

STUDENT ECONOMIC REVIEW 2015



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JAYWALKING OR JOYWALKING: A GAME THEORY APPROACH TO POLICY-MAKING

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BRITAIN MUST LEAVE: WHY PATRIOTISM HAS NO PLACE IN THE MODERN UNION

RÓNÁN O'CONNOR

BEST APPLIED ECONOMICS ESSAY

SPILLOVERS AND SYNERGIES: GEOGRAPHICAL CLUSTERING OF EMINENT SCIENTISTS

CONOR MCGLYNN

**EDITORS AND GENERAL MANAGERS OF THE
STUDENT ECONOMIC REVIEW 1987 - 2015**

Year	Editor	General Manager
1987 (Vol. I)	John Fingleton	Paddy Waldron
1988 (Vol. II)	Kevin Carey	Finbar McDonnell
1989 (Vol. III)	Jonathan Wright	Joe Dennehy
1990 (Vol. IV)	Philip Lane	C.J. O'Neill
1991 (Vol. V)	Paul O'Connell	Billy Stamp
1992 (Vol. VI)	Alan White	Addo C. Barrows III
1993 (Vol. VII)	Gareth Davis	David Butler
1994 (Vol. VII)	Alan Dunne	Donagh Butler
1995 (Vol. IX)	Fergal Shortall	Myles H. Clarke
1996 (Vol. X)	Geoffrey Gill	Suzanne O'Neill
1997 (Vol. XI)	Sarah Rowell	Carol Newman
1998 (Vol. XII)	Richard Doyle	Charlotte Hess
1999 (Vol. XIII)	Michael McMahon	Niamh McDonagh
2000 (Vol. XIV)	Ana Carrie	Colette Murphy
2001 (Vol. XV)	Ronan Lyons	Charles Larkin

Year	Editor	General Manager
2002 (Vol. XVI)	Ivan McAdam	Janine Boyd-O’Connell
2003 (Vol. XVII)	Rowena Gray	Elaine Doyle
2004 (Vol. XVIII)	Denis Tkatchenko	Tara McIndoe
2005 (Vol. XIX)	Cormac O’Dea	Paul Sammon
2006 (Vol. XX)	Deirdre Reilly	Melinda Simonffy
2007 (Vol. XXI)	Niamh Crilly	Charlie Nolan
2008 (Vol. XXII)	Nathalie Ennis	Kieran Curtis
2009 (Vol. XXIII)	Jean Acheson	James Walsh
2010 (Vol. XXIV)	Jason Somerville	Amandine Lobelle
2011 (Vol. XXV)	Robert Farhat	Áine Ní Shúilleabháin
2012 (Vol. XXVI)	Tony O’Connor	Debbie Blair
2013 (Vol. XXVII)	Brian Higgins	Marielle Grigsby-Rocca
2014 (Vol. XXVIII)	Féidhlim McGowan	Cián Mc Leod
2015 (Vol. XXIX)	Gearóid Gibbs	Michael Mahony

**GUEST SPEAKERS AT THE LAUNCH OF THE
STUDENT ECONOMIC REVIEW 1990 - 2015**

Year	Speaker	Organisation
1990 (Vol. IV)	Richard Lipsey	Simon Fraser University
1991 (Vol. V)	Charles Goodhart	London School of Economics
1992 (Vol. VI)	Peter Sinclair	Brasenose College, Oxford
1993 (Vol. VII)	David Greenway	Nottingham University
1994 (Vol. VII)	Hamish McRae	The Independent, London
1995 (Vol. IX)	John Sutton	London School of Economics
1996 (Vol. X)	John Martin	OECD
1997 (Vol. XI)	Alan Tait	IMF
1998 (Vol. XII)	David O'Sullivan	European Commission
1999 (Vol. XIII)	Paula Donovan	World Bank
2000 (Vol. XIV)	Dermot McCarthy	Department of An Taoiseach
2001 (Vol. XV)	Donal Donovan	IMF
2002 (Vol. XVI)	Margaret Doyle	The Economist
2003 (Vol. XVII)	Tom Healy	Irish Stock Exchange
2004 (Vol. XVIII)	Gerry Foley	ITV PLC.
2005 (Vol. XIX)	John Fingleton	Competition Authority

Year	Speaker	Organisation
2006 (Vol. XX)	Marius Brühlhart	HEC University of Lausanne
2007 (Vol. XXI)	Cliff Taylor	Sunday Business Post
2008 (Vol. XXII)	Alan Barrett	ESRI
2009 (Vol. XXIII)	Patricia Callan	Small Firms Association
2010 (Vol. XXIV)	Jane Williams	Forfás
2011 (Vol. XXV)	Tom O'Mahony	Department of Transport
2012 (Vol. XXVI)	Kyran McStay	Key Capital Limited
2013 (Vol. XXVII)	Alan Gray	Indecon Economic Consulting Group
2014 (Vol. XXVIII)	Anke Heydenreich	Attestor Capital LLP
2015 (Vol. XXIX)	Declan Sheehan	JP Morgan

STUDENT ECONOMIC REVIEW DEBATES 1996 - 2015

Year	Opposition	Topic	Victor
1996	U.C.D.	Third-Level Fees	Trinity
1998	U.C.D.	EMU Without Britain	Trinity
1999	Oxford	The Euro: The Way Forward?	Oxford
2002	Oxford	Boston or Berlin?	Trinity
2003	Cambridge	The Euro is a Success	Cambridge
2004	U.C.D.	Free Trade and Development	U.C.D.
2005	Oxford	Third World Debt	Trinity
2006	Cambridge	Common Agricultural Policy	Trinity
2007	Oxford	Environmental Responsibility	Trinity
2007	Yale	Boston or Berlin?	Trinity
2008	Harvard	Mass Emigration and Labour	Trinity
2008	Cambridge	Britain's Place in Europe	Cambridge
2009	Yale	Boston or Berlin?	Yale
2009	Oxford	Bank Nationalisation	Trinity
2010	Cambridge	Should Ireland Have Joined the Euro?	Trinity
2010	Harvard	The Decline of U.S. Economic Dominance	Harvard
2011	Oxford	Ireland Owes a Debt of Gratitude to Britain	Oxford
2011	Yale	It's All America's Fault	Trinity
2012	Cambridge	Ireland Should Rejoin the Sterling Area	Trinity
2012	Harvard	The U.S. State Does Not Care for its Sick	Harvard
2013	Oxford	Deserting the Euro	Trinity
2013	Yale	Tax is Theft	Trinity
2014	Cambridge	United States of Europe?	Cambridge
2014	Harvard	U.S. Education System	Trinity
2015	Oxford	100% Inheritance Tax	Trinity
2015	Yale	Opening the Mexican Border	Yale

“The Student Economic Review is the only student-run economics journal that I know of at any university... As recent events have highlighted, economics is still a young discipline, and the economics profession still has much to learn, but the opportunities and questions are exciting. The Student Economic Review is an unparalleled vehicle for getting students involved in research in economics and related fields.”

*Prof. Jonathan Wright
John Hopkins University, formerly Board of Governors
US Federal Reserve, SER Editor 1989*

“My involvement in the SER was an important defining point in my undergraduate experience at Trinity. It introduced me to the world of academia, the role and importance of academic publishing and the range of questions and depth of research possibilities in the discipline of economics.”

*Carol Newman,
PhD TCD, Associate Professor TCD,
General Manager 1997 SER*

“In my first year at Trinity, I read the Student Economic Review with awe. There were so many thought-provoking articles, written to such a high calibre... This publication is truly a testament to the passion and dedication that Trinity’s students and faculty have to economics and to higher learning. It is an honour to get to continue to be involved with the Review as a graduate.”

*Aoife Cunningham,
Apache Corporation
SER Finance Manager, 2008*

Further reflections available online at
<http://www.tcd.ie/Economics/SER/about/reflections.php>

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THE STUDENT
ECONOMIC REVIEW



WELCOME TO THE REVIEW

On behalf of the committee of the Student Economic Review I would like to extend our warmest thanks to you, the reader, for purchasing this copy of our annual journal and for your continued support of our society. Within the pages of this highly acclaimed academic journal you will find the culmination of a yearlong project executed with precision by this year's committee, comprising solely of Junior Sophister Economic students. Now in its twenty-ninth year the SER provides a unique focal point for students across a range of disciplines to demonstrate their skills and knowledge, outside the usual setting of the lecture theatre or exam hall. This provides Trinity students with a hands-on approach to learning, allowing trinity undergraduate students to reach their full potential and to develop independent learning skills crucial to life after college.

The remit of the SER extends beyond the publication of this journal. In conjunction with the Trinity Philosophical Society, the SER was proud to host two very successful debates against Oxford and Yale University this academic year. The innovative and ever-evolving nature of the SER was on full display this year when, for the first time, a post-debates workshop was held to discuss the debate motions, allowing those not directly involved with the debate to have their say and practice for future and forthcoming debates. Our interview with Gideon Rachman (chief foreign affairs columnist of the Financial Times), was another first for the SER. Our annual Foundation Scholarship workshop helps young undergraduates gain their first footholds on the ladder of academic success. We were proud to invite back Cormac O'Dea, a former editor of the SER, who has successfully established himself as a senior research economist at the Institute for Fiscal Studies, London.

I would not be writing this welcome, nor would you be reading it, if it were not for the generous support of our sponsors. Due to kindness and foresight of these modern day philanthropists the SER has been able to tap into the well of potential that is our students, who are the future leaders of the business, economic, social and political world. It is through societies, such as ours, that students learn to develop their skills outside the lecture theatre and exam hall. Through the debates, workshops and publication of essays undergraduate's progress from being a student to an economist and masters of their field. Therefore, it is only but fitting that our deepest respect and gratitude is extended to Harry Hartford, Vinay Nair, Alan Gray, Aoife Cunningham and Bord na Móna.

I would also like to extend our thanks to Siobhán O'Brien of the economics department. Without her help, dedication and hard-work the SER would not be the success it is today. In particular I would like to thank her for the fantastic work she has done in launching our brand new website. On the website past issues of the SER journal, our upcoming events, a list of our sponsors and our submission page for potential essays for the journal can be found. Without doubt, the launch of our new website was a milestone in

the history of the SER.

The SER would never have been established as the successful society and the academic masterpiece it is today without the perseverance and clairvoyance of the President of the SER, Professor John O'Hagan. For that, we must all be thankful. Professor John O'Hagan has provided countless students with the opportunity for self-advancement not only in his lectures but also through the workings of the SER. Throughout the year, I found that no matter the time of day (or night, in some cases) Professor O'Hagan was always there, ready to dispense advice or simply just to chat. It was a great honour and privilege to have the opportunity, and experience, to work with one of Trinity's (and Ireland's) most experienced and professional economists. Furthermore, the committee would also like to extend our thanks to Dr. Ronan Lyons, Dr. Michael Wycherley and Dr. Tara Mitchell who regularly liaise with committee members to ensure our success throughout the year. Our final worthy patron is Whately Professor of Political Economy and Head of the Economics Department (and former editor of the SER), Professor Philip Lane. Not only has he helped the SER through his successful stewardship as a former editor, but now as head of department continues to provide support allowing this much appreciated society to continue, prosper and evolve.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow committee members. While I would like to mention each individually and all their accomplishments throughout the year, that would diminish the team effort that is vital to the survival and spirit of the SER. Every single member exerted themselves one hundred percent in ensuring that the standard of the SER was as high this year as every other. The committee acted in unison at all times, allowing us to achieve all of our stated goals and to provide the greatest service possible to our fellow economic students. I could not have been luckier in the chosen committee; the intelligence, dedication and innovation of each member never failed to astound me. Not only did I enjoy leading this diverse group, I also have made many new friends for life!

I hope that as you read this journal you will appreciate the high academic ability sampled in it. The journal is the culmination of a year-long project undertaken by us on the committee, the department of economics and all students of the discipline of economics who attended the debates, workshops and submitted an essay.

MICHAEL MAHONY

General Manager, Student Economic Review 2015.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the Student Economic Review 2015. In its 29th year, the Review has a long established tradition of academic excellence, and prides itself in providing students with a forum to contribute to the economic discourse at Trinity and beyond.

An exploration of economics can take many forms. This diversity is evident in the variety of submissions we have received and the papers we have published. While some submissions are natural developments from course material, others extend beyond the scope of what is taught in the classroom and examine a range of contemporary economic issues. Regardless, publication is a fantastic achievement and demonstrates an ability to both understand and convey the often complex arguments of economics. Given continued high submission levels, we regretfully had to leave many excellent essays out. We hope, however, that the papers selected for this edition will educate and inform the reader about a range of topics of interest to students at present. The publication is divided into five categories, which are outlined below.

The first section on Economic History opens with an essay by Conor McGlynn exploring the common ground between Aristotle's account of private property and modern economic views. Féidhlim McGowan considers historic British tea prices and develops an empirical framework to investigate commodity price shocks. Following this, we have a thought-provoking paper which questions if free trade is always the best policy, while another paper examines the panic of 1873, which triggered a depression in Europe and North America.

Applied Economics contains several novel and original essays concerning the practical applications of economics in the modern world. Sabrina Schönfeld's behavioural game theory exploration of jaywalking was awarded the Best Overall Essay Prize. This engaging and informative piece looks at how policymakers can use concepts from behavioural economics to change payoff structures of agents in order to achieve optimal Nash equilibria. Greg Mangan takes an industrial economics approach to the music industry and looks at the market for digital music against an ever-changing technological background. Another prize in this section, Best Applied Economics Essay, is awarded to Conor McGlynn for his account of the phenomenon of geographical clustering by eminent scientists. One last paper examines the impact of a new climate change risk on urban housing market dynamics.

Monetary Thought remains an important area of interest. Jack Dempsey examines the factors which can help explain higher sovereign default rates in South American countries. Sergey Alifanov explores a number of concerns with the workings of the fractional reserve banking system and outlines how policy implementations could address these. A further paper recounts how reluctance to leave the gold standard was significant

in prolonging the Great Depression.

Essays in Political Economy allow for rich and varied analyses of economics intertwined with policy and politics. Rónán O'Connor wins the Best Political Economy Essay Prize for a confident and well-argued piece on the current state of the European Union and Britain's role, if any. Economics has obvious practical implications for policy issues and Daniel O'Brien presents an intriguing paper on how paternalistic policies can disproportionately affect the poor. We also learn about the moral limits surrounding the market for blood, and the barriers which inhibit job creation in the French labour market.

Economic Research is the fifth and final section of the Review and sees two strong econometric investigations. Firstly, Cián Mc Leod looks into the impact of labour market gender equality on FDI flows in Southeast Asia. While, Conor Parle considers what is the most efficient method to improve an education system.

I cannot continue without expressing my sincere gratitude to my colleagues on the Editorial team. Paul, John, and William all worked tirelessly to identify and select essays which were not only economically sound and well argued but also interesting and engaging. The selection process was lively but we managed to reach consensus, while also learning a great deal about new topics and issues in economics. Paul's attention to detail has ensured maximum writing quality throughout the essays.

I must also thank my fellow committee members for their dedication in organising a variety of events throughout the year. The debates and workshops reinforce the Review's aim of promoting and stimulating economic discussion on campus. Michael, as General Manager, was of vital importance in keeping the selection process anonymous. While Greg, our production manager, put in long hours to ensure the Review looked well and was published on time.

Finally, I must thank the Department of Economics for their continued support of this student publication. Special thanks to Dr Mitchell, Dr Lyons, and Dr Wycherley for their help throughout the year. Most importantly, I wish to acknowledge the unwavering commitment of Professor O'Hagan. As our president, it has been his vision, counsel, and dedication that have made the Student Economic Review what it is today. For this, we have the utmost gratitude.

I now encourage you to explore the many novel and engaging essays which we have chosen for publication, and I hope you enjoy reading the papers presented as much as I have.

GEARÓID GIBBS

Editor, Student Economic Review 2015.

WORKSHOPS

For the 2014-2015 academic year the Student Economic Review ventured into new ground. In addition to the two workshops held in Michaelmas and Hilary Term, we held an interview with Gideon Rachman, the Chief Foreign Affairs Correspondent for the Financial Times (FT). Such experiences helped students engage with economic affairs outside the lecture hall.

‘Schols’ Workshop

30 October 2014

The Annual SER Schols Workshop is the key event for the preparation of Trinity’s most prestigious examinations, the Foundation Scholarship. By covering the Economics, Business, Politics, Sociology, and Philosophy papers the SER gave valuable insights and tips to prospective scholarship candidates. A mixture of current scholars and high scoring students engaged with the audience with Q&A session making the event as interactive as possible.

Cormac O’Dea, Senior Research Economist IFS

28 January 2015

The SER welcomed Cormac O’Dea, a Senior Research Economist from the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) in London, to discuss the relevance of economic research to public policy. The IFS is Britain’s leading microeconomic research institute, which has a global impact on a range of actors. Due to having one of the broadest research remits in public policy analysis, this event covered a range of topics relevant for all economics students.

Gideon Rachman Interview

19 February 2015

Three SER members, William Foley, Rónán O’Connor, and myself, were given the opportunity to interview Gideon Rachman over a cup of coffee. The interview is published below, aptly named “Coffee with the SER: Gideon Rachman”. Given the topical nature of European affairs we focused our attention to these issues.

Before the interview the SER would like to add it was a pleasure to interview Gideon, and thank him for the experience. I would like to extend my appreciation to the rest of the SER who helped make all these events a rewarding experience. Special thanks to Professor John O’Hagan, and the rest of the economics department for their continued support.



From left to right: Rónán O'Connor, John Tate, Gideon Rachman, William Foley

Coffee with the SER: Gideon Rachman

Before joining Financial Times in 2006, Gideon Rachman worked for 15 years at The Economist in a range of jobs. Currently the chief foreign affairs correspondent for the FT, he has gained a unique insight from his extensive travels and access to world leaders. Such knowledge has given us a refreshingly different perspective on the current issues in the European Union (EU).

From being born and raised in London, it was intriguing to find out that Gideon believes that “the predictions everybody has made for many years, that Britain would be marginalised if it did not join the euro, have pretty much come true”. Such events combined with the current political climate in Britain, has led the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, to attempt to quell threats from Tory backbenchers and UKIP, with a referendum promise on the EU after the next general election. Gideon suspects a British exit from the EU will not occur, but the outcome will be close. Such a vote to stay in does not mean the UK should join the euro, as Gideon believes “Britain was probably right not to join the euro given what has happened, but the cost is that you are marginalised and that will continue”. Gideon argued that such an affect would occur as “the main questions of the EU are about the euro”.

However, Gideon stressed that the potential dangers of a Brexit are not confined to Britain itself. If the UK left it “would damage the EU”, and is arguably worth more consideration. Despite being the pain-in-the neck of Europe, the UK is an ally to the economically liberal countries. He argued, “If you were one of the Nordics, or the Germans, or actually the Irish, I would be uneasy where EU debates would go if that British voice was not at the table”. Gideon supported such claims by citing Britain’s key role in the de-

velopment of the internal market.

Gideon was not only uneasy about where the debate in Europe might go, but also of the potential negative signal a Brexit could have to the rest of the union. Given the relatively large economic clout the UK possesses a move away from the EU may highlight the potential weakness of the resulting members. He argued, "if Britain leaves they've got to fail". However, if the perception of such a move is that it is due to internal nervous breakdown such signals may not be present. As a large economy, unlike Switzerland, Britain can have leverage with tax rates, which could create tensions. Gideon argued we "could get into a very difficult relationship and it would be probably be better for all sides to cooperate".

However, Gideon believes one of the big problems with European integration generally is that "they have tended to assume there is a greater degree of unity than actually exists, and they have also assumed that if they created the structures that unity will follow if they force people to cooperate". He believes that such effects are not working very well. Although, with "foreign policy you've tended to see that the EU is good at agreeing on second order issues, but when there's a huge international crisis national interests come to the fore very quickly". With regard to the current crisis in Ukraine, Gideon believes that the EU has not done too badly over Russia compared to other crises, like Iraq. However, tensions have bubbled beneath the surface. Gideon argued, even though "Greece isn't really in a position to be difficult, but they are being as difficult as they can be given their position".

Despite such a potentially fractionalised response Gideon does not believe that the EU has failed as a peace project, by not developing a modern day equivalent to the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Signed in 1951 Schuman argued this treaty made war between historic rivals, France and Germany "not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible" by joining these key strategic industries. Gideon argued, "I would never say [war is] impossible in Western Europe, but it is as close to as impossible". In this light, Gideon revealed a previous conversation with a French strategist explaining that they had a nuclear facility as a form of insurance against a potential German aggression.

Gideon argued that the reason for there being no EU foreign policy collective is due to the potential lack of acceptance from member states. Thus a move to majority voting with foreign policy must be accepted, and such a case is unlikely to occur if countries deem that their national interests are at stake.

Such hardwired sovereignty not only posits problems for foreign policy, but also economic policy across the Eurozone. Such divisions are clear with crises, which are the real test to the European project. The lack of trust between EU members highlighted the ethno-national divide, which is not present between states within the US. Gideon argued there is a need to respond to nations' preferences. He argued the most recent attempt to build trust happened with Monnet, where the WW2 peace project was more resonant.

Even including such effects Gideon cited that “what Monnet was asking people to do was less hard than what was done in the 1990s.”

However, despite such potential limitations to a foreign policy response, Gideon finds the desire for Europe to be a superpower “is the most persuasive argument for the EU.” The days of Britain and France’s use of the UN Security Council membership are probably gone, Gideon argued. To maintain their influence the EU must rise with India and China on the international stage. Gideon argues such realisations have convinced natural euro sceptics, like William Hague, that it’s easier to get heard when you speak for 27 or 28 countries rather than one.

Despite such potential gains of the EU it is a consensus-based organisation and the rise of populist parties poses a clear threat to progression. Gideon argued such a phenomenon “is partly a product of the euro-crisis”. Without the ability to devalue or inflate away the debt, debtor countries have adjusted more painfully. Gideon argued there are always two sides to debt, and for the EU to operate we need trust, and renegeing on debt will break that. He argued that “the EU is a law based institution and it’s based on the idea that people follow them, and if they don’t trust begins to break down, the whole thing begins to breakdown.”

Gideon did raise concerns about the political stability of Europe, evident with the rise of Golden Dawn, a Neo-Nazi party in Greece. However, he argued cutting the debt is not necessarily the solution as other countries had similar debt problems yet did not have such political turmoil. With regards to the Irish case Gideon agreed that Ireland should not have guaranteed unsecured bondholders, and that they should have faced a haircut making the debt less crushing. He argued a sense of social justice would then be more prevalent. However, Gideon praised Ireland in admitting their fault in the crisis, and made a stark contrast with the “self-pitying” nature in Greece.

However, Gideon believes criticism may have now gone to far, and there is a lack of recognition of our common ground. He argued that the euro has focused attention “on what is different... but if we look at Russia we see that we have a lot in common”. In light of this, Gideon believes that the Euro will break-up as monetary unions generally don’t last unless political union is behind them. He argues, “it has become apparent that you need at least a transfer union, ...[but I] doubts the political will is there for that or that it will emerge”. He acknowledges that “There are massive risks for breaking it up, and that may be enough to keep it together”, like an unhappy marriage. He warned, “Russia has the potential to divide us, but equally if it went in the other direction it could be a unifying factor, although I wouldn’t put my house on it.”

JOHN TATE

Assistant Editor & Workshop Convenor, Student Economic Review 2015.

THE SER DEBATES

Since their inauguration in 1996 the SER debates have come to be one of the most exciting events in the Trinity calendar. This year saw Trinity face Oxford and Yale and proved to be one of the most exciting years yet with each debate played out to packed chamber. We would like to extend our sincerest gratitude to the University Philosophical Society and in particular to their President Sarah Mortell and their Secretary Clare Ní Cheallaigh, who were a pleasure to work with and ensured the debates exhibited the professionalism and oratorical prowess that characterises both the Phil and the SER. Thanks also to Professor John O’Hagan, Tara Mitchell and Ronan Lyons for their counsel throughout the year, without which these debates would not have been so successful. We also wish to extend our thanks to Mr Vinay Nair, founder of the international debates against Harvard, Yale, Cambridge and Oxford.



From left to right: Richard Ngo (Oxford), John Engle (Oxford), Rex Batar (Oxford), Liam Hunt (Trinity), Caoimhe Stafford (Trinity), William Dunne (Trinity)

Trinity vs. Oxford

20 November 2014

The first SER debate of the year was against Oxford, with the teams facing off over the motion “This House would introduce a 100% inheritance tax” to a packed chamber in the Graduates’ Memorial Building. It was agreed the proposal was best debated ideologically and the principled debate that unfolded revealed the dual nature of inheritance to an economy.

Caoimhe laid out the endemic harms in perpetual wealth that circulates lineage rather than the economy. She outline the stagnation that this causes and the unfair burden

lifted from the kin of the successful to contribute for themselves. She impressed upon us the good that the State could do with the wealth obtained by this tax.

Rex was quick to point out that we were still mystified as to the implementation of such a policy. He harangued Trinity for the burden Oxford saw that would require children to pay back every penny their parents invested in them. He extolled the virtues of longevity in business as a means of creating a legacy and a lasting ideology that can persist beyond the economic quarterly forecasts.

William clarified the practical aspects of the policy by explaining that the tax was only applicable to assets that held transferable monetary value after the death of the parents. In this sense the field of the debate was more about ownership of boats and houses than education and clothing. He argued that the burden this removes from the lower-income individuals cannot be overlooked in that it allows them access to social mobility they could never previously attain.

Richard continued the discussion in terms of the impact on the lower-income households by arguing that they in fact lose out when they can no longer retain a family business. He deplored the intense competitive markets that would destroy family businesses without the protection of inheritance to sustain them.

Liam brought Trinity's case to a close by exploring the costs of inheritance on a broader scale. He outlined how inefficient wealth can be when held for so long in inheritance because it is so inflexible when removed from the competitive market allocation. He illustrated this with the losses to property that might be more efficiently used in another form that may lie vacant as part of an inheritance so large it remains unexploited for generations.

John responded on behalf of Oxford by discussing what he saw as the Trinity team's failure to provide a viable alternative. Ultimately he told us inheritance is the only means by which we can maintain longevity to an field of business which is essential for development. Progress would not be possible without the institutional memory accumulated by corporate longevity and ultimately those who owned big businesses can always find a way around these governmental constraints.

The debate came down to whether a redistribution of wealth by removing inheritance was desirable rather than whether it was feasible. Trinity won the debate unanimously while John of Oxford claimed the best speaker prize on the night. Our thanks to all of the judges and particularly to Dr. Frances Ruane for her pithy insights in delivering her adjudication and the more lighthearted commentary from the debate chair, Dr. Patrick Geoghegan.



Back row (L to R): SER Committee- Aoife Slevin, Michael Mahony, William Foley, Greg Mangan, Richard d’Esterre Roberts, Gearóid Gibbs, Paul Reidy, John Tate, Rónán O’Connor
Front Row (L to R): Niall Casey (Trinity), William Dunne (Trinity), Hannah Beresford (Trinity), Soonjoe Sul (Yale), Adira Levine (Yale), Christopher Taylor (Yale)

Trinity vs. Yale

19 February 2015

Teams from Trinity College Dublin and Yale University debated the motion “This House would open the U.S. border to Mexico” in the Graduates’ Memorial Building. The debate was chaired by Gideon Rachman, Chief Foreign Affairs Editor of the Financial Times. The chair of the judging panel, RTÉ Morning Ireland’s Áine Lawlor, awarded Yale the prize for best team on the night. Trinity’s Hannah Beresford was awarded Best Speaker, while Trinity’s William Dunne was, according to Ms. Lawlor, a close runner-up.

The full panel for the debate, hosted by the University Philosophical Society, consisted of Áine Lawlor, Stephen Collins, Political Editor of the Irish Times, and Hannah Cogan and Rebecca Keating, both past winners of the SER debate and Trinity graduates. The Trinity team, consisting of Niall Casey, William Dunne, and Hannah Beresford, argued on the proposition side during the debate.

Casey argued that immigration has historically underpinned American success and that the current system has held back prosperity and caused massive suffering. Dunne claimed in his speech that he despaired on lecturing Americans on their own cherished values of freedom, and argued that the better wage competition caused by the migrant influx would keep firms in the US. In her speech, Beresford put it to the house that immigrants would bring new ideas and entrepreneurial spirit to America.

The Yale team, consisting of Adira Levine, Christopher Tyler, and Yoon Joe Sul argued the opposition side. Levine argued that the sudden wholesale opening up of the border to low-skilled migrants would lead to a disastrous rise in crime and a fall in working conditions. In his speech, Tyler argued that the proposition side were basing their position on a mistaken idea of American exceptionalism. Finally, Yoon argued that there is a difference between being nice and being good - so that if her mother decided to feed all the homeless men on her street rather than her she would be justifiably annoyed.

In his closing speech, Gideon Rachman told an amusing but salutary story about his deportation from the United States. He also pointed out that the opening up of internal borders within the European Union had led to a surge of anti-immigration parties. He also said that he felt uncomfortable hearing Europeans lecture Americans on their border problems when hundreds of migrants drown in the the mediterranean every year when trying to enter Europe.

The SER would like to extend our sincerest thanks to both Trinity teams and the Oxford and Yale teams for providing two compelling debates. Their talent both engaged the audience through rhetorical persuasion as well as challenged the judges through their developed, principled argumentation. We would also like to thank in particular Professors John O'Hagan, Tara Mitchell and Ronan Lyons for their guidance throughout the year. Thanks finally to all of those who came out to enjoy this opportunity to open up Economics to the art of debate, something that we hope to see even more of going forward.

RÓNÁN O'CONNOR

Debates Manager, Student Economic Review 2015.

WILLIAM FOLEY

Assistant Editor and Assistant Debates Manager, Student Economic Review 2015.