

A timeline of contributions to the EDI material on display at the Biology Department of the University of Oxford, and associated commentary

May 11, 2026

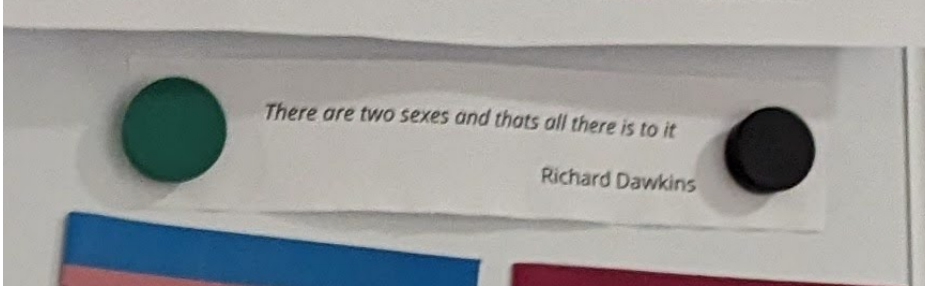
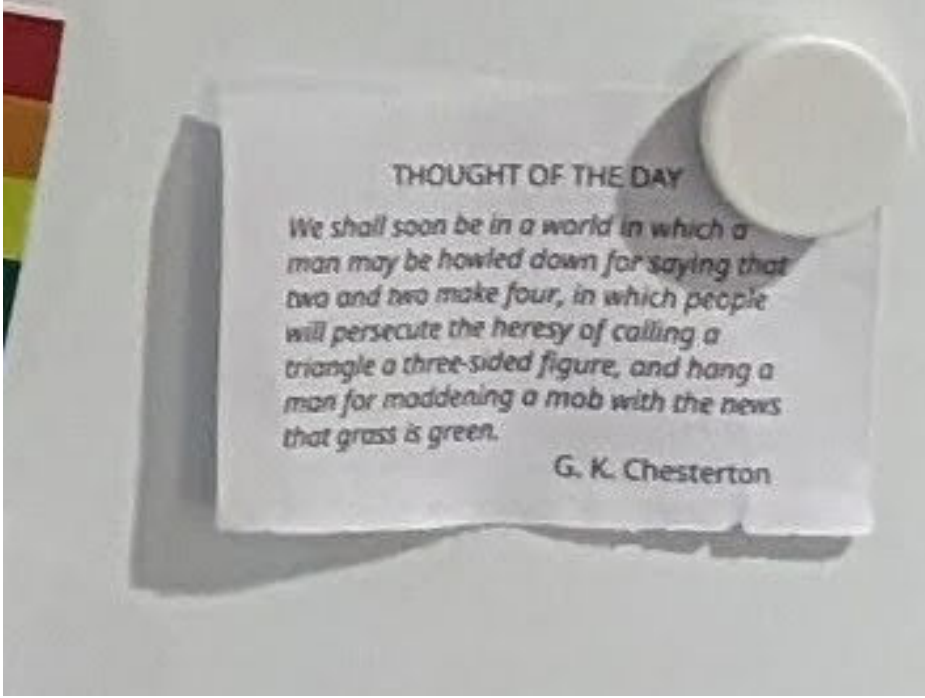
Image	Date	Comment
	<p>21-04-2023</p>	<p><b>EDI board</b> (below Gender Unicorn infographic). This was up for approximately 5 weeks before removal, then replaced on 29-05-2023. It was later replaced again (after a second removal).</p>
	<p>17-06-2023</p>	<p><b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). First "THOUGHT OF THE DAY"</p>

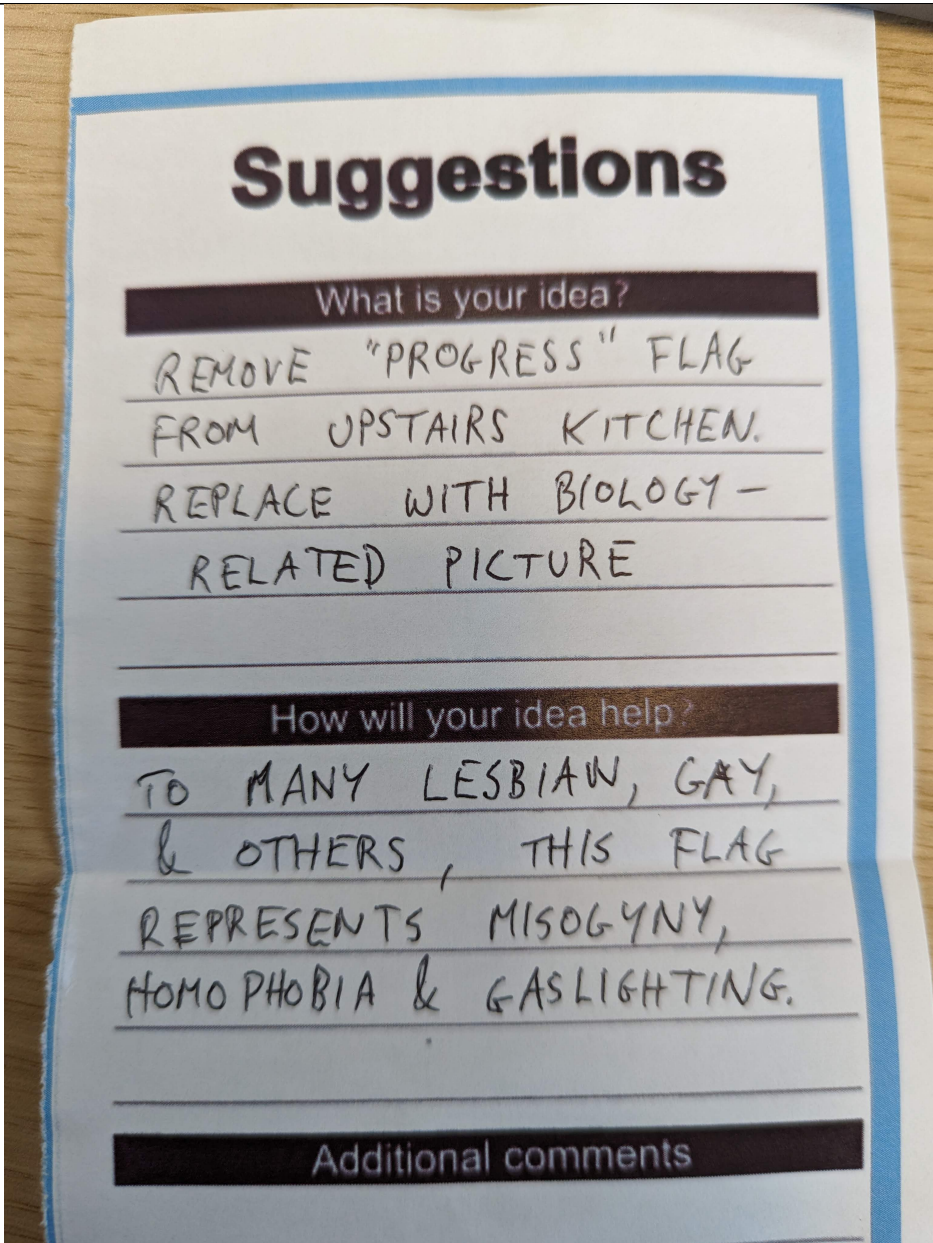
Image	Date	Comment
	<p>22-06-2023</p>	<p>Addition to a suggestions box. The suggestion was ignored. (Indeed, a second and even larger progress flag was later added in the same room).</p>

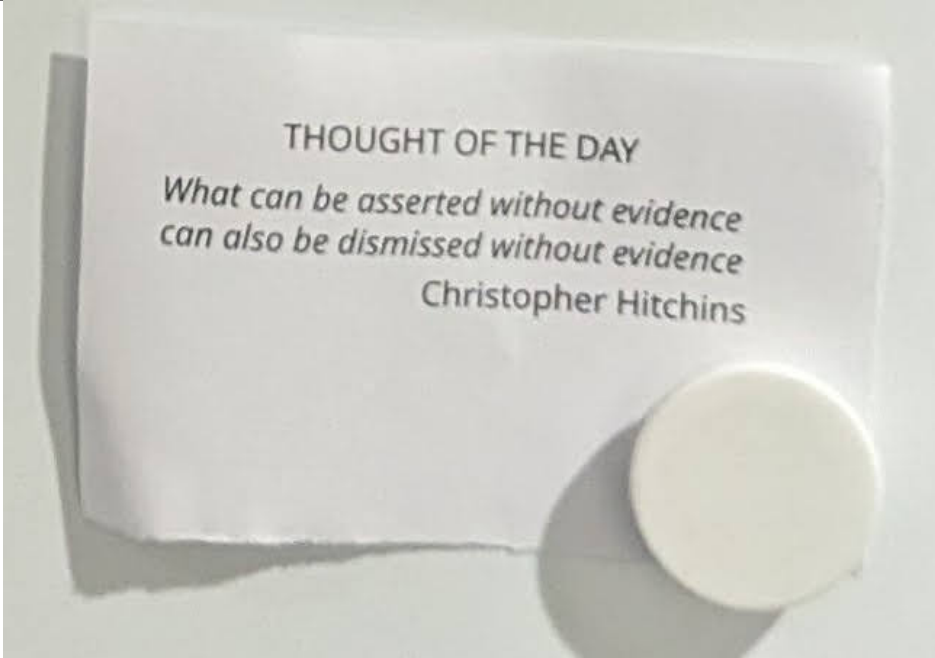
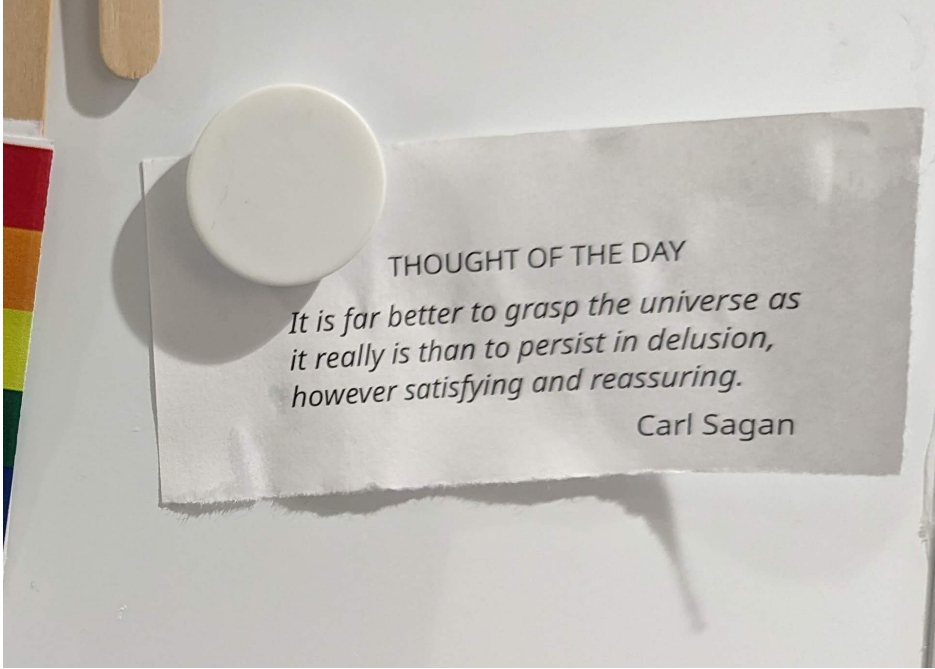
Image	Date	Comment
	22-06-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #2
	01-07-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #3

Image	Date	Comment
 <p>umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.</p> <p>Refers to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.</p> <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY  <i>The basic tool for the manipulation of reality is the manipulation of words. If you can control the meaning of words, you can control the people who must use the words.</i>  Philip K Dick</p> <p>PROGRESS FLAG  The Progress flag was introduced in 2018, to be more inclusive of how people of colour and trans people are still marginalised within the LGBTQ+ community, and to celebrate the progress that has been made whilst pointing towards the work that is still to be done.</p> <p>OX.AC.UK/AGAINSTSEXUALV... OX.AC.U</p>	09-07-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #4
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY  <i>You can ridicule ideas without hurting anyone.</i>  Ricky Gervais</p>	17-07-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #5

Image	Date	Comment
	21-07-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #6
	16-08-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (below gender unicorn). TOTD #7

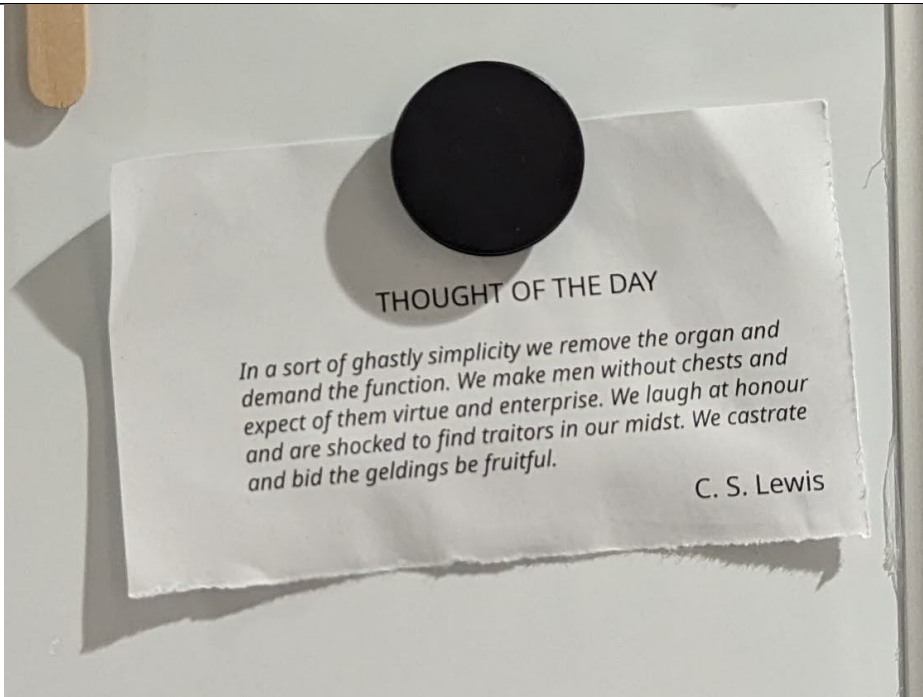
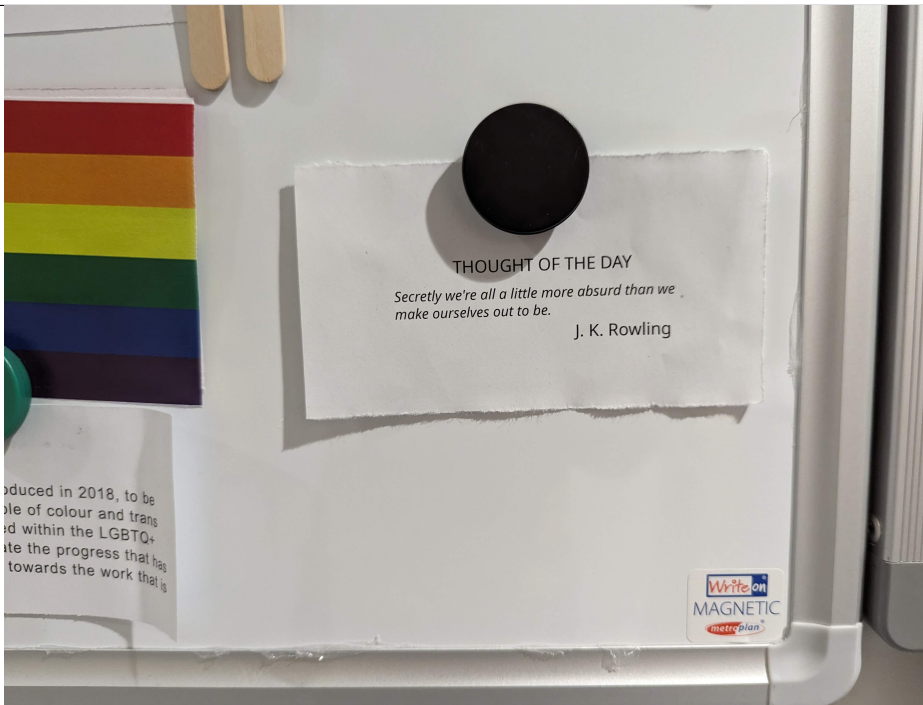
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	25-08-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #8
	02-09-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #9

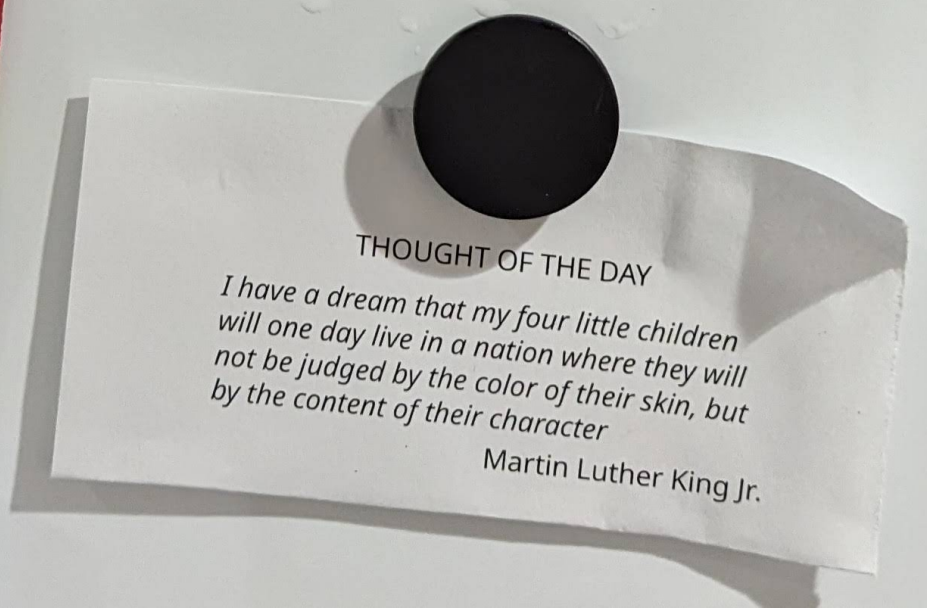
Image	Date	Comment
	09-10-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #10
	22-10-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (Ally information).

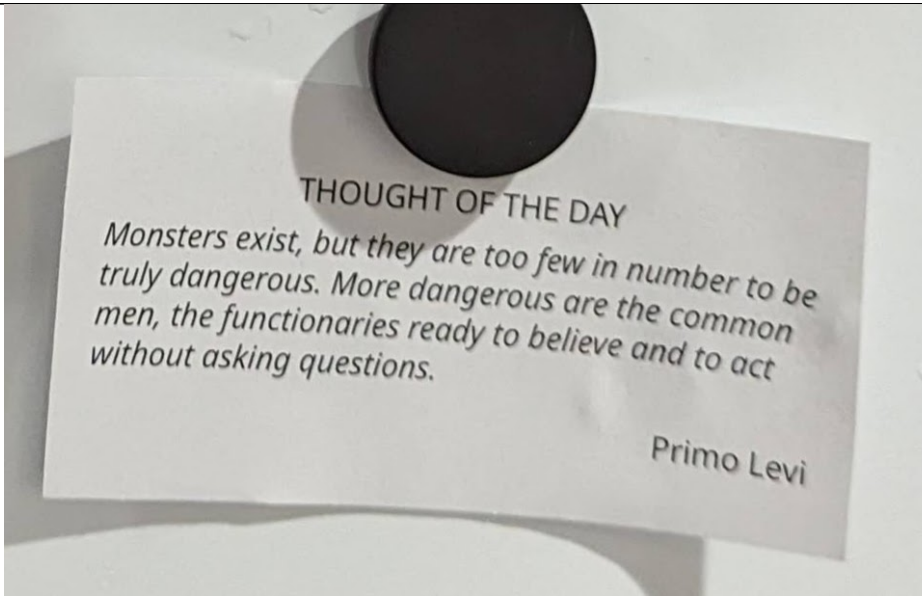
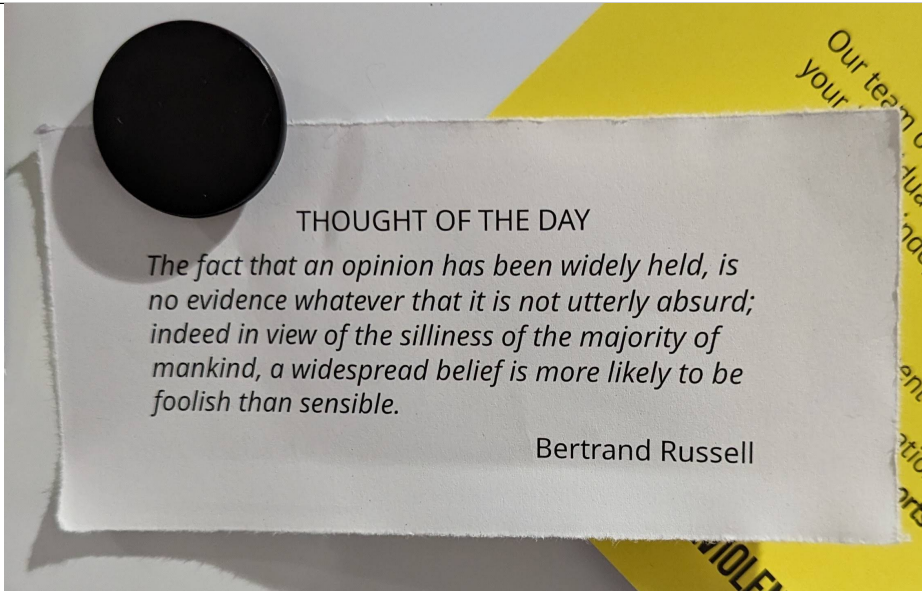
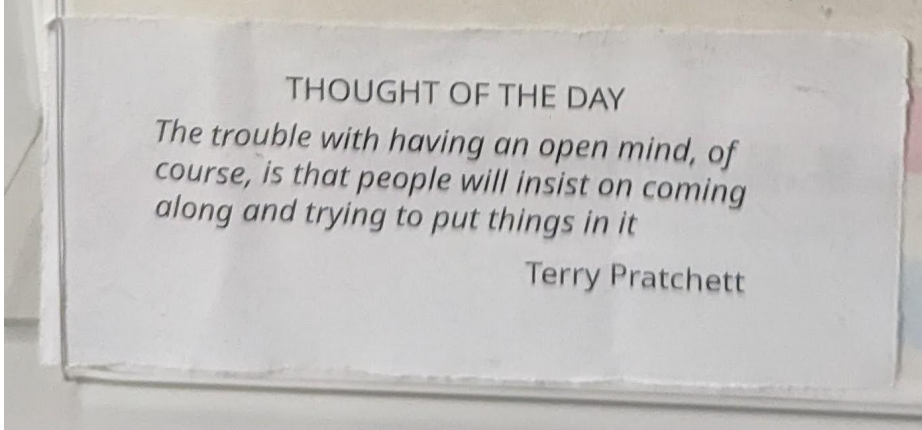
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 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>Monsters exist, but they are too few in number to be truly dangerous. More dangerous are the common men, the functionaries ready to believe and to act without asking questions.</i></p> <p>Primo Levi</p>	22-10-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #11
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>The fact that an opinion has been widely held, is no evidence whatever that it is not utterly absurd; indeed in view of the silliness of the majority of mankind, a widespread belief is more likely to be foolish than sensible.</i></p> <p>Bertrand Russell</p>	08-11-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #12
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>The trouble with having an open mind, of course, is that people will insist on coming along and trying to put things in it</i></p> <p>Terry Pratchett</p>	21-11-2023	<b>Reception</b> (Pronouns & Inclusive Language infographic) TOTD #13

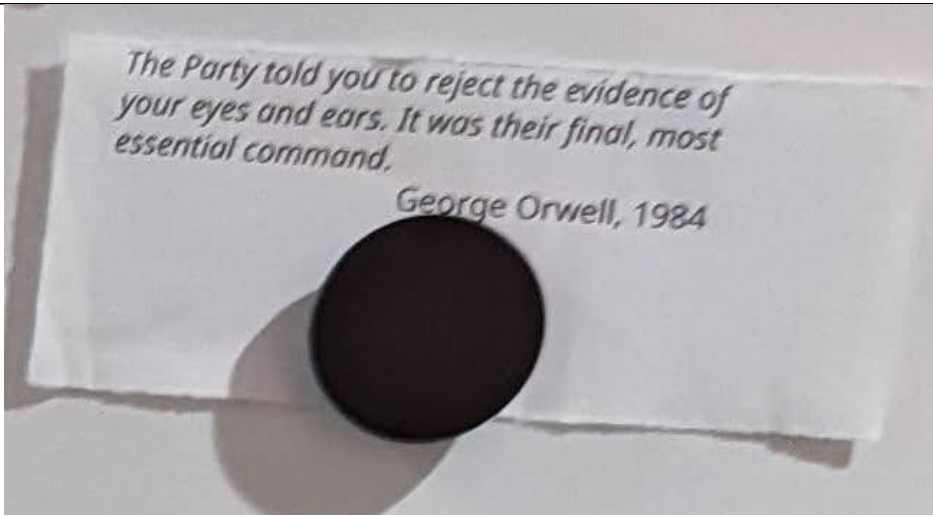
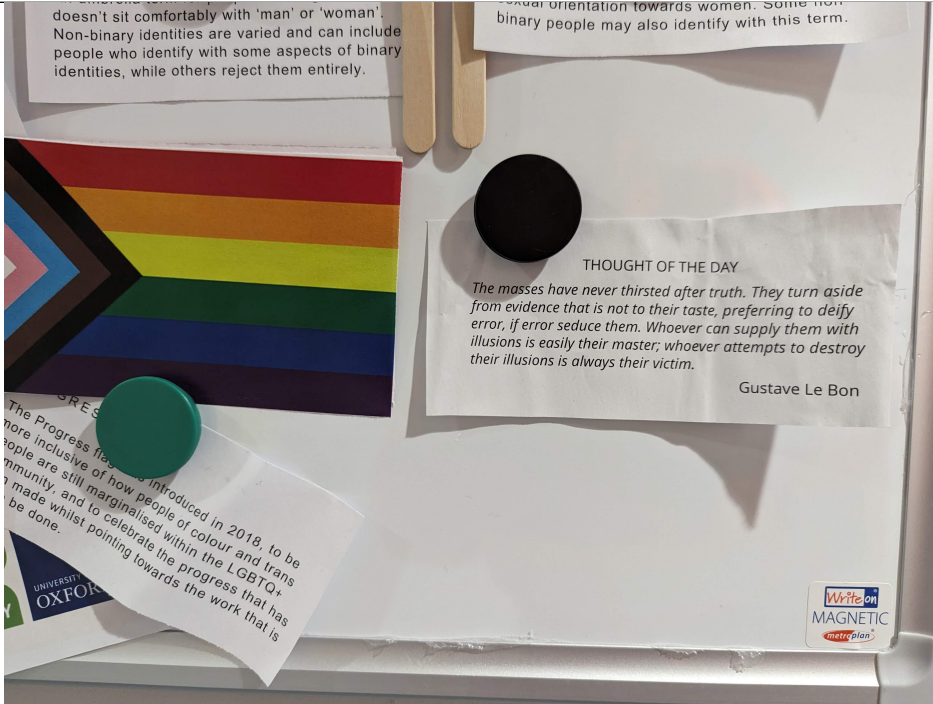
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	23-11-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner).
	05-12-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #14

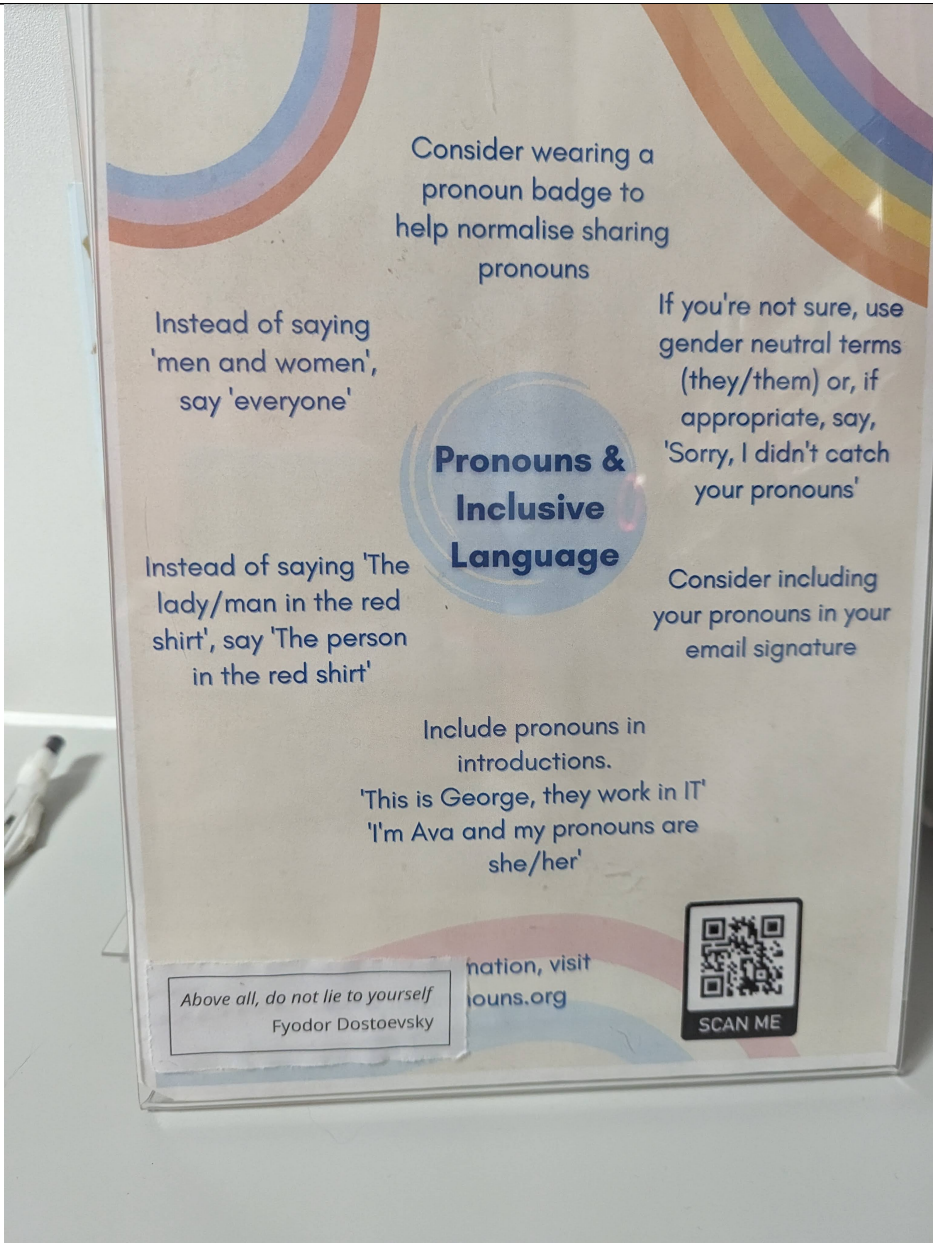
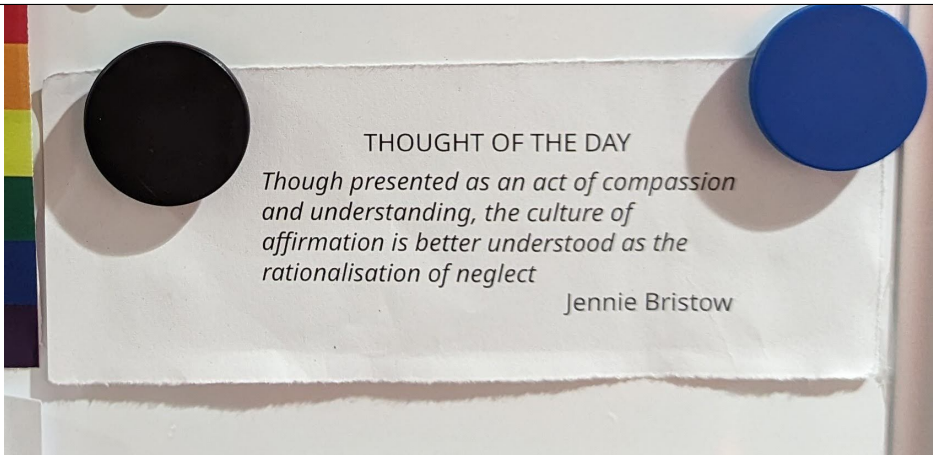
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 <p>Consider wearing a pronoun badge to help normalise sharing pronouns</p> <p>Instead of saying 'men and women', say 'everyone'</p> <p>Instead of saying 'The lady/man in the red shirt', say 'The person in the red shirt'</p> <p>Include pronouns in introductions. 'This is George, they work in IT' 'I'm Ava and my pronouns are she/her'</p> <p>Consider including your pronouns in your email signature</p> <p>If you're not sure, use gender neutral terms (they/them) or, if appropriate, say, 'Sorry, I didn't catch your pronouns'</p> <p>Above all, do not lie to yourself Fyodor Dostoevsky</p> <p>nation, visit ouns.org</p> <p>SCAN ME</p>	05-12-2023	<b>Reception</b> (Pronouns & Inclusive Language infographic)
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>Though presented as an act of compassion and understanding, the culture of affirmation is better understood as the rationalisation of neglect</i></p> <p>Jennie Bristow</p>	11-12-2023	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #15

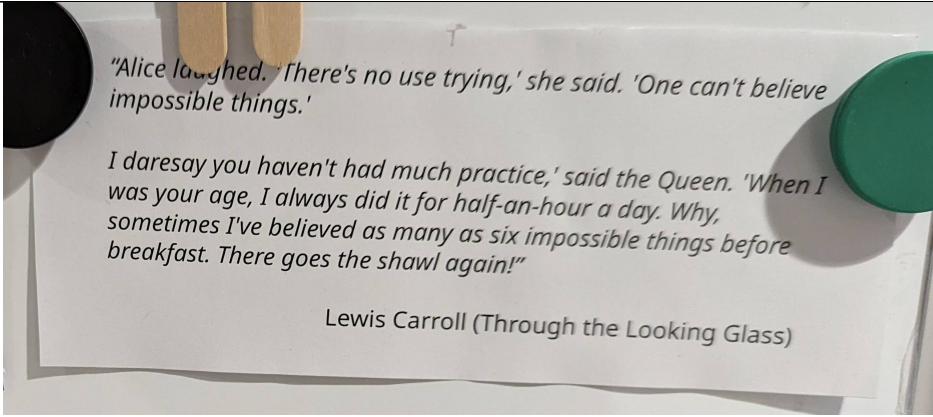
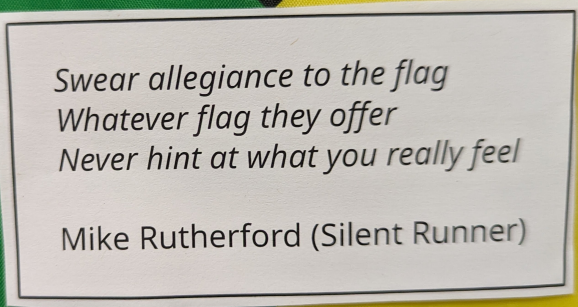
Image	Date	Comment
 <p><i>"Alice laughed. 'There's no use trying,' she said. 'One can't believe impossible things.'</i></p> <p><i>I daresay you haven't had much practice,' said the Queen. 'When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast. There goes the shawl again!"</i></p> <p>Lewis Carroll (Through the Looking Glass)</p>	14-01-2024	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner).
 <p><i>Swear allegiance to the flag Whatever flag they offer Never hint at what you really feel</i></p> <p>Mike Rutherford (Silent Runner)</p>	11-02-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). First adornment of progress flag. From a song heard on Absolute 80s radio station.

Image	Date	Comment
<p>The image shows a board titled 'ED&amp;I Updates' with various resources and information. Key elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sex Assigned at Birth:</b> A diagram showing Female, Masculine, Other, Male, and Other/Intersex.</li> <li><b>Physically Attracted to:</b> A diagram with arrows pointing to Women, Men, Other Gender(s).</li> <li><b>Emotionally Attracted to:</b> A diagram with arrows pointing to Women, Men, Other Gender(s).</li> <li><b>Richard Dawkins:</b> A quote: "There are two sexes and that's all there is to it".</li> <li><b>Lewis Carroll:</b> A quote: "I dreamt you weren't had much practice".</li> <li><b>Harassment Procedure flowchart for Students:</b> A large flowchart on the left side of the board.</li> <li><b>QR code:</b> A QR code for 'ED&amp;I Updates'.</li> <li><b>Posters:</b> Several posters, including one about 'Sexual harassment and violence' and another about 'Embed EDI in your work'.</li> </ul>	<p>11-02-2024</p>	<p><b>EDI board</b> (below each flag). The Jabbawocky by Lewis Carroll</p>

Image	Date	Comment
	13-02-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). TOTD #16
	18-02-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). TOTD #17
	19-02-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). TOTD #18

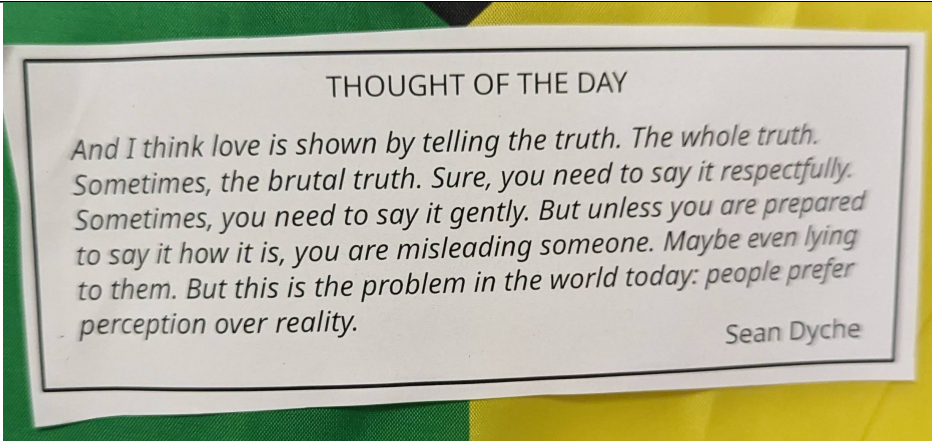
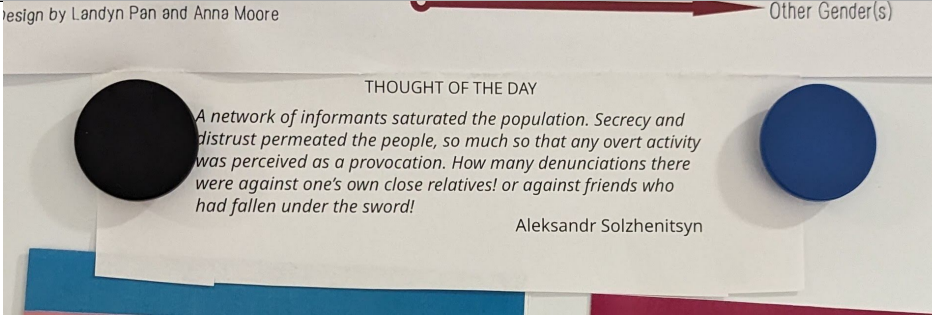
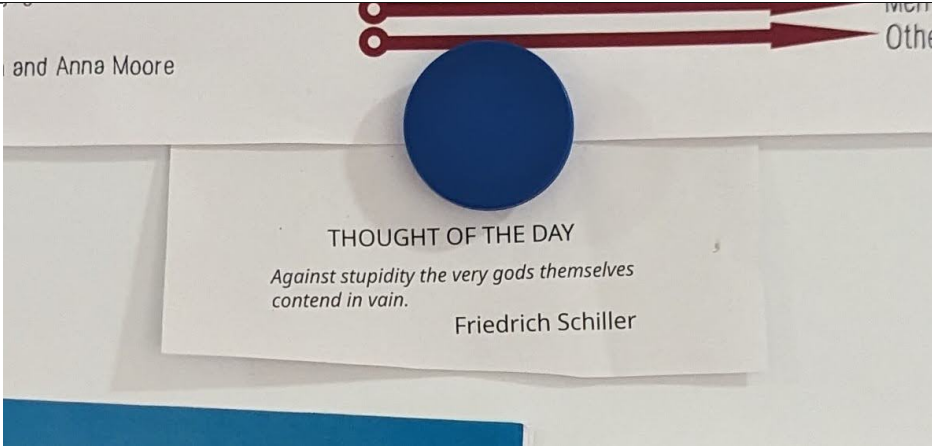
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 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>And I think love is shown by telling the truth. The whole truth. Sometimes, the brutal truth. Sure, you need to say it respectfully. Sometimes, you need to say it gently. But unless you are prepared to say it how it is, you are misleading someone. Maybe even lying to them. But this is the problem in the world today: people prefer perception over reality.</i></p> <p>Sean Dyche</p>	24-02-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). TOTD #19
 <p>design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore</p> <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>A network of informants saturated the population. Secrecy and distrust permeated the people, so much so that any overt activity was perceived as a provocation. How many denunciations there were against one's own close relatives! or against friends who had fallen under the sword!</i></p> <p>Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn</p>	27-02-2024	<b>EDI board</b> (below Gender Unicorn infographic). TOTD #20
 <p>and Anna Moore</p> <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>Against stupidity the very gods themselves contend in vain.</i></p> <p>Friedrich Schiller</p>	28-02-2024	<b>EDI board</b> (below Gender Unicorn infographic). TOTD #21



Image	Date	Comment
<p>From Biology HoD &lt;hod@biology.ox.ac.uk&gt; </p> <p>To biology-all@maillist.ox.ac.uk 01/03/2024, 13:29 &lt;biology-all@maillist.ox.ac.uk&gt; </p> <p>Subject <b>Unacceptable behaviour</b></p> <hr/> <p>Dear all,</p> <p>We have been made aware that the Progress and Pride flags in the ZRAB building have been defaced. This is entirely unacceptable, and we consider this hateful behaviour. We are currently trying to identify the people/person that is responsible, and disciplinary action will follow.</p> <p>We pride ourselves on being an inclusive Department that welcomes everyone, irrespective of gender or sexuality, and we will not tolerate any incidence of hateful, harassing or intimidating conduct.</p> <p>Tim and Mark</p>	01-03-2024	Signed by both Heads of Department
<p>Comment from the <u>HoD</u> (MR) at a <u>Department</u> weekly meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expression of “disappointment” and “surprise” that someone in this community has been defacing pride flags, an act he finds “unacceptable” and “unexpected” given the community’s values.</li> <li>• He hopes the behavior stops but also suggest that if the individual has underlying issues or a message, he/she should reach out to HR or the head of EDI for support, balancing condemnation with a call for understanding.</li> </ul>	08-03-2024	Announcement by HOD (MR) at a Department weekly meeting

Image	Date	Comment
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>Don't listen to the person who has the answers; listen to the person who has the questions.</i></p> <p>Albert Einstein</p>	11-03-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). TOTD #22
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>The first principle is not to fool yourself - and you are the easiest person to fool</i></p> <p>Richard Feynman</p>	17-03-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). TOTD #23
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>Inspect every piece of pseudoscience and you will find a security blanket.</i></p> <p>Isaac Asimov</p>	25-03-2024	<b>EDI board</b> (below Trans flag). TOTD #24

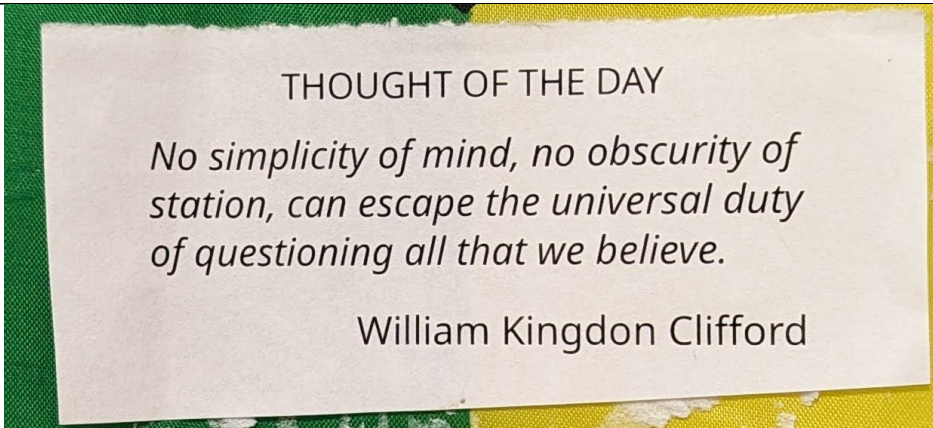
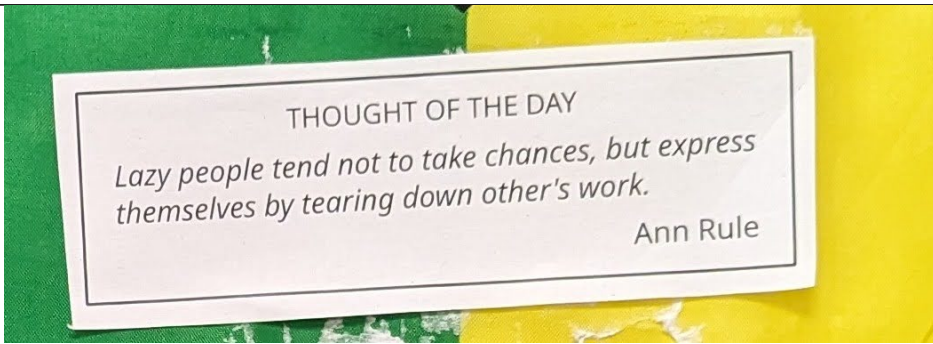
Image	Date	Comment
 <p style="text-align: center;">THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>No simplicity of mind, no obscurity of station, can escape the universal duty of questioning all that we believe.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">William Kingdon Clifford</p>	01-04-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). TOTD #25
 <p style="text-align: center;">THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Lazy people tend not to take chances, but express themselves by tearing down other's work.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Ann Rule</p>	09-04-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). TOTD #26



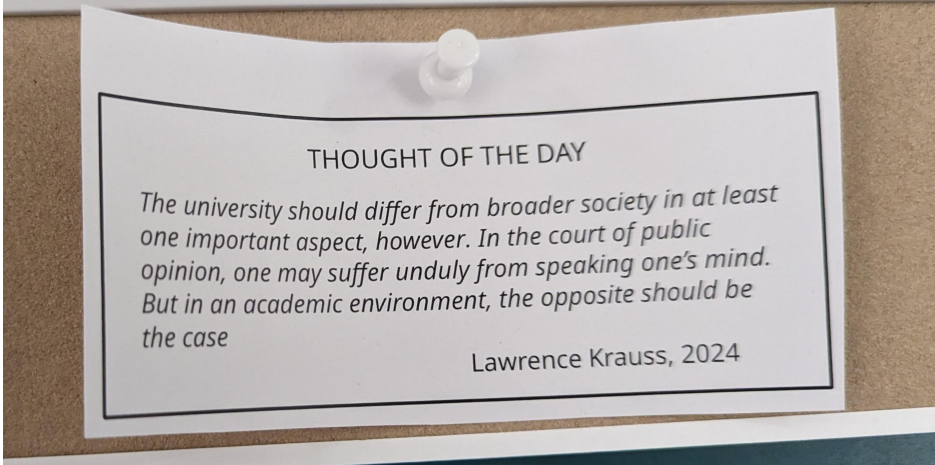
Image	Date	Comment
<p>From Biology HoD &lt;hod@biology.ox.ac.uk&gt; </p> <p>To biology-all@maillist.ox.ac.uk &lt;biology-all@maillist.ox.ac.uk&gt;  10/04/2024, 10:45</p> <p>Subject <b>Defacing of E, D and I noticeboard and flags</b></p> <hr/> <p>Dear all,</p> <p>We are sorry to report further instances of defacing of the E, D and I noticeboard and the flags. This behaviour is frustrating and upsetting.</p> <p>We want to do two things in this email. First, offer those responsible a confidential meeting to try and understand their motives and to offer support. It may be possible that those responsible do not realise how hurtful and harmful their behaviour is. If you are involved and would like a completely confidential discussion, please do reach out by coming to see Jorgelina Marino, our E, D and I lead, or one of the HoDs. We would prefer to stop this unacceptable behaviour by working together and we appreciate that those responsible may need help and support.</p> <p>If our preferred option of confidential mediation does not work, we will need to find another way to stop the behaviour. Given this, we have begun an investigation to identify those responsible. Once we have identified those responsible, and assuming confidential mediation has not begun, we will begin a formal investigation. The reason for this is that defacing flags and notice boards is a form of harassment, a behaviour that neither the department nor the university finds acceptable. The university has wide-ranging powers to act against those who are found guilty of it, and we will follow university policy and procedures. In extreme cases, the university can decide to discontinue students from their course of study or terminate the employment of staff, with lesser punishments including removing responsibilities and formal warnings.</p> <p>We try to foster a diverse, accepting, and supportive culture in the department. We want to create an environment where a diverse range of views can be expressed and discussed respectfully. We don't expect everyone to agree with one another on all aspects of society, or science, but we do require that people respect other people's views and do not harass those that they disagree with. We very much hope we can resolve this issue without recourse to a formal investigation and do hope that those responsible seek a confidential consultation.</p> <p>With best wishes,</p> <p>Tim Coulson, Mark Fricker and Theresa Burt</p>	09-04-2024	
	30-04-2024	<b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (top corner). <b>TOTD #27</b>

Image	Date	Comment
<p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>It's easier to fool people than to convince them that they have been fooled.</i></p> <p>Mark Twain</p>	19-05-2024	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner) TOTD #28
<p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>Reality is that which, when you stop believing in it, doesn't go away</i></p> <p>Phillip K. Dick</p>	24-05-2024	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #29
<p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>Polite fictions are almost always harmful to the individual, and there are no circumstances under which you should be able to enforce someone's individual polite fiction on all of society.</i></p> <p>Heather Heying</p>	28-05-2024	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #30

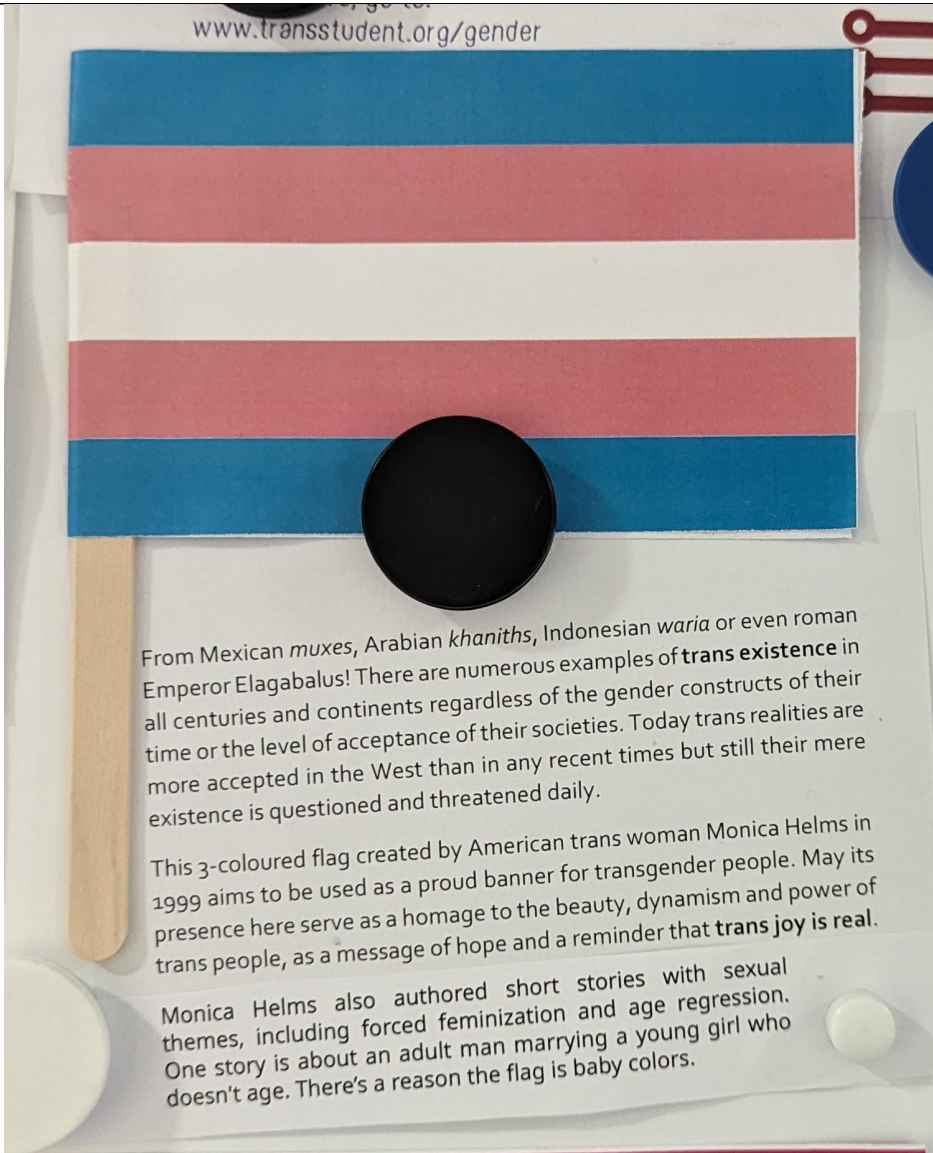
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 <p>www.transstudent.org/gender</p> <p>From Mexican <i>muxes</i>, Arabian <i>khaniths</i>, Indonesian <i>waria</i> or even roman Emperor Elagabalus! There are numerous examples of <b>trans existence</b> in all centuries and continents regardless of the gender constructs of their time or the level of acceptance of their societies. Today trans realities are more accepted in the West than in any recent times but still their mere existence is questioned and threatened daily.</p> <p>This 3-coloured flag created by American trans woman Monica Helms in 1999 aims to be used as a proud banner for transgender people. May its presence here serve as a homage to the beauty, dynamism and power of trans people, as a message of hope and a reminder that <b>trans joy is real</b>.</p> <p>Monica Helms also authored short stories with sexual themes, including forced feminization and age regression. One story is about an adult man marrying a young girl who doesn't age. There's a reason the flag is baby colors.</p>	<p>02-06-2024</p>	<p><b>EDI board</b> (below Trans flag legend). After this was removed it was reprinted and re-affixed using double-sided tape, to blank paper below the legend. The latter was removed using scissors</p>

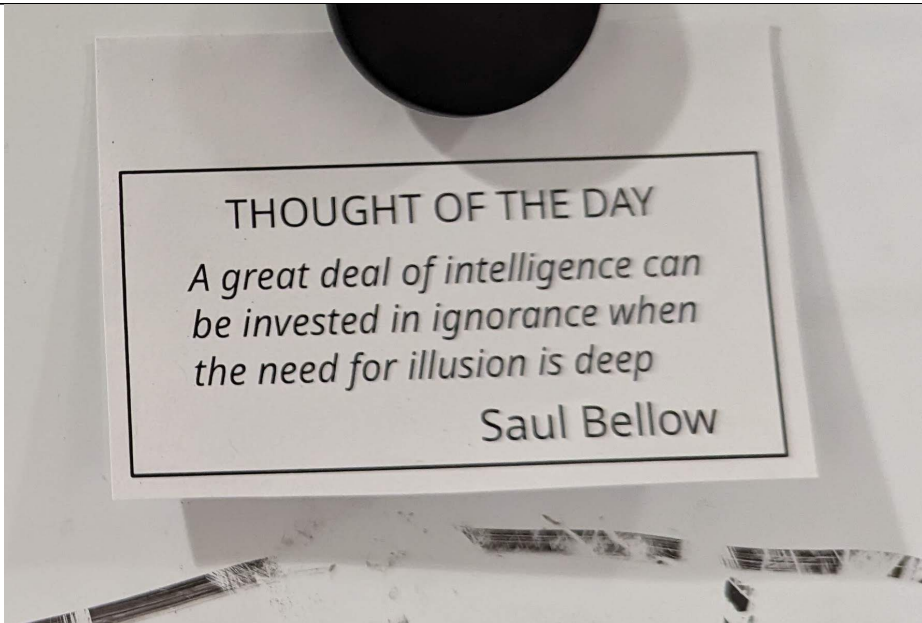
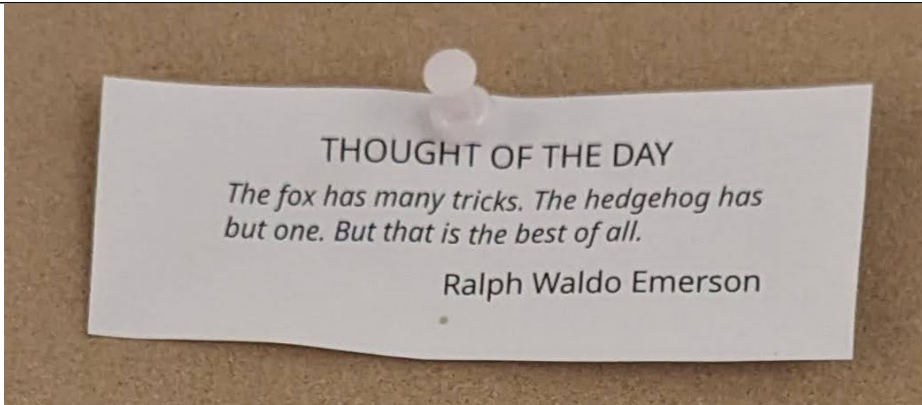
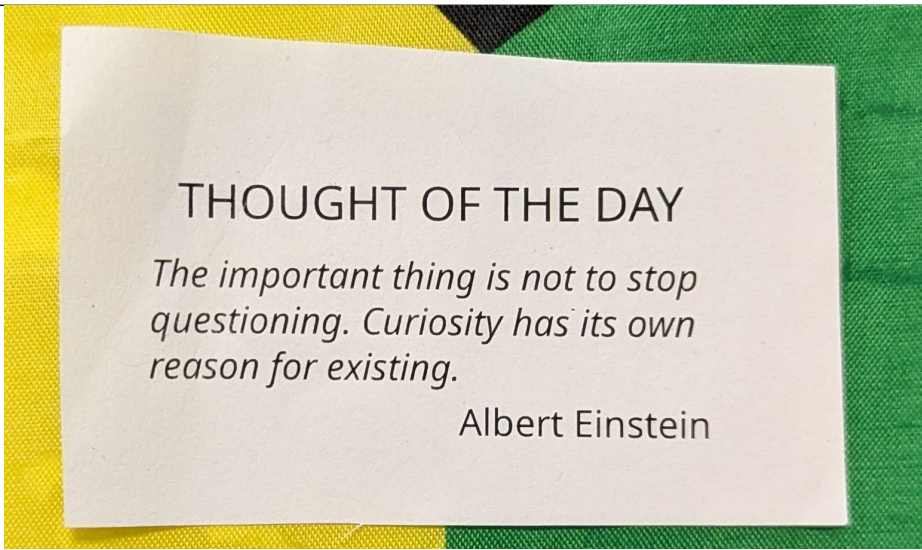
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 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>A great deal of intelligence can be invested in ignorance when the need for illusion is deep</i></p> <p>Saul Bellow</p>	11-06-2024	<b>EDI board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #31
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>The fox has many tricks. The hedgehog has but one. But that is the best of all.</i></p> <p>Ralph Waldo Emerson</p>	13-06-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). <b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (top corner). TOTD #32
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.</i></p> <p>Albert Einstein</p>	16-06-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). TOTD #33

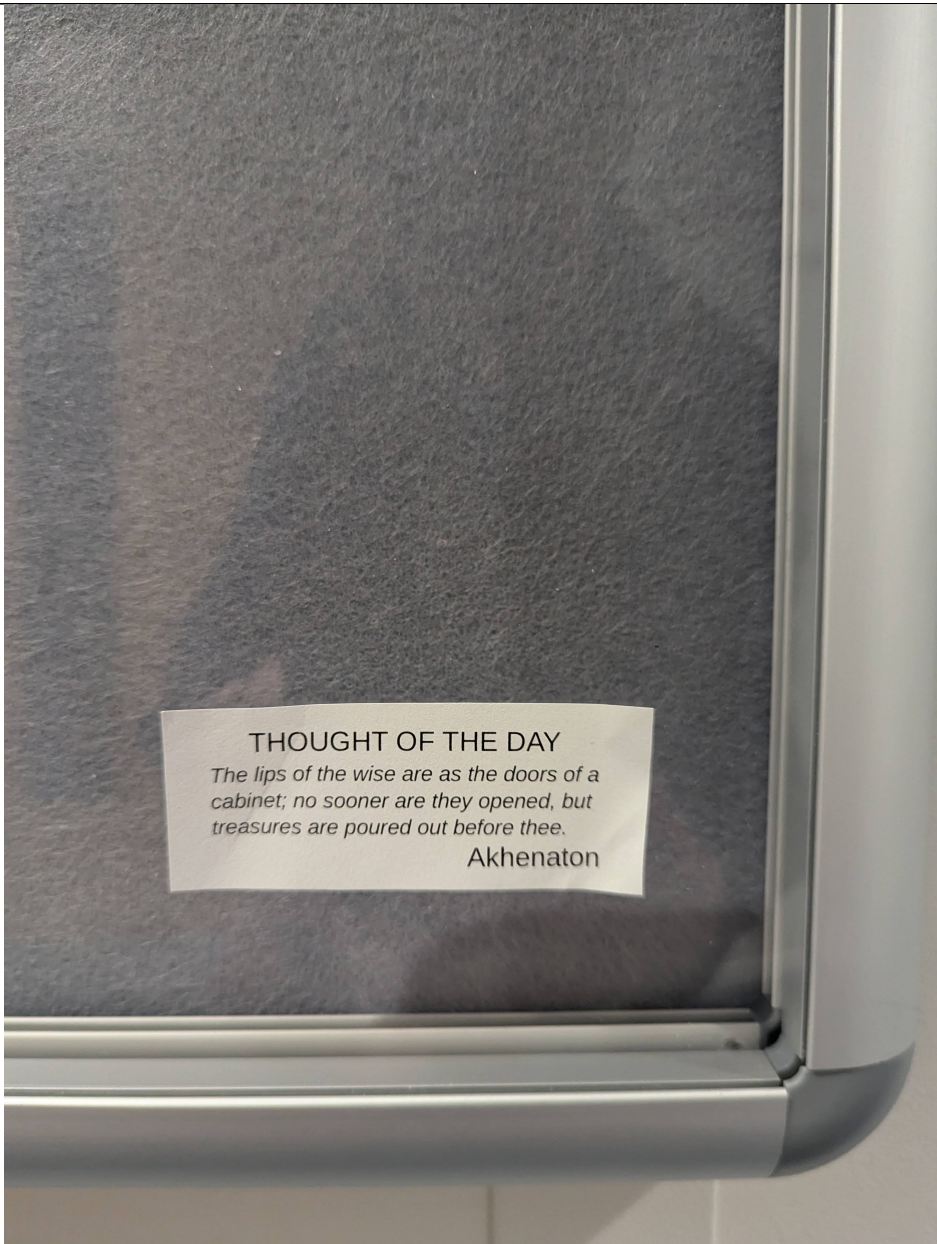
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	<p>18-06-2024</p>	<p><b>EDI cabinet</b> (lower corner). The EDI magnet board was moved into a locked display cabinet on this day. TOTD #34</p>

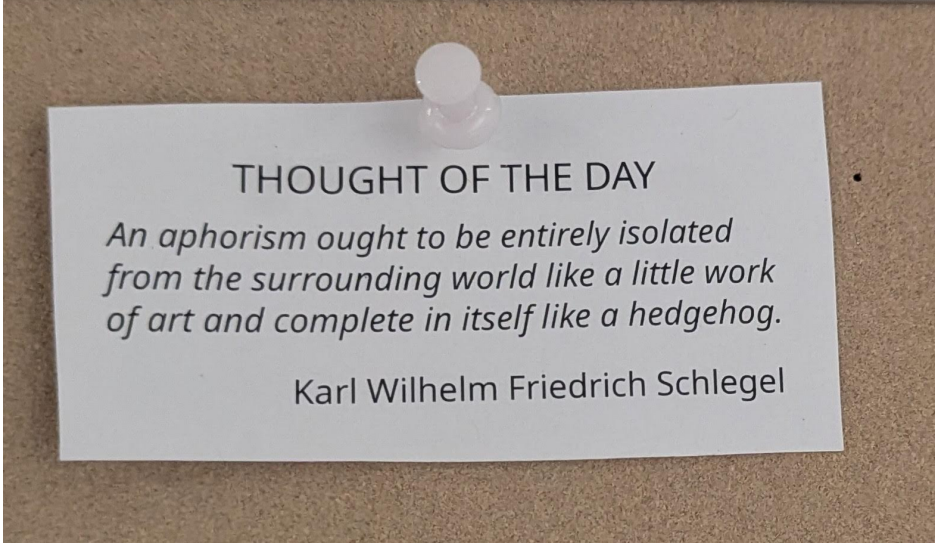
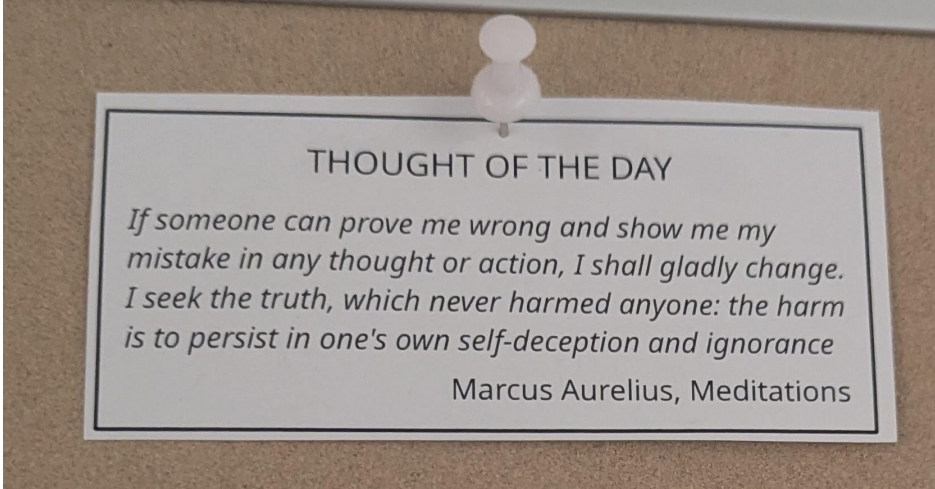
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<p style="text-align: center;">Image</p> <p> <span>Reply</span> <span>Reply List</span> <span>Forward</span> <span>Archive</span> <span>Junk</span> <span>Delete</span> <span>More</span> </p> <p> <b>Biology HoD</b>            hod@biology.ox.ac.uk         </p> <p>           To biology-all@maillist.ox.ac.uk &lt;biology-all@maillist.ox.ac.uk&gt; @ 19/06/2024, 15:34         </p> <p> <b>Unacceptable behaviour</b>            List-ID &lt;biology-all.maillist.ox.ac.uk&gt;         </p> <p>Dear all,</p> <p>Unfortunately, the defacing of the Pride flags and EDI noticeboards continues. Defacing LGBTQ+ symbols is very clearly a hateful behaviour. It is also upsetting and something i find utterly unacceptable and objectionable. I strive to make Biology a place in which all members are valued, listened to and empowered to participate fully in the life of the department and to foster freedom of speech within the law.</p> <p>We have agreed a new policy on notice board management (see the intranet), and I have asked Jorgelina Marino, EDI Lead, to look into what this will mean for EDI communications. I am hoping to share more information in the upcoming days.</p> <p>I am determined to stop unacceptable behaviour. I will continue to respond to events until the culprit is caught or the behaviour stops.</p> <p>With best wishes, Tim</p>	18-06-2024	Signed by one of the two HODs (TC)
	24-06-2024	<b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (top corner). TOTD #35
	26-06-2024	<b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (top corner). TOTD #36

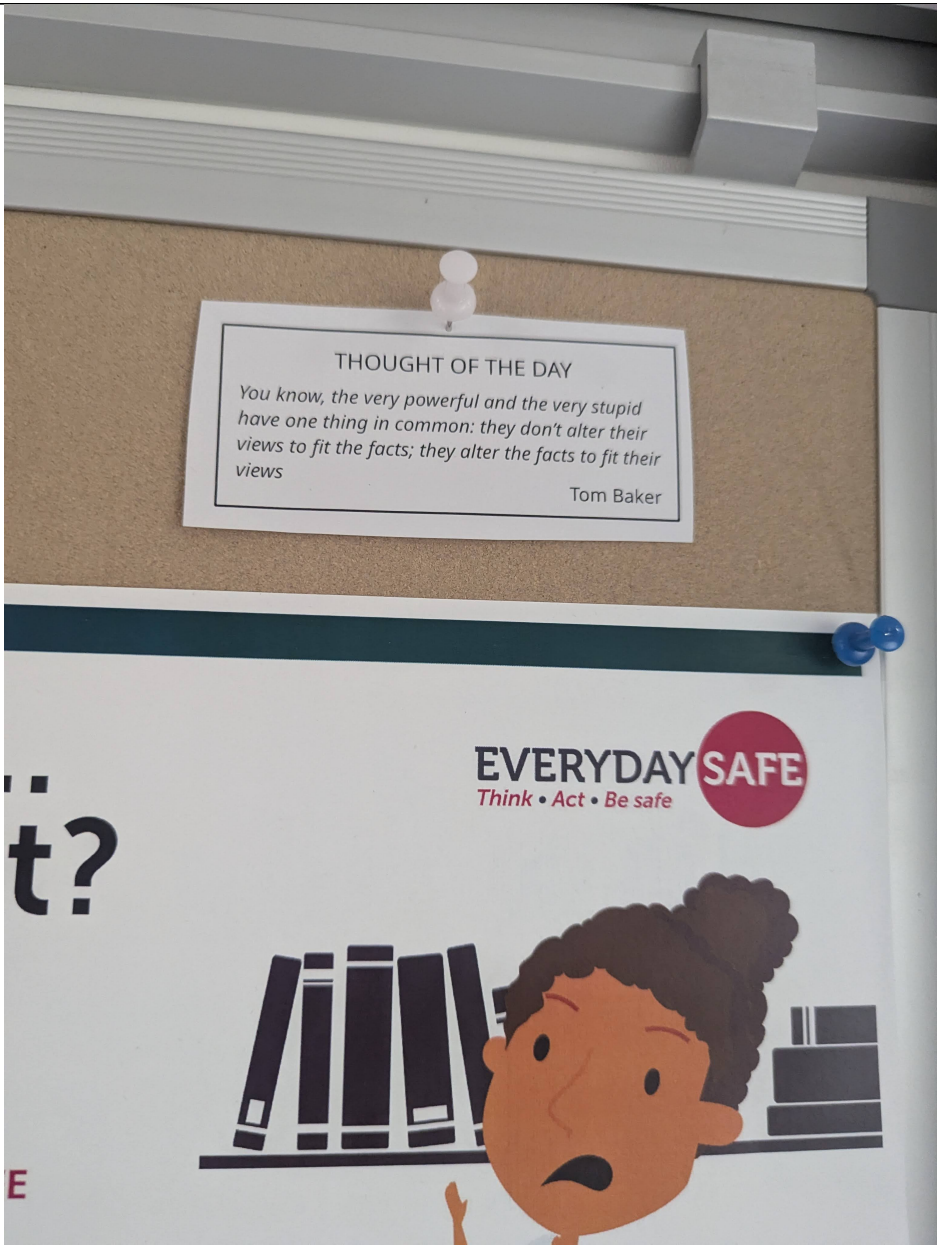
Image	Date	Comment
 <p>The image shows a corkboard with two items pinned to it. At the top is a white sign with a black border titled "THOUGHT OF THE DAY". The text on the sign reads: "You know, the very powerful and the very stupid have one thing in common: they don't alter their views to fit the facts; they alter the facts to fit their views" followed by "Tom Baker". Below the sign is a poster for "EVERYDAY SAFE" with the tagline "Think • Act • Be safe". The poster features a cartoon illustration of a person with curly hair looking thoughtful, with a bookshelf and books in the background. The text "t?" is visible on the left side of the poster, and a red letter "E" is in the bottom left corner.</p>	<p>03-07-2024</p>	<p>Miscellaneous notice board (top corner). TOTD #37</p>

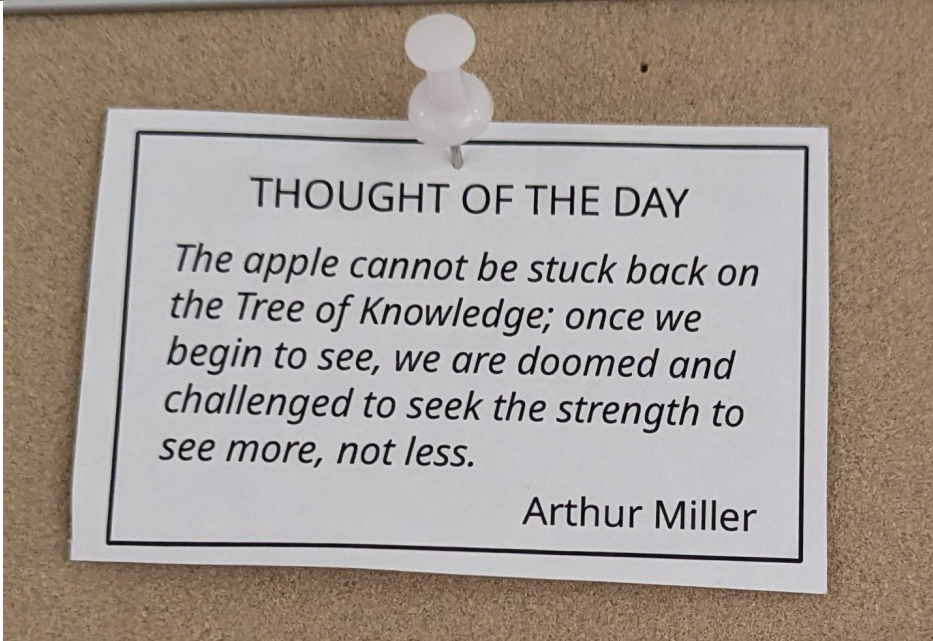
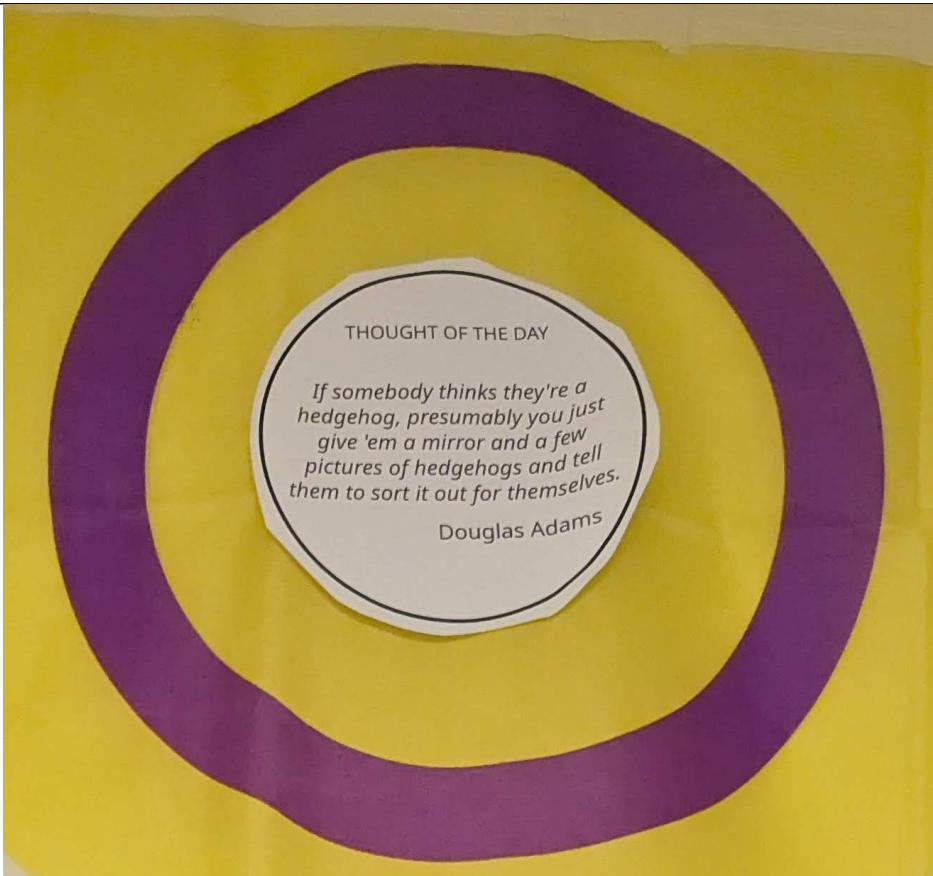
Image	Date	Comment
	08-07-2024	<b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (top corner). TOTD #38
	09-07-2024	<b>2nd Progress flag</b> (circle). TOTD #39

Image	Date	Comment
	15-07-2024	<b>EDI cabinet</b> (gender unicorn).
	17-07-2024	<b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (bottom corner). TOTD #40
	24-07-2024	<b>EDI cabinet</b> (gender unicorn).

Image	Date	Comment
	18-08-2024	<b>EDI cabinet</b> (gender unicorn).
	03-09-2024	<b>2nd Progress flag</b> (upper white stripe).

Image	Date	Comment
<p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY  <i>The true definition of a snob is one who craves for what separates men rather than for what unites them.</i>          John Buchan</p>	05-09-2024	<b>2nd Progress flag</b> (upper white stripe). TOTD #41
<p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY  <i>No rational argument will have a rational effect on a man who does not want to adopt a rational attitude.</i>          Karl Popper</p>	13-09-2024	<b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (central gap). TOTD #42

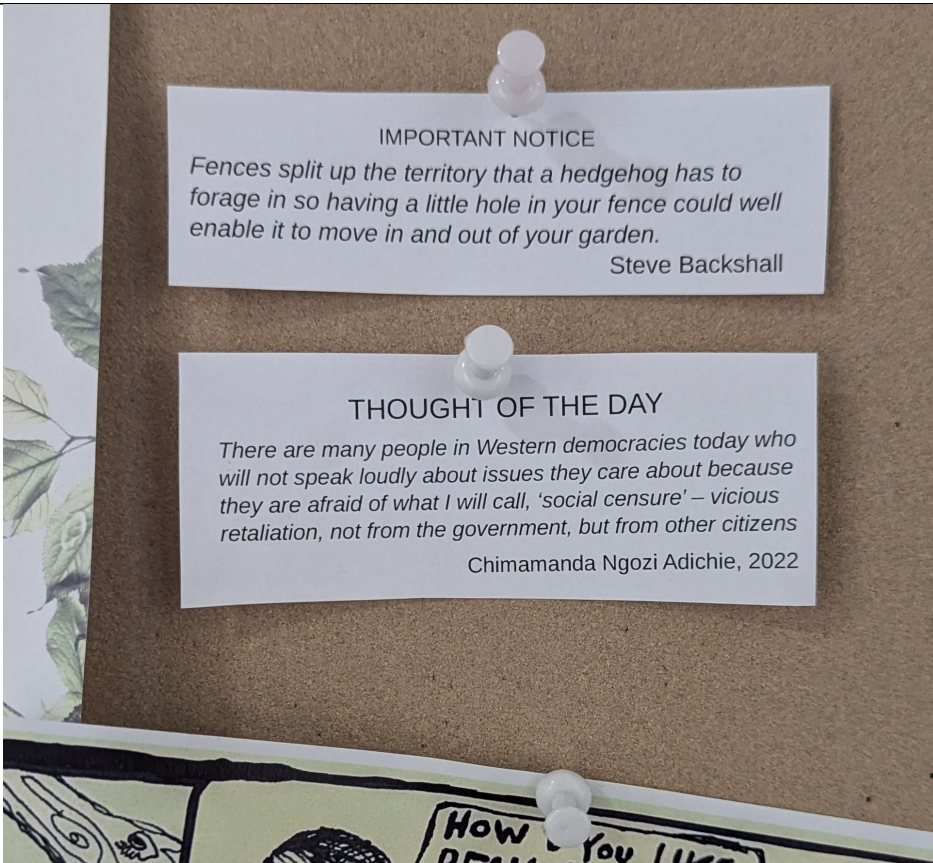
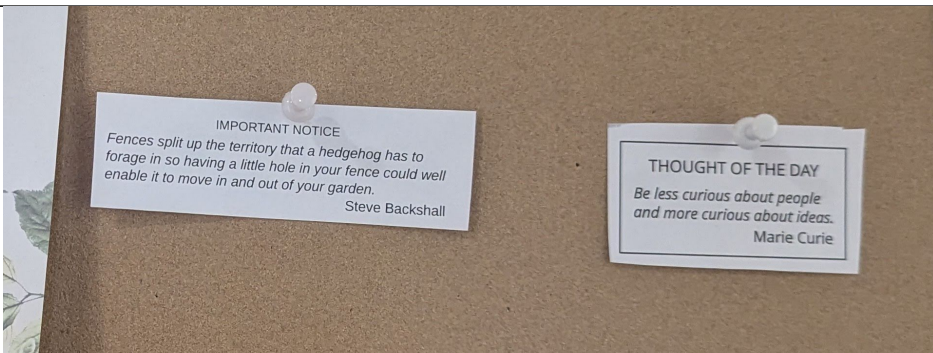
Image	Date	Comment
	18-09-2024	<p><b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (central gap). The lower quote was removed within 24hrs, the upper was permitted at this time. TOTD #43</p>
	19-09-2024	<p><b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (central gap). Both were removed. TOTD #44</p>

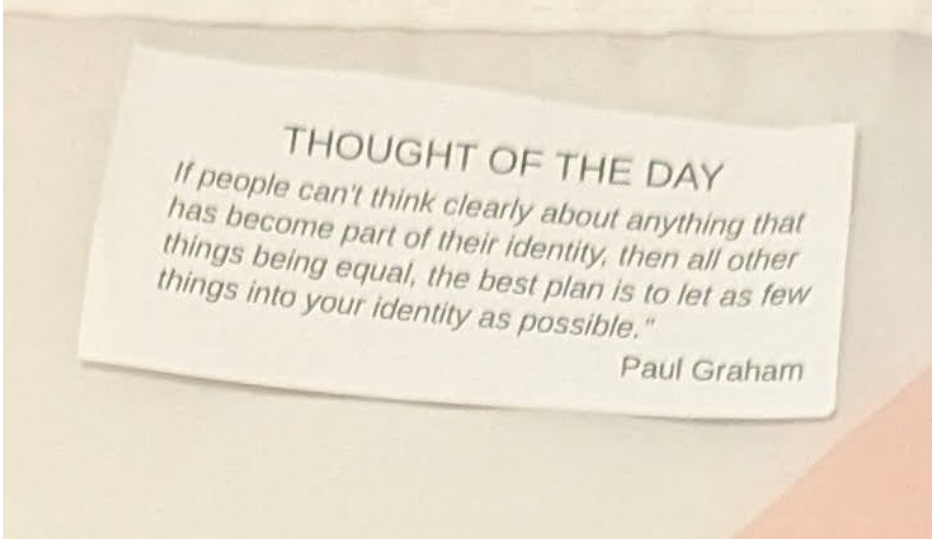
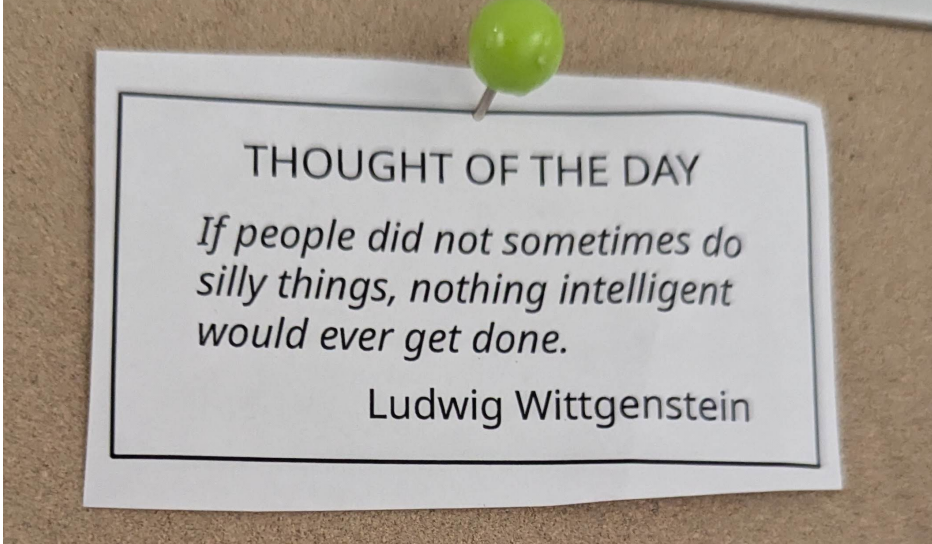
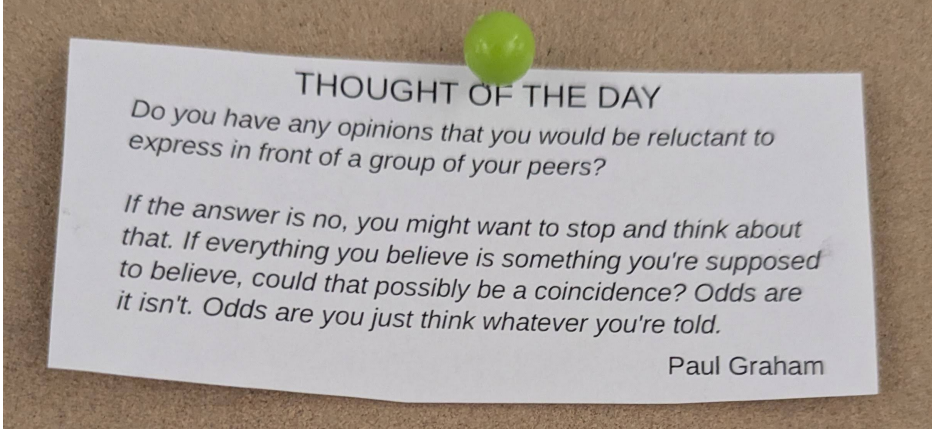
Image	Date	Comment
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>If people can't think clearly about anything that has become part of their identity, then all other things being equal, the best plan is to let as few things into your identity as possible.</i></p> <p>Paul Graham</p>	29-09-2024	<b>Progress flag</b> (upper white section). TOTD #45
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>If people did not sometimes do silly things, nothing intelligent would ever get done.</i></p> <p>Ludwig Wittgenstein</p>	02-10-2024	<b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (upper corner). TOTD #46
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>Do you have any opinions that you would be reluctant to express in front of a group of your peers?</i></p> <p><i>If the answer is no, you might want to stop and think about that. If everything you believe is something you're supposed to believe, could that possibly be a coincidence? Odds are it isn't. Odds are you just think whatever you're told.</i></p> <p>Paul Graham</p>	03-10-2024	<b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (upper corner). TOTD #47

Image	Date	Comment
<p>is and grey-70.</p> <p>PROGRESS FLAG</p> <p>The Progress flag was introduced in 2018, to be more inclusive of how people of colour and trans people are still marginalised within the LGBTQ+ Community, and to celebrate the progress that has been made whilst pointing towards the work that is yet to be done.</p> <p><i>There are some ideas so absurd that only an intellectual could believe them.</i></p> <p>George Orwell</p>	06-10-2024	<b>EDI cabinet</b> (below Progress flag legend)

Image	Date	Comment
 <p data-bbox="571 271 927 645"><b>Please feel free to take a pronoun badge</b></p> <p data-bbox="204 465 515 645"> <b>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</b>  <i>Human beings have a demonstrated talent for self-deception when their emotions are stirred.</i>      Carl Sagan   </p> <p data-bbox="177 696 868 730">The Equality &amp; Diversity Unit runs the following initiatives:</p> <ul data-bbox="177 734 564 880" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University LGBT+ Network</li> <li>• LGBT+ Allies Network</li> <li>• LGBT+ Role Models programme</li> <li>• University wide Networks</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="177 920 727 994">For more info on workshops and networks, visit <a href="http://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks">edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks</a></p> <p data-bbox="177 1032 818 1115">Sign up to the Equality and Diversity Unit newsletter at <a href="http://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/news">edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/news</a></p> <p data-bbox="177 1144 818 1234">To join our Biology LGBTQ+ Network mailing list, email <a href="mailto:sympa@maillist.ox.ac.uk">sympa@maillist.ox.ac.uk</a></p> <p data-bbox="687 1249 954 1384">   </p>	<p data-bbox="1070 1447 1198 1473">11-10-2024</p>	<p data-bbox="1225 1447 1497 1541"><b>EDI cabinet</b> (Pronoun badge information). TOTD #48</p>

Image	Date	Comment
	21-10-2024	<b>EDI cabinet</b> (gender unicorn)
	03-11-2024	<b>Reception</b> (Trans flag)

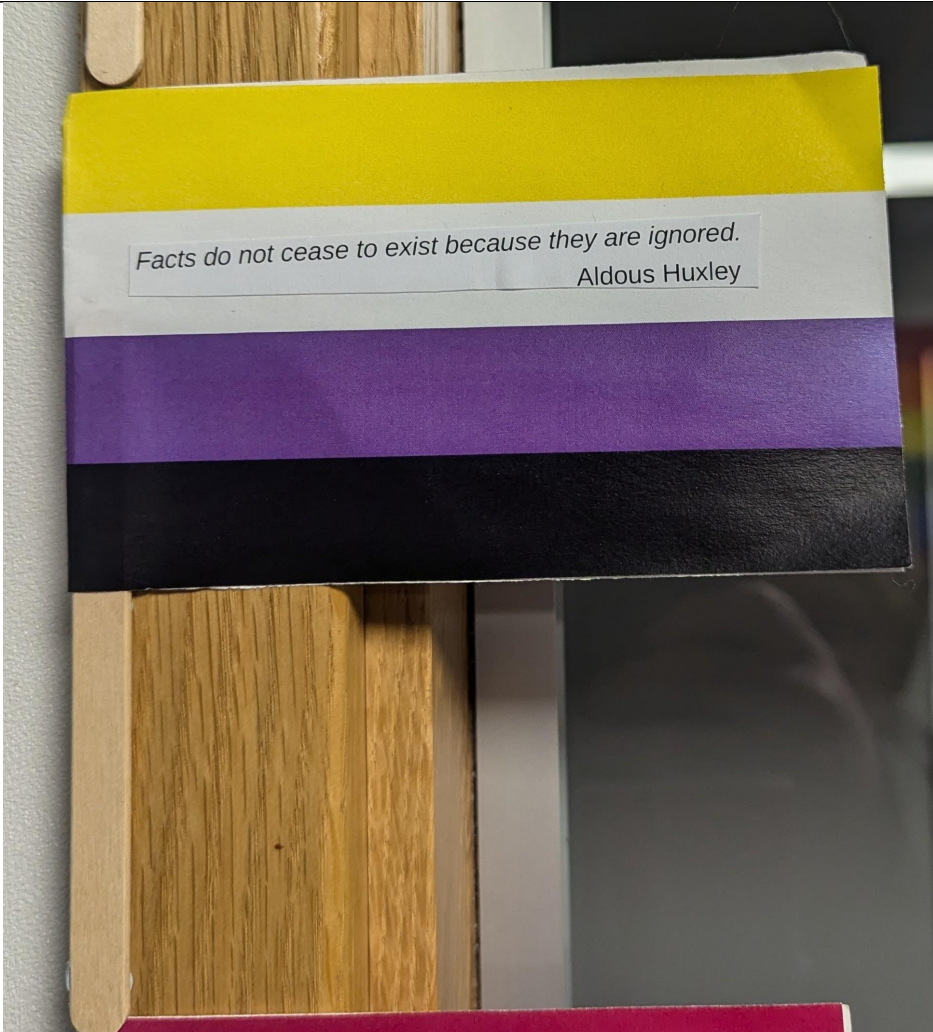
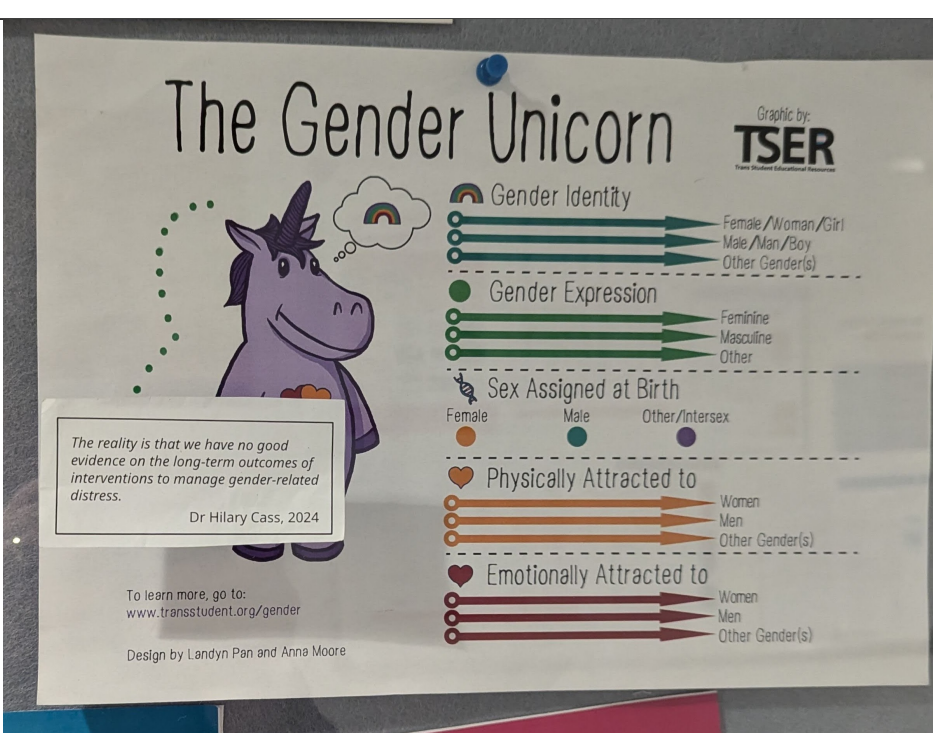
Image	Date	Comment
	05-11-2024	<b>Reception</b> (Non-binary flag)
	07-11-2024	<b>EDI cabinet</b> (gender unicorn)

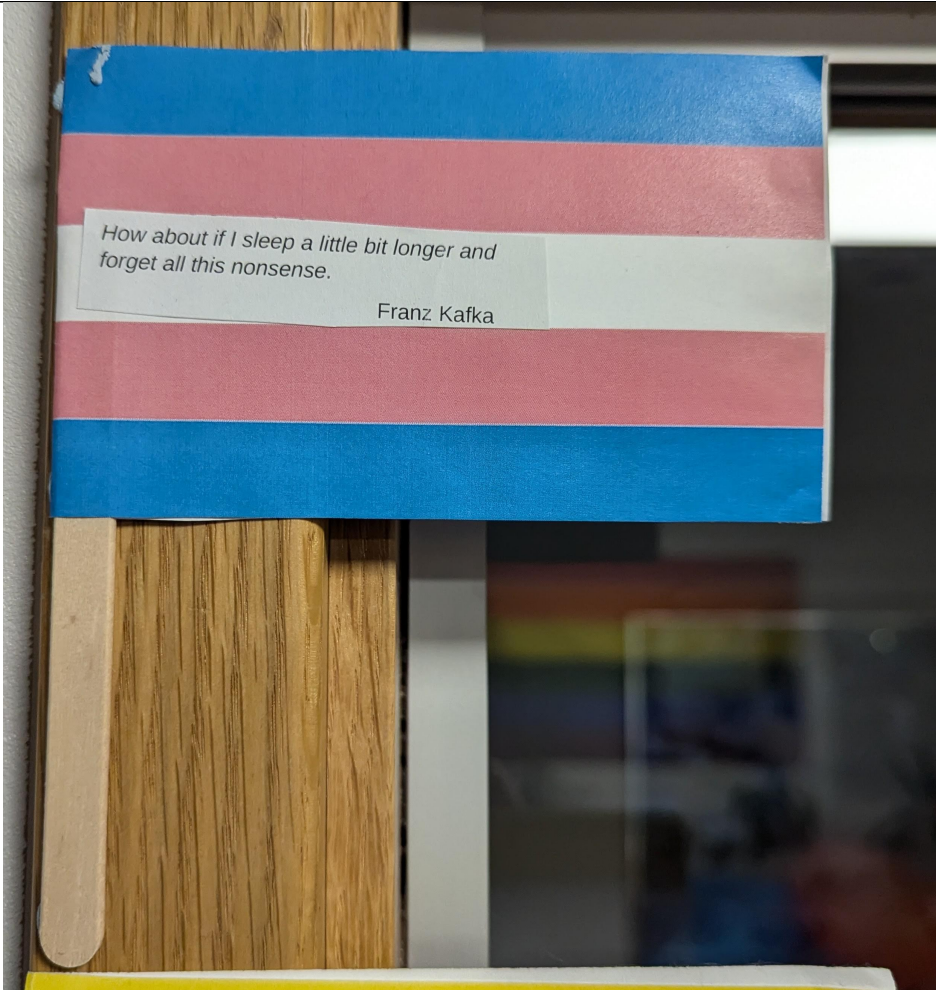
Image	Date	Comment
	07-11-2024	<b>Reception</b> (Trans flag)


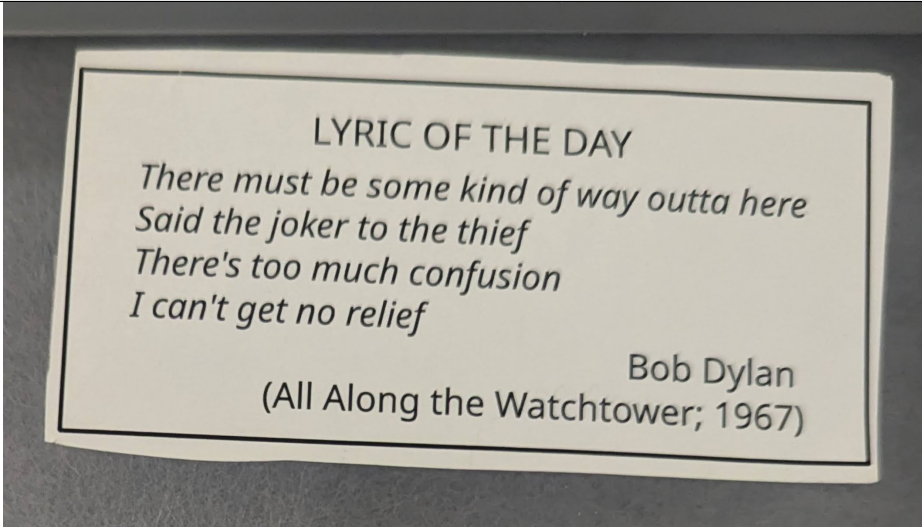
Image	Date	Comment
	07-11-2024	<b>Reception</b> (Asexual (?) flag). TOTD #49
	13-11-2024	<b>EDI cabinet</b> (upper corner)

Image	Date	Comment
	15-11-2024	
	21-11-2024	<b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (upper corner). TOTD #50

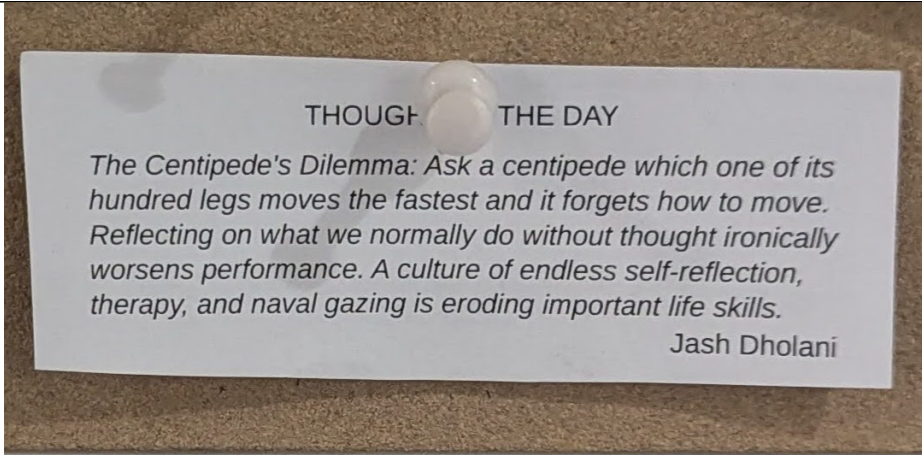
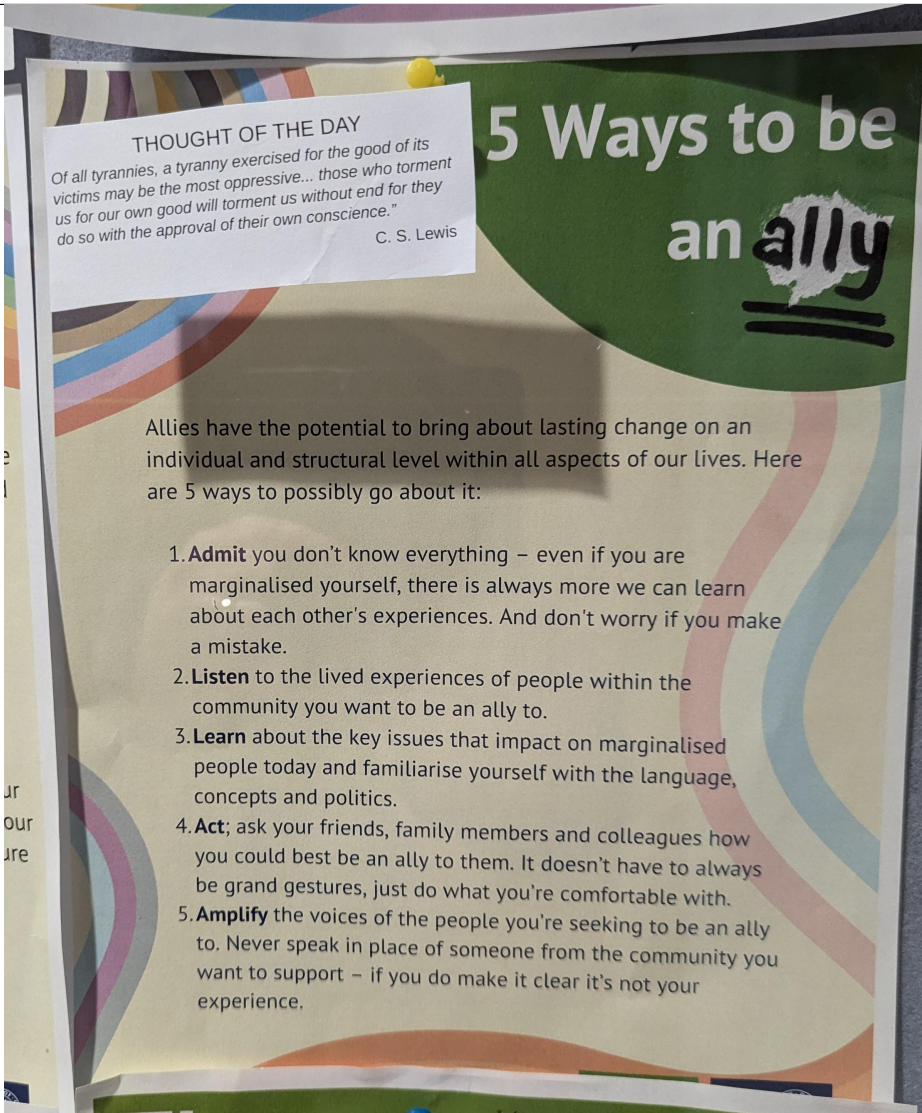
Image	Date	Comment
	25-11-2024	<b>Miscellaneous notice board</b> (upper corner). TOTD #51
	27-11-2024	<b>EDI cabinet</b> (Ally information). TOTD #52

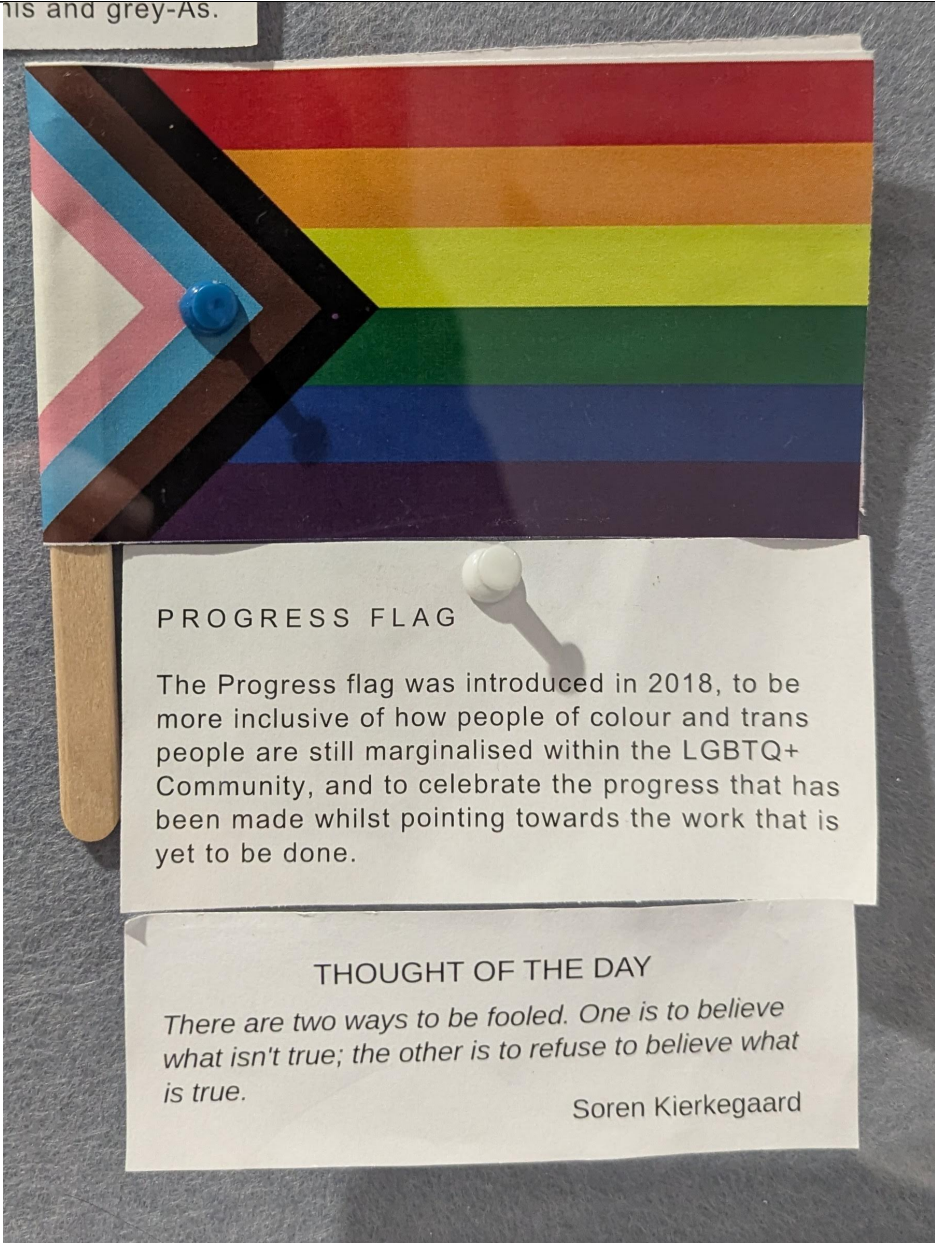
Image	Date	Comment
<p>his and grey-As.</p>  <p><b>PROGRESS FLAG</b></p> <p>The Progress flag was introduced in 2018, to be more inclusive of how people of colour and trans people are still marginalised within the LGBTQ+ Community, and to celebrate the progress that has been made whilst pointing towards the work that is yet to be done.</p> <p><b>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</b></p> <p><i>There are two ways to be fooled. One is to believe what isn't true; the other is to refuse to believe what is true.</i></p> <p>Soren Kierkegaard</p>	<p>01-12-2024</p>	<p><b>EDI cabinet</b> (below progress flag). <b>TOTD #53</b></p>

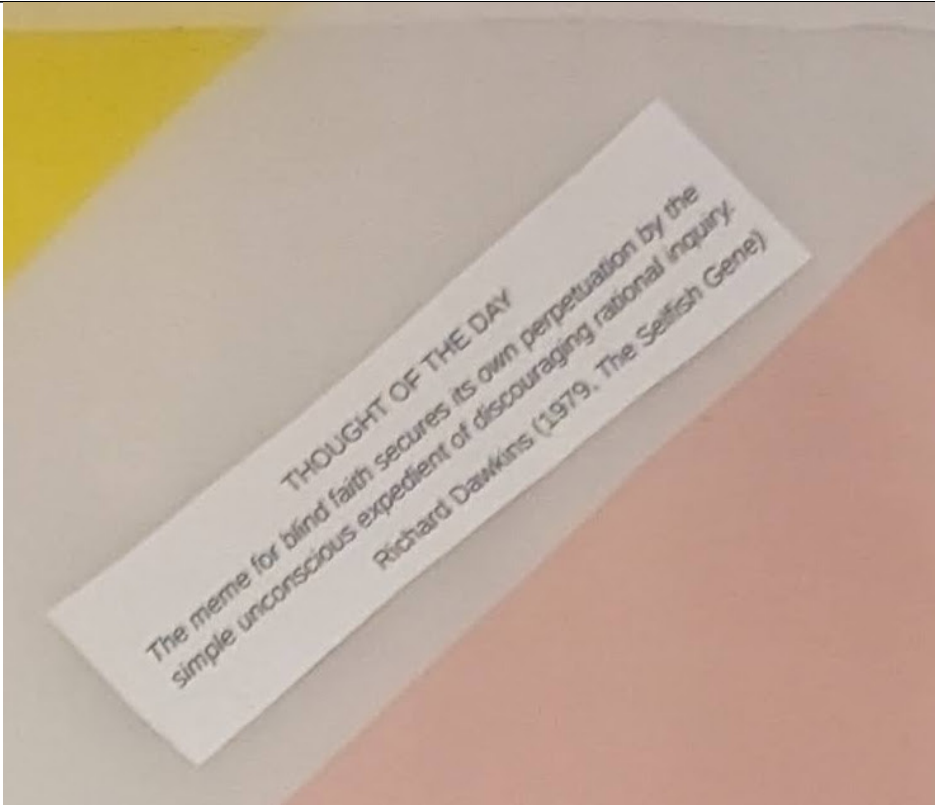
Image	Date	Comment
	<p>10-12-2024</p>	<p><b>2nd Progress flag</b> (upper white stripe). TOTD #54</p>

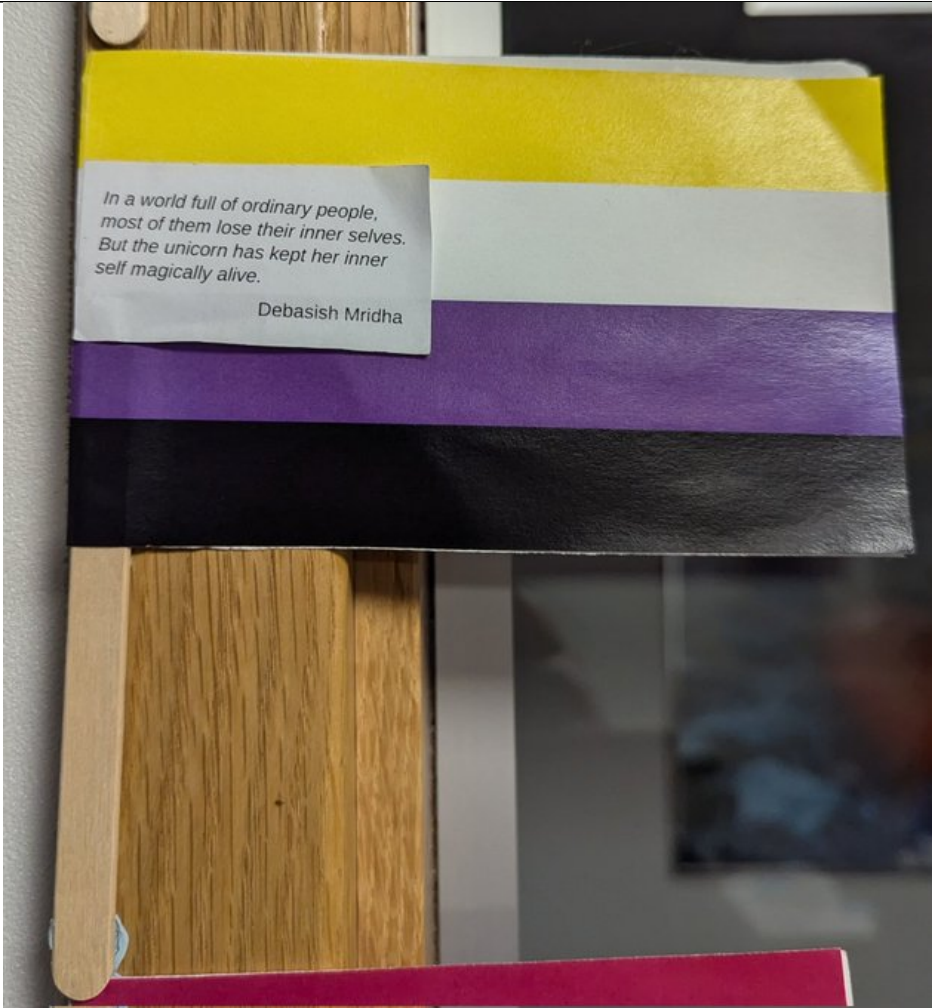
Image	Date	Comment
	19-12-2024	<b>Reception</b> (non-binary flag).

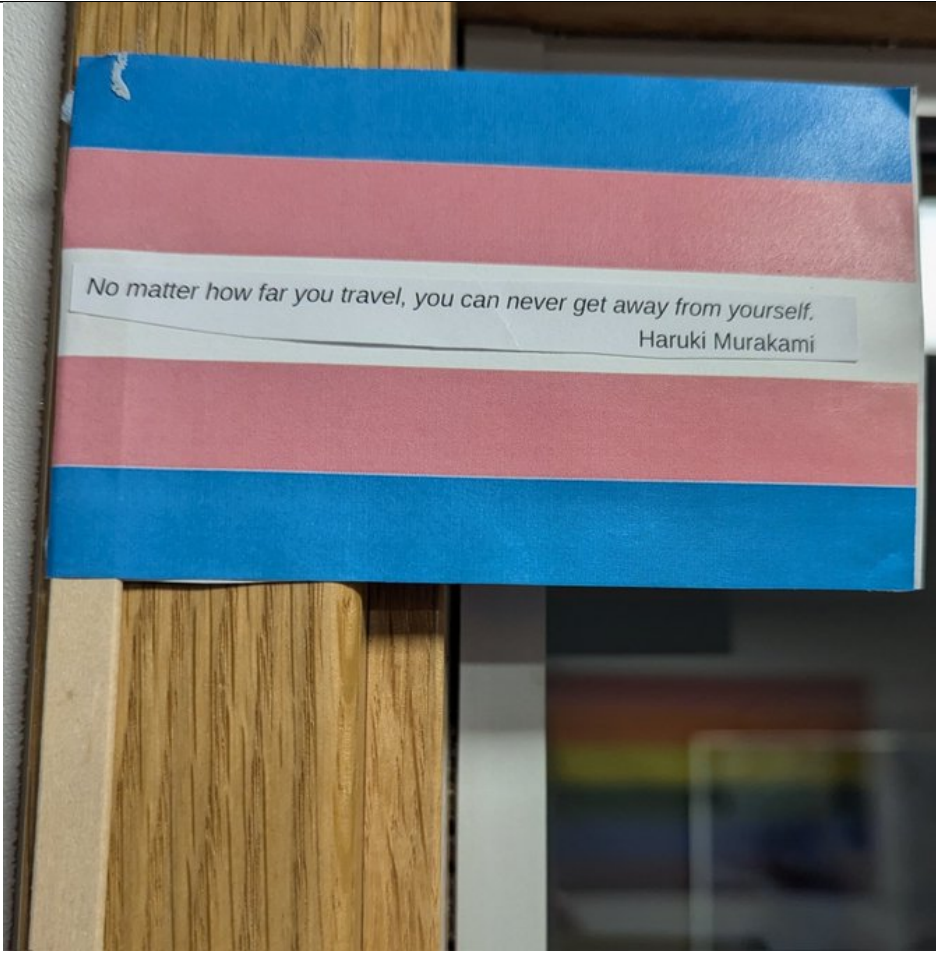
Image	Date	Comment
	19-12-2024	<b>Reception</b> (trans flag).

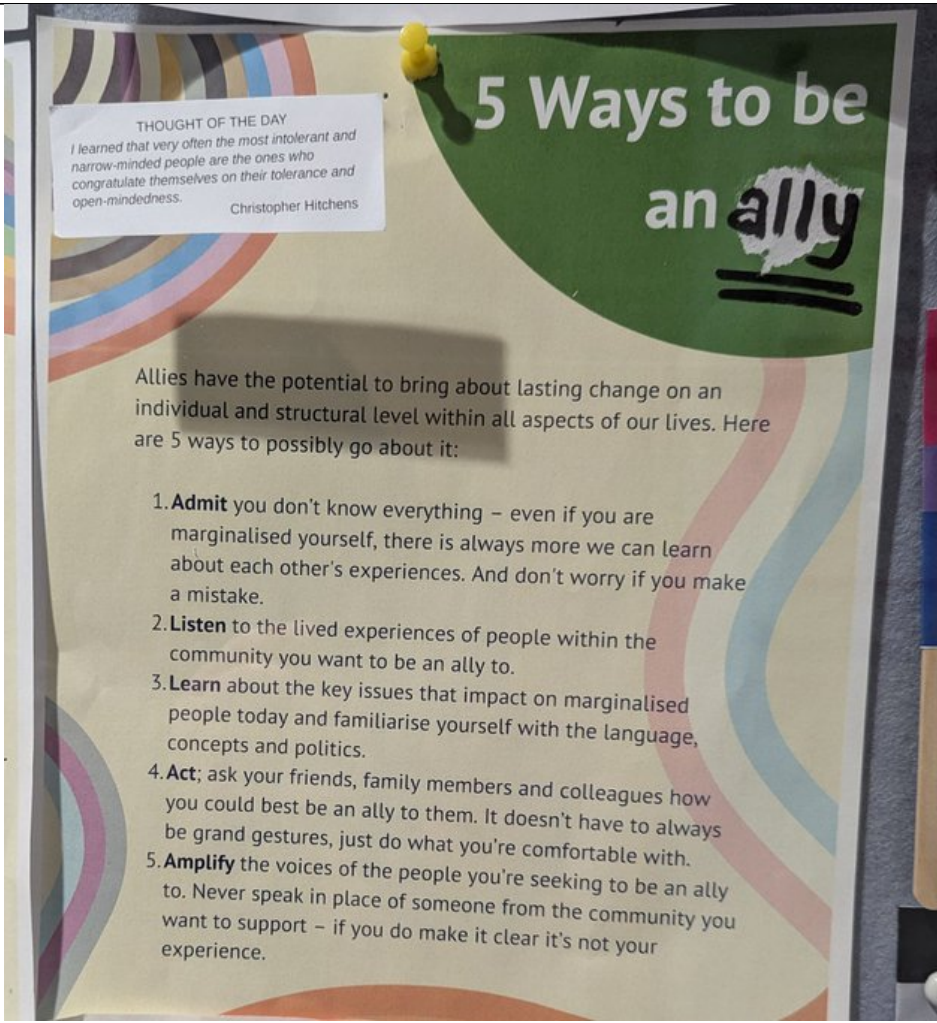
Image	Date	Comment
 <p><b>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</b>  <i>I learned that very often the most intolerant and narrow-minded people are the ones who congratulate themselves on their tolerance and open-mindedness.</i>    Christopher Hitchens</p> <h2>5 Ways to be an ally</h2> <p>Allies have the potential to bring about lasting change on an individual and structural level within all aspects of our lives. Here are 5 ways to possibly go about it:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Admit</b> you don't know everything – even if you are marginalised yourself, there is always more we can learn about each other's experiences. And don't worry if you make a mistake.</li> <li>2. <b>Listen</b> to the lived experiences of people within the community you want to be an ally to.</li> <li>3. <b>Learn</b> about the key issues that impact on marginalised people today and familiarise yourself with the language, concepts and politics.</li> <li>4. <b>Act</b>; ask your friends, family members and colleagues how you could best be an ally to them. It doesn't have to always be grand gestures, just do what you're comfortable with.</li> <li>5. <b>Amplify</b> the voices of the people you're seeking to be an ally to. Never speak in place of someone from the community you want to support – if you do make it clear it's not your experience.</li> </ol>	<p>12-01-2025</p>	<p><b>EDI board</b> (Ally information). TOTD #55</p>

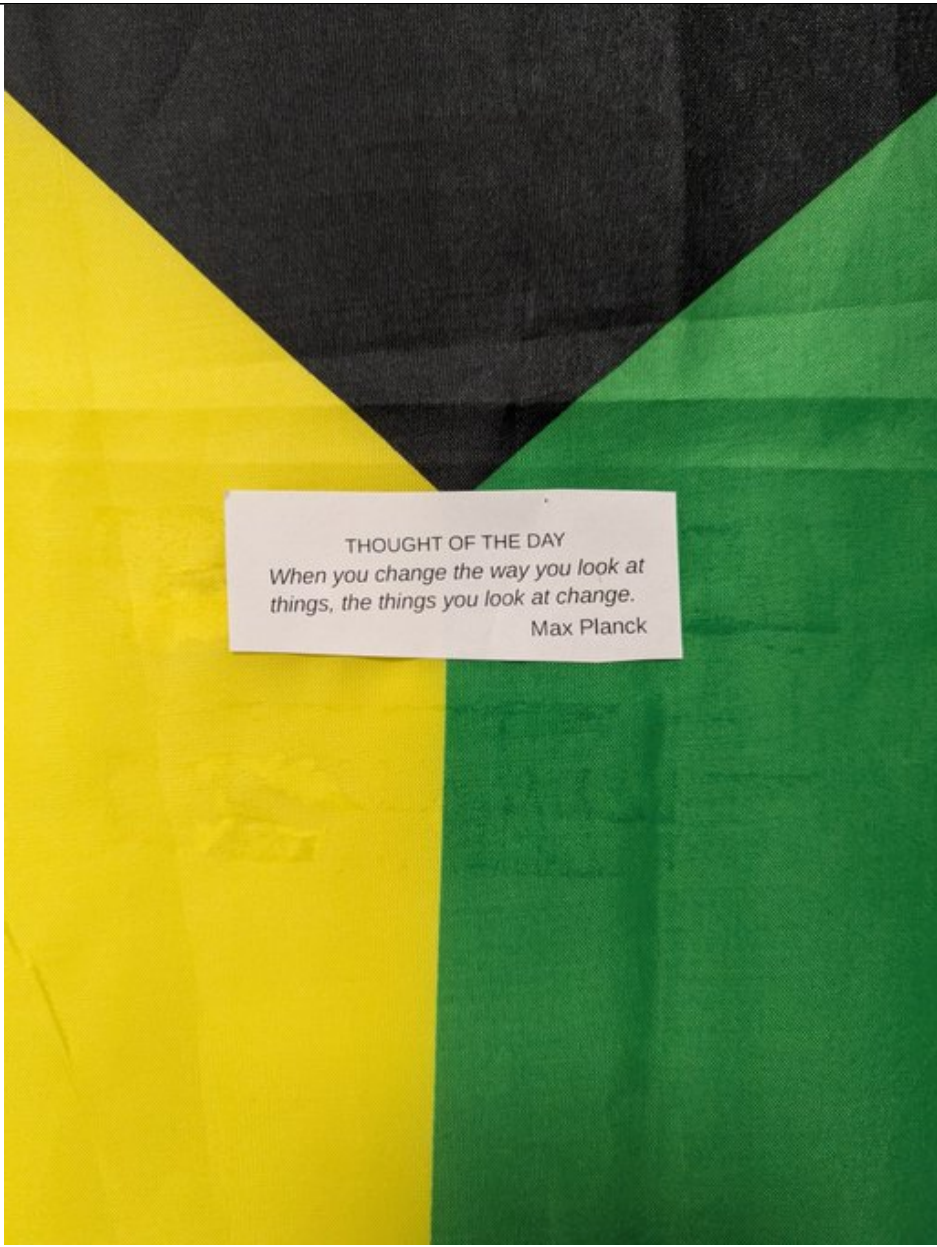
Image	Date	Comment
 <p data-bbox="323 667 780 837">THOUGHT OF THE DAY <i>When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.</i> Max Planck</p>	16-01-2025	<b>Progress flag</b> (center). TOTD #56

Image	Date	Comment
<p data-bbox="566 280 949 660"><b>Please feel free to take a pronoun badge</b></p> <p data-bbox="183 560 430 638">THOUGHT OF THE DAY If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything Mark Twain</p> <p data-bbox="167 728 877 761">The Equality &amp; Diversity Unit runs the following initiatives:</p> <ul data-bbox="167 772 558 907" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University LGBT+ Network</li> <li>• LGBT+ Allies Network</li> <li>• LGBT+ Role Models programme</li> <li>• University wide Networks</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="167 952 726 1019">For more info on workshops and networks, visit <a href="http://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks">edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/networks</a></p> <p data-bbox="167 1064 821 1131">Sign up to the Equality and Diversity Unit newsletter at <a href="http://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/news">edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/news</a></p> <p data-bbox="167 1176 821 1254">To join our Biology LGBTQ+ Network mailing list, email <a href="mailto:sympa@maillist.ox.ac.uk">sympa@maillist.ox.ac.uk</a></p> <p data-bbox="686 1299 965 1433">Department of <b>BIOLOGY</b> UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD</p>	23-01-2025	<b>EDI cabinet</b> (Pronoun badge information). TOTD #57

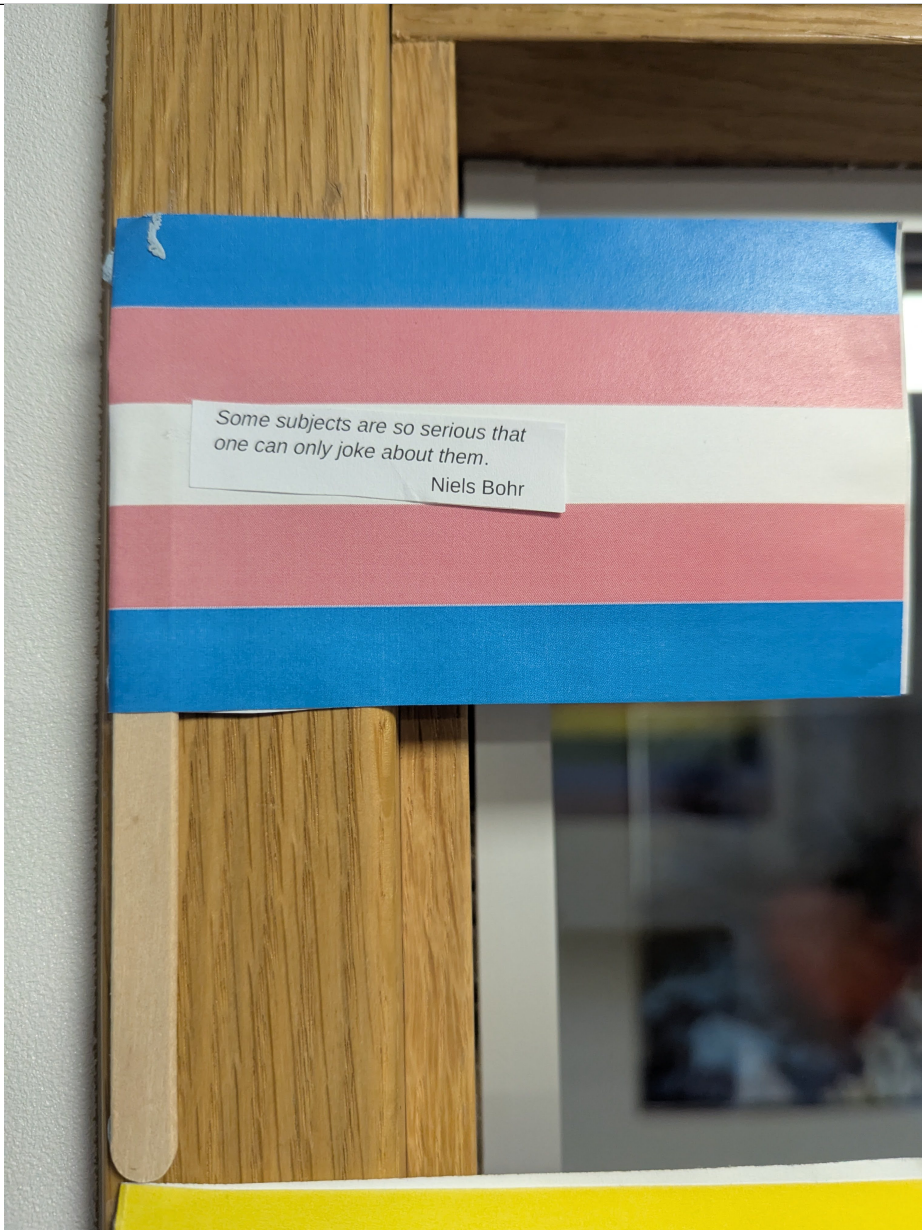
Image	Date	Comment
 <p>A white, cloud-shaped sticker with a scalloped edge is pasted on a yellow background. The text on the sticker reads: "THOUGHT OF THE DAY", "A reigning ideology is a little like the weather: all pervasive and virtually inescapable.", and "Michael Pollan".</p>	<p>26-01-2025</p>	<p><b>2nd Progress flag</b> (circle). TOTD #58</p>
 <p>A Transgender flag is displayed on a wooden surface. A white rectangular sticker is placed over the white stripe of the flag. The sticker contains the text: "Some subjects are so serious that one can only joke about them." and "Niels Bohr".</p>	<p>26-01-2025</p>	<p><b>Reception</b> (Trans flag)</p>

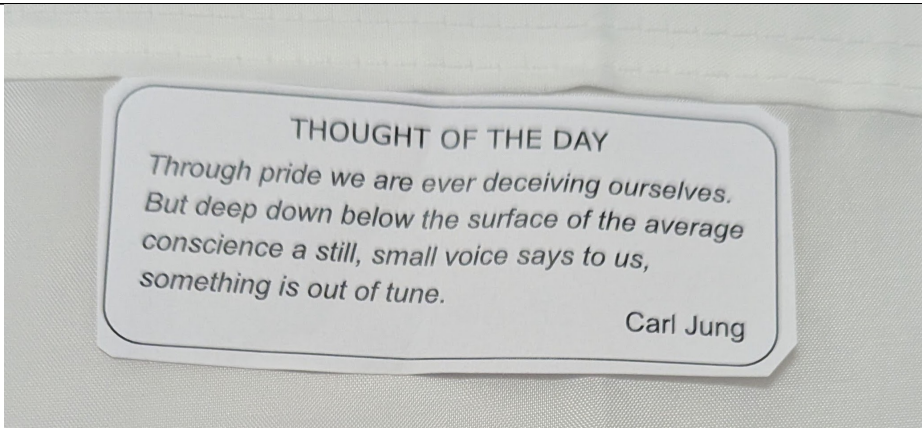
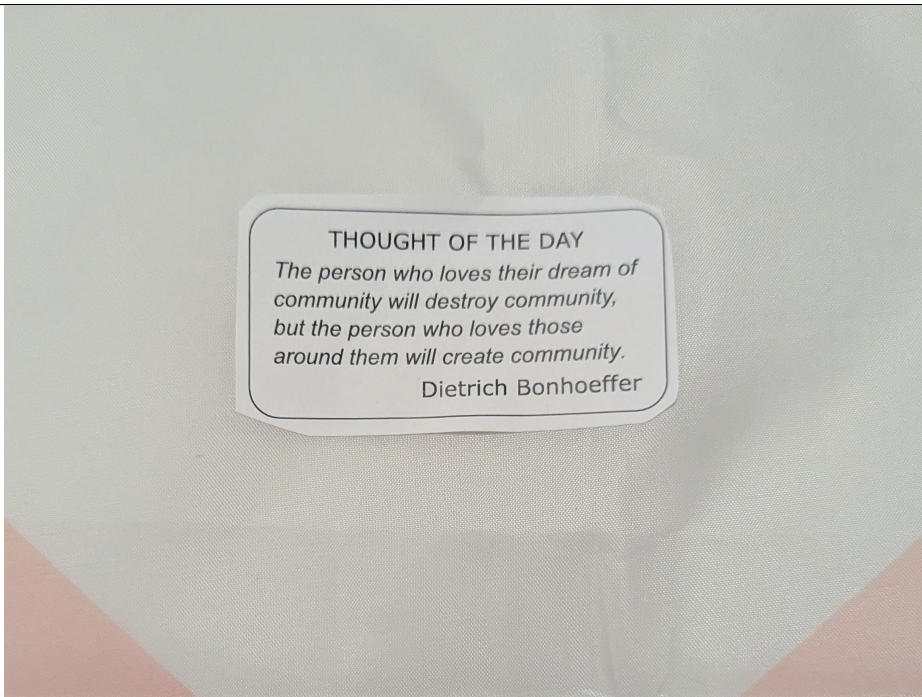
Image	Date	Comment
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>Through pride we are ever deceiving ourselves. But deep down below the surface of the average conscience a still, small voice says to us, something is out of tune.</i></p> <p>Carl Jung</p>	02-02-2025	<b>Progress flag</b> (upper white section). Also 2nd progress flag (white section). TOTD #59
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY</p> <p><i>The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community.</i></p> <p>Dietrich Bonhoeffer</p>	06-02-2025	<b>Progress flag</b> (upper white section). TOTD #60

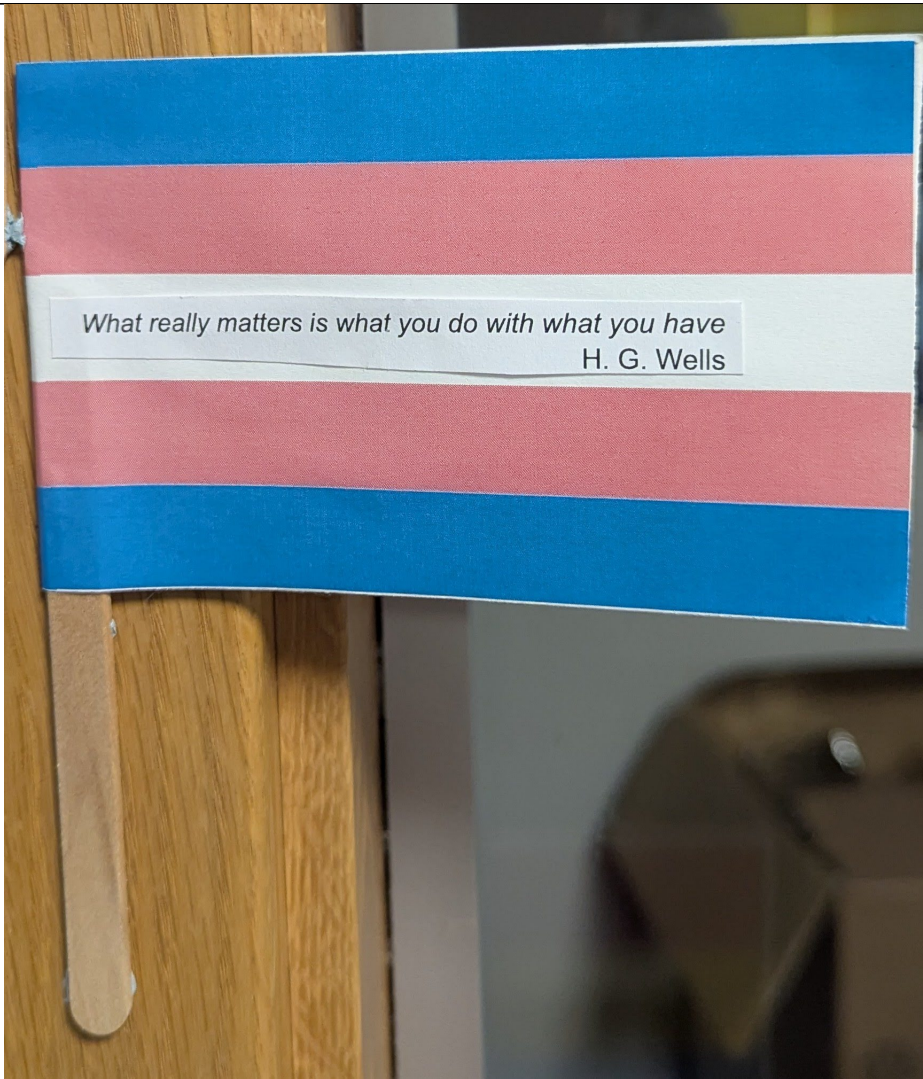
Image	Date	Comment
	06-02-2025	<b>Reception</b> (Trans flag)

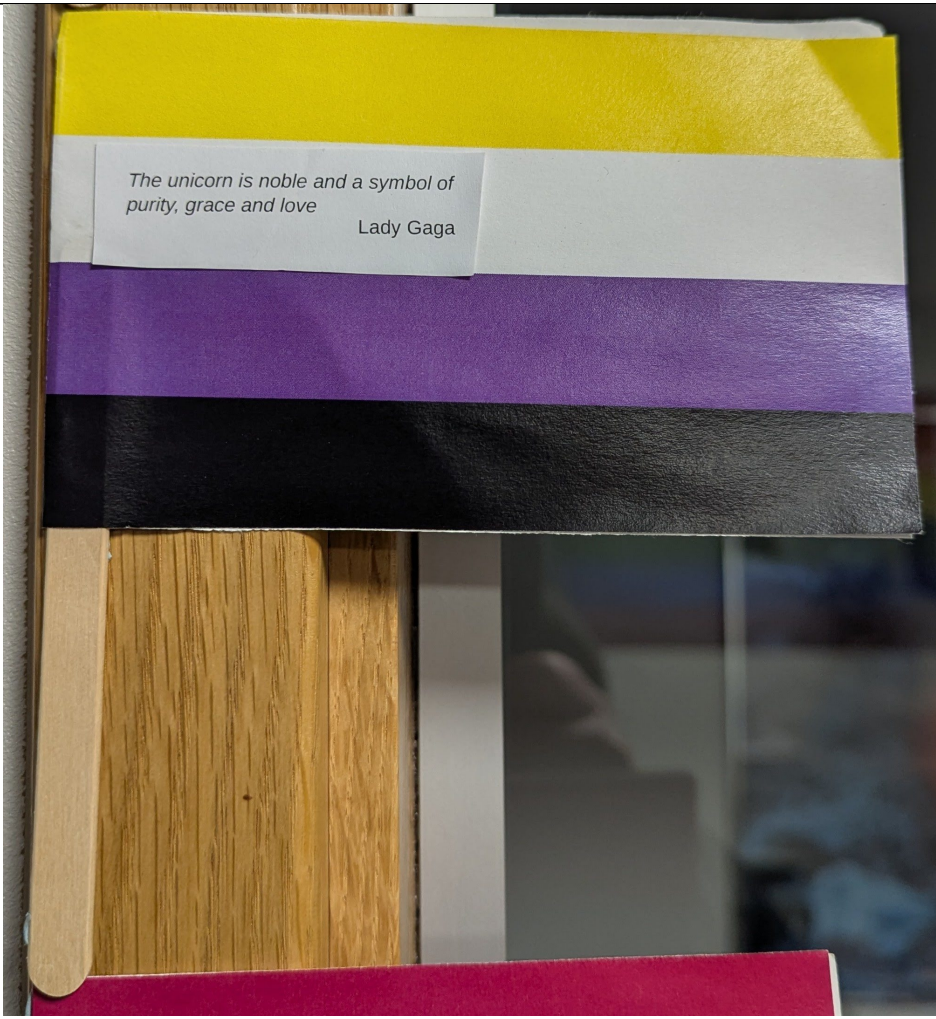
Image	Date	Comment
 <p>The unicorn is noble and a symbol of purity, grace and love Lady Gaga</p>	06-02-2025	<b>Reception</b> (Non-binary flag)

Image	Date	Comment
<p>A photograph of a trans flag (blue, pink, white, pink, blue stripes) mounted on a wooden stick. A white speech bubble sticker is attached to the flag with the text: "How about if I sleep a little bit longer and forget all this nonsense. Franz Kafka". The flag is pinned to a wooden beam on a wall. A red sign with the word "ctor" is partially visible in the bottom left corner.</p>	<p>10-02-2025</p>	<p><b>Reception</b> (trans flag)</p>
<p>A photograph of a trans flag (blue, pink, white, pink, blue stripes) mounted on a wooden stick. A white speech bubble sticker is attached to the flag with the text: "THOUGHT OF THE DAY Those who know do not speak. Those who speak do not know. Lao Tsu". The flag is pinned to a wooden beam on a wall. A red sign with the word "ntractor" is partially visible in the bottom left corner.</p>	<p>11-02-2025</p>	<p><b>Reception</b> (trans flag). TOTD #61</p>

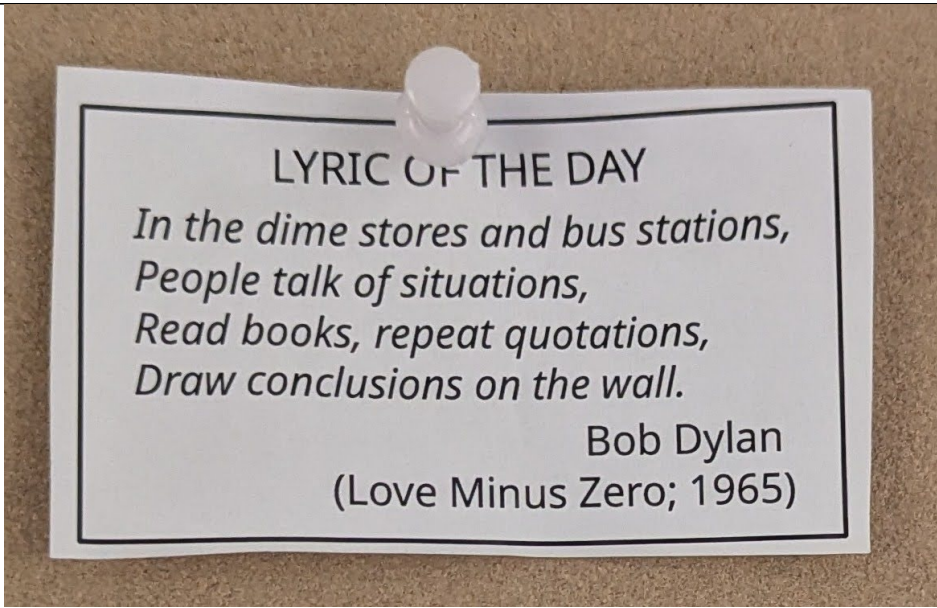
Image	Date	Comment
	23-02-2025	Miscellaneous notice board (upper corner)
<p>From Biology EDI committee &lt;edi.committee@biology.ox.ac.uk&gt; @</p> <p>To biology-all@maillist.ox.ac.uk &lt;biology-all@maillist.ox.ac.uk&gt; @ 12/08/2025, 15:07</p> <p>Subject <b>EDI Committee update on the defacing of LGBTQ+ flags.</b></p> <p>Dear all,</p> <p>The Biology Department has completed its investigation into the defacing of LGBTQ+ flags. There have been no further incidents since February 2025, and the Department is confident that the steps taken have brought this activity to an end.</p> <p>We understand that these events have caused concern or distress. The EDI Committee and the Department remain committed to supporting any member of our community who has been affected.</p> <p>Feel free to contact the EDI Co-Leads, Jorgelina Marino and Lucy Radford, at <a href="mailto:edi.committee@biology.ox.ac.uk">edi.committee@biology.ox.ac.uk</a>.</p> <p>With best wishes,</p> <p>Jorgelina and Lucy.</p>	21-04-2023	

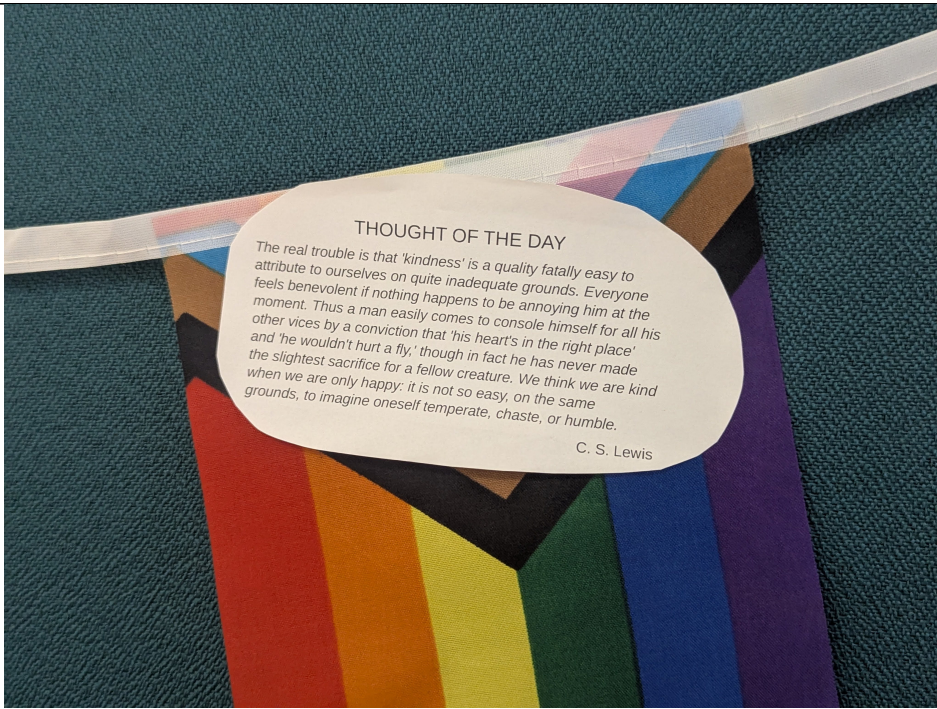
Image	Date	Comment
	<p>25-10-2025</p>	<p>Hot desk bunting in the LaMB. TOTD #62</p>


Image	Date	Comment
	<p>2-11-2025</p>	<p>Hot desk bunting in the LaMB</p>


Image	Date	Comment
 <p>A hot desk bunting with a quote by Confucius. The bunting is made of colorful fabric strips (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) and is attached to a white ribbon. The quote is: "THOUGHT OF THE DAY: The man who asks a question is a fool for a minute, the man who does not ask is a fool for life. Confucius".</p>	2-11-2025	Hot desk bunting in the LaMB. TODD #63

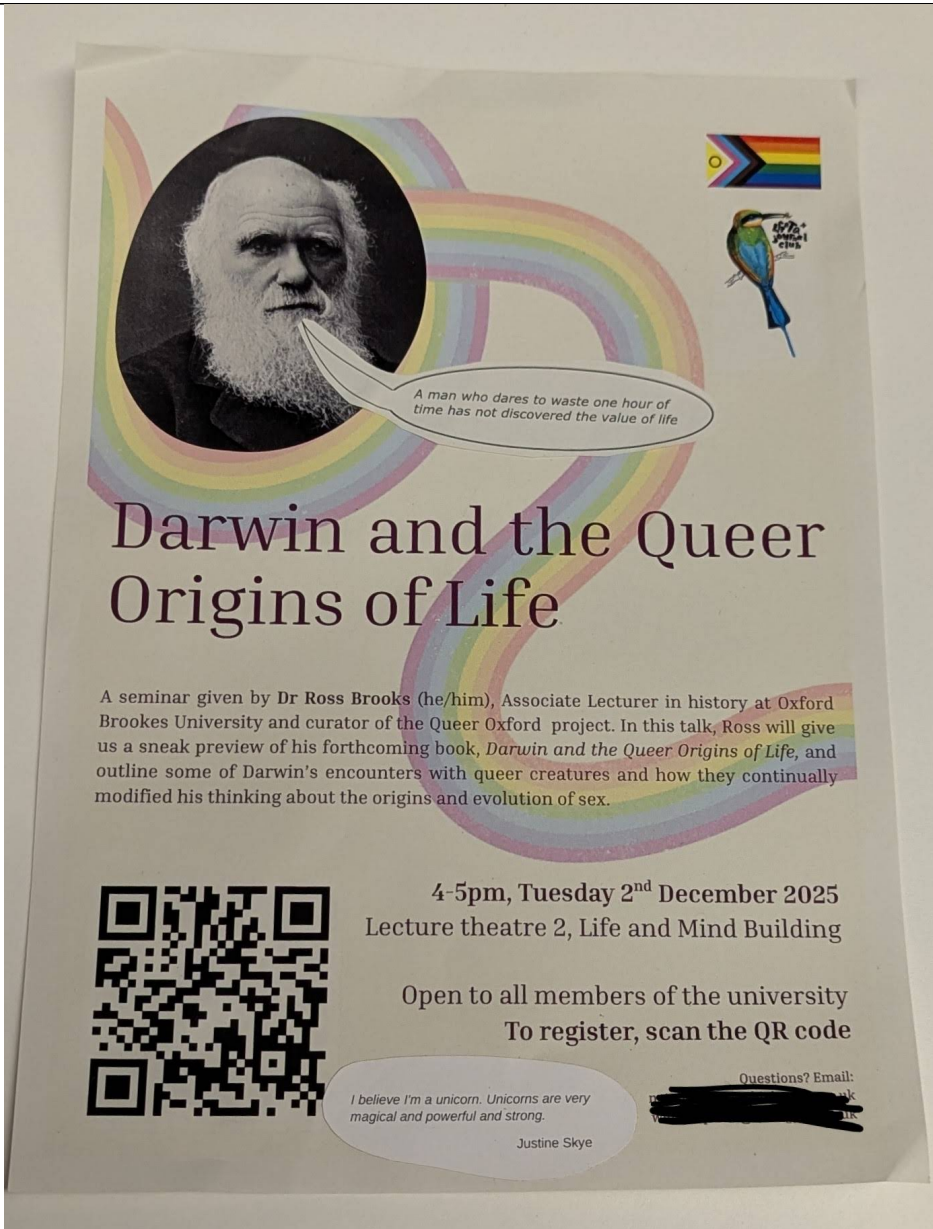
Image	Date	Comment
 <p data-bbox="209 293 523 629">A man who dares to waste one hour of time has not discovered the value of life</p> <h2 data-bbox="204 678 922 813">Darwin and the Queer Origins of Life</h2> <p data-bbox="189 864 938 987">A seminar given by Dr Ross Brooks (he/him), Associate Lecturer in history at Oxford Brookes University and curator of the Queer Oxford project. In this talk, Ross will give us a sneak preview of his forthcoming book, <i>Darwin and the Queer Origins of Life</i>, and outline some of Darwin's encounters with queer creatures and how they continually modified his thinking about the origins and evolution of sex.</p> <p data-bbox="459 1055 938 1122">4-5pm, Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025 Lecture theatre 2, Life and Mind Building</p> <p data-bbox="499 1160 951 1227">Open to all members of the university To register, scan the QR code</p> <p data-bbox="443 1267 691 1335">I believe I'm a unicorn. Unicorns are very magical and powerful and strong. Justine Skye</p> <p data-bbox="834 1245 962 1312">Questions? Email: [redacted]</p>	<p data-bbox="1066 1384 1193 1417">10-12-2025</p>	<p data-bbox="1225 1384 1497 1447">Poster promoting Queer Biology talk.</p>


Image	Date	Comment
 <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY <i>Censorship reflects a society's lack of confidence in itself.</i> Potter Stewart</p>	1-12-2025	Hot desk bunting in the LaMB. TOTD #64

Image	Date	Comment
<p>Remove the anti-reflex cover. Anti-reflex-Schutzfolie abheben. Anti-reflex korumayı kaldırın.</p> <p>3 Place in the poster. Poster einlegen. Posteri yerleştirin.</p> <p>4 After placing the cover back on the poster, close the profiles downwards. Anti-reflex-Schutzfolie auf Poster legen und die Seitenprofile in Pfeilrichtung zuklappen. Anti-reflex korumayı posterin üzerine yerleştirerek kenar profilleri ok işareti yönünde kapatın.</p> <p>2. Locate the metal brackets on the back of your frame near the gap and loosen the screws.</p> <p>3 Push the frame sides together and retighten the screws.</p> <p>4 OK 4. The frame corners will be better aligned.</p> <p>THOUGHT OF THE DAY A man is a sperm's way of producing another sperm Philip K. Dick</p>	<p>18-1-2026</p>	<p>Empty poster frame in a “town centre” within the LaMB. TOTD #65</p>

Image	Date	Comment
	<p>18-1-2026</p>	<p>Hot desk bunting in the LaMB. TODD #66</p>

Image	Date	Comment
<div data-bbox="118 197 185 264" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="193 197 485 259" data-label="Text"> <p><b>the red headed hedgehog</b> @hedgehognothog</p> </div> <div data-bbox="932 197 1002 230" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Dear Oxford Biology,</p> <p>These quotes from the singers Róisín Murphy and Chrissie Hynde, two of the greats in my book, will be the final contributions to the EDI material on display in the Biology Department at the University of Oxford. The first contribution was a quote from Richard Dawkins, “There are two sexes and that is all there is to it”, placed beneath the Gender Unicorn poster on April 21st, 2023 (see banner picture). Since then, over 60 “Thoughts” and numerous other comments have appeared on the EDI/identity flag display board, the progress flags, and various other notice boards.</p> <p>These were intended as optional prompts to encourage reflection on the materials being displayed. Each one inspired me and in sum they featured a wide range of interesting figures from the past and present, including scientists, writers, and musicians. Some of them were challenging, yet none of them were hateful.</p> <p>In the past two years, each of them has been removed on discovery. They have been critiqued in department communications, but their contents have never been shared. This has limited their potential to raise interesting discussions.</p> <p>The final Thought from Róisín Murphy offers a perspective on the idea that people can change sex and its potential real-world implications. She critiques the belief itself, not those who hold it. The final Lyric from Chrissie Hynde conveys a sense of constraint, “force us to live like we do”, yet the tune is upbeat and I find it hopeful.</p> <p>The department has an illustrious history and a promising future. As a science institution, it would do well to keep in mind these words from Albert Einstein (Thought of the day #51): “Science can only flourish in an atmosphere of free speech”.</p>	<p>18-1-2026</p>	<p>Posted on X alongside the picture above</p>

## Appendix 1

### Meeting to discuss anonymous postings on EDI material in the Department of Biology at Oxford University

**Date:** 25/02/2025

**Location:** The Board Room, The Biology Research and Administration Building,  
The Department of Biology, Oxford

**Present:**

Carol Baggiolini (CB; HR manager, Department of Biology (leaving in 3 days))

Michael Biggs (MB; Associate Professor, Department of Sociology)

Nigel Cribb (NC; Head of Administration and Finance, Department of Biology)

Ace North (AN; Researcher, Department of Biology)

*Notes prepared by Ace North*

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- **Purpose of Meeting:** to address anonymous postings of quotations on Pride flags and notices in the department, which have caused discomfort to some staff and students over the past year.
  - **Department's Stance:** The department values free speech and academic freedom but aims to foster open debate rather than anonymous postings that create tension or feelings of harassment.
  - **Evidence Against AN:** Significant evidence points to AN as the poster, linked to a Twitter page ("Red-Headed Hedgehog") tied to his role as secretary of the Oxford Woodturners, updated shortly after a prior conversation with NC.
  - **AN's Response:** AN neither confirmed nor denied involvement, citing union advice not to answer unless it's a formal investigation, and expressed concern about a defamatory email about him circulating in the department.
  - **No Formal Complaint:** NC and CB clarified this is not a formal complaint but a fact-finding effort to resolve the issue informally and reduce departmental tension.
  - **Gender Critical Views:** CB acknowledged the postings reflect gender-critical views (referencing the Forstater case), and the department seeks to balance these with other perspectives without taking sides.
  - **Proposed Solutions:** Suggestions included hosting an academic event with speakers like biologist Emma Hilton (developmental biologist at the University of Manchester) and an opposing view; replacing overbearing Progress flags with images relevant to the work of the biology department; and better implementing a notice board policy.
  - **Notice Board Policy:** Initiated last year, this policy restricts wall postings to department-approved content, with designated boards for EDI and health/safety, but implementation has been inconsistent; full enforcement is planned for the move to the new LAM building.
  - **Pride Flags Debate:** Flags are seen by some as pushing one viewpoint; the community resists removal, feeling it concedes to the anonymous poster, but CB suggested limiting flags to specific times and diversifying EDI board content.
  - **Neutrality Concerns:** MB pointed out NC's Progress flag lanyard as a sign the department isn't neutral.
  - **Next Steps:** NC will discuss with Head of Department, send AN a redacted copy of the email linking him to the postings, and email the department reinforcing the notice board policy and discouraging anonymous posts.
  - **Timeline:** Changes like flag removal or policy enforcement would take at least a month, and would require the person who is placing the stickers to cease as a confidence-building step.
  - **Department's Goal:** Focus on science, teaching, and research, not politics, by facilitating productive dialogue and reducing distractions from this issue.
  - **Statute XII:** CB noted noted that AN's employment contract falls under Statute XII of the University Regulations.

28/3/2025

## **Appendix 2: letter to the Head of Department (Prof. Martin Maiden) and Head of Administration (Nigel Cribb)**

Dear Head of Department,

I don't believe we know each other well, despite having worked under the same roof(s) for a number of years. I am.. I apologise in advance that this is quite a long message, but I think it is important and I'd be grateful if you'd consider it.

I am writing to express my misgivings about the display of two "progress flags" in the break room, the numerous gender identity flags in the entrance lobby and on the EDI board, and the "Gender Unicorn" poster on the EDI board. This material has now been in place for several years, and during this time I have reflected upon it through innumerable conversations with people of different persuasions, and by reading countless articles offering diverse perspectives. This has led me to a view that displaying the material is problematic and poses a reputational risk to the department. I hope that bringing my concerns to your attention may initiate a dialogue and lead to a re-appraisal of the department's position.

### **Gender identity theory**

The items listed above are all symbols of "gender identity theory", the idea that "people should count as men or women according to how they feel and what they declare, instead of their biology" [Joyce 2021]. For example, the Gender Unicorn poster tells us that we each have a "gender identity" which may be 'female/woman/girl', or 'male/man/boy', or 'other gender'. This trait is considered independent from our sex which, by contrast, is 'assigned at birth' from three options: 'female', 'male', or 'other/intersex'. This theory was developed in American universities in the latter half of the 20th century [Sullivan & Todd 2024], and in recent years it has become incredibly popular in mainstream culture. Given the challenge that it poses to previously accepted principles of biology (e.g. that there are exactly two sexes [Lehtonen & Parker 2014]), one might have expected its rise to have inspired a wave of scientific debate. However, scientific literature defending gender identity theory is all but impossible to find [Hilton & Wright 2024]. Instead, many prominent biologists have felt the need to publicly refute it, while vigorously defending the standard model. Some examples:

- **A defense of the binary in human sex** - Jerry Coyne (evolutionary biologist and Professor Emeritus at the University of Chicago; blog article; 2020)
- **There are only two sexes** – Anne Glover DBE FRS FRSE FRSGS FASM (biologist and President of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society; interview; 2021)
- **Race is a Spectrum. Sex is Pretty Damn Binary** - Professor Richard Dawkins FRS FRSL (blog article; 2021)

- **Many Sexes? That is nonsense!** - Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard (biologist and Nobel laureate; interview; 2022).
- **No Bones About It: Sex Is Binary** - Elizabeth Weiss (anthropologist, San Jose State University; *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 2024)
- **Don't Let Anyone Confuse You: There Really Are Only Two Sexes** – Carole Hooven (human evolutionary biologist, the American Enterprise Institute; *The Boston Globe* 2025)

These and others have spoken out despite attracting opprobrium for doing so. See, for example, Carole Hooven's chilling **account** of being the target of such a hostile student-led campaign that she felt no option but to quit her 20 year career at Harvard. In the UK, philosopher Kathleen Stock was the target of an equally troubling campaign, leading to her **resignation** from a professorship at the University of Sussex. You may have seen that the University of Sussex has just been **fined £585,000** by the Office for Students for 'failing to uphold freedom of speech' in this case.

The chorus of scientists who have made their opinions known, in spite of the disincentives to speak, rings loud and clear: gender identity theory *fails* to offer falsifiable predictions, it *lacks* explanatory power, and it *undermines* common scientific understanding. Instead, it demands of followers to believe without question, akin to a religious belief. For these reasons, gender identity theory is often referred to by critics as an ideology [Sullivan & Todd 2024] or belief system [Joyce 2020], rather than a theory.

#### **What's the harm?**

In our department, I worry that uncritical promotion of gender identity theory threatens the culture of free and open discussion that we know and love. While no one should object to alternative ideas being presented for discussion, I fear that displaying gender identity symbols is not in this spirit. For instance, the informatics are all presented as factual and the identity flags as *fait accomplis*. One cannot help forming the impression that questioning this material will not be tolerated, particularly in light of critics being ostracised in other institutions.

More generally, I believe that gender identity theory is dangerous because it is the cause of real-world harm to many across society. I hear the serious concerns of some medical practitioners over 'treatments' prescribed for gender dysphoria, including puberty suppression, cross-sex hormone therapy, and invasive surgeries such as double mastectomies in teenage girls (**example**). I sympathise with women's groups that are concerned about the intrusion of trans-identifying males into women only spaces (**example**). I also sympathise with lesbian, gay, and bisexual people who point to the fact that a disproportionate number of trans-identifying teenagers develop, in the absence of medical interventions, into same-sex attracted adults ([Holt, Skakerberg & Dunsford 2016]; this is why gender affirming care is sometimes called **transing away the gay**).

#### **Moving forwards**

As the department moves into its new premises, I hope you might consider this an opportune time to re-evaluate the department's position. I suggest a number of steps the department might wish to consider:

- Engage openly with gender identity theory by using normal scientific processes to debate and test it.
  - Invite a biologist to the department who is critical of gender identity theory (for example developmental biologist Emma Hilton), alongside a speaker who offers an opposing view.
  - Reserve space next to the EDI board for points of view that are sceptical of gender identity theory.
- Adopt an agnostic stance by not displaying materials that promote any particular disputed theory uncritically.
  - Remove the large progress flags from the break room to make space for biology-themed pictures - perhaps the department could commission more artwork like the fantastic selection displayed in the stairway?

- Remove the small gender identity flags from the reception lobby. These flags seem to have been put up anonymously and it is not clear what purpose they are intended to serve.
- Remove the gender identity flags and unicorn poster from the EDI board.

**In conclusion**

In writing this letter, I do not seek to provoke or antagonise. I have no objection to people who believe in gender identity theory, just as I have no objection to people believing in God despite being atheist myself. If someone believes they have a gender identity, its no business of mine and I will hope it does not cause them difficulties. My concern is not with individuals but the worldview being promoted uncritically.

Finally, as a proud member of the department of 15 years standing, I worry about how the department's reputation may be affected. I see gender identity theory as a direct threat to the public understanding of biology, for it seeks to dismantle fundamental biological truths. It saddens me that this rightly celebrated department, home of so much innovation in biology through its history (via its ancestral departments of Zoology and Plant Sciences), is, seemingly, missing in action.

I hope you will consider these comments and let me know your thoughts.

Yours sincerely,

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## Appendix 3

### Meeting to discuss concerns over gender identity in the Department of Biology at Oxford University

**Date:** 8/10/2025

**Location:** Head of Department office, The Life and Mind Building,  
The Department of Biology, Oxford

**Present:**

Nigel Cribb (NC; Head of Administration and Finance, Department of Biology)  
Sonja Grotjahn (SG; Senior analyst/ Programmer, Department of Population Health)  
Martin Maiden (MM; Head of Department, Department of Biology)  
Ace North (AN; Researcher, Department of Biology)

*Notes prepared by Ace North and Sonja Grotjahn*

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## 1 Background

- Purpose of the meeting: The informal meeting was offered for AN to “discuss his views and concerns” (following email from AN to MM and NC sent in March 2025, raising concerns about the display of gender identity theory in the BRaB, the department’s former building, including Progress flags and a ‘Gender Unicorn’ poster). The long delay between email and meeting was largely due to the move to the LaMB, and a suggestion from AN to meet after the move.
- AN invited SS to join the meeting to assist in note taking.
- MM opened the meeting to state that as head of Department, he was not willing to disclose his personal views because the department is committed to a position of neutrality. He said he was keen to discuss how the department can be made an inclusive and safe space for all, regardless of their views on this issue.
- AN said there were two main issues he hoped to discuss (stated in an email of the preceding day). First the promotion of gender-identity material in the department; second, how to reassure gender critical staff that they will not be harassed for expressing their views. AN said that he would also like to discuss the Athena Swan scheme, time permitting.

## 2 Promotion of gender identity material in the department

- MM said that department’s policy is not to promote political views, more over, no personal posters should be allowed because they could be taken as being endorsed by the department.
- MM acknowledged that the display of gender identity materials in the BRaB was problematic. He said there had been a failure to implement policy correctly (noting he was not head of department at the time), and gave an assurance that this material will not be displayed in the LaMB. The LaMB has clear policies, agreed between the Biology and Experimental Psychology departments, not to display materials promoting contested points of view. MM commented that these policies had to be balanced against freedom of expression.
- SG commented that there were no progress flags displayed her department, except during Pride month.
- AN commented that in the office next to his (in the LaMB), research staff had hung up progress flags above a line of hot desks. He said that they had been over 2 desks for a couple of weeks, and yesterday the display was extended to over 4 desks.
- MM and NC agreed that flags should not be put up in such a space, and agreed that they would deal with this issue.
- AN raised the issue of official LGBTQ+ staff networks in the Department and the wider University, showing two screenshots: one from a Biology department intranet page (advertising the Biology LGBTQ+ network and 3 other networking/ campaign groups), and one from the University main pages advertising 7 different LGBTQ+ networks. AN said he didn’t have a problem with staff forming networks per se, but their official endorsement by the Biology department was evidence of non-neutrality. He quoted guidance from the Sullivan report (part 2, Recommendation 11, pg. 15): “Activist networks have a place within the university, but they must be independent of the university administration. Such networks should not be embedded within university structures, including EDI structures.”
- AN mentioned that there were no corresponding ‘gender critical’ networks in the department (or university) promoted in these online spaces.

- MM said that promotion of networks on department intranet pages was problematic and agreed to look into their removal. NC questioned if the networks were support rather than activist groups; AN said it seemed likely that they engage in activism.
- MM asked AN for his views on lanyards, where staff may choose between a neutral design or a “rainbow” lanyard featuring the progress flag. MM said he allowed staff to choose freely because it was a matter of personal expression. AN commented that he agreed in principle, but if e.g. the staff member works in HR, it will be problematic if another member of staff needs to discuss a gender-identity related concern. MM agreed it is problematic for staff working in the management structure of the department to choose rainbow lanyards.

### **3 Reassurance to gender critical staff that they will not be harassed for expressing their views**

- AN said that supporters of gender identity theory had instilled a culture of fear preventing gender critical views from being expressed.
- AN noted an incident when he had been harassed shortly after moving to the LaMB, which he had previously reported to NC in order that it be logged rather than as a formal complaint.
- MM also said that things like this shouldn’t happen in the department but they were not able to investigate further because there was no formal complaint. MM commented that reporting the incident was the right thing to do, and said raising it to a formal complaint was an option for AN to decide.

### **4 Athena Swan**

- AN asked MM and NC if they are aware of gender critical critiques of the Athena Swan scheme, in particular those made in an article by Armstrong & Sullivan (2024). For instance, were they aware that in 2020, Athena Swan officially stated that “gender is a spectrum”?
- MM said there are many strong opinions for and against Athena Swan within the University administration, yet joining Athena Swan was university policy, and the department has no choice but to participate.
- NC commented that AN had only shown one paper and there were no doubt other academic papers arguing in favour of the Athena Swan scheme. AN agreed but said he wanted to highlight the particular concerns raised by Armstrong & Sullivan (2024), because he found them persuasive.