

# Reflections of Past Committee Members, 1987 to 2014, on their Experiences with the SER

## 1987 to 1991

"The *Student Economic Review* gives many students their first opportunity to publish a piece of academic written work. It thus supports and promotes the rigorous analysis, excellence in learning and persuasion that are essential building blocks for future careers and broader intellectual contribution. The collected contributions, now reaching into a third decade, constitute an elegant contribution to scholarship and erudition of which Trinity College can be proud."

*John Fingleton, DPhil Oxford, Economic Consultant, former Chief Executive Office of Fair Trading London, Editor 1987 SER.*

"What I can recall most is the extraordinary fellowship among undergraduates, post-graduates, and faculty to sustain the publication, a sense of wonderment when sponsorship money (£100!) was found, and then amazement at what our successors were able to do with it. It has proved a lot more sustainable than a brief attempt of ours to inject economics content into *Trinity News*, with an article on smoking and taxation in a special issue devoted to 'the vices'!"

*Kevin Carey, PhD Princeton, Lead Economist Middle East and North Africa Region World Bank, Editor 1988 SER*

"The *Student Economic Review* is the only student-run economics journal that I know of at any university. It has succeeded beyond anyone's wildest expectations when it first came out, over 20 years ago. 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."

*Jonathan Wright, PhD Yale, Professor of Economics, John Hopkins University, formerly Board of Governors US Federal Reserve, Editor 1989 SER*

"A hallmark of the Trinity economics department (both when I was a student and still today) is that there are numerous opportunities to write about economics in an essay format. The ability to write well is a crucial requirement for career success in many fields and can also offer much by way of personal fulfilment. The SER provides a unique outlet for the best economics essays each year and I am always impressed by the quality of the contributions. On the production side, the editorial and publication process is a tremendous learning opportunity for the SER committee, as well as the origin of many long-lasting friendships."

*Philip Lane, PhD Harvard, Governor Central Bank of Ireland, Editor 1990 SER*

"There's a strange alchemy to the *Student Economic Review*. It pulls together a diverse community of students to produce a publication like no other. Whether surveying the state of the art, or changing the state, the articles it contains bring out the best in each contributor. More than that, though, the final product is greater than the sum of its parts. The ties it forges and the legacy it leaves are unique, as is clear on the faces of students, faculty and guests at each year's launch."

*Paul O'Connell, PhD Harvard, President & Partner at FDO Partners Investment Management, Boston, Editor 1991 SER*

### 1992 to 1995

"I remember fondly our 1992 blue cover with the EU logo signifying Ireland's important role with the EU that year....the cover caused us some heartburn but turned out well! The SER is a wonderful vehicle for budding economists to showcase their research. As a consultant in economics-related matters, my involvement with the SER was invaluable in developing my research skills as well as my communication and project-management skills. The SER is truly unique and Trinity should be proud of it. I wish it continued success."

*Alan White, PhD UBC Canada, Managing Principal at Analysis Group Boston, Editor 1992 SER*

"When I explain to other people that I voluntarily spent the Easter holidays of 1993 locked up in a computer lab proof editing essays from my fellow economics students, they quickly form the view that I must not have had much of a social life nor many friends while an undergraduate! Seriously, the SER was a great experience and something that built my confidence immensely during a formative period of my life."

*Gareth Davis, PhD George Mason, Head of Corporate Strategy ESB, Editor 1993 SER*

"What I recall most from the experience of editing the 1994 Review was the fun and enjoyment of collaborating closely with classmates, and the shared satisfaction of delivering a quality publication for the launch. Indeed, the collaboration wasn't limited to the production; the editing committee broke new ground by co-authoring an essay! Looking back at that year, it is fascinating to see how some essays provide a snapshot of the main economic debates of the day, while others are as relevant today as in 1994."

*Alan Dunne, MSc Hong Kong, Managing Director Abbey Capital Dublin, Editor 1994 SER*

"The hard part was trying to be as fair as possible in whittling down a huge number of high-calibre submissions and working together to produce a physical publication that we could actually launch, all the while wrestling with the quirks of Microsoft Publisher 2.0 in some dingy attic in House 6. I'm not sure we succeeded – and I'll never forget the horrible feeling in the pit of my stomach when I realised the printers had messed up the cover and the title just said 'Student' – but I learned an enormous amount about team-work, logistics, finance and leadership that has stood to me ever since."

*Fergal Shortall, MSc Warwick, Head International Economics Bank of England, Editor 1995 SER*

### 1996 to 2000

"The things I remember about being Editor of the SER are what I value most in any work environment – intellectual rigour, collaboration and camaraderie, creativity and a small dose of pressure! It was great fun, and fantastic to see what a few third-year students, with a little guidance and direction (thanks John), can achieve. Down through the years, the calibre of the personnel involved has always been high, and the quality bar continually raised. It's also really cool to get your name in print!"

*Geoff Gill, MPhil Oxford, Partner Transfer Pricing Deloitte Sydney, Editor 1996 SER*

"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. . It has stood the test of time and grows stronger every year attracting the highest calibre of students."

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

"My abiding memories of the SER are of the tremendous efforts of the committee to meet the production deadline, the quality of the essays, the support from the Department, our pride in the

finished product and a fantastic launch party. Other highlights included international interest in the Review, and a debate with arch rivals UCD about the euro that evoked strong passions! Overall, involvement with the SER provided some of the best experiences of my undergraduate days and I remain firm friends with many other members of the committee."

*Padraig Dixon, DPhil Oxford, Research Associate Health Economics, University of Bristol, Production 1998 SER*

"The 1999 SER had a profound effect on my life. I made life-long friends and it cemented my broad interests in economics that have driven my career choices since. Trinity had already exposed me to the fact that I was interested in many aspects of economics; but the Review highlighted that research, even when carried out by inexperienced undergraduates, allows an economist to dig deeper and to develop further understanding. I caught the research bug and it spurred me on to complete a PhD and to move into academia."

*Michael McMahon, PhD LSE, Associate Professor of Economics Warwick University, Editor 1999 SER*

"It is no exaggeration to say that the SER was the most enjoyable project I was involved with in my time at Trinity. Perhaps I just got lucky, but the committee comprised a lovely group of individuals who worked hard and had great fun in publishing the 'Millennium' edition. Many future economists and leaders in the financial world were first published in the SER, something I am sure they are very proud to acknowledge."

*Rowena Dwyer, MSc York, Chief Economist Irish Farmers' Association, Finance Officer 2000 SER*

## **2001 to 2005**

"The SER is a great way for students to move past review essays and on to doing their own analysis. The debates, now an integral part of the SER, pit Trinity's finest against the world's best debaters, giving the student body a chance to see ideas in action. And for those who get to serve on the Committee, it is a fantastic lesson in delivering a project from start to finish. It is no surprise, then, that Trinity's SER has become a role model for other subjects within Trinity and for students in Economics departments elsewhere."

*Ronan Lyons, DPhil Oxford, Assistant Professor of Economics TCD, and Editor 2001 SER*

"I was in charge of events. Who could I possibly invite to come and speak to our class? Who else but the first SER Editor, then Head of the Competition Authority? I remember arriving at his offices, unannounced and uninvited. 'I'd like to speak to the Chairman please'. 'Do you have an appointment? 'No!'. 'Who are you?' 'I am from the *Student Economic Review*'. Of course he would speak, only too happy to do so. And that was the start of my career in financial publishing and events. Thank you SER: it was your fault!"

*Orson Francescone, General Manager Euromoney Seminars, Workshops Manager 2002 SER*

"I convened the debate once, and spoke in it twice. One of the few occasions in my life that I can recall my appetite failing me was at Commons in advance of my first debate, which was against a Cambridge team that featured the then-World champion. As it turns out, the nerves were put to good use and we went on to win. The following year, my appetite was much better...and we lost! My involvement in the SER debates trained me for many things – giving seminars; organizing conferences; structuring a paper – but I still haven't thought of a comeback!"

*David Comerford, PhD UCD, Lecturer in Economics Stirling University, Debates Manager 2003 SER*

"Each person on the committee delivered a great output for their role which led to a wealth of enjoyable experiences for us all: from the debates, to the fund-raising, to 'publication week' and all culminating in the launch of the Review – a showcase event for the Department each year. Publication week was intense. We became daily pilgrims to Keoghs for scones and coffee to fuel the

endless revisions to page numbering and title formatting. Twelve-hour days in House 6 started to seem like a way of life!"

*Tara McIndoe Calder, PhD TCD, Senior Economist Central Bank of Ireland, General Manager 2004 SER*

"I found having the opportunity to submit content for peer-review and publish some original work to be an extremely motivating prospect. I participated as well in many hugely enjoyable SER debates. My involvement on the committee also granted me the opportunity not only to make more friends from my course (some of whom remain my closest friends to this day) but meet my wife, so I'm particularly happy to have been involved!"

*Cormac O'Dea, PhD UCL, Senior Research Economist Institute for Fiscal Studies London, Editor 2005 SER*

## **2006 to 2010**

"Being involved in the *Student Economic Review* was a highly beneficial experience. It gave me early exposure to many different areas and approaches of economics, as well as finance, production, marketing, event management, public speaking and editorship, and through it made some great friends. In 2007 we celebrated the 20th edition of the SER and I was fortunate to meet many distinguished past committee members who returned to Trinity for the launch."

*Deirdre Reilly, PhD TCD, McGarrell Reilly Group, Editor 2006 SER*

"It is never the wrong time to work on the SER. I did so on Christmas Day when I emailed John O'Hagan about some production ideas I had! . And like any good Christmas experience, it stayed with me---the SER piqued my interest in doing research, and showed me how one can dig deeper to analyse and understand economic problems---and I have been digging ever since."

*Michal Kolesár, PhD Harvard, Assistant Professor Princeton, Production Manager 2007 SER*

"In my first year at Trinity, I read the SER with awe. There were so many thought-provoking articles, written to such a high calibre. In my ensuing years I tried to emulate the standard of the Review set, though not always successfully! This publication is truly a testament to the passion and dedication that Trinity's students and faculty have to economics and to higher learning."

*Aoife Cunningham, MSc TCD, Supervisor of Corporate Planning, Apache Corporation, Houston, Finance Manager 2008 SER*

"I feel very lucky to have been part of the SER. It was a unique opportunity to extend and encourage economic thinking outside the lecture hall, and the quality of the essays and debates that resulted was a real testament to the economics department, the talent of the students, and the dedication of the other committee members."

*Jean Acheson, MSc UCL, ODI Fellow Rwanda, Editor 2009 SER*

"The *Student Economic Review* was without a doubt one of the highlights of my BESS undergraduate degree. It was a privilege to be a part of this talented and driven group of students, most of whom became friends for life. The SER was a conduit for research and discussion on pertinent economic debates outside of the classroom; the calibre of the essays that were submitted, and the resulting journal we published, is a true reflection of the world-class standing of the Trinity economics department and its lecturers."

*Amandine Lobelle, Master in Public Policy student, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, General Manager 2010 SER*

## **2011 to 2016**

"The (SER) experience opened my eyes to areas of economic research which I hadn't yet been exposed to and motivated my desire to do original research of my own and enter a PhD programme. I believe the high quality of the review reflects the hard work put in each year by the students involved and is a testament to the incredible legacy left over by the founders, previous team members and contributors."

*Cian Ruane, PhD student Stanford, Production Manager 2011 SER*

"I really enjoyed the experience of managing a team of like-minded students with the ultimate aim of producing a high quality journal, as well as enjoying ourselves with the debates and workshops along the way. I would encourage everyone to get involved; be it by attending a debate, trying out for a position on the committee, submitting a piece of their own work or even simply just to read the journal. I look back on my time in Trinity with fond memories and certainly the SER stands out as one of the most rewarding experiences."

*Debbie Blair, M Phil Oxford, Researcher Becker-Friedman Centre Chicago, General Manager 2012 SER*

"Being victorious in a debate against a team of Cambridge post-graduate students seemed a far-off prospect when I began university. However, in my second year of College as a member of the *Student Economic Review* Debate team I achieved just this! The SER is a mechanism by which undergraduate students are challenged to develop their thoughts and means of expression. While the Review itself is focused on written expression, the debates enable this through oratory."

*Estelle Purcell, Tax Specialist PwC Dublin, Debates Manager 2013 SER*

"Ever since leafing through a copy of the SER in my JF year, my ambition to become involved in this prestigious student society could not be curbed. Leading the committee through the year from the first workshop to the launch was an experience dotted along the way with enduring memories. From a three-day discussion about which tablecloth should be used for the workshop (!), to finally holding a copy of the review at the launch evening. I'm sure our friendships will last as long as the memory of my scrupulous organisation!"

*Cián McLeod, Strategic Operations Specialist, Google Ireland, General Manager SER 2014*

"Getting involved with the Student Economic Review really added another dimension to my Economics experience at Trinity, offering exposure to the world of academic research in a very hands-on way. The production end of things was quite challenging, but everything ran smoothly- 'production week' was actually more like 'production weekend' thanks to our great team. The toughest decision was, of course, the cover colours, but thankfully they went down very well. It was a proud moment when I finally got to flick through the first printed copy of the 2015 SER!"

*Greg Mangan, SS student in Economics and Mathematics, Production Manager SER 2015*

"Being part of the *Student Economic Review* was a fantastic experience and stands out as one of the highlights of my time in Trinity. It was an incredible year, with the debates, hosting two Nobel Laureates and of course selecting from the essays received, which were numerous, varied, and interesting. There was something very special about the Launch and seeing so many past committee members come back and the regard they still hold the SER in really highlighted that it is something quite unique."

*Gillian O'Connell, JS Student in Economics and Psychology, Editor SER 2016.*