Warden’s Message

Not since James Watson’s ‘From the Double Helix to the Human Genome Project’ on 18 January 1999 had the Witts Lecture Theatre been so full. This time we did not quite have to turn people away, but for four consecutive Monday evenings in January/February the 2006 Green College Lectures, on climate change, kept the Witts comfortably full. Unquestionably a lot of people in Oxford wished to hear about ‘Climate Change – Evidence, Effects and Evasive Action’. Which people? The audience was diverse and its composition seemed to remain much the same throughout: a strong student contingent, our own College students and many from the Environmental Change Institute and from Geography; not just our own Fellows but academics from all over Oxford. And many people describing themselves as ‘just a member of the public’ had telephoned the College to enquire if they could attend. They could. Disciplines? Yes to ecologists, physicists, environmentalist and medics but the interest was broadly spread. Clearly we had a topic and a timing which generated an immediate response from members of a significant part of Oxford’s academic community and of the public at large.

Our speakers were experts in their own fields – a physicist (Dr Tim Palmer, European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts), a natural scientist (Professor Jeremy Thomas, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology), a public health specialist (Professor Sir Andy Haines, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) and the retiring chairman of Shell, Lord Oxburgh of Liverpool who had a particular take on choices for energy consumption and governments contemplating the abyss. But from the base of their own specialism they evidently had a message to communicate to each other and, I thought, to anyone who would listen. Many did. Ultimately it was a deeply depressing message about the future of our planet.

In a graduate College which deliberately fosters an intellectual community whose members address, in different but contiguous specialisms, questions relevant to the human condition, the attractions of an interdisciplinary approach are a given. It is an appropriate and important stance to take. The second lesson I took from the series is that the College has an excellent contribution to make to the public awareness of science. Not just to clarify science, but also to respond to the public appetite to understand some of the painfully difficult questions – in social policy or ethics perhaps – that scientific advances pose for contemporary society.

A report of the Green College Lecture series by Professor Sir John Grimley Evans can be viewed on our website www.green.ox.ac.uk/latestnews

If you prefer a hardcopy of this document please contact Sharan Attar, Development Officer on 01865 274786 or email sharan.attar@green.ox.ac.uk
Taking Comedy Seriously

The 2006 News International lecture series – this year devoted to the subject of television comedy – attracted the largest attendances in the event’s eight-year history. The College found itself obliged to relocate lectures from the Abraham lecture theatre to the much larger Witts theatre next door in the Infirmary to accommodate the influx.

The attraction was not just the theme of the lectures, “British TV Comedy: Dead or Alive?”, but the credentials of the current Visiting Professor of Broadcast Media (a post associated with Green College).

Armando Iannucci is one of this country’s leading comic writers and producers. His television credits include the acclaimed political satire *The Thick of It* and successful comedy series such as *I’m Alan Partridge, Knowing Me Knowing You* and *The Day Today*. During the course of the four weekly lectures he enjoyed a particularly high media profile, being the focus of an ITV South Bank Show and a Radio 3 programme as well as maintaining his regular satirical column in *The Observer* newspaper.

Professor Iannucci argues that television comedy is at a crossroads. He says that most people’s lists of the best of television from the past forty years invariably have great moments of comedy at the top. But, as his first lecture, “Ever Decreasing Viewing Figures: the decline of mainstream comedy”, revealed, there has been a marked reduction in the amount of comedy being made for the mass audience channels, ITV and BBC1.

Comedy has largely migrated to niches like C4 and digital channels but, in his second lecture “Little Office: the rise of cult comedy”, Iannucci asserted that although cult comedy may be currently dominant, it was wrong to think that there was no longer any room for mass-appeal, large viewing-figure comedy programmes on mainstream channels. But for this to happen, he argued in the third lecture “Help! TV Comedy under Threat”, commissioning editors must champion creative talent – and creatives should sharpen up their acts.

In his final lecture, “Two Feet in the Grave: how can mainstream comedy survive?”, Professor Iannucci reviewed the new digital technology which encouraged innovation in comedy formats. The widening of the field could also be seen in the rise of the internet “viral” where an audience increasingly deprived of comedy on-screen is hunting for good comedy on the net. But just as it gets more daring and varied in format and technique, comedy must not “aim off the mainstream”, instead all concerned need to work creatively to bring in the new viralists from the net into broadcasting as well as keeping established comedy teams together in longer runs.

Paddy Coulter
Director, Reuters Foundation Programme

Mosquitoes are attracted to children

Dr Simon Hay, a Wellcome Trust Research Career Development Fellow based in Oxford’s Department of Zoology and former student of Green College, has been taking part in a new study to ascertain why mosquitoes are more attracted to some children. The study took place in Africa and reveals that 80% of all new infections are concentrated in just one fifth of the population. Similar trends have been shown for a range of infectious disease systems, but the new research represents some of the most compelling evidence for this pattern in malaria, which kills around 2 million people every year – most of them children under five.

The findings, published in *Nature*, are based on field data from a number of studies of mosquito behaviour and records of infections in around 5,000 children aged under 15 years living in more than 90 communities across Africa.

Dr Hay said: “Why some children provide a more attractive target for mosquitoes carrying the malaria-causing parasite, Plasmodium falciparum, remains unclear, particularly in areas where transmission of the parasite between mosquitoes and man is so high.”

“Identifying this small group of children in any particular locality will likely be very difficult. What is clear, however, is that interventions targeting prevention of bites from malaria-carrying mosquitoes should be delivered as widely as possible in a community to ensure those contributing most to the perpetual transmission of the parasite are protected from doing so. The current target of 60% coverage, set by the African Heads of State in Abuja in 2000, might be too low.”
The clinical burden of stroke and mini-stroke is now greater than that of coronary heart disease in the UK, finds an Oxford study published last month in The Lancet. The findings have important implications for the health service provision and research funding allocated to stroke.

The Oxford Vascular Study looked at a population of 91,000 people in Oxfordshire between 2002 and 2005, in the first ever comprehensive survey of vascular disease (disease related to the blood vessels, which includes strokes and types of heart attack) in a single population. 1,500 had acute vascular events (strokes, mini-strokes or heart attacks) during the study and were assessed in great detail soon after the event by the study team.

Stroke and coronary heart disease are caused by events affecting the blood supply to the brain and heart respectively. Although the diseases have common underlying pathology, risk factors, and preventive treatments, clinical services for stroke have been much less well developed than those for heart disease and research funding lags far behind.

Professor Peter Rothwell from the Department of Clinical Neurology and Governing Body Fellow of Green College, who led the study, said: 'Mortality data show that coronary heart disease is the leading cause of death in most developed countries. However, although cerebrovascular events are less likely to be fatal and so mortality rates are indeed lower, stroke is much more likely to cause major disability. We have shown that rates of acute cerebrovascular events in our population are, in fact, higher than those of acute coronary events. The major under-funding of both clinical services and research for cerebrovascular disease compared with coronary heart disease cannot be justified on the basis of clinical burden.'

The team also found that the ages at which stroke and acute coronary syndromes occur are the same. 'The idea that heart attacks occur in middle age and strokes in the elderly is not true' said Professor Rothwell.

Both types of disease are much more common in the elderly: the study found that nearly half of all acute vascular disease occurs in the over-75 age group. 'This emphasises the need for more research, particularly trials of treatment, in older age groups,' said Professor Rothwell. 'Currently very little work is done in these age groups, despite the UK’s rapidly aging population.'

It is hoped that the Oxford Vascular Study will become a major resource for research in Oxford and with collaborators elsewhere. The study is ongoing and the team hopes to continue until at least 2012, making ten years of data in total.

The Fellows wish to record their thanks to Professor and Mrs Gordon Johnson (member of Common Room) for their generosity in donating to the College a beautiful framed print of a painting by the Danish artist Martinus Rørbye (1803-1848) which depicts the Tower of the Winds in Athens, the building which provided the inspiration for the design of the College’s Radcliffe Observatory. The original painting is entitled “Greeks Fetching Water from the Well at the Tower of the Winds in Athens, 1836”, oil on canvas 30 x 41.5cm, and is on display at Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen. The print, which is made to the same size as the original, is mounted in College on the wall of the room formerly known as the Smokers’ Room.

We said farewell at the end of January - temporarily, we hope - to Research Fellow Dr Fumiko Kawasaki who has been with us in Oxford for over a year conducting research in diabetes at the Oxford Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism, thanks to the hospitality of Professor David Matthews and his colleagues. Fumiko played an active part in the life of Green College and made many friends here. She has now resumed her clinical duties in Kurashiki and we wish her well in her future medical career.
Green College is to retain an integral link with a new University Journalism Institute which builds on the College’s longstanding Journalism Fellowship Programme for visiting mid-career international journalists. The creation of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism was announced in January by the Vice Chancellor of Oxford University, Dr John Hood, following the commitment of £1.75m funding over five years by the Reuters Foundation.

The chief focus of the Reuters Institute (which will not offer undergraduate courses) will be research into the practice of journalism worldwide. It will publish high quality analysis and comment on how the media operates and will also provide an independent forum for exchanges between practitioners and analysts of journalism and those affected by it. It will chart the technological and market changes which influence news media today and identify long-term trends.

The team which developed the initiative drew on expertise from across the university (and outside) including valuable input from Professor Timothy Garton Ash of St Antony’s and Tim Gardam, the Principal of St Anne’s. But Green College’s role in pioneering the study of journalism within Oxford is acknowledged.

The Institute, which will be part of the university’s Department of Politics and International Relations, will be based at Green College’s 13 Norham Gardens premises. The programme for visiting journalists will be maintained as a key component of the new Institute and the journalists will continue to enjoy membership of Green College with the status of Visiting Scholars. The new post of Academic Director will have a College Fellowship attached, a move unanimously supported by the Green College Governing Body.

The establishment of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism was warmly welcomed by the Warden, Sir John Hanson, in a University press release: “The Reuters Foundation Journalists Fellowship Programme has been one of the longest standing international journalism institutions outside the USA and Green College is proud to have hosted it in Oxford”. Sir John looked forward to the strengthening of the College’s links with international journalism, the Reuters Foundation and neighbouring colleges in this new endeavour.

Paddy Coulter
Director, Reuters Foundation Programme
(and Director of Studies-designate in the Reuters Institute)

Varsity Match at Twickenham

On Tuesday 6 December 2005 a coach load of Green rugby supporters set out from College at 0930, by courtesy of Jeff’s Coaches, for the annual Varsity Match to witness the usual Oxford Obliteration of Cambridge. A seemingly perfect day according to the script: initial Christmas present buying in the Twickenham rugby shop (small-size rugby balls for the granddaughters …); hot lamb stew and dumplings, ham rolls and convivial drinks in the coach park to keep off the winter chills; a spot of pre-match shouting in the stand to warm up the lungs; a bright start by the boys in dark blue. Then … oh dear. Fairness and accuracy demands that I record a Cambridge win at the end of a desperate Oxford second half; though I don’t see why I should run to the scoreboard. But I’d better say it: well done Cambridge. And it really was the usual fun day – thanks for organising it for us, Sharan. See you all next year.

Warden
Welcome New College Members

Governing Body Fellowship
Professor Robert Walker, Professor of Social Policy, who comes to Oxford after the last five years as Professor of Social Policy at the University of Nottingham (with effect from 1 April 2006)

Senior Research Associate
Professor Roy MacLeod, Senior Research Associate with the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine

Research Associates
Dr Hormoz Ebrahimnejad, Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine (from 15 February for 3 years)
Dr Peter Barham, Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine (from 15 February 2006 for 3 years)

Research Fellowship
Dr Michalis Papadakis, MRC/Wellcome Fellow (Laboratory of Cerebral Ischaemic)
Professor Kazuo Tanemoto (Professor of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery at the Kawasaki Medical School) for 3 months with the Nuffield Department of Surgery, March–May 2006.
Professor S Aoki (Professor of Psychiatry at the Kawasaki Medical School) for 3 months with the Department of Psychiatry, April–June 2006

Robert Turner Visiting Scholar
Dr Matthias Braun (from 20 February - 31 August 2006)

New Common Room Members
Dr Terry Dawson, Centre of Environmental Change and Sustainability, University of Edinburgh and Ex Research Fellow of Green College

Dr Chris O’Callaghan, The Henry Wellcome Building of Molecular Physiology
Dr George Pollock, Department of Public Health & Epidemiology, University of Birmingham and ex Visiting Scholar of Green College
Dr Jonathan Black, Director, Corporate Relations and Media & Communications Consultant, Said Business School, Oxford
Dr Rosemary Bosnell

Reuters Fellows
Mr Aveek Kumar Sen (India)
Mr Volodymyr Marchak (Ukraine)
Ms Sara Beck (UK)
Ms Frances Walsh (New Zealand)
Ms Deborah Pout (UK)
Mr Jonathan Curiel (USA)
Mr Rifatullah Khan (Pakistan)
Ms Yoko Hanu (Japan)
Ms Ornela Liperi (Albania)
Ms Po Wah (Sharon) Cheung (Hong Kong)
Mr Damian Christie (New Zealand)
Mr Stephen Shifferes (UK)
Ms Mei Ping Tang (Hong Kong)
Mr Musaazi Robert Namiti (Uganda)
Ms Gulveda Ozgur (Turkey)
Mr Jose Pereira Filho Lima (Brazil)
Mr Wei Li (China)
Mr Gianluca Wallisch (Austria)
Mr Sean Scanlon (New Zealand)

Dr Michalis Papadakis, Research Fellow

Our laboratory works in the field of cerebral ischaemia, aiming at the identification of novel pathways to confer neuroprotection. For these studies we are using focal and global models of cerebral ischaemia. Focal cerebral ischaemia is representative of stroke, whereas global forebrain ischaemia is usually the result of cardiac arrest.

To dissect differences in the protein array between normal and ischaemic state, we are using powerful proteomic techniques. These studies should provide invaluable insights about the protein spectrum of ischaemic brains and therefore, give vital information about protein expression changes induced by ischaemia. Identifying such changes can propose particular ischaemic pathways as potential drug targets.

Despite over 100 neuroprotective trials during the last 20 years, claimed neuroprotection has not been the result of pharmacological manipulation but rather the manifestation of physiological protection e.g. lowering temperature. A major problem encountered in most neuroprotective trials is the absence of an in vivo surrogate for ischaemia. Consequently, the putative action of pharmacological interventions is not demonstrated in vivo. Our proteomic studies could lead to the discovery of surrogates for ischaemia that would confirm the therapeutic action of future neuroprotective drugs, therefore making more likely the successful translation of experimental studies to clinical trials.
Honours for Fellows

Queen’s Anniversary Prize for the Clinical Trial Service Unit

The research findings over the past 20 years from the Clinical Trial Service Unit (CTSU) have been recognised by the Queen’s Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education. The award was given in acknowledgement of the CTSU’s uniquely large randomised trials and epidemiological studies that have led to substantial changes in public health policies and treatment strategies.

The Queen’s Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education is awarded every two years to around twenty academic units that can clearly demonstrate the outstanding achievement and benefit of their work. It is judged on characteristics of excellence and achievements that merit national and international interest.

Professors Rory Collins and Sir Richard Peto have been CTSU co-directors for the past 20 years. The CTSU’s work is helping to prevent hundreds of thousands of premature deaths a year worldwide. Its major contributions include showing how much death and disability is caused by smoking in different countries and that high blood pressure and cholesterol are much more important causes of death and disability than previously recognised.

Congratulating the CTSU on its achievement, the Vice-Chancellor, Dr John Hood, said: ‘I am delighted that the excellent work which the CTSU has carried out not only in the UK but also throughout Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas has been recognised in this way. Their work has provided, and is providing, the evidence needed to help save hundreds of thousands of lives each year worldwide, as well as preventing serious disability among even larger numbers of people.’

This is the University’s fifth Queen’s Anniversary Prize since they were set up in 1994. Previous Prizes were awarded to Isis Innovation (1994), the Institute of Molecular Medicine (1996), the Centre for Tropical Medicine (2000) and the Refugee Studies Centre (2002).

Dr J K Aronson, Governing Body Fellow

Congratulations to Dr Aronson who has been elected President of the British Pharmacological Society from 2008. This is the first occasion on which a clinician has been elected to the Presidency.

Honours for Students

Saurabh Mishra and Sophie Scamps were awarded distinctions for the MSc in the History of Science Medicine and Technology

The following new students were awarded Domus Merit Awards 2005: Rebekah Braswell, Carla Cue, Helen Doolittle, Alireza Haghighi, Bing Ji, Janelle Knox, Amrit Lota, Richard McKay and Meriel Raymond

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Green College Christmas Event

The annual Christmas event was held at 13 Norham Gardens on Monday 5 December 2005. Over 70 College members attended singing carols with enthusiasm and an enjoyable evening was had by all. The event was hosted by Sir John Hanson and the carols were accompanied by Mr Paddy Coulter (keyboard).
As the days grow longer and warmer and we welcome the first signs of spring, it is apparent that it is the beginning of a wonderful and exciting new year at Green College. As the outgoing MCR committee transfers power to a dedicated and energetic new group of student officers, we take a quick review of the achievements made over the last year.

The Green College Bar saw many changes over the last year, becoming smoke free, following action by the MCR Committee which was ratified by the student body in November. The Green College Bar also had a makeover last spring, with a new coat of paint, the installation of a new disco ball, new lighting, and the mounting of a number of beautiful photographs around the bar that were taken by Green College members (both students and staff).

The number of Osler-Green Sports and Societies has more than doubled from last year, with over 20 organizations requesting budgets from the new joint Osler-Green funding system. The use of the new system has been a great success so far and hopefully will continue to foster the development of strong Osler-Green Sport Clubs and Societies into the future.

Over the course of the last year, the Green MCR welfare team has led a number of strong initiatives to promote student well-being around college. A number of welfare teas were hosted, in addition to the traditional wine & cheese nights, the organization of a student run statistics workshop series and the hosting of a “Small World” Charity Bop. The Entertainments team has also had a successful year, recently hosting such events as a Sparkling Wine and Chocolates Night on Valentine’s Day, Bar Competition Night, and New Years Bop! I would personally like to thank each member of the outgoing committee for their dedication and contributions to student life at Green College.

Finally, it has been an honour and a pleasure to act as president of the student government of Green College throughout the last year. I hope that the contributions made by this student government continues to be built on by future committees to maintain Green College as a wonderful and special place for graduate student life. We thank the Warden and College Fellows and Administration for all of their support and encouragement. May there be many more years as special as this in the future.

Jamie Salo, MCR President, Green College
DPhil Student in the Oxford University Centre for the Environment

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Message from Outgoing President, Jamie Salo

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Varsity Volleyball
Greens win Blues! Warmest congratulations to Rachel Swift and Anders Krarup who once again helped their Oxford University teams to victory over Cambridge. The Varsity Match this year took place in Oxford on 18 February at Iffley Road Gym and both the Men and the Women won by the same narrowest of margins, 3-2 on deuce points, in breathless finishes. Well done Rachel, who Captained the Women’s team, and Anders who both play in the position of Middle Blocker in their respective teams. A healthy contingent of Greens was present to cheer them home to Oxford wins.

Jamie Salo

Varsity Ultimate Frisbee
The Oxford University Ultimate Frisbee Team hosted Cambridge University at Iffley Road Gym on Friday the 17 February for the annual indoor Varsity Match. The game was closely fought, with Oxford scoring first off of a pass into the end-zone by Green College DPhil student Jamie Salo following catching a long pass 20 yards up the pitch. In the end, Cambridge managed to hold off a strong Oxford team through the second half of the competition to win 13-10, though the score was usually within a single point. The Blues are keenly looking forward to their Outdoor Varsity Match vs Cambridge which occurs each year in May. The outdoor event, in addition to outdoor student regionals (which Oxford is to host) and outdoor student nationals, has been the primary focus of the Blue Squad this year.

Jamie Salo
Alumni Focus

Paul Colditz MBBS, FRACP, MBiomedE, FRCPCH, DPhil (Oxon); Professor of Perinatal Medicine, University of Queensland; Director, Perinatal Research Centre, University of Queensland, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Brisbane, Australia

I arrived in Green College in 1986, a newly qualified paediatrician and neonatologist supported by a University of Sydney Postgraduate Fellowship and other awards. Little could I envisage how undertaking a DPhil in Oxford would impact on my career.

Research with my supervisors Prof Andrew R Wilkinson and Peter Rolfe took precedence on a day to day basis, but a highlight was the convivial gatherings at the College with the Warden, Sir John, (prior to his becoming Lord Walton of Detchant), Fellows and students from many nations. With my wife Rhonda, a young child and another born in Oxford soon after our arrival, we lived for a time at 13 Norham Gardens where, each day, the blue plaque on the building reminded me of Sir William Osler and how much medicine I had yet to learn.

Now, I am back in Australia and still learning. After several years in Sydney, I moved to a foundation chair in Perinatal Medicine at the University of Queensland, Brisbane. Based at the Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital, I continue my research interest in perinatal medicine and especially neurodevelopment. I founded and direct the Perinatal Research Centre which continues to grow and incorporates a wide range of research disciplines. The recent Ryan review of research at the RBWH which is Australia’s largest hospital ranked the Perinatal Research Centre first and noted that it was “performing at an outstanding level against national and international standards”. Details of research contributions are at www.som.uq.edu.au/prc. I serve on medical research, professional, industry and lay boards and committees and have founded 2 professional organisations. I contributed innovative aspects to the design of Australia’s largest medical education course, teach medical and science students and postgraduates from medicine, science, engineering and allied health and maintain clinical practice in neonatal intensive care and developmental follow-up.

Green College provided me the enduring skills of observation, mentorship and the application of scientific method to medicine.

(We would welcome alumni news for future issues of Green News. Please send your articles to Mrs Sharan Attar, Development Officer, Green College at the Radcliffe Observatory, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6HG or email to sharan.attar@green.ox.ac.uk.)

Green College Clubs and Societies

Green College Golf Day 25 May 2005

The Annual Walton Cup Match was played on a beautiful sunny day at Frilford Heath Golf Club on the Red Course.

Keith Hawton, who won in 2003, took the Walton Trophy again with an outstanding 37 points and Graham Burt was the runner up with 33 points.

John Read scored the best back 9 holes with 18 points and Gerald Sacks the best front 9 with 15 points.

The winner of the Par 3 holes was Philip Awdry.

This year’s competition will be held at Frilford on the afternoon of Monday 22 May.

Please contact Gerald Sack via the Lodge for details.

Green College Book Club

Following an enjoyable evening last November discussing ‘The Master’ by Colm Toibin, we decided for our meeting on 19 January 19 to go to the source and read ‘Washington Square’ by Henry James himself. Though we had no doubt that this was a well-written short novel, there was considerable debate about the credibility of the main characters and whether they were ‘nice people’ or not. One of the delights of discussing books with others is finding that there can be such divergent views about the same words. And on this occasion we were indeed delighted.

The dates and books for our next meetings are:

30 March – ‘Family Matters’ by Rohinton Mistry presented by Beryl Selkon
11 May – ‘Changing Places’ by David Lodge presented by Mary McMenamin
6 July – Book to be agreed

Paul Brankin and Mary McMenamin

Student News – College Record 2005

Due to an unfortunate oversight important student information was omitted from our recent issue of the Green College Record 2005. Would you kindly insert the enclosed pages into the back of your copy to complete the publication.

Our sincere apologies to the students concerned and a complete version of the publication can be found on the Green College website within ‘About the College’.

Green College at the Radcliffe Observatory, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6HG.

Green College News is printed on recycled paper which is fully recyclable and biodegradeable, totally chlorine-free, and holds ISO 14001 environmental certification.