

University in the news

The University is constantly in the news locally, nationally and internationally. Here are just a few of the stories from 2003/04.

HEART DISEASE RISK 'HYPED IN MEN'

*BBC News Online:
28 November 2003*

A formula widely used by doctors to predict which men will die from coronary heart disease over-estimates the risk, according to research by Dr Peter Brindle of the Department of Social Medicine.

The research, published in the *British Medical Journal*, examined the accuracy of the Framingham risk equation which is based on data collected between 1968 and 1974 in the town of Framingham, Massachusetts.

It looked at the medical histories of 6,643 British men over a ten-year period and found that only 2.8 per cent died of heart disease – not the 4.1 per cent predicted by the Framingham equation.

Other media coverage included:
28 November, The Guardian
28 November, The Times
29 November, Channel 5 News



LAVA COMES FROM EARTH'S MANTLE

*Financial Times:
16 January 2004*

Research published in *Nature* shows that the lava from large volcanoes comes from the earth's mantle above the planet's core – not from the core itself.

Scientists from the Department of Earth Sciences analysed the tungsten content of the lava of some large Hawaiian volcanoes. Tungsten from the earth's core has different isotope ratios from the rest of the earth, so lava from the core should reflect this. It did not, and nor did samples of South African kimberlites, rocks that bring diamonds to the surface from great depths.

Other media coverage included:
15 January, BBC Radio Bristol;
Morning West, GWR
20 January, Honolulu Advertiser



COFFEE MAKES MEN STRESSED OUT

*Evening Post
16 February*

Drinking coffee may not be the pick-me-up it's cracked up to be, at least for men, according to Bristol researchers.

Professor Peter Rogers and Dr Lindsay St Claire in the Department of Experimental Psychology carried out the study with funding from the Economic and Social Research Council. They found some surprising results.

For example, men who work alone tend to experience increased levels of stress after drinking coffee, while stress ratings in women showed a tendency to fall after a coffee



HELPING TO OPEN A WINDOW

Staff and postgraduates in the School of Biological Sciences contributed to the Window on Life CD-ROMs distributed with *The Sunday Times* in November 2003. The CD-ROMs were developed by the Department of Trade and Industry Bioscience Unit and the Department of Health to capture some of the past, present and future developments in genetics and bioscience.

break. There were also indications that caffeine consumption can make team-working less effective. Other media coverage included:
15 February, The Scotsman
16 February, Western Daily Press

segregated in the playground than in their neighbourhoods.

Other media coverage included:
1 April, BBC News Online
2 April, Sunrise Radio
6 April, The Times

TENSIONS THAT START IN THE PLAYGROUND

*The Guardian,
1 April 2004*

According to new research by Professor Simon Burgess and Dr Deborah Wilson of the Centre for Market and Public Organisation, English schoolchildren from different ethnic backgrounds are more



Staff

With over 5,400 staff, the University is Bristol's largest independent employer.

People Strategy

The University adopted a new 'People Strategy' aimed at ensuring that the leadership, recruitment, deployment and development of staff are closely aligned with the institution's key goals. The strategy is shaped in large measure by the Education, Research and Enterprise strategies, which together set a clear direction for the University.

The agreement may well prove to be the catalyst for one of the biggest cultural changes the University has seen – for an organisation in which over 45 per cent of its staff are currently on fixed-term contracts, the impact cannot be overestimated.



Positive Working Environment project

Work towards a more Positive Working Environment (PWE) at the University has gathered pace, with the publication of the results of the workforce survey in January 2004.

So far, consequent action has included:

- a new training and communications programme for technical managers
- the first in a series of short publications tackling practical issues raised by staff
- new training in diversity issues, with an initial focus on race
- new investment in leadership development
- fresh guidelines on handling conduct, performance and ill-health issues.

The University has committed significant resources to driving forward the PWE agenda, which

will include the implementation during 2004/5 of a major leadership and management development programme.

Equality and diversity

Adjustments to buildings

The results of the University's Disability Audit enabled the Bursar's Office to categorise and prioritise University buildings, culminating in the production of a phased programme of works to make the University more accessible to disabled people.

Opportunity Now award

The University was again awarded a silver standard from Opportunity Now, following completion of the Annual Benchmarking Survey designed to assess an organisation's progression towards gender equality and diversity.

HEFCE audit of race equality policies and action plans

The University's Race Equality Policy and Action Plan have been strengthened in line with recommendations by HEFCE after its 2002 audit. The policy is online at: www.bristol.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/race/racepolicy.html.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act Higher Education Implementation Project

The University accepted an invitation from the government's

Reward Project

The University's Reward Project is aimed at having a single, transparently fair pay and grading system, together with harmonised terms and conditions and, where possible, clearer career structures, in place in 2005/06. The first phase of the project, which involved evaluating a representative sample of about 200 roles across the University, was largely completed during 2003/04. Progress will continue to be made in partnership with the trades unions.

Fixed-term contracts

Agreement has been reached with the AUT on an approach to the use of fixed-term contracts for academic and related staff. This agreement represents a significant improvement on the statutory position, and takes effect from October 2004.



MARTIN CHAINEY

Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) to be one of nine UK institutions to participate in a two-year project to support the higher education sector's implementation of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. In partnership with the Commission for Racial Equality and the ECU, the University will develop and promote good practice in race equality within the sector.

Staff Mediation Service

To support the University in creating a more positive working environment, University Council approved the introduction of a Staff Mediation Service, which was launched in 2003.

Equality and diversity newsletter

A new newsletter – *Diversity Direct* – is distributed termly. The newsletter will raise awareness of issues connected to equality and diversity that are of relevance to staff.

Disability Resource Allocation Fund

The University has introduced a fund to support disabled overseas students, who are not entitled to Disabled Students Allowance. A limited fund was made available for 2003/4, and has given support to several disabled students.

Appointments



British Academy honours

Peter Townsend,
Senior Research Fellow and Emeritus Professor in Social Policy at the School for Policy Studies, has been elected to a Senior Fellowship of the British Academy.

The University Chancellor, The Right Honourable the Baroness Hale of Richmond, has been elected to a Senior Fellowship of the British Academy.

Fellows of the Royal Society

Malcolm Brown, Professor of Anatomy and Cognitive Neuroscience, was elected for his electrophysiological studies into the neural basis of learning and memory.

Stephen Halford, Professor of Biochemistry, School of Medical Sciences, was elected for his pioneering application of quantitative biophysical methods to problems previously only examined by qualitative methods of molecular biology.

New Chairs

The following new Chairs took up their posts between 1 August 2003 and 31 July 2004:

William P Coldrick
Chair in Genomics
Dr Patricia Kuwabara (1), formerly faculty member of the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute.

Chair in Earth System Science
Professor Colin Prentice (2), formerly Director of the Max Planck Institute for Biogeochemistry in Jena, Germany.

Stanley Hugh Badock
Chair in Music
Professor Stephen Banfield (3), formerly Elgar Professor of Music at the University of Birmingham.

Chair in Philosophy
Dr Alexander Bird (4), formerly Reader in Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh.

Chair in Cell Biology
Professor Paul Martin (5), formerly Professor of Tissue Repair in the Departments of Anatomy & Developmental Biology and Surgery, University College London.

Chair in Bionanotechnology
Dr Daniel Robert (6), formerly Reader in the School of Biological Sciences.

Chair in Accounting
Professor David Dugdale (7), formerly Professor of Management Accounting at the University of the West of England.

Chair in Gender, Violence and International Policy
Professor Marianne Hester (8), formerly Professor of Sociology and Social Policy and Director of the International Centre for the Study of Violence and Abuse at the University of Sunderland.

New Year Honours

Four members of the University were included in the New Year Honours List 2004.

John Enderby CBE FRS, Emeritus Professor and Senior Research Fellow in Physics, was appointed a Knight Bachelor 'for services to science and technology'.

Derek Higgs, Pro-Chancellor, was appointed a Knight Bachelor 'for services to corporate governance and finance'.

Stephen Bann FBA, Professor of History of Art, was awarded a CBE 'for services to the history of art'.

Malcolm Evans, Professor of Public International Law, received an OBE 'for services to the promotion of human rights, particularly torture prevention and religious liberty'.

Other appointments

New Faculty Deans

Medical and Veterinary Sciences: Professor Len Hall
Medicine and Dentistry: Professor Gareth Williams
Arts: Professor Robert Fowler
Engineering: Professor David Muir Wood

Deputy Registrar Alison Alden
Director of Campaigns and Alumni Relations Tania Jane Rawlinson
Director of Human Resources Guy Gregory

Honorary degrees

In 2003/04 the University conferred Honorary degrees on the following:



MARTIN CHAINEY

The Very Reverend
John Cairns
*Moderator of the General
Assembly of the Church of
Scotland, 1999-2002; Bristol
graduate (Doctor of Laws)*

Frances Cairncross (3)
*Chairman, Economic and Social
Research Council; journalist,
author (Doctor of Science)*

Donald Insall, CBE
*Architect, Planning Consultant
(Doctor of Laws)*

Professor Patrick Godfrey
*Civil engineer; Director, Halcrow;
Visiting Industrial Professor
(Doctor of Engineering)*

Jerry Hicks (4)
*Artist; retired schoolmaster;
former Chairman, Bristol Civic
Society (Master of Arts)*

Alastair Hignell
*Former England rugby
international; broadcaster;
journalist; President, Bristol
Multiple Sclerosis Nerve Centre
Appeal (Master of Arts)*

John Fortune
*Actor; satirist; writer
(Doctor of Letters)*

Professor Lance Lanyon
*Principal, Royal Veterinary
College; Bristol graduate
(Doctor of Science)*

Professor Judith Howard
*Professor of Chemistry,
University of Durham; Bristol
graduate (Doctor of Science)*

Dr Alastair Summerlee
*President and Vice-Chancellor,
University of Guelph, Ontario;
Bristol graduate (Doctor of Laws)*

Mark Ellingham (1)
and Natania Jansz (2)
*Publishers; co-founders of the
Rough Guides publishing
enterprise and Sort
of Books; Bristol graduates
(Master of Arts)*

Peter Owen
*Wig-maker; make-up artist;
Oscar and Bafta winner for Best
Make-Up, Lord of the Rings:
The Fellowship of the Ring
(Master of Arts)*

Professor Charles Tomlinson
*Poet; literary scholar
(Doctor of Letters)*

Francis Powell
*Member of Bristol University
staff since 1956;
Accommodation and Audio-
Visual Aids Officer
(Master of Arts)*

Jenni Murray
*Broadcaster; presenter of BBC
Radio 4's Woman's Hour;
journalist; author
(Doctor of Laws)*

Terry Pratchett
*Author
(Doctor of Letters)*