

St Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church · Timonium, Maryland

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A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

June 27th, 2017

FROM THE RECTOR

An effort to root out genius at Cambridge University

The rivalry between Britain's Oxford and Cambridge Universities is generally good-natured – but nonetheless real for all that. Members of Oxford's faculty and student body, for example, habitually avoid referring to Cambridge directly by name. Instead, they call it "the other place."

When Cambridge decided to start teaching engineering, the best part of a half-century ago, "Oxford men" (an expression which in my day also embraced women) sniffily declared that "the other place" had ceased to be a university and had become a polytechnic.

Now Cambridge has offered Oxford yet another opportunity to snigger superciliously. And it was something that might best be described as a self-inflicted wound.

A Cambridge "don" (that's what faculty members at the two universities are called) has denounced as sexist such words as "flair", "brilliant" and "genius" when used to assess student work.

Dr. Lucy Delap, a lecturer in "gender history" at "the other place", claims the words are generally associated with men and, thus, "carry assumptions of gender inequality."

She explains: "Some of those words, in particular genius, have a very long intellectual history where it has long been associated with qualities culturally assumed to be male."

In order to help her university "progress" in terms of "gender equality", Dr Delap says her department wants to use language that is more "transparent".

She explains: "We're rewriting our first two years of our history degree to create a wider set of paper choices to make assessment criteria clearer, and to really try and root out the unhelpful and very vague talk of 'genius', of 'brilliance', of 'flair' which carries assumptions of gender inequality and also of class and ethnicity."

Actually, it's hard to understand why Dr. Delap's singles out the words "flair", "brilliant" and "genius." Judged by her yardstick, there should surely be hundreds, if not thousands, of other words equally deserving of condemnation – "capable", "masterly", "workmanlike", "forthright" and "businesslike" to name but five.

Indeed, by her standard, every noun, adjectival noun and adjective that has been applied to male academics should be eschewed on the grounds that they "have a very long intellectual history where it has long been associated with qualities culturally assumed to be male."

Dr. Delap's "schtick" is that one of the reasons men get more first class degrees at Oxford and Cambridge than women is because female students struggle with the "male dominated environment." She cites as examples reading lists dominated by male authors and the lack of diversity seen in college portrait collections.

It is true that until relatively recently (six or seven decades or so ago) Oxford, Cambridge, Durham and a vast majority of the less well-known British universities were exclusively male preserves.

But today the situation is vastly different. The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) – a British-based organization whose main role is to operate the application process for British universities – has just announced that more 18-year-old women are

securing places to study at Cambridge and Oxford than men for the first time in history.

This indicates the problems Dr. Delap identifies might well prove to be self-correcting. Indeed, it might not be long before an equally humorless male "gender history" professor demands that such words as "flair", "brilliant" and "genius" be dropped because they "have a very long intellectual history of being associated with qualities culturally assumed to be female."

Oxonians (as Oxford scholars are commonly called) are doubtless chortling over Dr. Delap's fulminations. Sooner rather than later, one suspects, they will cite her statements as evidence of their long-time rival's further intellectual decline – from polytechnic to vocational college.

But folks in glass houses shouldn't trade epithets. Oxford has its own problems when it comes to relations between the sexes. The university's history faculty was accused of sexism for introducing a "take home" exam paper in hopes of boosting results for female students who are statistically better performers at long term assessment than sit-down exams.

Some faculty members, however, object to the proposal on the grounds that it risks implying that women are the "weaker

Parish Prayer List

Our Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List as well as the guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice. To add a name to the prayer list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, ring the parish office on 410 560 6776.

FOR RECOVERY: Timothy, Peter, June, Sarah, Betsy, Edie, Alan, Terry, Helen, Jim, Linda, John, Judy, Neal, Aida, Stephen, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Eunice, Tom, Robert*, David, Jan, Susie, Sophia, Bobby, Lee, Cary, Cour Marie, Joanna, Kendall, Ian, Gloria, June, John, David, Adrian, Michell, Aida, Mai, Al, Kathy, Jack, Lewey & Stephen

FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Stephen, Melba, Sam, Vinnie, Doug, Ian, Lisa, Carey, Cindy, Jacob, Casey, Beth, Erin and Aubery

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Lt Alex Bursi, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes; MSGT Michael Holter, USAF; Cpt Fiodor Strikovski, US Army

sex."

You don't say!

Clearly there is at least one male author who does not appear as prominently as he should on reading lists at either university: George Orwell – one of the most prescient social critics of the modern age.

His seminal novel 1984 is an eloquent, and spine-chilling, denunciation of totalitarianism and the political correctness by which it comes into being and by which it maintains its tyranny.

The current social and political climate amply demonstrates the purpose of political correctness in shutting down discussion of ideas by the outright suppression of words and language with which they are debated.

In our universities, academic totalitarians employ politically correct epithets such as "sexism" and "racism" to shut down the dispassionate discussion about such issues as the alleged

under representation of female students in the disciplines of mathematics, the sciences, economics and engineering.

Could it be the totalitarians fear that an honest debate might reveal that their charges of “sexism” and “racism” are pure hokum because a majority of women simply happen to be more attracted to such disciplines as literature, the arts, sociology and psychology?

Be that as it may, this episode graphically illustrates the degree to which political correctness is debauching our institutions of higher learning. Not least it has deprived them of the ability to distinguish between the biological and the grammatical.

Apparently even Oxbridge men and women can no longer tell the difference between the word “gender” and the word “sex.” Gender is the term that denotes whether a noun is, grammatically, masculine, feminine or neuter. Sex, by contrast, is the biological term for the state of being male and female.

Dr. Delap is, thus, usurping a grammarian's prerogative by calling herself as “a lecturer in gender history.” If her department is genuinely interested in “transparency”, her proper title should be “lecturer in sex history.” Truth in advertising demands it! GPH✕

FROM THE PARISH CHEFS

There's nothing silly about our Silly Summer Suppers

The moment you have all been waiting has arrived. At 6.30 PM, each Wednesday, starting July 12th, the chefs of St. Stephen's will be serving the 2017 series of “Silly Summer Suppers.”

It's hard to think of a less appropriate name than “Silly Summer Suppers” for these remarkable gastronomic events. The food is absolutely scrumptious – and there is plenty of it. Actually, the only thing silly about these suppers is the price – entrée, dessert and salad for just \$10. Soda costs a buck and wine at \$3 per glass and \$5 for two.

And, by the way, if you are handy in the kitchen (or even if you are not) you are welcome to join our team of volunteer chefs. In fact, if you decide to do so, you 'll welcomed with open arms. When you come to think about it, cooking your way to heaven isn't such a bad idea.

St Stephen's Anglican Church

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Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

The Rev. Canon Guy P Hawtin, *Rector*
The Venerable Michael Kerouac, *Vicar*
The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. John Novicki and
The Rev. Robert Ludwig, *Associate Rectors*
The Rev. M Wiley Hawks, *Pastoral Care Chaplain*
Mrs Happy Riley, *Director of Pastoral Care & Wedding Coordinator*

SUNDAY SERVICES

8am: Said Eucharist

9.15am: Choral Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)

11am: Choral Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)

6pm: Choral Evensong (as announced) –

evensong.ststeve.com

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6pm: Evening Prayer

Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5pm: Family Eucharist

Calendar of Events

WEEKLY

Monday, 6.30pm: Bridge Club

Tuesday, 7am: Fellowship Breakfast (Nautilus Diner)

Thursday, 10am: Knitting Circle

Friday, 10.30am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

Parish Youth Play Group

Every Sunday After the 9.15 Eucharist

Vestry Meeting

Note: the meeting has been postponed until
Wednesday June 28th 7.00 pm because of the
Diocesan Synod

Independance Day Hymnfest

Tuesday July 4th 6.00 pm

Silly Summer Suppers

The season starts on at 6.30 PM on
Wednesday, July 12th in the Parish Hall

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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