



RHODOS

STAFF NEWSLETTER

9 October 1998 VOL 10 No17

TWO FIRSTS FOR EAST LONDON

Rhodes University East London's Psychology Department scored two firsts this last month with the dual honour of Sandy Sparrius winning the Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award, and the Inaugural Lecture of Professor Andrew Gilbert. Ms Sparrius is the first ever East London winner and first woman at Rhodes to win the award.

Professor Gilbert's Inaugural Lecture, the first ever at the East London campus, took place on Tuesday, September 22, and was steeped in Rhodes tradition. Entitled *Mental Health - Engaging in New Activities and Telling New Stories*, it dealt with the very relevant topic of the direction of psychology in the New South Africa. At issue were a number of aspects, ranging from the view of mental health in relation to society, as opposed to the perception of it as 'a lack of mental illness', to looking at HIV/AIDS and domestic violence as mental health issues.

This was a particularly poignant and tense issue - looking at the perceptions around HIV/AIDS within the community, and the implications for the spread of the disease. As Professor Gilbert puts it, "the spread of the disease is tied up with such issues as: denial, anger, sexual practices that put particular groups at risk, and myths. Without confronting these

psychological issues, educational programmes have limited impact."

Professor Gilbert presented a similar argument for domestic violence - examining the meaning of violence and distinctions between public and private violence, how and when people intervene, and what appropriate action can be taken. Both of these issues point to a deeper involvement of psychologists within the community context.

The lecture outlined the structures and principles Professor Gilbert feels need to be put in place for addressing mental health needs within communities, including amongst other issues, mental health centres, district mental health units and 'level II' psychologists. Level II psychologists refer to people who hold the four year BPsych - a degree to be created to fill the immediate needs of an underserved population. Most important for Professor Gilbert was the necessity for grounding of psychology in South Africa within a social constructionist perspective, emphasising local knowledge, a sense of community, and a process of engagement, as opposed to "the transfer of information or the bland use of generic counselling skills."

The lecture also detailed a story-telling project jointly

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Sandy Sparrius, the first East London campus winner of the Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award delivered a daringly interactive public lecture on Monday 5 October, as part of her acceptance of the award. She is also the first woman at Rhodes to receive the award.

In his introduction, Dr Woods read from a number of letters, from both students and staff, roundly praising Mrs Sparrius for her communication skills, her knowledge of psychology, and her ease of interaction with students. Her efforts within the Department - she effectively founded and nurtured the first-year, then second-year and third-year courses - were also highlighted. In one of the letters, a first year BCom student unreservedly called her

'the best lecturer' she'd ever encountered.

The lecture began with a bang, a shock to the system that clearly demonstrated the teaching skills for which Mrs Sparrius was acknowledged. Those used to the dry notes of an academic lecture, were more than mildly surprised when Mrs Sparrius launched into a style more associated with first-year lectures. She began by haranguing Professor Ian Macdonald, amongst others, into answering the question 'What is Psychology?' which swiftly led to her chosen topic: Teaching Psychology - Changes and Challenges.

Using definitions the audience provided, Mrs Sparrius dealt with a number of issues, from starting points

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Sociology Congress

Three members of the Sociology and Industrial Sociology Department recently attended the 14th World Congress of Sociology of the International Sociological Association (ISA) in Montreal, Canada, entitled *Social Knowledge: Heritage, Challenges, Perspectives*.

The Congress, which is only held every four years, coincided with the 50th anniversary of the ISA and was attended by 5000 delegates. The programme consisted of a number of plenary sessions, Symposia and the concurrent running of 50 established Research Committees academic sessions.

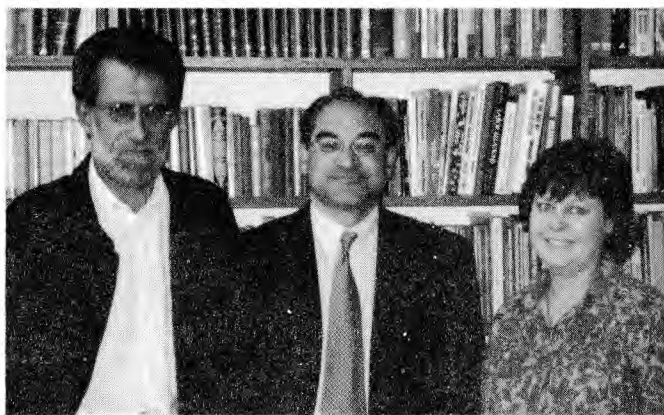
Dr Susan Ziehl, a member of Research Committee 6 focusing on Family Research presented a paper entitled *Class, Culture and Household Structure - towards a theoretical model*. She presented the results of a survey of households amongst 300 English and Afrikaans speaking whites living in Grahamstown. The aim of the study was to test the claim that class is a better predictor of household structure than culture. She has developed a model on these results with the crux of it being that class and culture combine in a particular way to produce different propensities to live in different household types.

"A lot of the papers at the RC6 sessions covered the topic of divorce and the reasons why divorce takes place, but there was also a large number of papers on co-habitation and the fact that in societies where there are high levels of co-habitation, there are also high levels of di-

vorce," said Dr Ziehl. "As part of my future research I would like to explore why white South Africans have the second highest divorce rate in the world."

Dr Fred Hendricks, Head of the Department, presented a paper entitled *Prosecute or Pardon; Comparing the criminal justice system with the truth commission in South Africa* to Research Committee 12 which focused on the Sociology of Law. His paper was well-received and he was invited to become a member of the Committee. Dr Hendricks also organised a meeting of most Africans attending the Congress with a view to forming an African Sociological Association and he was elected co-convenor of the interim committee for organising the launch of this body in Dakar in December.

As a member of the Board of Research Committee 38 (Biography and Society), Professor Jan Coetzee was invited to organise and



Professor Jan Coetzee, Dr Fred Hendricks and Dr Susan Ziehl of the Sociology Department.

coordinate a session on *Individual resistance as part of collective protest*. Within this session he presented a paper entitled *Interpreting trauma narratives: Comparing the life histories of former political prisoners in South Africa and in the then Czechoslovakia*. The empirical information on which the paper is built, was obtained by recording and transcribing extensive life histories of a selected group of political activists in South Africa and the former Czechoslovakia who were charged, stood trial and were incarcerated (in prisons and labour camps) for lengthy periods prior to 1989 as a re-

sult of their opposition to authoritarian and totalitarian rule. Professor Coetzee was reelected to the Board of Biography and Society until the year 2002.

* Dr Valerie Moller of the ISER also attended this Congress where she worked with two groups: quality of life, and social indicators. She presented a paper on quality of life in South Africa, an update, as well as chairing a session. Dr Moller attended the working group on the study of time use and presented a paper, somewhat unexpectedly, in poster form to the gerontology committee.

Visiting Lecturers Department of Economics

Professor Andries Schoombee
of the University of Stellenbosch
will visit the

Department of Economics
on Monday 12 October.

He will deliver lectures at 14:15
(Ecos A)

and at 19:00 (Hobart Houghton
Seminar Room)

on

*Commercial Banking Services for
Micro-entrepreneurs in South Africa.*

Dr Claudia Manning,
Senior Specialist of the
Development Bank of South Africa,
will visit the Department
on Monday 19 October.

She will deliver lectures at 14:15
(Ecos A)

and at 19:00 (Hobart Houghton
Seminar Room)

on

*The South African Government's
New Investment Initiatives.*

**Interested persons can RSVP
to Brenda Erasmus on ext 8301.**

Library Labours

The Library staff at the East London campus did not realise that a prerequisite for the job was to have some serious arm muscles!

As a result of security problems, a change around in the library system took place during the July vacation. A team of five moved every book (about 13 000) and periodical (about 80 titles) off the shelves while these were moved around, and then replaced them. The library was only closed for two days and within a week all was running smoothly once again. According to Circulation Assistant Jan Richter, "We had to scabble on all fours at times

to find a computer to issue books, but we did it!" There were several delays which frustrated the smooth-running of the process but overall everything went according to plan. One of the biggest hitches was the security system which was installed back-to-front, thus setting off the alarm as people entered the library!

Casual labour was brought in to assist in the moving of the heavy furniture and shelving. "During the breaks it was wonderful to see these big strong men gathering around the Xhosa children's books and getting such delight out of them," said Jan.



... and the books pile up!

Leadership Training

The Johnson & Johnson Leadership Development Institute (JLDI) based at the East London campus, which has run a variety of highly successful leadership training programmes over the past ten years, is extending its reach beyond the Eastern Cape Province.

The Institute has embarked on a major marketing drive in Gauteng and Botswana, as there are strong indications that there are potential students in these regions.

Besides its involvement in community-based programmes, the Institute has also offered a range of courses aimed at the business sector in the Eastern Cape region. These include the Certificate in Business Leadership, a fifteen-week course aimed at broadening leaders' frames of reference; the one-year Industrial Leadership Development Programme, which aims to develop leadership potential in individuals from a wide range of companies, and the three-year Diploma in Manufacturing Management.

This diploma course draws participants from a number of manufacturing and other organisations, and its aim is to develop the students' capacity to integrate business strategy with manufacturing strategy in such a way that the graduates are able to contribute to the resolution of the key strategic challenges which companies face.

Until recently, the JLDI was primarily involved with organisations in the private sector, but new inroads have been made into the public sector over the past few months. Two courses are underway for the East Cape Department of Health, one focusing on District Health Managers from 21 districts in the region. The other is a Certificate in Public Health Leadership aimed at a mix of Environmental Health Officers and Nurses from 13 districts in the area.

The Institute has recently forged links with Fort Hare University's Institute for Government, and has collaborated in the designing of an Executive Leadership Certificate in Public and Development Management.

Professor Ken Dovey, Director of the JLDI, states, "Suc-

cessful transformation in South Africa hinges on individual transformation. The frameworks developed in the past that defined reality for people are often no longer appropriate and could hinder progress into a new reality. Our activities are focused on assisting people to achieve this personal transformation."

He went on to outline a process whereby each of the JLDI courses could be articulated into higher level courses culminating in a two-year Masters degree. "The process of mounting such a Masters course would be conducted through the University structures in 1999, with a view to launching this degree in the year 2000," he said.

81st Birthday Celebration



Emeritus Professor George Roberts celebrated his 81st birthday recently and dropped in to the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences to have tea with some of his past colleagues. Professor Roberts joined the Department of Pharmacy as Associate Professor in 1960 and taught pharmaceuticals until his retirement in 1983. Several of the School's current senior members were students of his in the 1960s.

From left to right are: Professor John Haigh; Emeritus Professor and past Head of the School, Egil Ramstad; Professor Beverley Wilson, Dean of the Faculty; Professor Roberts, Professor Ben Potgieter; Professor Lambe Parolis, Head of the School, and in front, Sirion Robertson. Professors Haigh and Parolis were students of Professor Roberts.

Father & Son Collaborate



Professor Mike Brown of the Chemistry Department with his son, Dr Richard Brown of the University of Glasgow.

Professor Mike Brown of the Chemistry Department recently returned from attending the 7th European Symposium on Thermal Analysis and Calorimetry at Lake Ballaton in Hungary.

Prof Brown presented a

paper on work done with Dr Beverley Glass of the School of Pharmacy. The techniques of thermal analysis were used to study the interactions of an anti-emetic drug with the tableting compounds used in its formulation.

A highlight of the Symposium for Prof Brown was the publication by Elsevier of the first volume of a four-volume Handbook of Thermal Analysis and Calorimetry. Prof Brown edited this volume as well as co-authoring two of the 14 chapters. "I was pleased with the interest shown in its publication after four years' of preparation," he said.

After a few extra days in Budapest and a visit to family in Glasgow, Prof Brown travelled to Cleveland in the USA for the 26th North American Thermal Analysis Symposium (NATAS) where he had been invited to give a paper on his research into fac-

tors affecting the rates of reactions of solids. His collaborator in this paper was his son, Dr Richard Brown, an aeronautical engineer working at the University of Glasgow. The paper looked at some of the problems of predicting the behaviour of untested materials from known results on similar materials. This paper aroused considerable interest.

During the Awards Banquet at the NATAS meeting a special issue of the international journal, *Thermochemica Acta*, co-edited by Prof Brown, was presented to a leading American scientist, Prof Patrick Gallagher, to commemorate his 65th birthday.

Literary Character Conference



Sydney Carton, dissolute English barrister, demonstrates his likeness to Charles Darnay, an aristocratic French exile on trial for treason. At the end of Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* the Marquis's life is saved by Carton who takes Darnay's place in the tumbrils. The sacrificial act is accompanied by the famous closing lines: "It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known".

Dr Wendy Jacobson of the Department of English recently attended a conference at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The conference focused on the notion of literary character, from Romanticism to Postmodernism. Dr Jacobson's paper examined the intertextual nature of the characterization of Sydney Carton on Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, arguing that the intersection of the novel with the Gospel of Luke provides the matrix for the configuration of Carton's role.

The conference was convened in honour of Baruch Hochman, a retiring professor in the Department of English at the Hebrew University, and took its theme from Professor Hochman's enduring interest in and important work on the problem of character in literature. Papers were delivered by colleagues, past students and associates of Professor Hochman from Europe, America and South Africa, as well as from within Israel.

Because most of the delegates had a significant association with Hochman, an atmosphere of mutuality and reunion prevailed. "It was moving to note how many papers keyed into moments of connection, or projects undertaken, with

Hochman, and how many delegates had returned to honour him with papers acknowledging ways in which their careers were indebted to him," said Dr Jacobson. Dr Jacobson's own association with Aruch Hochman has been through his membership of The Dickens Project of the University of California at Santa Cruz, which supported the major conference on *Dickens, Children and Empire* convened at Rhodes in 1996.

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem Arts Faculty is housed on Mount Scopus in a vast complex accommodating Arts departments, lecture, exhibition and concert halls, bookshops, administration offices, accommodation for conferences and visitors, a Staff Club, and exotic gardens. "The conference venue (somewhat distractingly!) overlooks the breathtakingly beautiful panorama of The Old City, known as 'Jerusalem of Gold' after the stone that must be used in all buildings there," said Dr Jacobson. "Fortunately there was time to sample Middle Eastern cooking and visit the Shrine of the Book, the Mosque of Omar, and the horrifying yet discretely appointed Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum."

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run by Educare, Border Technikon, the Small Projects Foundation and Rhodes University. Within the project, participants from the community were invited to share their views and perceptions through the telling of narratives. These stories frame the way in which people look at themselves. The stories were documented and passed on to arts students at the Border Technikon. These students then created a visual representation of the story which

was taken back to the community for feedback. Amongst other benefits, the role of story-telling within local culture was enhanced and the project leaders have gained a greater understanding of the context of intimate violence and even the Xhosa tradition of wife-abduction.

Professor Gilbert's lecture challenged and questioned the changing role of psychology within contemporary society, enrapturing his audience, informing them and sparking their imaginations.

for teachers of psychology, including the necessity of human experience and existence, to enabling students to connect with psychology. This was an important factor, given the tendency to assume zero knowledge of psychology amongst first year students. Instead, Mrs Sparrius said, students are aware of themselves and of people around them - the primary source of psychological knowledge. In addition, the relevance of psychology to students was stressed, in contrast to creating a popular, but valueless curriculum. One of

the key ways to this, said Mrs Sparrius, is to seek student input. The issue of relevance carries through in one of the other challenges, looking at the teaching of the profession of psychology. According to Mrs Sparrius there is "a space of tension between the requirements of the university, the expectations of the profession, and the needs of communities." It is important to hold onto the liberal arts tradition, but at the same time, equip students to be effective professionals. Psychology, she quotes one of her colleagues, should be accessible, affordable and relevant to

people.

Mrs Sparrius has to some extent incurred the mock wrath of colleagues within the East London Campus, for the way in which she empowers students to be critical. For students who've emerged from an authoritative style of education, where questioning the teacher is seen as insubordination and the cold repetition of facts predominates. It is important for teachers of psychology to create thinkers, students who become curious and empowered to meet challenges head on. As a result, Mrs Sparrius says, academics need to adapt, to become

more open, approachable, even self-reflective. She is driven and passionate about the East London campus's psychology course, often pushing for the best lecturers to be pillars of the first-year programme.

Mrs Sparrius ended her lecture by honoring those individuals who'd contributed to her success as a teacher: her parents, peers, teachers, and her students (about whom she made it very clear that she felt possessive). In closing, she said, "I hope, along the way, that students have fallen in love with psychology."

Rhodes Winner!



Claire Claasens, a fourth-year Pharmacy student at Rhodes, was recently announced winner of the South African Pharmaceutical Student's Federation (SAPSF) Patient Counselling Competition.

This was announced at the SAPSF 45th Annual General Meeting held recently at the University of the North. The Patient Counselling Competition was reintroduced this year after having stopped due to financial constraints. Boehringer Ingelheim has taken over sponsorship of this event.

Finalists from respective universities competed for the

prize as Patient Counsellor 1998. The main prize is a fully paid trip to the International Pharmaceutical Student's Federation Conference to be held in Helsinki, Finland. The competition tested individual skills on patient counselling while helping final year students and interns improve their general confidence and approach.

Where to find the Dean of Research!

Professor John Duncan, Dean of Research, is now located in Room 601 in the old Geology block. His Secretary (still to be appointed) will be in Room 608. The new phone numbers are ext 8055/6. Until such time as a Secretary is appointed, if there is no reply on these extensions please phone Prof Duncan on his cellphone (082 801 1346) or email him on mijd@giraffe.



The Industry Advisory Board of the Department of Information Systems met recently in East London.

Pictured with members of staff are:

Back row: Ken Jarvis (General Manager: Information Systems, Amplats), Philip Schoken (IS student member, East London campus), Andrew Stockwell, Prof Malcolm Sainsbury (Company Director, SUN Couriers), Leigh Warren (CEO, Oracle), Roy Andrews (Managing Partner, Andersen Consulting), Erik Levin (General Manager: Information and Computing Services, Shell), Matthew Charlesworth (IS student member, Grahamstown campus), Nick Vat, Danie Vlok, John Roberts, Ed de la Rey, Chris Upfold, John McNeill.

Front row: Marcelle Snyman, Lee-Ann Biller, Lydia Palmer, Mike Bergen (Director, USKO and Chairman of the Board), Prof David Sewry, Prof Rinette Roets, Mark Maritz.

Not present at the Board meeting were Prof Derek Smith (UCT), and Arthur Mashiatshidi (CEO, Thebe Media and Comms).

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

In response to Professor Billy Futter's letter that appeared in the 11 September 1998 issue of Rhodes, members of staff may be interested to know that:

- in August 1989, the Transport and General Worker's Union negotiated Long Service Awards for members of the service staff whereby they received an amount of R350 in respect of each cycle of 15 years of continuous service. This amount was increased to R450 in 1990. Following discussions with RUSA in 1990, the University agreed that all other staff who had completed 25 years' continuous service would qualify for a Long Service Award;
- the award would consist of a cheque for R750 and a certificate of service;
- the awards would be retrospective (22 awards were made at the first

function held on 13 November 1990);

- while members of the service staff now receive service awards after 15, 25, 35 and 40 years' continuous service, the value of their 15 and 25 year awards is equal to the value of the 25 year award made to other members of staff; when a member of the senior staff has completed 40 years' service, the University makes a special Long Service Award equal in value to the 35 and 40 year awards made to members of the service staff.

Should Professor Futter and a substantial number of senior members of staff strongly believe that they should be recognised on the identical basis as the service staff, I have no doubt that their request would be carefully considered.

Yours sincerely
BMH Smith
Director of Personnel

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Visiting Librarians



Two visiting librarians from Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen spent a day in the Rhodes library with the director of URICA, Phil Minnaar. Their programme consisted of an introduction to our library system and the systems administration as well as the use of URICA for archival purposes. From left - Judith Brown (senior Librarian, Robert Gordon University), Will Campbell (Systems Librarian, Robert Gordon University), Irene Vermaak (systems administrator, Rhodes University), Felix Ubogu (Head Librarian, Rhodes University) and Phil Minnaar (Managing Director of URICA).