

The Theory of Everything

The Theory of Everything is the story of the most brilliant and celebrated physicist of our time, Stephen Hawking, and Jane Wilde the arts student he fell in love with whilst studying at Cambridge in the 1960s. Little was expected from Stephen Hawking, a bright but shiftless student of cosmology, given just two years to live following the diagnosis of a fatal illness at 21 years of age. He became galvanized, however, by the love of fellow Cambridge student, Jane Wilde, and he went on to be called the successor to Einstein, as well as a husband and father to their three children. Over the course of their marriage as Stephen's body collapsed and his academic renown soared, fault lines were exposed that tested the lineaments of their relationship and dramatically altered the course of both of their lives.

University vocabulary:

Oxbridge *Oxford Cambridge (the top 2 best!)*

The boat race *course d'aviron (rowing)*

To graduate undergraduate / postgraduate *avoir une licence*

To do research a Ph. D. / a doctorate *faire des recherches*

First-class honours / second-class / third-class *Très bien / Bien / Assez bien*

To get a first / 2:1: 2:2 / third

A viva

Famous people mentioned:

Sir Roger Penrose: Oxford University, mathematician, won the Wolf Prize for Physics in 1988 jointly with Stephen Hawking.

J.J. Thomson (Sir Joseph John): Cambridge University, physicist, discovered the electron in 1897, won the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1906.

Ernest Rutherford: Cambridge University, (born in New Zealand), first split the atom in 1917, won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1908.

Alfred Einstein

Scientific notions:

A black hole

Quantum theory

The Schrödinger equation

General relativity

Cygnus X-1

Oh my goodness!: OMG!

“What if the secret of the universe had something to do with sex? Maybe do your doctorate on that. The physics of love.”

To boot sb out: renvoyer

“Looks mortifyingly dull.”

a bore: ennuyeux

“Ban the Bomb” marches

Jane: What about you? What are you?

Stephen: Cosmologist, I'm a Cosmologist.

Jane: What is that?

Stephen: It is a kind of religion for intelligent atheists.

C of E = Church of England

Jane: What do cosmologists worship?

Stephen: A single unifying equation that explains everything in the universe.

A shambles: un désastre

To summon: faire venir

To fix up = to organise

“A little challenge for you all as you embark on your separate journeys, whatever they may be.”

“Something to separate the men from the boys, the wheat from the chaff, the mesons from the pi mesons, the quarks from the quacks.”

Impregnable: imprenable

(rowing, a cox, the boat race)

an absolute cad: un parfait goujat

“Do you play croquet?”

“Stephen, are you aware that you have voluntarily embarked upon a Ph D in physics at the most prestigious college in England?”

The induction = initiation

Baffling = puzzling

“So this is where J.J.Thomson discovered the electron, and where Rutherford split the atom.”

To gather = to understand

Jane: So, I gather you've never been to church?

English – Alison Bates

Stephen: Once upon a time.

Jane: Tempted to convert?

Stephen: I have a slight problem with the celestial dictatorship premise.

Spuds = slang word for potatoes

"Medieval poetry of the Iberian peninsula."

Elderflower wine: vin fait à partir de fleurs de sureau

To feel holier-than-thou: être sanctimonieux, bigot

"A physicist can't allow his calculations to be muddled by a belief in a supernatural creator."

"Sounds less of an argument against God than against physicists."

"You see how the men's shirtfronts & their bow ties – how they glow more than the women's dresses? Tide." (washing powder)

"I suppose I like to time-travel."

The Roaring Twenties: Les années folles

Poetry quote: seek, then, no learning from starry men, who follow with the optic glass the whirling ways of stars that pass. (The Song of the Happy Shepherd by William Butler Yeats!...)

"In the beginning was the Heaven & the Earth. And the earth was without form, and darkness was upon the face of the deep."

To get a move on = chop-chop = hurry up!

The warping of space-time = deformation

Space & time come to a stop

"What if I reverse time to see what happened at the beginning of time itself?"

Wind back the clock?

"It's called motor neuron disease." "It's Lou Gehrig's disease. He was a baseball player.

To waste away: déperir

"I'm afraid average life expectancy is two years. There's nothing I can do for you."

"I have motor neuron disease. Lou Gehrig's disease." (This is also called ALS – amyotrophic lateral sclerosis – or maladie de Charcot)

To lag behind: être à la traine

Odd = strange

A berk = an idiot

English – Alison Bates

A jumper = a pullover

"John is having an affair with Martha. But Martha is in love with Alan, and I think that Alan is probably a homosexual by the look of his jumper. Well, I'm just trying to work out the mathematical probability of happiness."

"Some integer of zero."

"Your glasses are always dirty."

"This will not be a fight. This is going to be a very heavy defeat."

A space-time singularity

Sloth = laziness

Kartoffel = German for potatoes

"Well, it's convenient for breakfast."

To glow = to shine

The second law of thermodynamics

To vanish = to disappear

Racy = risky

Preposterous = absurd, ridiculous

"The little one here has done it!"

a codger: un vieux crouton

"How does Jane manage?"

Brian: Stephen, your 'motor-mouth' disease, does it affect, um...

Stephen: What?

Brian: [Gesturing towards his crotch] Uh, everything?

Stephen: What? No. Different system. Automatic.

Brian: Are you serious? Well that's pretty wonderful isn't it? Well it certainly explains a lot about men.

Snug = comfortable

Shimmering = shining

"I think that you should consider joining the church choir."

Mezzo

To do a U-turn: faire demi-tour

A boundary = a limit

To go tits up / haywire

"God doesn't play dice with the universe."

English – Alison Bates

To cope: s'en sortir

To pass (away) = to die

A sin: un péché

A commitment: un engagement

Chilly: frisquet

Bracing: vivifiant

"I doubt he would be willing."

To bear in mind

A life-support machine

To wean off: sevrer

To blink: cligner des yeux

Builder's tea = very strong tea

To worship the ground beneath sb's feet

To tighten up: reserrer

Cutting-edge: de pointe

Technician: [presenting Hawking with the speech-generating device] Welcome to the future.

Stephen: [speaks for the first time] My name is Stephen Hawking...

Jane: [astonished] It's American!

Technician: Is that a problem?

Jane: Oh, my goodness, well... is there another voice?

Technician: That's the only one they have at the moment.

Jane: [smiles with delight] I think it's great!

"Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do," (from the song Daisy Bell written in 1892)

"Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn." (Rhett Butler to Scarlett at the end of Gone With the Wind)

"Exterminate! Exterminate!" (the Daleks in Dr. Who, a BBC tv series)

Stephen: I will write a book.

Jane: About what?

Stephen: Time.

Jane: Time?

Stephen: What is the nature of time? Will it ever come to an end? Can we go back in time? Some day these answers may seem as obvious to us as the Earth orbiting the sun, or perhaps as ridiculous as a tower of tortoises. Only time, whatever that may be, will tell."

"So I said, I have long been looking for a model of the universe. I finally found her."

To acknowledge = to recognise

English – Alison Bates

An award = a prize

"I have loved you. I did my best."

Cockcroft Guest: Now you are recognized everywhere. How do you deal with all the attention?

Stephen: [grinning] I was stopped recently by a tourist at Cambridge, who asked if I was the real Stephen Hawking. I replied I was not, and said the real one was much better looking."

"I now predict that I was wrong."

"It is clear that we are just an advanced breed of primates on a minor planet orbiting around a very average star, in the outer suburb of one among a hundred billion galaxies. But, ever since the dawn of civilization people have craved for an understanding of the underlying order of the world. There ought to be something very special about the boundary conditions of the universe. And what can be more special than that there is no boundary? And there should be no boundary to human endeavour. We are all different. However bad life may seem, there is always something you can do, and succeed at. While there is life, there is hope."

Gosh!: Ça alors!

To receive a knighthood: être anobli

Jane: What are you writing?

Stephen: Look what we made.