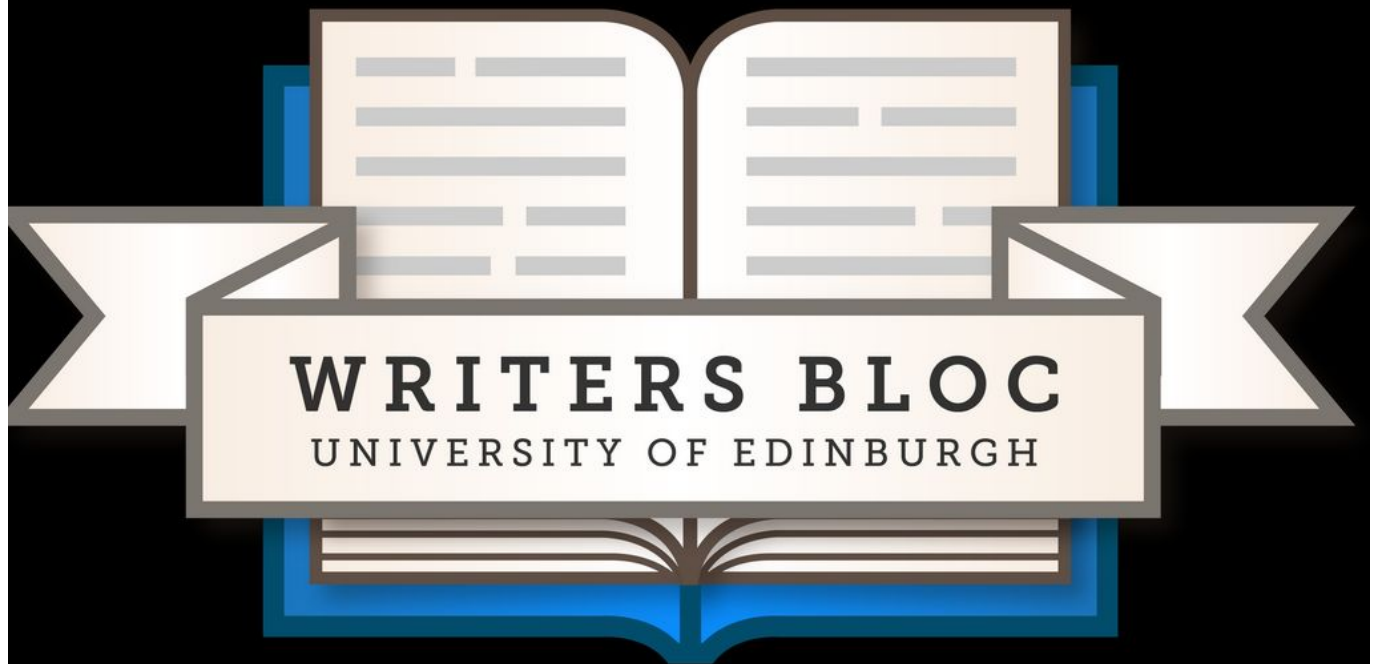


THE "WRITERS' BLOC" PROJECT



WEBSITES AND THE CREATION OF AN ENGLISH LITERATURE LEARNING COMMUNITY

INSPIRATIONS:

- 'Enhancing Critical Reading Using Blogs' Northcott, Patterson, Kidwell
- [To examine student engagement with critical texts using blogs
- To make the students collaborate over posts
- To use a text based-platform to create closer study of texts]
- LEaD 2009 "Students' own views are central to the study" (3)

- 
- KEY GOALS:**
- Student Collaboration
 - Deeper Critical Engagement
 - Student Feedback & Project Growth

TWO-PRONGED FOCUS:

- Student Online Learning Platform (blog)
- Departmental Events (ILW)

@smilions12

ORIGINAL STRUCTURE (Jan 2013)

- 3 Postgraduate Student Editors
- Undergraduate Writers
- Academic style articles
 - 4 content sections
- Student Panels at ILW



DATA:

- Very low blog view count.
(10-15 views pp. avg)
- Positive feedback on ILW

CONCLUSIONS:

- Successful content
- Too Postgraduate-focused
- Contribution drop-off
- Highly successful ILW

FIRST REBOOT (July 2013):

- 4 Person Management Team (Undergrad/ Graduate)
 - New blog design
- New Learning-Content Focus
 - Same ILW

- DATA (to June 2014):**
- Double student participation in ILW**
 - Poor attendance**
 - Fluctuating page view**

	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Entrances	Bounces
Overall Views	22,528 % of Total: 100.00% (22,528)	18,668 % of Total: 100.00% (18,668)	00:01:58 Site Avg: 00:01:58 (0.00%)	16,882 % of Total: 100.00% (16,882)	81.1%
1. /2013/11/adventure-time-is-the-best-show-on-tv-right-now/	14,407 (63.95%)	11,854 (63.50%)	00:02:18	11,832 (70.09%)	
2. /	1,363 (6.05%)	1,013 (5.43%)	00:02:11	922 (5.46%)	
3. /2014/01/10-painfully-sexist-momentsthe-mistreatment-of-women-in-skyfall/	759 (3.37%)	681 (3.65%)	00:02:28	626 (3.71%)	
4. /2013/08/post-fringe-review-spring-awakening-and-the-genius-of-fringe-traditions/	550 (2.44%)	467 (2.50%)	00:00:47	461 (2.73%)	
5. /2013/10/film-review-prisoners/	352 (1.56%)	288 (1.54%)	00:01:15	282 (1.67%)	
6. /2013/08/waiting-for-the-barbarians/	241 (1.07%)	218 (1.17%)	00:03:47	218 (1.29%)	
7. /ilw/	236 (1.05%)	206 (1.10%)	00:02:15	169 (1.00%)	
8. /2013/08/the-bling-ring-slaves-to-the-media-or-misunderstood-youth/	148 (0.66%)	116 (0.62%)	00:01:32	114 (0.68%)	
9. /litsoc/	135 (0.60%)	86 (0.46%)	00:01:22	75 (0.44%)	
10. /2013/11/album-review-dan-le-sac-vs-scroobius-pip-repent-replenish-repeat/	131 (0.58%)	110 (0.59%)	00:01:36	108 (0.64%)	

The narrative for this section:

We can look at page views for an overall indicator from January 2014 to June 2014 (half a year up until the reboot.)

Results are amazing in terms of pageviews- thousands a month- but mostly come from a non-academic article which magnificently broke through into popular reading circles. So let's ignore that article.

Unfortunately, only three of these top ten pages are Academic: the ILW page (which is good), the Litsoc page (which is good), and the Waiting For The Barbarians review (which is great). Also notice that WftB review has almost FOUR MINUTES of reading time.

Perhaps page linger time is a better indicator of how much students can get out of a piece?

This is the next direction we took. (Onto next slides).

Page		Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Entrances
Avg Pg Time		2,970 % of Total: 100.00% (2,970)	2,441 % of Total: 100.00% (2,441)	00:01:52 Site Avg: 00:01:52 (0.00%)	1,62 % of Total: 100.00% (1,62)
1.	/2013/08/dickens-said-it-was-vulgar/	6 (0.20%)	5 (0.20%)	00:10:41	4 (0.25)
2.	/2014/06/course-book-review-untouchable-by-mulk-raj-anand/	9 (0.30%)	7 (0.29%)	00:09:49	3 (0.19)
3.	/404.html?page=/httpdocs/wp-content/uploads/Beardyman.jpg&from=http://www.google.fr/imgres?imgurl=http://www.literature.hss.ed.ac.uk/httpdocs/wp-content/uploads/Beardyman.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.literature.hss.ed.ac.uk/2013/08/edinburgh-fringe-review-beardyman-one-album-per-hour/&h=399&w=600&tbnid=E_En2cPNkUpnrM:&zoom=1&docid=_cOzDoyd1pwVzM&ei=V5RrU_HVF-mQ1AVWei4DICw&tbn=isch&iact=rc&uact=3&dur=589&page=1&start=0&ndsp=20&ved=0CGAQRQMwAg	1 (0.03%)	1 (0.04%)	00:09:46	0 (0.00)
4.	/category/pals/	1 (0.03%)	1 (0.04%)	00:08:24	1 (0.06)
5.	/2013/09/course-book-review-republican-visions-john-dos-passos-the-42nd-parallel/	16 (0.54%)	15 (0.61%)	00:08:21	14 (0.86)
6.	/2014/06/black-coffee-250414-review/	2 (0.07%)	2 (0.08%)	00:07:09	0 (0.00)
7.	/404.html?page=/httpdocs/wp-content/uploads/Adventure_Time_Chibi.png&from=http://www.google.fr/imgres?imgurl=http://www.literature.hss.ed.ac.uk/httpdocs/wp-content/uploads/Adventure_Time_Chibi.png&imgrefurl=http://www.literature.hss.ed.ac.uk/2014/06/adventure-time-chibi/&h=300&w=300&tbnid=U_HVF-mQ1AVWei4DICw&tbn=isch&iact=rc&uact=3&dur=589&page=1&start=0&ndsp=20&ved=0CGAQRQMwAg	30 (1.01%)	21 (0.86%)	00:05:10	19 (1.17)
8.	/2014/06/can-adults-enjoy-childrens-tv/	9 (0.30%)	9 (0.37%)	00:04:50	5 (0.31)
9.	/2014/01/10-painfully-sexist-moments-the-mistreatment-of-women-in-skyfall/	292 (9.83%)	271 (11.10%)	00:04:27	257 (15.86)
10.	/2014/06/cages-of-the-ground/	13 (0.44%)	13 (0.53%)	00:04:20	6 (0.37)

This shows some improvement: the pages with the longest viewing times are more student-focused pages.

Three course book reviews, the PALS page, two literary pieces and a review of good places to study.

However, a problem arises when we look at the pageviews. Many of them have less than ten views- which means the views could be the content creator leaving the page open while they edit it or check it.

So perhaps we should meet this halfway with number of views as well as page linger time.

NEXT PAGE...

	22,528 % of Total: 100.00% (22,528)	18,668 % of Total: 100.00% (18,668)	00:01:58 Site Avg: 00:01:58 (0.00%)	16,88 % of Tot: 100.00 (16,88)
11. /404.html?page=/lecture-timetables-and-handouts/&from=http://www.literature.hss.ed.ac.uk/author/cmccann/	1 (0.00%)	1 (0.01%)	00:07:14	0 (0.00)
12. /2013/08/book-festival-review-a-l-kennedy-on-writing/	4 (0.02%)	4 (0.02%)	00:06:38	3 (0.02)
13. /2013/01/innocence-and-experience-in-the-poems-of-fleur-adcock/	34 (0.15%)	28 (0.15%)	00:06:11	25 (0.15)
14. /2013/07/write-like-rowling/	8 (0.04%)	8 (0.04%)	00:06:09	6 (0.04)
15. /2013/08/michael-bay-the-most-influential-director-in-hollywood-today/	16 (0.07%)	15 (0.08%)	00:05:56	15 (0.09)
16. /2013/07/the-stigma-of-the-young-adult-section/	32 (0.14%)	32 (0.17%)	00:05:49	28 (0.17)
17. /2013/09/course-book-review-republican-visions-john-dos-passos-the-42nd-parallel/	82 (0.36%)	76 (0.41%)	00:05:48	73 (0.43)
18. /2013/07/a-beginners-guide-to-blogging/	4 (0.02%)	4 (0.02%)	00:05:37	0 (0.00)
19. /2013/09/freshers-week-poetry-slam/	20 (0.09%)	20 (0.11%)	00:05:30	18 (0.11)
20. /2013/10/tv-review-season-premiere-american-horror-story-coven/	58 (0.26%)	54 (0.29%)	00:05:27	53 (0.31)

Here's where things start to make more sense.

Notice that the pages with more views (say a minimum of 30) are all literary, and they still retain long reading sessions.

This suggests that, save anomalies like number 20, we can more accurately gauge what students read in numbers AND in depth.

NEXT.

	22,528 % of Total: 100.00% (22,528)	18,668 % of Total: 100.00% (18,668)	00:01:58 Site Avg: 00:01:58 (0.00%)	16,881 % of Total: 100.00% (16,881)
21. /2013/09/course-book-review-the-unbearable-lightness-of-being/	89 (0.40%)	79 (0.42%)	00:05:26	73 (0.43%)
22. /404.html?page=/httpdocs/wp-content/uploads/Adventure_Time_Chibi.png&from=	32 (0.14%)	23 (0.12%)	00:05:10	19 (0.11%)
23. /author/matt-mcdonald/	1 (0.00%)	1 (0.01%)	00:05:05	0 (0.00%)
24. /2013/11/el2-course-book-review-gullivers-travels/	46 (0.20%)	42 (0.22%)	00:04:48	30 (0.18%)
25. /httpdocs/wp-admin/customize.php	3 (0.01%)	3 (0.02%)	00:04:45	0 (0.00%)
26. /2013/08/fringe-review-hag-a-grotesque-fascinating-fairy-tale/	15 (0.07%)	14 (0.07%)	00:04:34	14 (0.08%)
27. /2013/10/el2-course-book-review-the-autobiography-of-benjamin-franklin/	40 (0.18%)	36 (0.19%)	00:04:32	30 (0.18%)
28. /2013/11/the-cabinet-of-curiosities-addition-two/	12 (0.05%)	12 (0.06%)	00:04:26	1 (0.01%)
29. /about/	20 (0.09%)	15 (0.08%)	00:04:21	2 (0.01%)
30. /404.html?page=/user-groups-2/english-literature-one-public-group/forum/topic/english-literature-one-close-reading-assignment/&from=	1 (0.00%)	1 (0.01%)	00:04:15	1 (0.01%)

It becomes even more clear from here on in.

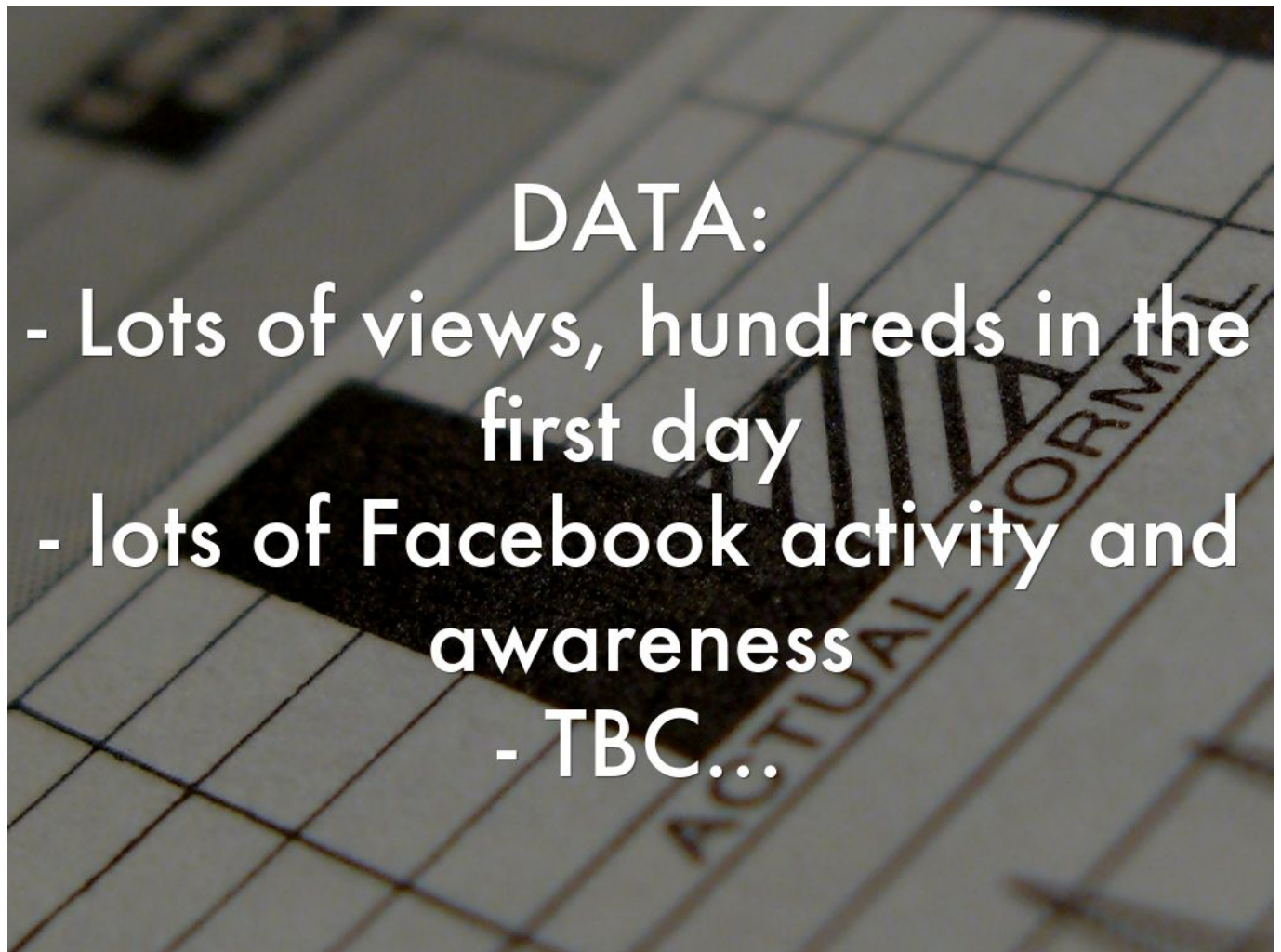
There are three literary pages here, and more as we progress, which have many views, but also long reading times.

This shows that while we have many cultural pages which garner non-University views from overseas and other sectors, our Student-focused content IS being read, and hopefully being used, judging from the long linger time.

CONCLUSIONS:

- Successful academic learning content
- Contribution drop-off
- Small team with too much responsibility





WHERE WE WERE GOING (MAY 2013)

- Summer student blog internships
- Expand undergraduate involvement in Innovative Learning Week
- Transition website control and content creation
- Reconcile role of postgraduate tutors

Where We're Going Now:

- Autonomous, undergraduate-run academic blog.
- Encouraging independent learning and initiative amongst undergraduates:
Semesterly essay competition (tutor led)
Academic Conference & ILW



UNDERGRADUATE CONFERENCE

Innovative Learning Week and Beyond

The Idea

'All undergraduate students in all higher education institutions should experience learning through, and about, research and inquiry.' (Healey and Jenkins, 2009)

Give undergraduate students a platform to pursue independent research and present papers in a peer-reviewed undergraduate research conference.

Expand ILW to students across Scotland and the United Kingdom

Antecedents:

- British Conference of Undergraduate Research

- British Undergraduate Philosophy Conference

Intended Design

- Undergraduate students write independent research papers, mentored by staff
- Select and present papers at the Conference
 - Academic benefits: dissertations and essay skills

Organisation

- Writers' Bloc Events team
- Funding from Innovation Initiative Grant by IAD
- Sponsorship by BYU London Office
- Possible student involvement: paper selection, presentations, et cetera.

WHAT NEXT? THE BIG PICTURE

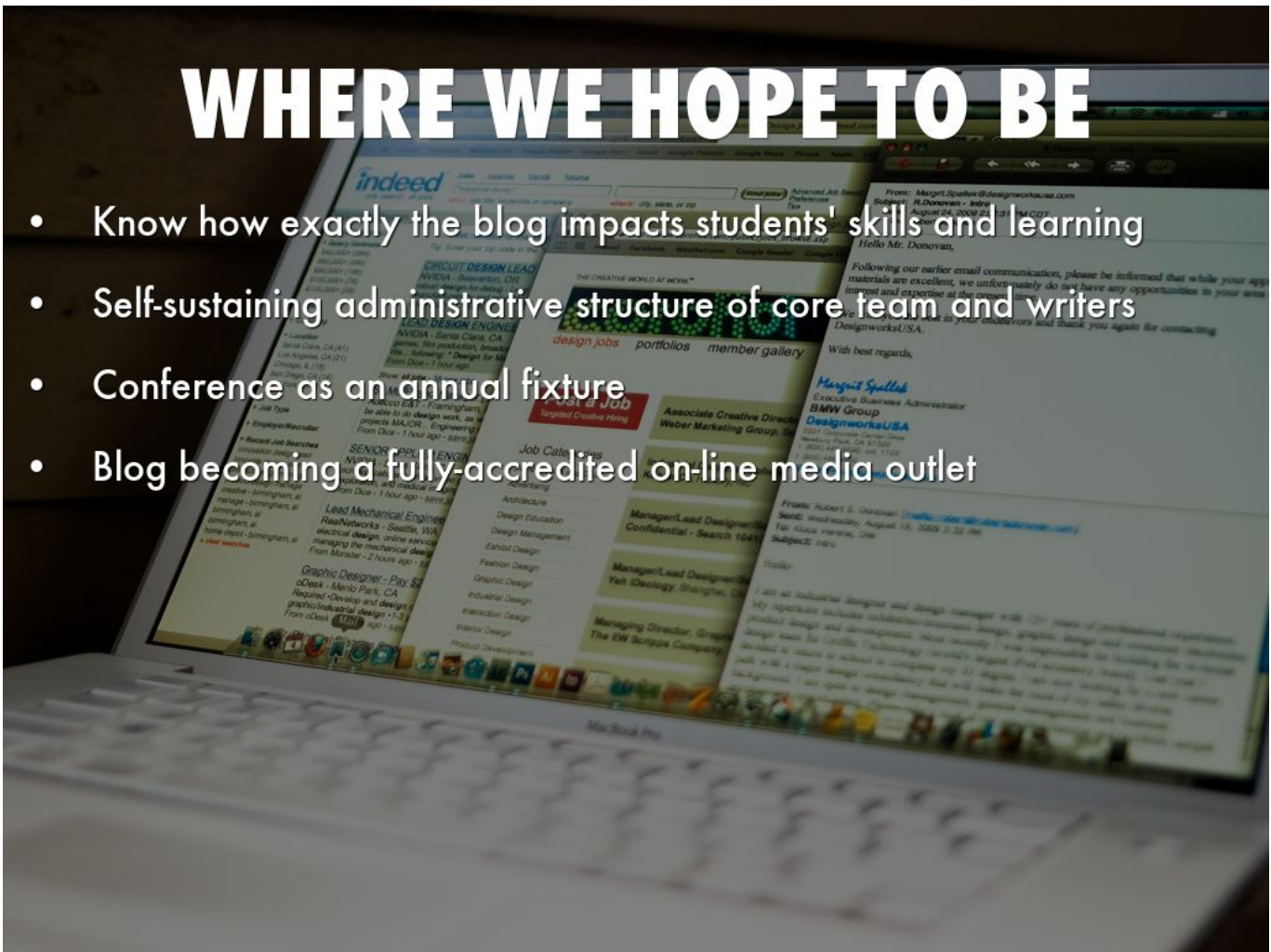
- Academic Blog and Peer Support: PALS and Editors
- Essay Contests as opportunities to get involved
- Conference as major event to support undergraduate learning
- Overall impact on student experience and learning at university
- Ultimately: student-led project.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT

- Developed methodology further to get qualitative data
- Study impact on students' skills and academic development
- Students set targets at the start of project
- Self-assessment to evaluate learning. Like Edinburgh Award.

WHERE WE HOPE TO BE

- Know how exactly the blog impacts students' skills and learning
- Self-sustaining administrative structure of core team and writers
- Conference as an annual fixture
- Blog becoming a fully-accredited on-line media outlet



THANKS FOR LISTENING AND THANKS TO:

- Brian Wall and Charity McAdams (our heroes)
- The new undergraduate team (Lucy, Eleanor, Enzo, Lauren...
- Kelsey, Catherine, Brodie, Jessica and Catherine!) and Joel Keightley
- Daphne Loads and Alison Treacy
- David Salter

WRITERS BLOC
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH