Jim's Bigger Bang

Sussex is at the forefront of a new discipline which has emerged within astronomy. The new field, which was legitimised as a subject by the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council only last year is known as 'particle cosmology', and Sussex boasts the largest research group in the UK to be working in this subject.

Dr Jim Lidsey, the world's first official particle cosmology research fellow, is based in the Astronomy Centre (CPES) and describes the work of the group as studying what happened in the first fraction of a second after the Big Bang, approximately ten billion years ago. The first hot and energetic moments of the universe just $10^{-36}$ seconds after the beginning can be discussed by employing the language of the elementary particles physics.

Jim studies theoretical models of the very early universe and projects them into the future. Comparing how the universe should be with how it actually looks is a reliable method of testing theories about what has happened since the Big Bang. This link between the study of the very small (particle physics) and the very large (cosmology) has given rise to 'particle cosmology'.

Jim works on a scenario known as 'cosmological inflation', which might explain why the universe is expanding and how the galaxies formed out of the primordial universe. The expansion of the universe can be described by the 'raisin bread' analogy. The raisins represent galaxies, which change position as the loaf bakes, or as the universe expands. Although the raisins don't really move around the dough, they become further apart as the dough rises. The analogy fails to explain the universe's uniform temperature (2.7° above absolute zero), as you would expect some parts of the loaf to be warmer than others. However, current theory suggests that this constant temperature can be explained if the universe did indeed inflate during that brief moment after the Big Bang.

Jim's new book, The Bigger Bang, is to be published by Cambridge University Press later this year.

Winter Graduation and Special Award Ceremonies

Professor Gordon Conway attends his final congregation as Vice-Chancellor. Professor Conway is pictured here with Pro-Chancellor, Lord Attenborough and Dr Brian Manley, Senior Pro-Chancellor and Chair of the University Council. A full report of the ceremonies and more pictures inside.

Major Survey of the Student Experience

Students in selected classes will be asked next week to participate in the first in-depth survey of the student experience at Sussex. The survey forms part of the work of the Student Experience Working Party set up by the Vice-Chancellor following the discussions of the 'Sussex in the 21st Century' document and in the wake of the Dearing Report.

The questionnaire, which has been designed by Professor Pete Saunders and Dr Ruth Woodfield of SOC, aims to survey 1000 students by means of a stratified cluster sample. This ensures that representative samples of such key groupings as year of study and subject area are included.

The terms of reference of the Working Party are, 'to review the student experience at Sussex – that is, the experience beyond the formal curriculum – and to consider recommendations for its further development and improvement.'

The survey is a key part of the Working Party's work and will make a major contribution to the improvement of the 'Sussex experience' as we plan for the 21st Century. So far as we have been able to discover, only one other 'old' university has undertaken such a survey in recent years.
Notices

Writing for ourselves, for others
Sussex pioneering student mentoring scheme

The mentoring scheme in writing, in which students help other students overcome writing, exam and other learning blocks, is now up and running for 1998 in eight Schools: AFRAS, BJOLS, CCS, COGS, EAM, EURO, and SOC. Student mentors — there are at least two per School — have been through a training with Robert Snell, from the Learning Support Unit in Counselling Services, in which they develop exercises and other helping strategies based on their own experiences as essay and project writers. They are now available in their Schools to meet with their peers individually or in groups.

The scheme is widely publicised on noticeboards, and the Net, and tutors who wish to refer students to the scheme can also contact their School’s mentors via School Secretaries or Sub-Deans. Originally funded partly by EHE and partly by Counselling and participating Schools, the scheme is in its fourth year. Mentors are now paid for their work by Schools, and report tremendous satisfaction from their involvement; the scheme, to judge from feedback from students mentored over the last three years, is making a significant impact on students’ ability to make the most of their experience at Sussex and their enjoyment of learning.

At the Gardner Centre

Film
Sunday 15 February
3.00 pm True Romance (18)
6.00 pm Hamlet (PG)

Musical
11 – 13 February at 7.45 pm
Blatchington Mill School presents
Guys and Dolls

Theatre
17 and 18 February at 7.45 pm
Black Theatre Co-op presents
ICED, a powerful and moving story
of a crack addict, adapted from Ray
Shell’s cult novel.

FREEBIES for either of the
theatre performances of ICED to
the first 10 people to present
themselves at the box office with
this Bulletin.

News

WINTER GRADUATION and

Two recipients
of the first Teaching Awards:
Beryl Williams and Annis May Timpson

Over 300 students and their families
attended the winter graduation
ceremonies held in the Gardner Centre on
Thursday. The students, most of whom were
candidates for masters’ degrees or doctorates,
received their degrees from the
Vice-Chancellor who welcomed them all to
lifelong membership of the University.

The ceremonies marked a return to Sussex
for the two honorary graduands, former Urban
Studies student Jenny Backwell, and former
Professor of Chemistry and
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Michael
Thompson. Jenny Backwell, who is currently
Director of the Brighton Housing Trust, was
awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of
Laws and the degree of Doctor of Science was
awarded to Michael Thompson.

The winter graduation ceremonies were
also the occasions of the first presentation of
the new University of Sussex Society Teaching
SPECIAL AWARD CEREMONIES

Awards. The annual scheme aims to promote excellence in teaching and learning at the University and is open to all those teaching University courses and for MPhil and DPhil supervision. Libby Lines of the University’s Alumni Society presented the awards to four members of faculty in recognition of their excellent teaching: Martin Bell (SPRU), Paul Roche (CPES), Annis May Timpson (EAM) and Beryl Williams (EURO).

The winter graduation ceremonies were followed, in the evening, by a Special Award ceremony for certificate and diploma students. One hundred and eighty students attended the special ceremony to receive their awards among them a number of University staff who had successfully completed part-time courses, including Trish Cotton and James Procter from the Bookshop, Sue Cott from EURO and Jackie Watts from USIE.

An additional feature of the ceremony was the presentation of the Alumni Society Fellowship to the following distinguished alumni: Rosalind Gold, a long-serving member of the Societys Management Committee and co-ordinator of the Alumni media group, David Lepper MP for Brighton Pavilion and Robin Lustig, Radio Four presenter. A Fellowship was also awarded to local businessman Arthur Oppenheimer in recognition of his work and involvement with the Centre for German Jewish Studies.

The evening culminated in the presentation of the Whistler Prize awarded for the best student essay in the fields of local or natural history, geology or archaeology. This year, the prize was won jointly by Margaret Thorburn and Elizabeth Stone, who have both completed the diploma course in Landscape Studies. Margaret’s prize-winning essay was entitled ‘Beddingham a shrunk settlement: origins and decline.’ Elizabeth was awarded the prize for her critical review of the environmental history of the Malling Coburn and the Vale of Brooks in the Lewes area.

MA students from 1 to r: Daniel Webster, Linda Verrall, Michael Wrightman and Tanya Shadrick

In brief

Sussex and Brighton Universities
Joint Public Lecture
George Bell Lecture
Bishop Hugh Montefiore
former Bishop of Birmingham, author and broadcaster

CAN A DARWINIST BE A CHRISTIAN?
Thursday 12 February
at 6 pm
Asa Briggs Hall
University of Brighton,
Falmer site
All welcome

SIGNS R US

Are you paying too much for engraved signs and labels? For a competitive engraving service with a personal touch on campus, contact CPES workshop, tel: 8067, email: T.J.Stanley@sussex.ac.uk

THE WILLIAM AND OLIVIA ALLAWAY SCHOLARSHIP

This Scholarship, for the 1998–99 academic year, has been established thanks to the generosity of Professor William Allaway, Director Emeritus of the Education Abroad Program of the University of California, and his wife, Olivia. Professor Allaway was instrumental in establishing the Sussex-California exchange programme in the 1960s.

The Scholarship will provide a stipend of $3,000 (US) for the academic year and is open to full-time Sussex undergraduates in any discipline with certain exceptions. Return airfare, insurance, rent and living expenses will be the responsibility of the student.

To apply for the Scholarship write an essay of not more than 1,500 words on Why the opportunity to study at the University of California would benefit my degree programme and my future career.

The closing date for entries is Monday 2 March, 1998.

For full details about the scholarship, information on the University of California and an application form contact Liz Wingfield, Arts B, room 150.
What’s on...

Lectures, Seminars, Colloquia

Monday 9 February
12.30 pm Sussex Continuing Education Research Forum: Cheryl Hunt (University of Sheffield) Bridge over muddy water: the place of reflective practice in academic programmes. Room D310

2.00 pm Centre in Global Political Economy Seminar: Tom Whiston, Global sustainability: four scenarios. Room A71

3.00 pm Centre for Mathematical Analysis and its Applications Seminar: J Roe (Oxford University) Geometric operator algebras and homology. Room Pevsey SE2

4.00 pm CULCOM Lecture: Sandra Kogut (Independent film-maker) Video works. CCS Common Room

4.30 pm Neuroscience Seminar: Susanna Blackshaw (Oxford University) Regeneration in the leech nervous system. Biology Lecture Room (EP 3.9)

5.00 pm Sociology and Social Psychology Seminar: Sara Grogan (Manchester Metropolitan University) Socio-cultural factors and body image. Room D310

5.00 pm Women’s Studies Research in Progress Seminar: Sybil Oldfield, Who’s in, who’s out? Compiling the first biographical dictionary of British woman humanitarians. Room D310

Tuesday 10 February
2.15 pm Sussex European Institute Research in Progress Seminar: Ash Amin (Durham University) Combating regional inequality in Europe. Room A71

4.00 pm COGS Seminar: Ian Wakeman, Title t.b.a. Room COGS SC11

4.15 pm Biochemistry, Genetics and Development Seminar: Mike Munday (School of Pharmacy) The AMP-activated protein kinase cascade mediates inhibition of fatty acid and cholesterol biosynthesis by hypolipidaemic drugs. Biology Lecture Theatre

5.00 pm American Studies Seminar: Annis May Timpson, Women and the royals. Room D730

5.00 pm Social Anthropology Seminar: Jeff Pratt, A whole world to gain. Room D722

5.00 pm New Metaphysical Art Seminar: Roger Poole, Browning and Pound, the Renaissance and the Cantos. Room EDB 302

5.15 pm German Research Colloquium: Christina Gatt and Ralph Meisron (Potsdam University) Wissenschaft des Judeautums: Zum’s heritage in Potsdam. Room A155

Wednesday 11 February
11.30 am Plant Science Seminar: Jonathan Bryant, Atmospheric nitrogen: a threat to the chalk grassland plant community? Room Pevsey 2A1

1.30 pm Sussex Centre for Optical and Atomic Physics Seminar: Jeremy Baumberg (Hitachi Cambridge Lab.) Ultrafast coherent control in semiconductors: vibrating excitons and their interactions. Room Pevsey 2A2

2.00 pm Social and Political Thought Seminar:

Lectures, Seminars, Colloquia

John Varty, Adam Ferguson and the republican ideal of liberty. Room D630

2.00 pm Quercus Seminar: Merl Start (University of East London) Bisexuality and its discontents. Room D630

5.00 pm English Graduate Colloquium: Tomoyo Nakao (Okayama and Essex Universities) The Bridge on the River Kwai*: POWs, 'Japs', 'native' women and the colonial gaze. Room D640. (*The film may be screened on campus from 2 pm - check for notices.)

5.00 pm Centre for Modern French Thought Seminar: Leslie Hill (Warwick University) Up the republic: Beckett, writing, politics. Room A103


Thursday 12 February
12.30 pm Postgraduate History and Gender Seminar: Katherine Store, British romance in India. Room D520

4.00 pm Geography Research Seminar: Stephen Page (Massey University, New Zealand) Tourism, development and indigenous people. Room D610

4.00 pm Experimental Psychology Colloquium: Janet Astoning (Toronto University) Children's theory of mind and language at the transition to school. Biology Lecture Room (EP 3.9)

4.00 pm Media Studies Lecture: Robert Fisk (The Independent) Threats, lies and videotapes: reporting the Middle East. Room A2

5.00 pm Sussex Development Lecture: Ann Whitehead, Women in development/Gender and development: the new politics of an old distinction. Room A1

5.00 pm History Work in Progress Seminar: Otwell Hufion (Merton College, Oxford) A woman and her money in 19th century Western Europe. Room A155

5.00 pm Centre for Statistics and Stochastic Modelling Seminar: Seigai Nowak (Institute of Mathematics, Novosibirsk) Title t.b.a. Room Pevsey 2A2

Friday 13 February
4.30 pm Philosophy Society Seminar: Adam Morton (Bristol University) Where vagueness meets demonstrative: possible languages. Room A155

Miscellaneous

- Luncheon recital at the Meeting House - Alison Back (flute) and Nigel Wicken (piano) 10 February, 1.20 pm in the chapel.
- PRUS workshop on recent research on microfinance: implications for policy, 13 February, 9 am to 5.30 pm, room IDS 221. Organised by Saurabh Sinha and Imran Martin, administrator: Hilary Cook. Attendance by invitation only.

Bulletin

The Bulletin appears every Friday of term, with copy deadline the preceding Friday lunchtime. We welcome any suggestions for news, events, letters and small ads. Please contact the Information Office, Sussex House on ext. 8209 or e-mail: bulletin@sussex.ac.uk

FOR SALE: '91 VW Golf Driver, 3 door, midnight blue, 1.6l, fsh, average mileage, good condition, £4,250. Contact ext 7230

TO LET: single bedsit, share facilities with two other students, close to Seven Dials, £50/week incl. Contact 773161 or e-mail: mmmfl@sussex.ac.uk

ACCOMMODATION WANTED: one-bedroom flat, part or unfurnished in Lewes, Brighton or surrounding area from late February. Contact John or Kate on 202831

WANTED: lo-tech tachistogram for psychology/art project. Contact Lin Donaldson on 721175

TO LET: single room in house near Fiveways, to share with two others. Mature, non-smoking female preferred, £45/week excl. Contact ext 2734 or 881920

FOR SALE: A-reg VW Polo, must go asap, only £200, sound working order, MOT until October, perfect student car. Contact Simon on 232859

TO LET: room on weekdays only, spacious flat, close to shops and sea, £50/week incl. Contact 0171 328 3862 (weekdays) or 821593 (weekends).

TO LET: furnished four-bedroom house in Kingston near Lewes, available mid-February. Contact ext 8536 or 692005 (day) 483993 (evenings)

FOR SALE: gents Meindl hiking boots, size 8 (42), as new (25 miles proves them to be too small for present owner), £114 new, sell for £80 o.n.o. Contact ext 8306

FOR SALE: Renault Clio RT, 1.91 diesel (top of the range model) 1993, K-reg, electric windows, sunroof, pas, fsh, 69,000 miles, £4,950. Contact 84652

FOR SALE: child's size office desk, three drawers and shelves built-in, pine effect finish, very good condition. £10. Contact ext 2841

FOR SALE: two Tunturi exercise bikes, good working order, suitable for home use, £10 each. Contact Karen, ext 3947 or Sam, 3946

BULLETIN

Small Ads

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