

## **March 2008 Bulletin**

### **From the Dean**

#### **Faculty Assembly: Cancellation of April 2008 meeting**

The April meeting of the Faculty Assembly has been cancelled.

The Assembly provides an opportunity for staff to hear reports from the Dean on what has been happening across Faculty and Schools. In the 2007/8 session one meeting of the Assembly has already taken place (October 2007) and a second had been planned for 9th April 2008.

The second meeting is being replaced by meetings with individual Schools (for example through School Boards) on a trial basis. It is hoped that this new arrangement will provide more localised opportunities for communication between the Dean and staff in Schools.

#### **Election of the Chancellor**

The present Co-Chancellors of the University, Anna Ford and Sir Terry Leahy, will complete their respective terms of office on 31st July 2008. The process of electing a successor for a new seven-year term began on 11th March 2008 with the issue of nomination forms.

All University Staff holding paid superannuable appointments, all members of the Alumni Association registered for election notices, and all members of the General Assembly have an opportunity to participate in this election.

Full details of the procedure to be followed and a nomination form can be found at the University's website at <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/electionofchancellor>.

The closing date for the receipt of nominations is 12 noon on 23rd April 2008.

### **ICT News**

#### **Print Room in Ellen Wilkinson**

The Ellen Wilkinson print unit is currently closed. Alternative reprographic services are available in Samuel Alexander and Dover Street, details of each unit are at:

<http://ict.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/facilities/printing/reprographics.html>

#### **Staff and Student Cluster Image for 2008/2009 session**

This University wide software image for desktop PCs is being developed under the name Desktop 08 to distinguish it from the previous CLIP images used for student clusters and adapted in Humanities for use on staff desktops. The image will still be based on Windows XP and Office 2003. It is not expected that Windows Vista or Office 2007 will be deployed before Summer 2009. If you have any new software requirements for the student clusters for next sessions (either new software or updated software), changes of functionality of the desktop image either for student clusters or staff desktop please contact [Richard.Walters@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Richard.Walters@manchester.ac.uk) as soon as possible.

#### **Webcam driver available on PC clusters**

If you need to use webcams in Humanities clusters, the model to use is the Logitech Quickcam Express for which a driver is supplied in the software image.

## **Media News**

Professor John Harris's views on the 2 sets of Belgian parents who were recently handed 5 month prison terms for failing to vaccinate their children against polio received massive coverage across the world – and especially in the United States. He was also given a mention in the latest novel by Alexander McCall Smith – the Careful Use of Complements.

Dr Conrad Leyser appeared on the Today Programme on BBC Radio 4 and the World Service to discuss his research on the origins of celibacy in the Catholic Church. BBC News online covered the news that former student Jonathan Trigell, who wrote a controversial novel about a child offender as part of his Master's thesis, was voted best "book to talk about" in a public poll organised as part of World Book Day.

Humanities also received wide coverage across national and international newspaper and broadcasting outlets.

## **Widening Participation News**

### **Gateway to Humanities, Y10 Cohort**

The end of the first year of the Gateway to Humanities project is approaching, with 98 Y10 students taking part in three mentoring visits in school and now looking forward to attending the upcoming Insight Days. Visits for Business & Management, Citizenship, Geography, History, Languages and Law will take place between now and mid-April and consist of workshops and activity sessions exploring the variety of related disciplines that the University offers.

<http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/aboutus/wideningparticipation/secondary/gateways/>

### **Building Bridges**

31 students have registered on this course which is designed to facilitate progression on to the Diploma/Degree in Community & Youth Work Studies by providing the skills and confidence to succeed in HE application; 8 of these students had progressed from the Introductory Course which aims to increase awareness of and aspiration to HE.

### **Discover Days Post 16**

Humanities Widening participation organised a series of subject specific discover days during February and March, including Discover South Asian Studies, Discover Archaeology and Discover Classics and Ancient History. Students from All Saints Catholic College, Parswood Sixth Form College, Ashton Sixth Form College, Whalley Range High School for Girls and Aquinas College attended.

The subject specific discover days provide a unique opportunity for all post-16 learners to gain an insight into various Humanities degrees and to experience the diversity of our courses first hand. They are a great opportunity for prospective students to find out more about what university study and university life is like through talking to both students and academic staff. Each event is comprised of an overview of the relevant degree programme; career prospects talk; subject specific lecture; choice of interactive workshops; campus and departmental tour and a question and answer session with current undergraduate students.

To view the programme for any of these events please visit:

[http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/aboutus/wideningparticipation/post16/sixthformers/subjectsificdiscoverdays/](http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/aboutus/wideningparticipation/post16/sixthformers/subjectspecificdiscoverdays/)

If you are interested in a discover day for your discipline please contact  
Katie.howley@manchester.ac.uk.

## Blake Study Day

To coincide with the Blake's Shadow exhibition, the Humanities Widening Participation Office in partnership with the Whitworth Art Gallery, organised a Blake Study day on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> February. Y12 students from Cardinal Langley College, Loreto College, City College and Pendleton College attended an interactive lecture and interactive seminars, led by Postgraduate students, which reflected the interdisciplinary approach to study at HE level. Demand was such, that there will be a second Blake study day on the 18<sup>th</sup> April. The programme can be viewed at:

<http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/aboutus/wideningparticipation/post16/>

## Pathways to Law Mock Trial event, Saturday 15th March

The Mock Trial gave our Pathways to Law students an insight into how criminal cases are dealt with in a Court of Law. Barristers from Kings Chambers, St Johns Street Chambers, along with Solicitors from Hempsons and District Judge Gosnell conducted a Mock Trial, while students acted as members of the jury whose job it was to reach a verdict. Once a verdict had been reached students engaged in a question and answer session with the Legal professionals, all of whom also attended state schools and were the first in their families to go to university. For further information please email Katie.howley@manchester.ac.uk.

## eLearning Team

### Getting Started with Blackboard

A good way to get started with Blackboard is to experience it as a student. The University currently has two Blackboard online courses for you to take. The courses are open to all staff - academic and administrative.

You can self enrol on both these courses:

1. Go <http://blackboard.manchester.ac.uk> (it may take a few seconds to load, please be patient, watch for the green status bar at the bottom right of the screen, wait until it has disappeared).
2. Don't sign in yet, click the **Enrol** button.
3. You will be taken to the self-enrolment page. Here you have 2 choices
  - Familiarise yourself with Blackboard
  - eLearning essentials
4. Click **Familiarise yourself with Blackboard**
5. Enter your **central IT username and password**
6. Click **Register**
7. You will then be informed whether your enrolment has been successful
8. **Repeat** steps 1-6 to enrol for 'eLearning essentials'
9. Now you are enrolled Go to <http://blackboard.manchester.ac.uk> and sign in with your central IT username and password to access the courses.

Full details of the online courses and instructions on how to enrol, are available from <http://campus.manchester.ac.uk/elearning/traindevelop/bboline/>. Any problems getting access to these courses please e-mail [elearning@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:elearning@manchester.ac.uk).

## Getting help for eLearning and Blackboard

- Any problems, questions or suggestions please e-mail [elearning@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:elearning@manchester.ac.uk)
- We will be running meetings in individual Schools to introduce you to Blackboard and answer your questions. Details will be sent out within your School and will also be available on the eLearning team's website
- We are running drop-in sessions to support developing your knowledge or, and skills, in Blackboard
- Full details of the School meetings and the drop-ins will be available from <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/humanities/ict/tandl>

## The Teaching and Learning Team

The latest news from the Teaching and Learning Team is available on:

<http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/humnet/tandl/teachingandlearningbulletin/>

## The Skills Learning Team

We would like to welcome Nicola Sheehan to the team as the new team assistant. Some of you may recognise Nicola as she has joined us from Combined Studies. In her new role, Nicola will be managing the training calendar and booking system, and keeping a close eye on attendance.

## School News

### Centre for New writing

#### Up-front and personal: Hanif Kureishi visits the Centre for New Writing

The Centre for New Writing welcomed leading novelist and screenwriter Hanif Kureishi to one of its Literature Live events in early March, where he gave the very first reading from his new proclaimed novel *Something to Tell You*.

Kureishi, who was recently awarded a CBE for his services to literature and drama, has written novels including *The Black Album* and *The Buddha of Suburbia*, which won the Whitbread First Novel Award and was televised by the BBC. He is also well-known for his highly successful screenplays, which include *My Beautiful Laundrette*, *The Mother* and *Venus*.

He began the evening by reading from the opening of *Something to Tell You*, a freewheeling account of narrator Jamal's social interactions and pursuit of pleasure. Descriptions of his work as a psychoanalyst and relationships with 'significant others' are interspersed with memories of his coming of age in the 1970s, including his haunting experience of first love and furtive involvement in a murder.

After the reading the author participated in a discussion of his work with Centre co-director Ian McGuire, when he discussed his interest in psychology and its parallels with writing, his motivation in deciding whether to develop a story into a novel or a film (often financial!) and how all fictional writing is essentially the same: ". . . you invent characters, then you torture them!"

The evening ended with a lively Q&A session with the audience. Asked whether advancing years were making him any more careful about what he writes, he concluded, "Just existing upsets people; you have to write what's in you and other people have to deal with it."

### August Kleinzahler joined by Joe Stretch

Acclaimed US poet August Kleinzahler was joined at the last minute by our writer in residence Joe Stretch during a recent Literature Live event, after Helen Dunmore unfortunately had to withdraw

due to illness. It is hoped that Helen will appear next academic year, but in the meantime it was a treat to hear a reading from Joe in the publication week of his debut novel *Friction*.

He began by reading the opening passages of the book, described by Manchester Confidential as "...a hellhole vision of empty-headed young people bored out of their skulls seeking sensation to fill in the blanks."

Joe then read what he described as "...a short story which suddenly occurs" in the midst of the novel he is currently working on, *Wildlife*. While hitchhiking down to London protagonist Joe's baby daughter begins to regurgitate tiny people, first the corpse of a lady he christens Dolly, and later - during a ride with a monstrous family from Wokingham - her living husband Sam.

Perhaps surprisingly, Joe claimed in the subsequent Q & A session that he had never read a horror novel and didn't consider genre when writing, certainly not seeing himself as part of the resurgence of interest in that type of work.

August Kleinzahler began with the title poem from his book *Green Sees Things in Waves*, about a homeless man who also hallucinates the presence of another person after taking 'too much LSD' at some point in his past. Somewhat fulfilling the stereotype of the San Francisco ageing drop-out, Green "...can't find the knob to turn off the show."

'The Dog Stoltz' contains a strong element of the absurd, its canine lead announcing that he must write an essay on First World War poet Siegfried Sassoon, while 'Sleeping it off in Rapid City', the title poem from August's forthcoming collection, provides a 4am perspective on the place which claims to be the central point of the United States.

The title of his poem 'Almost Nothing' refers to modernist architect Mies van der Rohr's motto, and it was written in memory of a friend in that field who was an ex-patriot of Rochdale. As well as being a devotee of his architecture Gordon shared his hero's love of martinis, but there are also contrasts throughout the poem between purity of 'the great man's' creations and the ruggedness of Gordon's Rochdale roots.

After a brief Q & A the speakers and audience repaired to the wine reception with a lot to talk about, and perhaps some new perspectives on life in the modern city.

MA in Creative Writing graduate Jonathan Trigell's first novel, *Boy A*, has been voted the best Book to Talk About in a poll for World Book Day.

## **Boy A Wins!**

*Boy A*, which has recently been made into a feature film for Channel 4, was the top choice for more than 2,000 readers polled on a World Book Day website where readers and reading group members spread the word about their favourite books.

The novel tells the story of the introduction of a young man back into the community after spending his childhood in juvenile institutions. Although guilty of a monstrous childhood crime, he is utterly innocent of the world outside.

Jonathan said: "I'm totally delighted that *Boy A* has been named the 'Book To Talk About 2008', it's a real honour and I'd like to thank everyone who voted for it.

“I started writing *Boy A* several years before I took the Manchester MA in 2002. But the structure of the course really helped fine-tune my skills and give me the confidence to finish the job. The degree also allowed me to prioritise my writing, instead of trying to squeeze it in around work.”

One reader joining in the discussion on the World Book Day website said, “I finished this last night; 24 hours later I’m still mulling it over, seeing patterns and thinking and rethinking. It seems trite to say I’ve been on a journey but I do feel that genuinely.”

## News in general

### Procurement office - Oracle Purchasing Unit users and iProc requisitioners

The Procurement Office is pleased to announce that after an in-depth EU tendering process the University has awarded a framework contract to the following suppliers:

Please insert URL

The contract will run from 1st March 2008 for 3 years with a possible 1 year extension.

Every effort should be made to use the suppliers on the list but we acknowledge that there is work currently in the pipeline that may be completed by your current provider.

The information is also available on the supplier database (CuPID) which can be accessed from the Procurement website.

<http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/purchase/news.htm>

## Forthcoming Events

Forthcoming events are listed <http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/humnet/aboutus/events/>

In addition the following external events may be of interest:

Building Resilience: Responses to a Turbulent World

UK Systems Society International Conference – 1st-3rd September 2008

St Anne’s College, University of Oxford

Keynote speakers:

- Professor Ralph Stacey, Professor of Management at the Business School, University of Hertfordshire
- Professor Bernard Lietaer, Visiting Professor at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado
- Dr Tony Kendle, Foundation Director at the Eden Project
- Mark Lynas, Journalist
- Sarb Sembhi, Director of Metis-For

The organisers have also issued an invitation to submit a paper – the deadline for submission is 30th April 2008 and early bird discount ends on 30th June 2008.

For further details/updates: [www.ukss.org.uk](http://www.ukss.org.uk)