University College London. The success of the programme has led to further funding for 2007-08 to expand and run this workshop-based system. With two themed seminar series ('Perspectives on rural and folk medicine' and 'Medicine for the marginal') organised for History of Medicine, planning for three major conferences underway, and the launch of an undergraduate degree, the academic year promises to be extremely busy.

Of course, huge challenges remain: how to respond to the needs of a metrics-based RAE; the need to obtain further external funding for the major projects outlined above; the need to consolidate international networks; the need for more staffing to reflect success in obtaining external funding; and above all the need to deliver the brand identity – Health Care in Public and Private – promised as part of the Strategic Award. But there are also opportunities born out of the Centre's success, and successes elsewhere in the University in the fields of nutrition, health care, psychology and anthropology. These have the potential to foster a strong cross-university research network in the history and modern experiences/policy dimensions of health.

For more details of the Centre see: <http://ah.brookes.ac.uk/historyofmedicine/>

Contact: Professor Steven King, sking@brookes.ac.uk

New staff

Professor Magnus Ryner joined the Department of International Relations in the School of Social Sciences and Law from the Department of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Birmingham in May 2007.

Dr Fionn Stevenson was appointed to the post of Reader in Sustainable Design in the School of Built Environment in April 2007. Dr Stevenson was previously Reader in Architecture at the University of Dundee.

Professor Angus Gellatly has been appointed to the position of Professor in Psychology in the School of Social Sciences and Law. Professor Gellatly joins Oxford Brookes from the Open University, where he was Professor of Cognitive Psychology.

Professor Joseph Tah joined the Department of Real Estate and Construction, School of the Built Environment, as Professor of Project Management in May 2007. Professor Tah was previously at the University of Salford as Professor of Construction Information Technology.

Dr Assafa Endeshaw was appointed Reader in Law in the School of Social Sciences and Law in April 2007. Dr Endeshaw was previously a Reader in Information Law at the School of Legal Studies at the University of Wolverhampton.

Dr David Valler was appointed as Reader in Spatial Planning, School of the Built Environment in August 2007 and joins us from the Department of Town and Regional Planning at Sheffield University.

Leverhulme Trust grant for Life Sciences researchers



Dr Imogen Sparkes (above) and **Professor Chris Hawes** in the School of Life Sciences were recently awarded a three-year, £161,000 research grant by the Leverhulme Trust to work on 'Genesis of the cortical endoplasmic reticulum (ER) network in plants'. The ER is a complicated network of moving membrane tubules within every cell. It plays a vital role in many biosynthetic processes. The ER is the starting point where a large proportion of the proteins in a cell are synthesised, including all of those that are economically important in food crops. Proteins, once made, are then directed to various regions within the cell, for example for storage in seeds, or can eventually be secreted to the outside environment. The work aims to understand what factors determine the shape of the ER network in leaf epidermal cells, and whether the ER plays a role in the formation of the new wall which determines the shape of the cell during the cell division process.

New publications

The practice of modernism: modern architects and urban transformation, 1954-1972

Professor John Gold, School of Social Sciences and Law

Publisher: Spon Press

ISBN: 041525843X

The post-war period saw greater change in the appearance, structure and skyline of cities than any comparable period in modern history. During the late 1950s and the 1960s, municipalities routinely devised and implemented radical schemes to reshape and modernise their towns and cities. This book, the second in a trilogy which began with the author's widely-acclaimed *The experience of modernism* (1997), traces the involvement of modern architects in urban reconstruction and renewal between 1954 and 1972. Making extensive use of primary documentation and in-depth interviews with architects of the time, *The practice of*

modernism uses oral historical and contemporary archive evidence to examine the intricate relationship between vision and subsequent practice in the saga of post-war urban transformation.

Deposit insurance

Dr Dalvinder Singh, Senior Lecturer in Law in the School of Social Sciences and Law

Publisher: Palgrave Macmillan

ISBN: 023000699X

This book is edited by Dr Singh with colleagues from the University of Leeds and London South Bank University, and the International Association of Deposit Insurers.

Deposit insurance has risen rapidly over the last few years across the world. It was brought into renewed prominence with the reform of the system in the United States in the 1980s after the Savings and Loans crisis,

and was accelerated by the rash of financial crises that have struck Europe, Asia and South America in recent years. The contributions to this volume strike a fascinating balance between the interest of regulators, the view of academics as to how the issues should be handled, and the interests of banks and their depositors.

Olympic cities: city agendas, planning, and the world's games, 1896-2012

Professor John Gold, School of Social Sciences and Law

Publisher: Routledge

ISBN: 0415374073

This book provides the first full overview of the changing relationship between cities and the Olympic events from the revival of the games in 1896 to the present. It has been nominated for the International Planning History Society Book Prize.

News in brief

Congratulations on the conferment of the title of Professor to **John Durodola**, Assistant Dean (International) and Head of Mechanical Engineering, and to **Geoff Goddard**, Professor in Motorsport Engineering Design, both in the School of Technology.

Professor David Foxcroft won the 2007 Nan Tobler Award for Review of the Prevention Science Literature given by the Society for Prevention Research in the USA. The award is given for 'contributions to the summarisation or articulation of the empirical evidence relevant to prevention science'. In 2002, Professor Foxcroft conducted a literature review for the World Health Organisation on what works in alcohol and drug abuse prevention. This led to a systematic review of the literature, sponsored by the International Cochrane Collaboration, which identified and summarised psychosocial and educational programmes aimed at the primary prevention of alcohol misuse by young people. Professor Foxcroft's reviews have contributed greatly to our understanding of the evidence base for alcohol abuse prevention.

Professors Brian Andrews and Chris McLeod, School of Technology, have been awarded £110,000 by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) for a project entitled 'Feasibility of semi-active damping for advanced rowing ergometry'. Rowing ergometers are widely used to train and select athletes for rowing and sculling. However, these machines do not accurately replicate the feel and force actions experienced in a boat. In a sport where tenths of a second may separate gold from silver, a greater emphasis is likely to be placed on improved training techniques. Andrews and McLeod are developing a new ergometer that should be a step closer to on-water rowing for both amateur and elite, disabled and able-bodied rowers. The new ergometer will be based on their present designs for paraplegic rowing using functional electrical stimulation (FES). They have demonstrated that paraplegics can compete in the British and World Indoor Rowing Championships using electrical activation of their paralysed legs to produce the rowing motion.

Dr Brad Blitz, School of Social Sciences and Law, has been approached by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) to draft an expert report on statelessness and denial of citizenship, and to chair the December conference on this theme.

Professor Marlene Morrison, Westminster Institute of Education, together with colleagues at the University of Birmingham, University of Southampton, University of Newcastle and University of Oxford, has been awarded a grant by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to undertake a longitudinal case study project which will gather baseline data relating to educational reform in the 14 to 19 age group. The project team will gather qualitative and quantitative data from 45 case study sites across the country.

Dr Jane Appleton, School of Health and Social Care, has been appointed to the National Collaborating Centre for Women's and Children's Health (NCC-WCH) Guideline Development Group (GDG) on 'When to suspect child maltreatment'. The NCCs are contracted by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to develop clinical guidelines commissioned by the Department of Health. Each topic considered for an evidence-based clinical guideline needs to draw on current clinical and cost-effectiveness evidence, professional expertise, and patient and carer experiences and concerns. The principal role of GDG members is to use their individual skills and knowledge of healthcare to inform the development of the guideline recommendations.

A team led by **Professor William Clocksin**, School of Technology, is a member of a 55-partner consortium funded by the European Commission working on new methods for non-invasive prenatal diagnosis of genetic disease. The research at Brookes is developing computer-based methods for automatically processing images of human cells to detect chromosomal markers that may indicate disease.

Dr Sarah Whitmore, School of Social Sciences and Law, has been invited to act as a consultant on Ukraine for the US NGO Global Integrity during the preparation of their 2007 report on governance, anti-corruption, and openness in more than 40 countries. She also joined the Organisation for Co-operation and Security in Europe (OSCE) as a short-term observer during Ukraine's pre-term parliamentary elections on 30 September.

Following the success of a UK-India symposium on 'Greening cities' held in February 2007, the British Council has awarded **Dr Rajat Gupta**, School of the Built Environment, funding of £16,800 to organise and chair a follow-up UK-India Young Scientists conference on 'Towards sustainable energy technologies and low

carbon buildings' to be held in Delhi in February 2008. The local partner for this conference is the renowned Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi.

Professor Jo Neale, School of Health and Social Care, has received nearly £40,000 from the Scottish Executive to work with the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York on 'Homelessness and substance misuse: evidence-based approaches to the provision of effective services'.

Professor David Duce, School of Technology, has been elected Chair of the Eurographics Association, for 2007-08. He chaired the 28th General Assembly of the Association held during the very successful Eurographics 2007 conference in Prague, and chaired the award committee for the Eurographics Association's John Lansdown Award for Interactive Digital Art.

Dr Brad Blitz, School of Social Sciences and Law, will take up the Jean Monnet Chair in Political Geography in Europe. The European Commission complements its policy work in the field of education and training with a variety of funding programmes, including the Jean Monnet Action Programme which supports activities in more than 60 countries on the five continents. The Action Programme brings together a network of 1,800 professors, reaching audiences of 250,000 students every year. Jean Monnet Chairs are senior teaching posts at higher education institutions with a high-level specialisation in European integration studies and are awarded for a period of five years. Brad will hold the Chair from 2007 to 2012 and will address thematic issues regarding migration, citizenship and European integration in the course of his undergraduate and postgraduate teaching.

Dr Mary Zajicek, School of Technology, was invited to be a keynote speaker at W4A 2007 (International Cross-Disciplinary Conference on Web Accessibility) where she spoke on Web 2.0 and accessibility. Dr Zajicek has also been elected to the Editorial Board of the journal Universal Access in the Information Society.

Professor Joy Hendry, School of Social Sciences and Law, along with members of the Anthropology and Geography Department, has been awarded a Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation grant of up to £248,455 for a five-year Lectureship in Japanese Studies (Economic Anthropology of Japan).

Diary

November 2007 – February 2008

Wednesday 14 November

Public Lecture – Deafness and Development: challenges and opportunities for deaf children and their families

Professor Margaret Harris
Lloyd Lecture Theatre, Headington Campus
6.00pm
To book a place please fill in the booking form at www.brookes.ac.uk/about/news/public/bookings/

Wednesday 21 November

International Student Advice

Liz Robertson, International Student Advisory Services
Room BG10, Buckley Building, Gipsy Lane
12.00 – 1.00pm
To book a place, please contact jorgan@brookes.ac.uk

Wednesday 28 November

Chaotic, cathartic or calming?

Tackling the writing-up stage of the PhD
Dr Elizabeth Burton, Department of Architecture
Room BG10, Buckley Building, Gipsy Lane
12.00 – 1.00pm
To book a place please contact jorgan@brookes.ac.uk

Public Lecture – New concepts and models in reliability and risk

Professor Michael T Todinov
Lloyd Lecture Theatre, Headington Campus
6.00pm
To book a place please fill in the booking form at www.brookes.ac.uk/about/news/public/bookings/

Wednesday 5 December

PhD Oral Examination, the role of the Internal Examiner

Dr Susan Brookes, Research Training Co-ordinator
Room BG10, Buckley Building, Gipsy Lane
12.00 – 1.00pm
To book a place please contact jorgan@brookes.ac.uk

Public Lecture – Living with attitude: subversive theology through documentary film

Dr Robert Beckford
Lloyd Lecture Theatre, Headington Campus
6.00pm
To book a place please fill in the booking form at www.brookes.ac.uk/about/news/public/bookings/

Wednesday 9 January

UKRO/Framework 7

Room BG10, Buckley Building, Gipsy Lane
Time to be confirmed, please contact ldwilliams@brookes.ac.uk

Wednesday 23 January

Public Lecture – From art to empiricism: towards an evidence base for Architecture

Professor Elizabeth Burton
Lloyd Lecture Theatre, Headington Campus
6.00pm
To book a place please fill in the booking form at www.brookes.ac.uk/about/news/public/bookings/

Wednesday 30 January

Graduate School Lecture – Reading pictures, visible and invisible

Professor Michael Worton, University College London
Lloyd Lecture Theatre, Headington Campus
6.00pm
To book a place please fill in the booking form at www.brookes.ac.uk/about/news/public/bookings/

Wednesday 6 February

First three years – Project Management

Room BG10, Buckley Building, Gipsy Lane
Sandwich lunch available from 12.00, session will end by 4.30pm
To book a place please contact louise.wood@brookes.ac.uk

Thursday 7 February

Students' Union Lecture – The changing role of Students' Unions in creating our future leaders and activists

Bill Rammell, Minister of State at the Department for Education and Skills
Main Lecture Theatre, Headington Campus
6.00pm
To book a place please fill in the booking form at www.brookes.ac.uk/about/news/public/bookings/

Wednesday 20 February

Public Lecture – The rise of the 'fragile' learner: why assessing emotional well-being undermines education

Professor Kathryn Ecclestone
Lloyd Lecture Theatre, Headington Campus
6.00pm
To book a place please fill in the booking form at www.brookes.ac.uk/about/news/public/bookings/

Wednesday 27 February

Alumni Lecture

Lloyd Lecture Theatre, Headington Campus
6.00pm
To book a place please fill in the booking form at www.brookes.ac.uk/about/news/public/bookings/

Details of research training events throughout the year are available on the Research and Business Development Office website:
www.brookes.ac.uk/res/news/training

Details of research supervisor and student training are available on the Graduate Office website:
www.brookes.ac.uk/research/Graduate/Graduate.html

Details of research seminars taking place in each of the Schools are available at: www.brookes.ac.uk/res/news/seminars

Research Forum, the research magazine of Oxford Brookes University, is published three times a year.

Contributions are welcomed from all sections of the University and should be sent to The Editor, **Research Forum**, The Research and Business Development Office, Oxford Brookes University, Buckley Building, Headington Campus, Gypsy Lane, Oxford, OX3 0BP or by email to researchforum@brookes.ac.uk

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