Mothers cradle babies to their left side for a better bonding experience

Mothers cradle babies on the left side because it helps them to better understand their child’s emotional and physical needs, University of Sussex psychologists claim.

Research by Victoria Bourne (below left) and Dr Brenda Todd (below right) indicates that left cradling is the best way for a mother to notice and respond to a baby’s behaviour, such as tears, laughter or big yawns. The position directs important infant responses to the right side of the mother’s brain, the hemisphere used for emotional response. Left-sided cradling provides an advantage in the bonding process by giving the mother fast intuitive access to the baby’s requirements.

Victoria explained: “The different sides of the brain do different things. For most people, the right side of the brain controls the left side of the body and helps to process emotions. Our findings suggest that, for mothers with this typical brain organisation, left cradling is the best position for interpreting a baby’s well-being. The right hemisphere of the brain has also been shown to be better than the left at tasks needing external attention.”

A popular myth for the occurrence of left-sided cradling focused on whether the mother was left or right-handed. Victoria said: “We wanted to look past this anecdotal assumption. Large-scale studies where handedness measures were made showed that a significant number of left-handed women also cradle on the left side.”

Previous research showed that a bias of 70 to 85 per cent of women and girls cradle babies to the left. The Sussex team carried out a two-part experiment with more than 30 undergraduates to assess the idea of a link between right hemisphere emotional response and left cradling.

First, each student was observed picking up a life-like, baby-sized doll, a type used as a newborn substitute in midwifery training. Next, each volunteer was asked to look at a selection of facial images designed to reveal whether they use the right or left side of the brain for processing emotions.

Victoria said: “The results for women were very clear. The way a woman cradles a child is governed by which hemisphere of her brain is processing the stimuli she receives from the baby.

“There was no similar difference for the male volunteers. One possibility is that it is only when men become fathers they adopt this method of communication with their newborn. Brenda and I plan to further explore this line of research, particularly to look at the relevance of socialisation on how the brain processes information.”

Victoria and Brenda’s paper, ‘When left means right: an explanation of the left cradling bias in terms of right hemisphere specialisations’, was published in the January issue of Developmental Science.

Investment in the future of Sussex

A large recruitment campaign began this week when advertisements for about 50 academic posts at Sussex appeared in the education press.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alasdair Smith, described the move as a “bold public statement of the University’s plans”. Adverts for the posts appeared in the press (Guardian and THES) this week, with the aim of recruiting staff in time for the 2004/05 academic year. To maximise impact and interest, the 50 jobs were advertised together, presenting Sussex as a university that is planning and developing for the future. As last year, when 25 posts were advertised together, the aim is to attract a good field of well-qualified candidates.

The vacancies, which arise out of proposals from the Deans of each School, represent investment across the arts and science. 28 are new posts in areas where student demand is expanding, such as Psychology, English and International Relations & Politics. The remainder are replacements for faculty who have left the University and a small number of posts in the Medical School. If the House of Commons had not passed the Higher Education Bill at its Second Reading last month, the posts would not have gone ahead. The Vice-Chancellor said he was confident that Council would now approve this and other investments in new academic development.

Medical School.

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In this issue

VC’s staff meetings
A full report

Meet Roger
The next Students’ Union President

Cricket star
Sussex student gets England call
**Hopping mad**

Where biochemistry meets the stars

Sussex has a reputation for interdisciplinary research, but who would have foreseen a link between astronomy and biochemistry?

Two Sussex researchers, Dr Seb Oliver (Physics & Astronomy) and Dr Dek Woolfson (Biochemistry), are embarking on a project to do just this.

It all started when a student (Andrew Smith) in Dek's lab collected some images of self-assembling proteins that he had labelled with coloured dyes. Dek's first thought was that these looked like images of galaxies.

Undeterred, Dek called up Seb in the Astronomy Centre who had recently organised a meeting on 'Astronomical and Medical Imaging'. The two got together and this led to an MRC/PARC Discipline Hopping Award.

Seb and Rich Savage (a research fellow in his group) will be working with Dek's team to help analyse microscope images of the self-assembling proteins. Seb's team will be applying astronomical techniques to identify structures in these images (just as they do to identify galaxies in maps of the heavens).

"This award will give us the opportunity to learn a little about a different world," says Seb, "while we apply some sophisticated image-analysis techniques from astronomy to fundamental research in a totally different field."

Dek and his team are particularly interested in the growth and movement of the proteins. This will present an interesting challenge for Seb and Rich because, although galaxies move at speeds around 600 km s⁻¹ (1.3 million miles per hour), this motion is imperceptible in maps of galaxies, which can be millions of light years across. By contrast, the proteins move at much more modest speeds, but on microscope slides that are only a few micrometres across.

Dek is delighted to build this interdisciplinary research in another direction. "Seb and Rich's involvement in the project provides a real fillip to the work," he says, "as it will allow us to follow the assembly of systems in real time and considerable detail."

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**Research funding opportunities**

More details of these and other funding opportunities are available from your Research Support Officer in the Research Services Division. For an extensive listing of funding opportunities, search the Community of Science (COS) database at www.cos.com, British Academy Senior- British Fellowship Trust

These awards support individuals or cooperative research projects in Britain, China or both countries. Grants of up to £10,000 are awarded for any one project. Most awards are between £4,000 to £5,000 level. Grants cover travel and maintenance expenses.

Deadline: 28 February

British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship

This scheme offers up to 32 three-year fellowships from October 2004 to recently postdoctoral scholars to help them obtain experience of research and teaching in a university. The emphasis of the Fellowship is on completion of a significant piece of publishable research during the Fellowship.

Deadline: 1 March

Royal Society Conference Grants

Grants provide travel and subsistence to enable UK academics to participate in conferences overseas on a subject within the natural sciences, including: mathematics, engineering, agricultural and medical research, archaeology, geography, experimental psychology and history of science.

Deadline: 1 March

Fulbright scholars

The Commission seeks applications from academics to participate in the Distinguished Scholar Programme to undertake lecturing, research or professional development in the US for 10 months between September 2004 and April 2005. Applicants must be EU citizens normally resident in the UK.

Deadline: 12 March

EPSRC Portfolio Partnerships

EPSRC wishes to expand this method of support, which ensures continuity of research without submitting frequent applications. Groups who satisfy the requirements for an award are invited to provide an Expression of Interest after consultation with the relevant Programme Manager.

Deadline: 12 March
You may have seen the large advertisements in the press this week advertising new academic positions at Sussex. Because of the timing of the launch of our new 'visual identity', the advertisements make subtle references to the new identity, rather than using it explicitly. But the message that is conveyed about the University is clear and optimistic: we are confidently investing in the future of the University, and the University is confident that it will continue to be a pioneering, creative, international and excellent institution.

The decision to advertise a substantial number of new positions has of course been based on a judgement about our financial future. As I wrote in my last column (Bulletin 16 January), our current finances are quite strained, and it is the expectation of additional fee income from 2006 onwards that allows us to invest in new jobs now. If the Higher Education Bill had not passed its Second Reading, we could not have placed this advertisement. If the Higher Education Bill does not successfully complete its passage through Parliament this spring, we will face very difficult decisions.

The decisions about where to invest are not easy, or at least not all easy. The areas of strongest student demand, such as Psychology, English and International Relations, are obvious candidates for new appointments. But the overall growth of student demand and the need for investment in academic development in advance of the next Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) means that there are many more legitimate claims for new appointments than we could afford. I hope that next year we can address those strong claims which were not addressed this year.

It has been confirmed this week that the next RAE will take place in 2006, 19 months later than originally planned, and seven months later than envisaged before the Roberts review took place. The change in timetable should not result in any relaxation – at this point in the RAE cycle it is imperative that we maintain the pressure to deliver the best possible results in 2006. I think that the changes in methodology that are proposed will be good for us, but we also need to be aware that the competition gets more intense each time round. Whatever we are aiming to do, other universities will be aiming to do better. We also need to be aware of the threat posed by the current fashion for concentration of research funding; and ensure that we are among those on whom funding is concentrated.

By the time, this column appears, the outcome of the AUT’s ballot on industrial action will be known. Of course, I hope that there will not be industrial action. I strongly support one of the AUT’s objectives, and strongly oppose another.

There is overwhelming evidence that the pay of academic staff has fallen behind that of comparable jobs elsewhere over the past 20 years. We can all agree that a solution to this problem requires more money – complex comparisons of different incremental pay systems are a secondary issue. So I strongly support the case for higher pay (and I see the HE Bill as the only proposal on the table for getting the additional funding for universities that will allow them to meet this need).

But apart from pay, the AUT is arguing for the maintenance of a status differential between different categories of support staff. The other unions – the TGWU, Unison, and Amicus – support the proposed new unified pay structure for higher education staff, and oppose the AUT’s wish to maintain status differentials. In this dispute I am on the side of the majority.

If the controversial Higher Education Bill is eventually approved, it promises "very substantial additional funding for universities", according to the Vice-Chancellor.

Sussex could receive an increase of about £10 million per year – about 12 per cent extra on core funds – said Professor Alasdair Smith in his termly meetings with support staff and academic faculty. This would "represent a very substantial relaxation of the funding constraints we currently face", he said, warning that Sussex is not able at the moment to spend enough on its estate or on academic posts.

Asked about variable fees, Alasdair said that this was still being considered but that programmes with fees less than £3,000 were likely to be an exception. "The sensible thing to do is to charge a standard fee and offer incentives to particular classes of students," he argued.

Asked about how the allocation of new posts in the latest round of academic recruitment had been determined, he said the main basis had been student/staff ratios, and more new jobs had gone to departments with a strong research record, large graduate or international student numbers, or strong all-round recruitment.

Questioned on admissions for 2004, the Vice-Chancellor said the aims were the same as last year: that Sussex should not enter Clearing and that departments should cut at most one or two points at confirmation. "The policy is the right one," he said. "We want to recruit good students who stay the course."

On pay negotiations and the threat of industrial action, he said he continued to believe that the Association of University Teachers (AUT)’s concerns about pay could be addressed. The more fundamental difficulty with the AUT, he said, was the very notion of a proposed common pay structure for all university staff. On this it is at odds with the position of other campus unions (Amicus and UNISON), he emphasised. Moving on, the Vice-Chancellor reported a further – but smaller-scale – set of office and laboratory moves this summer. He reassured staff that lessons had been learned and that more resources would be available for the planning and management of moves.

He also reported that consultants had been asked to look at whether Sussex might develop a new campus at Horsham – an area with a growing population but little higher education provision. Alasdair emphasised that "we are very early stage of looking at ideas", and that "if the risks are too high, we won't do it". It would be 2008 or later before any significant developments took place. Asked if plans for a research park threatened activities at Falmer, the Vice-Chancellor replied: "Absolutely not." The potential balance of teaching and research in West Sussex was not yet clear but all activity would be "largely independent of what goes on here".

Asked about the make-up of bodies such as Senate and representation of support staff, Alasdair said that meetings in the new schools should now involve all staff but that Senate has not yet made any decisions about changes. His personal preference, he said, would be to have an academic board and a separate University "parliament", at which a wider range of issues could be discussed.

He was also asked about progress on the University's new visual identity and confirmed that the chosen design is being launched gradually from the end of this term.
Applications up for BSMS and Sussex

Places at Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS) are among the most sought-after in the country, with more than 14 applicants for every place on its five-year programme to become a doctor. Last year 997 people applied for the 128 places but this year that figure has almost doubled.

"It is a tremendous achievement to have had one of the highest increases in applications for medical school places in the country," said the Dean, Professor Jon Cohen. "Students tell us that they are attracted by the small class sizes, the friendly and supportive atmosphere, the modern and innovative curriculum and the brand-new facilities. This is our first year as a medical school but already we are establishing BSMS as a first-choice place to study medicine."

Applications for undergraduate places in other Sussex subjects are also up on the same point last year, but the overall increase has slowed, from 9 per cent up at the end of December to 2 per cent up at the end of January.

"The slow-down in the increase is obviously disappointing," said Owen Richards, Academic Registrar. "But the cycle isn’t finished yet and we do have some grounds for thinking that attracting more applicants early in the application cycle has a positive association with the quality of the students we admit in October."

"It also reminds us all that there is still no room for complacency in terms of trying to convert applicants to commit to Sussex, via admissions days and other forms of contact."

Friends launch campaign in student's memory

The University Chaplain, Revd Dr Gavin Ashenden, officiated at Natalie Naylor’s funeral in Surrey this week.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alasdair Smith, said: “Natalie’s death has been an especially poignant and tragic event for the University, an institution whose mission is to develop the potential and promise of young people. Her wide circle of friends, as well as the faculty who taught her, have written or spoken of how her humanity and vivacity enriched the University.”

Student friends of Natalie are launching a fundraising campaign in her memory and will be selling yellow ribbons around campus to raise money for meningitis research and her favourite charities.

Guilty verdict for Jane Longhurst murder

A man accused of strangling a Sussex graduate was found guilty of her murder on 4 February. The judge sentenced Graham Coutts to life imprisonment after the jury at Lewes Crown Court ruled he had strangled Jane Longhurst for her own sexual gratification in March last year. Jane had trained as a music teacher at Sussex, where she played both violin and viola in the University Philharmonia orchestra; she went on to become a music teacher at Uplands school in Hollingdean.

Sussex student recovers from meningitis

A 20-year-old Sussex student continues to make a good recovery from meningitis and left Brighton’s Royal Sussex County Hospital, where she was being treated, last week (5 February).

The student was admitted to hospital on Tuesday 27 January. Since that date there have been no further suspected cases of meningitis on campus. Blood tests confirmed on Friday 30 January that she had the group B strain of meningococcal disease, a bacterial form of meningitis.

Local health protection and University teams have undertaken thorough checks to see if there were any direct links between this case and that of the second-year student, Natalie Naylor, who died on Saturday 24 January and was subsequently found to have had the B strain.

Results of further tests, due in mid-February, will reveal if the B strain in both cases is a different genetic match. Meningococcal disease has already been ruled out for a suspected case that arose last month.

Dr Angela Iversen, consultant in communicable disease control at the Health Protection Agency, said: “Close contacts of both cases were quickly given antibiotics. In view of the fact that there have been two confirmed group B cases in students, antibiotics were also given to a wider social group of each of the cases."

“Between the identification of the first suspected case on Monday 19 January and the most recent one on Tuesday 27 January, 73 people received antibiotics. We are keeping further public health action under review.”

Highest turnout ever in student elections

The Students’ Union elections held last week (2-5 February) had the highest turnout ever, with 1,723 students voting, over 15% of the total number on campus.

Meanwhile, the referendum on whether Sussex should stay affiliated to the NUS was a landslide victory, with nine out of ten students voting for NUS.

Roger Hylton (above), 23, studying Law, takes over as President. "Profoundly elated" at the result, Roger says his priorities are helping to iron out problems in the new schools and the setting up of a “housing agency to protect students from unscrupulous landlords.”

A familiar campus face, he works with the University on widening participation initiatives, Claire Sands, studying Social Anthropology, takes over in Welfare, with IR student Alex Molano-Avian getting the Communications portfolio.

Politics student Harriet Sinclair (above) becomes the new Education Officer. She would like to "create closer links between the Union and student reps and mentors". She also says, "Contact hours continue to be a problem for many students."

Adie Burrow continues in her post as Sports and Activities Officer and sees her priorities as building up live music on campus and supporting the five society federations. Joe Williams (below left) stays in Finance and, unbowed by the recent Commons vote, intends to "fight top-up fees to the bitter end".

The new sabbatical officers take up their roles in July.
University cricketer selected for England team South Africa tour

A University of Sussex cricketer has been selected to play for the England women's team on tour in South Africa.

Rosalie Birch, a first-year linguistics student, combines her sporting ambition with academic endeavour, with the aid of a University-sponsored sporting bursary.

All-rounder Rosalie, 20, began playing cricket at the age of ten. Last year she enjoyed major success as a member of the Brighton and Hove Ladies Cricket Club when they won the National Premier League.

The month-long South Africa tour comprises five one-day internationals against the hosts in locations including Johannesburg. Speaking before she left for South Africa on 5 February, Rosalie said: “The tour is my main focus at the moment; I want to continue my success from the summer and be part of a winning team.”

Rosalie’s season promises to be an exciting one. She is preparing for next year’s women’s World Cup, and the England squad is set to play a new format – the new 20-over game known as Twenty20 cricket – against New Zealand at Hove in August.

Rosalie said: “To play at my home ground for England would be amazing. My ambition is to play a major part in a winning World Cup team, and with it only a year away, that dream is coming closer and closer.”

Luke Terrill, University sports development officer and Rosalie’s sporting mentor, said: “Rosalie has exceptional talent and will no doubt continue to be a huge success in the future. This summer she will be taking place in trials for the BUSA (British University Sports Association) national team.”

Student shopping website rakes in cash sums for charity

A Sussex student has come up with an enterprising scheme in which browsing shoppers can help to raise hundreds of thousands of pounds for charity.

Jonny Platt, 20, a Development Studies and Politics student, has set up a shopping website – www.GiveAsYouGet.net – for bargain hunters, directing them to big-name stores through online links and earning advertising commission from those stores, which he donates to worthy causes.

Commission can range from £5 to as much as £20 per cent on a sale, compared to the half a per cent that shoppers with charity credit cards donate with each transaction. Jonny donates 92 per cent of what he makes to charity, with the remaining eight per cent going towards running costs.

Jonny, a first-year student, set up the site last August and has recorded up to 300 visitors per day in the first few weeks. Now the site gets up to 4,500 visitors per day and Jonny is about to present his first donation, of £1,200, to Marie Stopes International, to provide Aids treatment and education in developing countries.

Jonny is passionate about the poverty and inequality affecting developing countries, an interest inspired by a gap-year trip to India.

“When I was travelling and seeing how little people have, I decided I needed to do something,” says Jonny. “When I got back I was really aware of how much people spent on consumer stuff, and that got me thinking that there must be a way of shopping that could help balance the inequality. I started looking at how people shop on the Internet. In November 2002, £1.2 billion was spent by online shoppers. If I could get just one per cent of that, I would make on average about half a million in a month for charity.”

Jonny now wants to develop the website further so that visitors can compare prices for various goods and keep up to date with news and features.

Life is a Cabaret

“Really big faces, definite gestures, and just keep it really sexy,” says Eleanor Kerslake. As a recording of a piano crackles into life, out struts a small woman with red hair. In a few weeks’ time she will take to the stage of the Gardner Arts Centre as Sally Bowles, reprising the role made famous by Liza Minnelli in Cabaret.

In a break from rehearsals Eleanor, who is a third-year English student, explains the challenges involved with managing the production. “It all starts off really skeletal,” she says. “But you get to know people’s skills and there are loads of us involved helping me, such as my co-director, Mike Smith.”

Cabaret, to be performed by SMuTS (Sussex Musical Theatre Society), is set in the Kit Kat klub in 1930s Berlin. While the influence of the Nazi party grows, the club clings on as one of the last vestiges of German decadence.

“Cabaret stood out because it’s a classic with great songs,” explains Eleanor. “It’s sexy and fun, but it also has a much darker side to it.”

80 students auditioned for just 16 female parts. To get a part, the wannabe stars had to have a range of talents: “We needed not just actors, but dancers and singers as well. We wanted energy and we wanted the audience to imagine them being a bit dirty,” says Eleanor.

As for the set, the constraints of a society budget mean much of the atmosphere will be created by the actors. “For example, they’ll be smoking and drinking on stage, to make it feel like a club. Also, the costumes are fabulous and help to create the dark and seedy atmosphere.”

But isn’t the prospect of staging a huge performance like this daunting for Eleanor? “Yes,” she agrees, but it’s worth the stress. “Mike and I knew it was a big thing to take on, and it is a huge learning curve. But you learn so much that you don’t in your degree. And it’s a great end to my time here at Sussex.”

Cabaret is at the Gardner Arts Centre from Wed 18–Sat 21 February. Book tickets on 685861.
Changing the way we work
Supporting and rewarding staff

Staff appraisal
After several months of development and piloting, a new staff appraisal scheme is being launched on campus.

The main focus of the appraisal process is "to support and develop staff, enabling them to make an effective contribution to the success of the University as well as their own fulfilment at work".

This new scheme includes involvement by all staff and gives everyone equal access to the benefits of appraisal.

All unit heads are aware of the scheme and should by now be working with the Staff Development Unit (SDU) to develop their unit appraisal strategies and timetables of individual appraisal review meetings.

The unit strategies will be guided by the new Appraisal Scheme Policy, which comprises a set of core principles to give all staff and units a framework within which to work. "Appraisal is a two-way process of communication," reads one principle, "leading to agreed outcomes related to work priorities, support and development needs."

As part of their strategies, units will also be negotiating with the SDU a timetable for their staff to attend appraisal training/briefing sessions.

Reward procedure
Most staff automatically benefit financially from an incremental pay system, and all staff receive an annual cost-of-living award. The reward procedure is designed to financially recognise exceptional performance.

The reward procedure for all support staff has been refined this year to include more detailed guidance on what sort of performance merits additional pay and the documentation has been updated to ensure that submissions can be compared more easily in relation to each other.

Managers should identify by late April any support staff they wish to put forward for additional reward payments. The reward procedure for academic faculty is already running. ■

Small ads
WANTED: 1- or 2-bed flat for couple (staff members). In or nr B'ton; from mid March for 6-mth contract + possible renewal. Call 698226 or email ecp95@sussex.ac.uk.

TO LET: 3-bed house overlooking Queens Pk. From mid Mar for 3 mths or longer. Suit PG or staff. Contact ellen.yeo@cooptel.net, tel. 682855.

HOLIDAY LET: 2-bed furnished apartment in Prague, slps 4, £290 p/w for 2, £250 for 4, all yr round. Tel. 474738.

TO LET: House in Kemp Town. Suit couple + 4 individuals or 56 individuals. £1,500 pcm excl. Available now.

Downs, even on occasion to classes on campus. In 1975, after a two-year spell in the Department of Energy, Lesley returned to work closely with the then newly established Energy Club at SPRU.

After retirement in 1982, the links with SPRU became closer. She contributed to a number of industrial projects and was a regular attendee at meetings and seminars, listening intensely, ready to pounce on any inconsistency of argument. Here perhaps lay her major contribution. She lasted platitude and sloppy thinking and was constantly ready to challenge the orthodox. Many a graduate student had reason to thank Lesley for teaching them to think simply and argue straight.

Margaret Sharp
A memorial service will be held at the Meeting House on Monday 23 February at 11am. All are welcome. ■

Possible industrial action on campus
Academics, academic-related staff and students could cause disruption to work and study at the University of Sussex during a week of joint action. If its members around the UK back the call for industrial action in the ballot that ended this week, the Association of University (AUT) looks set to approve action against pay and modernisation proposals that would coincide with action opposing variable top-up fees by the National Union of Students (NUS). The action would hit campus twice in the week beginning Monday 23 February, with one UK-wide strike and another in each of the four home nations.

The result of the AUT ballot was due to be announced yesterday (12 February). ■

Staff vacancies
Apply by 23 Feb
Research Fellow in Informatics, SciTech (ref 503)

Apply by 24 Feb
Administrative Asst/Asst Registrar: Academic Office (ref 512)
Management Accountant, Finance Division (ref 514)

Research Co-coordinator / Date monitor, BSMS Psychosocial Oncology Group (ref 515)

For further details, see www.sussex.ac.uk/units/staffing/personnel or contact Staffing Services on ext. 5706, fax 677401, email recruitment@sussex.ac.uk.

Phone 608050.
FOR SALE: Upright vacuum cleaner £40; compact bagless cylinder vacuum cleaner £10, steam iron £10; CD-clock radio £10. Email iane@sussex.ac.uk.


FOR SALE: 5-d'r Citroen Xantia 1.6 SX hatchback. L reg. (93). 107k miles. MoT Nov. £395 ono. Tel. 07906 237886.

HOLIDAY LET: 2-bed furnished apartment in Prague, slps 4, £290 p/w for 2, £250 for 4, all yr round. Tel. 474738.

WANTED: Studio/1-bed flat in B'ton/Hove, from 1 Mar, for 2 yrs, for visiting fellow. Email Nathalie.Karagiannis@IEEE.

WANTED: Volunteers with internet access to identify and research local companies that may sponsor Brighton Early Music Festival (www.bremf.org.uk). Contact Jenny Pain on ext 8544, email v.m.pain@sussex.ac.uk.

TO LET: 1-bed unfurnished GF flat with patio. N'Rove station. £575pcm. Tel. 729869.

TO LET: Part furnished room in Hovener house. Share with 2 women. Suit PG or professional. £298 + bills. Email c.j.harrer@sussex.ac.uk or call 670343.


FOR SALE: Wireless network PC Card: ORINOCO NG Silver (4871-WD). NW, boxed. £55. Call Sarah on 07998 203734 or email sir204@sussex.ac.uk.

FOR SALE: Laptop ADVENT 7011, 15" TFT, Pentium 4, 2.4 GHz, 256 MB DDR RAM, 30 GB HD, DVI/CD writer combo/dvdrw, MS XP Home Edition. £920. Ext. 7334, tel. 5702053 (eves), email reby@sussex.ac.uk.
AUT ballot on industrial action

I have been concerned by your partial reporting of the AUT (Association of University Teachers) ballot concerning industrial action (Bulletin 30 January).

You should have balanced your reporting of comments from Barbara Bush with a comment from the AUT. Moreover, you should have checked the accuracy of the comments that you reported. Contrary to Barbara Bush’s assertions, the AUT ballot is about pay – in both narrow and broad terms. In narrow terms it is about the derisory offer of 6-7.2% over two years. This in no way makes up for the fact that academic staff have fallen behind all comparable professions. In broad terms the ballot is about the conditions concerning pay over the life-time of an academic (especially the structure of the pay spine).

The comments are also wrong insofar as the AUT has made clear suggestions as to how employers might provide a better pay deal.

The University will naturally wish to influence AUT members to vote against industrial action. I would suggest, however, that it would do well to listen to the concerns of its staff.

If it is to maintain its rightly enviable reputation and to continue to be a place to which academics are drawn because of its intellectual atmosphere, it must recognise that the current pay offer is simply too little with too many unacceptable strings attached.

Dr Martin Coward,
International Relations

Can food be discriminatory?

According to new rules that have come into force, food can be discriminatory. Legislation that outlaws discrimination on the grounds of religion and sexuality has focused attention on this and other less obvious forms of prejudice.

The new rules, introduced late last year, cover overt discrimination, such as harassment and unfair treatment. However, they have implications for more subtle forms of indirect discrimination, such as food provision.

Many religions have strict dietary requirements, such as eating only kosher food, or halal meat. An institution that, for example, served only non-halal steak and kidney pie, with no alternative food, could be seen as discriminating against Muslims.

If a member of staff or student feel they have been unfairly treated because of their sexuality or religion, they now have the full weight of the law to support them.

Celia Schultz, Deputy Catering Services Manager, explains the challenges this presents: “When we cater for conferences it is fairly easy. Food is pre-paid and pre-ordered so we can make sure we provide a suitable meal. However, in the restaurants it is more tricky because we cannot always predict what customers will want.”

It is simply not economic or practical to provide specific halal, kosher and other meals every day. However, Catering Services are confident the range of options available for lunch is wide enough for everyone to enjoy: “If someone came to us who can’t eat beef, for example, we can provide them with a range of alternatives, such as a vegetarian dish, or something from another outlet,” says Celia. Catering Services, however, are keen to hear people’s views so they can try and provide as wide a range of choice as possible.

The new legislation places the onus on institutions to look carefully at rules that may be, quite unintentionally, discriminatory. A strict dress code, for instance, might ban ponytails. Yet many Hindu men wear small ponytail-like tufts of hair called 'shikas' to define their religion. Meanwhile, the recent news that Brighton has the highest number of same-sex households in Britain shows how important it is for an employer’s partner benefits to apply to straight and gay couples alike.

As well as staff, the new legislation covers those in vocational training, which includes students in higher education. And if a member of staff or student feel they have been unfairly treated because of their sexuality or religion, they now have the full weight of the law to support them. Most of the new guidelines, however, are common sense, and it is hoped that on a university campus, in a town such as Brighton, many of the new guidelines are already practised.

If you need more information you can contact the Equality and Diversity Officer, Liz Burchett, on ext. 7602. Liz would like to hear from you if you would like to attend an informal workshop during the University’s Diversity Week on 3 March, 12noon–2pm in the Meeting House. The workshop will include short presentations on religion and sexual orientation issues.

Meanwhile, the University’s equalities web pages at www.sussex.ac.uk/ central/equality.shtml provide all sorts of information including advice on the new rules.

Launch date set for new identity

It’s official – the University’s new identity will begin to be rolled out from Monday 8 March, following approval of the new identity at Senate and Council in December.

The first items to carry the new identity will include the annual report, which will be sent to all staff.

The year-long project, to refine the University’s identity and create a new look, has involved people from all over campus, from secretaries to professors, students to alumni. The Communications division is managing the project and worked closely with two external companies.

Over the next few weeks many people across campus will be putting the finishing touches to the first applications of the new design.

Headed by the Publications and Branding team, a group including administrative staff from across campus are refining the look on stationery and computers. Another team is looking at how signage will fit in with the identity, with the Sussex Institute and the School of Life Sciences the first two units to receive updated internal signs.

Changes to the University website will be cosmetic at first and then more thorough. Staff will also be able to order generic folders, postcards and other materials with the new look.
Lectures, seminars, colloquia

Mon 16 Feb
1.00pm Behavioural and Cognitive Neuroscience Seminar: Julie Le Merre (Sussex), Editorial role administration into the ventral tegmental area. Sarah Squires (Sussex), Effects of monoamine reuptake inhibitors on locomotor and intracranial self-stimulation behaviour. Pev 1 1B3.

3.00pm International Relations Research-in-Progress Seminar: Speaker and title TBA. Arts C233.

4.00pm Clinical & Health Psychology Research Seminar: Speaker TBA. The clinical neuropsychology of Parkinson's disease. Pev 1 1B3.

4.00pm Economics Research Seminar: Rob Eastwood et al (Sussex), Small farms. Arts D610.

4.00pm Research on Languages and Linguistics at Sussex: Jonathan Roper (Sheffield), Illustrative quotations in dialect dictionaries. Arts D310.

4.30pm Neurones: Kevin Leland (St Andrews), Social learning, innovation and tradition in fishes. Genome Centre seminar room.


5.00pm Education Open Seminar: Anna Robinson-Pant (East Anglia), Empowering children through visual communication. Arts C233.

Tue 17 Feb

12.00pm Inorganic Chemistry Seminar: Dr Kevin Florey (UMIST), Keto–Enol Tautomerisation. Chi III R143.

2.15pm SEI Research-in-Progress Seminar: Simon Green (Birmingham), The politics of dual citizenship in Germany. Arts A71.

4.00pm CGS Research Seminar: Julie Coulats (Sussex), Synthetic evolutionary psychology. Arundel 404A.

4.00pm Biochemistry and Genetics & Development Seminar: Colin Smith (Sussex). Genome-wide expression analysis in Streptomyces using DNA microarrays. JMS Lecture Theatre.

4.15pm Anthropology Seminar: Reuveni Kaur (Sussex), Diasporic representations of popular Indian movies. Arts C233.

Wed 18 Feb

1.00pm South Asia Seminar: Jan Brower (Northeastern Hill University, India), Cultural interaction, Christianity and conversion. Arts C162.

4.30pm Research in the History of Art Seminar: Shearer West (Birmingham), Laughter and 18th-century cultural life. Arts A103.

5.00pm Migration Research Seminar: Janet Scelzy (East Anglia), The complexity of the international migration of women in Bangladesh. Arts C233.

Thu 19 Feb

4.00pm History Work-in-Progress Seminar: Colin Brooks (Sussex), Some aspects of local government in Bermondsey, 1674–1715. Arts A155.

4.30pm Social and Political Thought Graduates/Faculty Seminar: Stefan Muller-Dohm (Oldenburg, Germany), The life and work of Theodor W. Adorno. Arts D630.


6.00pm Nobel Prize Lecture: Tony Leggett (Indiana, USA), Superfluid 3He: The early days as seen by a theoretician. Chichester Lecture Theatre.

5.00pm Barlow Lecture: Henry Glassie (Indiana, USA), Contemporary ceramic art in China and Turkey. Arts A2.

Fri 20 Feb

2.15pm SPRU-CENTRUM Seminar: Peter Cotgreave (Save British Science), The decline of blue skies research. Freeman Centre.

3.40pm Philosophy Society: Ursula Cooper (Birkbeck), Aristotle on making things happen. Arts C233.

Mon 23 Feb

1.00pm Cognition and Language Seminar: Jamie Ward (UCL), A model for cognitive genomics? Penney 1 IIA.

3.00pm International Relations Research-in-Progress Seminar: Lee Evans, Civil society, global civil society and IR. Arts C233.


4.30pm Neuroscience Seminar: Manfred Kossel (Frankfurt, Germany), Postnatal development of Doppler-sensitive sound in bats. Genome Centre seminar room.

5.00pm New Metaphysical Poetry: Michael Longley, Readings from Snow Hater. Music Room, Gardner Arts Centre.

5.00pm Geography Seminar: Ron Skeldon (Sussex), Of cul-de-sacs and roundabouts: Regions of refuge re-visited. Arts C175.

5.00pm Education Open Seminar: Kwame Akreyamepong (Sussex), Learning to teach in a knowledge society. Arts C233.

Tue 24 Feb

1.00pm Perception Action & Communication Seminar: David Reby (Sussex), Laryngeal descent in a non-human mammal. Pev 1 1B3.

2.15pm SEI Research-in-Progress Seminar: Francis McGowan (Sussex), Governing the EU economy. Arts A71.

4.00pm CGS Research Seminar: John McCrone, How language structures the mind. Arundel 404A.

4.00pm Biochemistry and Genetics & Development Seminar: Garry Taylor (Sussex), Neuraminidases: Structures, functions and drug design. JMS Lecture Theatre.

4.15pm Anthropology Seminar: Guillermo de la Pena, Indigenous rights and the debate on civil society in Mexico. Location TBA.

Wed 25 Feb

12.30pm Experimental Particle Physics Seminar: F. Salvatore (Royal Holloway), Latest results from Bubn. Penney 1 2A1.

2.00pm Sociology Symposium: Politics: State and Capitalism. Arts E419.


4.30pm Research in the History of Art Seminar: Tara Hamling (Sussex), The presence of imagery in post-reformation houses. Arts A103.

5.00pm Migration Research Seminar: Nanja Kleist (Sussex), Visions of home and return in Somanscan and UK co-operative associations. Arts C233.

Thu 26 Feb

4.00pm Postcolonial Theory Seminar: Leon Wainwright (Sussex), Diaspora and visual culture from language to embodiment. Arts D630.

4.00pm History Work-in-Progress Seminar: Chris Clark (Cambridge), title TBA. Arts A155.

5.00pm Sussex Development Lecture: Hilary Benn MP, title TBA. Arts A1.

5.00pm Q-soc Colloquium: Professor Schroeder (Sussex), Astrophotography: Seeking the splendours of a clear, dark sky. Pev 1 Lecture Theatre.

Fri 27 Feb

2.15pm Joint Economics/Freeman Centre Research: Jonathan Haskel (Queen Mary), Inventions and productivity in the UK. Freeman Centre G2/25.

3.40pm Philosophy Society: Ron Chrisley (Sussex), When is a difference not a difference? Why the diagonal argument against artificial intelligence fails. Arts C233.

Gardner Arts Centre Box office: (01273) 685561 www.gardnerarts.co.uk

Performance

Wed 18–Sat 21 Feb
7pm SMUTS (Sussex University Musical Theatre Society) Cabaret – The Musical Sex, jazz-infused numbers and dancing to make you blush with scenes of overwhelming emotion.

Tue 24–Sat 28 Feb
8pm (Thu matinée 2pm) Northern Stage Ensemble Animal Farm While remaining true to the spirit of Orwell's story, this show opens with a group of political refugees telling the story of Animal Farm. £25-worth of tickets for any performance: go free to the first Bulletin reader at the box office

Exhibition

Until Sat 27 Mar
George Chakaravarti Barflies Chakaravarti's protagonists in a video triptych are transvestites putting their female identity to the test in anonymous London pubs, clubs and bars.

Sun 22 Feb
9pm The Five Obstructions [15] You and a friend can see any one of these films for free – first Bulletin reader at the box office saves £9.

Cinema

Sat 14 Feb
8pm Love Actually [15]

Sun 15 Feb
8pm Lord of the Rings – The Two Towers [12A]

Sun 22 Feb
5pm Taking Sides [15]
The University is proud of its reputation as a diverse community, with students and staff coming from a variety of backgrounds and experience. Much is happening nationally at the moment, including legislation in relation to sexual orientation and religion and the creation of the Equality Commission. Active participation by students and staff is vital for the effective implementation of the University's action plan for race equality and I am pleased to see the high level of response for the new Women's network, due to launch officially on 4 March.

Minority groups often face overwhelming barriers in institutions, structures and attitudes. These barriers are real and important. But equality and diversity are issues not just for minority groups – they are central to the lives of all of us, whatever our circumstances. Working together towards equality means working together for a better community for everyone who works and studies at Sussex.

I very much welcome this year's diversity week and the theme of celebrating equality and diversity. I do hope you and your colleagues will be able to participate in the various events around campus.

Professor Alasdair Smith, Vice-Chancellor

To balance the rights to religious diversity and tolerance from the wearing of clothes to the provision of food, with the need for equality for all, is an art form necessary for the health of every society and its institutions. All religions see themselves as pillars of peace and harmony when in reality they are sometimes the cause of conflict, both personal and political. However, the resolution of that conflict is something that people of faith can work towards.

Dr Paul Oestreicher, Chaplaincy Team
DIVERSITY WEEK 2004
Celebrating Equality and Diversity

Monday
Diversity Fair: An afternoon of Society stalls promoting diversity and equality, with exhibitions and a balloon launch by RAG
Library Square(weather permitting) 12-3pm

'Hot and Bothered' a documentary on feminist porn followed by speakers
Debating chamber 6-8pm

Tuesday
Amnesty, Sucaw, Che Liela and Acas present a joint Public meeting on human rights issues, A2 5-7.30pm.
Followed by fundraiser in East slope, with live music, from 8pm onwards. TBC.

LGBT and Unisex present ‘Diversity’ club night 10pm – 2am Venue to be confirmed

Wednesday
Lunchtime workshop for staff and students.
Featuring brief informal presentations on gender, race, disability, religion and sexual orientation. Chaired by Simon Fanshawe, Independent Member of the University Council
Lunch available, Display stands, networking opportunity
Meeting house 12pm – 2pm
If you would like to attend this event please book

Thursday
Women’s staff day
12.30-4.30pm, Terrace Room, Bramber House

Night of remembrance - a mini poetry and open mic night, a dedication to people we feel have touched our lives. To be confirmed

LGBT and RAG present Gay blind date East Slope Bar 8pm

Friday
Film Appreciation Society presents a day of films of variance illustrating different aspects of society.
12pm onwards Debating Chamber, Falmer House

Music Fed presents "ARENA's fourth instalment Bass Drop (R'n'b, Hip-Hop and Rap)

Sunday
ACAS Culture Festival: dance, music, poetry, drama & comedy drawing on the diversity of African, Caribbean & Asian culture.
Gardner Arts Centre, tickets on sale now
£8 concessions £9 other doors open 6pm

Some events are subject to change or are still to be confirmed. Watch out for more publicity or visit
www.ussu.info/diversity www.sussex.ac.uk/central/equality.shtml

Or contact Lori Culora USSU Welfare Officer ussu-welfare@sussex.ac.uk
Liz Burchett, University’s Equality and Diversity Officer E.J.R.Burchett@sussex.ac.uk

Lunchtime workshop for staff and students

Meeting House, 12-2pm, Wednesday 3 March 2004
Chaired by Simon Fanshawe, Independent Member of University Council

12.00 Brief Presentations by staff and students in relation to sexual orientation, gender, race, religion and disability issues
(Food available)

Display stands available in the foyer

To book your place please complete the form below and email to E.J.R.Burchett@sussex.ac.uk or phone extn 7602 and state your dietary requirements BY 1 MARCH AT THE LATEST.

I am attending the Lunchtime workshop on 3 March, 12-2pm in the Meeting House

Name:

Student/Staff (please delete)

I have dietary requirements YES/NO

(If YES please describe)