

Archbishop Cranmer (Archives)

## **Christ Church 'victim' Alannah Jeune inadvertently corroborates Martyn Percy's victimisation**

When the 'victim' in the renowned case of Dr Martyn Percy vs Christ Church, Oxford (which somehow became conflated with and morphed into an allegation of sexual harassment) decided to tell her story to the *Daily Telegraph*, it was an impressively slick piece of PR, replete with a 'Brideshead' photo-shoot and a plot for Pinewood (if not Hollywood). Her account of events was widely welcomed as 'the truth' to counter the Dean's distortions and the misleading and harmful attacks upon her by his supporters. The Diocese of Oxford issued this statement:

We are deeply saddened by the inaccurate and unevidenced claims Dr Percy makes in his media interviews.

We've long said that the actions of some of Dr Percy's supporters have left people damaged and hurt. None more so than Alannah Jeune. It's a courageous decision to tell her story given all that she has experienced, but hers is a powerful account that counters the vitriol sent her way. Her story deserves to be widely read.

One might think, given Christ Church's recent financial settlement (with both sides) and the questionable role the Bishop of Oxford has played in all this, that the Diocese's Director of Communications, Steven Buckley, might have been keen to convey a cool and professional detachment. But instead, he issued – on behalf of the Bishop – a partisan statement impugning Martyn Percy's integrity even further, condemning his supporters as callous, and lauding Alannah Jeune's account as definitive truth borne of exemplary virtue.

The Diocese has never issued a statement saying Martyn Percy's account 'deserves to be widely read': instead, they send in the lawyers who allege defamation and threaten legal action (which for this blog is ongoing). But the thing about "inaccurate and unevidenced claims" is that their accuracy may only be established when the evidence is disclosed. And when that evidence is disclosed, it can leave people "damaged and hurt". It might even be considered "vitriol" by those who are confronted by their own lies, distortions and misleading claims. Nevertheless, there is clearly a need for more evidence to be made known, so here follows a further contribution to the discovery of greater truth.

Dr Percy has not, to the best of our knowledge, given any public account to counter the allegation made against him. So far as one can tell, all he has ever done is deny it, and co-operate with several investigations, all of which have either quickly cleared him, or failed to proceed due to the lack of any evidence. The two remaining processes open to Ms. Jeune and Christ Church were both withdrawn by them, presumably because the others had already failed.

(*Pace* the Diocese of Oxford, everything asserted here can be corroborated with documentary evidence.)

Alannah Jeune's account of events as recounted by Camilla Tominey in the *Telegraph* is interesting on a number of levels. The article is in many ways a Godsend (quite literally), because it establishes beyond doubt that Martyn Percy has been profoundly wronged and is the victim of a grievous injustice. It merits a thorough fisting:

*A woman who has claimed to have been sexually harassed by the former dean of Christ Church, Oxford, has spoken about her experience for the first time, saying "it is insulting he is trying to claim being the victim".*

This opening sentence conveniently ignores all that preceded the allegation of sexual harassment (hereafter 'Hairgate'): Martyn

Percy's 'victimhood' was established beyond doubt when the Censors of Christ Church decided to trash his reputation with 27 counts of "conduct of an immoral, scandalous or disgraceful nature incompatible with the duties of the office or employment", which Sir Andrew Smith, a retired High Court judge, dismissed comprehensively. Yet they continued to harass and bully him (as Alannah Jeune inadvertently corroborates) in order to secure their objective.

*Previously known only as "Miss X", Alannah Jeune has waived her right to anonymity to reveal how reporting the Very Rev Prof Martyn Percy for allegedly stroking her hair in the sacristy in Oct 2020 cost her her thesis.*

*"This has had a massive impact on my life," the 29-year-old told The Telegraph in an exclusive interview. "I've lost my job, my housing and my PhD over this.*

She was actually known as 'Ms X': her marital status has never been disclosed. 'Ms X' is also how she self-identified. That aside, this claim is really quite puzzling. How has Hairgate cost her her thesis? How has an alleged touching of hair in the vestry caused her to lose her job, her house and her PhD? She still manifestly has her job at Christ Church (two, actually: chapel assistant in the College and vergers in the Cathedral), so what job has she lost? Who has made her homeless? Who has deemed her doctoral thesis to be 'lost'?

Alannah Jeune was studying for a PhD at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand, not at Christ Church Oxford (which would in any case be a DPhil, not a PhD). She was in the UK for a year (2017-2018) on a student visa, having been awarded a scholarship for educational enhancement. She is not and never has been a student at Oxford. She is not and never has been a member of that University. Nobody at Oxford has 'failed' her in terms of academic attainment because she is not subject to any kind of Oxford

assessment. So why did the University of Canterbury (NZ) apparently deregistered her from her doctoral studies just because her hair was (allegedly) touched by the Dean in the vestry?

Her thesis was due for submission in March 2020 (she herself records this in thanks to her sponsors a year earlier), and her university gave her an ultimatum for completion and asked to return well before the alleged incident. She declined to return, and remained in Oxford with a series of part-time roles. She apparently 'lost' the PhD of her own volition, preferring instead to pursue ad hoc welfare roles over an academic career.

*"The whole thing was weird and creepy. He assaulted me while wearing a collar in a cathedral."*

Setting aside the fact that everyone, including the Dean, was strictly observing social distancing at the time, the vestry at Christ Church isn't a musty, dark cubbyhole perfect for grooming and molestation: it is really quite cavernous; taller and wider than a double decker bus, with an unlocked door, staircases and two floors. After a service, hundreds of people would be milling round, walking past open doors or entering without knocking, including the Dean's wife. Such an alleged 'assault' in broad daylight with so many people around is an incredible (quite literally) claim to make. But it is certainly dramatic, and 'collar in the cathedral' is good alliteration.

*Last weekend, the married theologian gave an interview with The Times in which he suggested that Miss Jeune's claim "was all taken out of her hands, heavily weaponised, and then talked up as a full-blown sexual assault".*

*He repeatedly denied having touched her and insisted he was the victim of a witch hunt and failure in safeguarding.*

*“It’s just so unbelievably insulting to say that a 29-year-old educated woman is not capable of making a complaint herself,” says Miss Jeune.*

*“This was a case of a man using his power, connections and position to trample down the woman who’s telling the truth.”*

This is quite possibly the most important revelation, because it establishes beyond doubt that Martyn Percy is indeed the victim of a profound injustice. Hitherto, he (and his lawyers and advisors) have been informed that Alannah Jeune was a ‘vulnerable adult’, hence the application of the College’s and the Church of England’s safeguarding policies. She told Camilla Tominey that such a designation is “unbelievably insulting”. And yet this phrase has been adduced throughout the process, including on documents which she has seen and approved. The College told the NST that they had evidence that Ms. Jeune was a ‘vulnerable adult’, so that made it safeguarding. The Dean never knew of this claim, and it is possible Ms. Jeune did not know how she had been weaponized either.

‘Safeguarding’ is not a procedure available to anyone who alleges misconduct. If an adult female employee alleges harassment by a male colleague, it is a matter for the internal HR disciplinary procedure, and thereafter an Employment Tribunal. ‘Safeguarding’ has a very specific definition and application in law: it is for the safety and security of children and vulnerable adults. For ‘safeguarding’ to have been the appropriate procedure to apply in the case, Alannah Jeune must be one or the other. She was 28 when the allegation was made, so plainly not a child. And here we learn (for the first time) that neither is she a ‘vulnerable adult’. Ergo, both the College and the Church misapplied their own policies, and subjected Martyn Percy to flawed procedures. That is to say, they victimised him.

*Last Wednesday, Prof Percy announced that he was leaving the Church of England and his supporters are expected to join him on*

*Saturday for a “farewell” service and party at an undisclosed location.*

*Yet for the softly spoken chapel assistant and verger from New Zealand, the nightmare, she said, is far from over.*

*“I thought once we’d settled, this would all be over. But now he’s in the paper calling me a liar,” she says, tearfully. “It feels like he’s never going to stop.”*

‘Softly spoken’ and ‘tearfully’ are designed to convey to the reader credibility, if not vulnerability. But truth and accuracy are important. The truth is that the Dean did not settle with Alannah Jeune, as she suggests here, principally because he has always consistently denied what she alleged. Christ Church may have reached a generous settlement with her, but the suggestion that the Dean “settled” with her after ten days of negotiations is false.

*Photo caption: Methodist, teetotal Miss Jeune – who looks considerably younger than her 29 years – was brought up in a modest home by her stay-at-home father and her mother, a part-time music teacher.*

‘Anglican, teetotal Dr Percy – who used to look considerably younger than 59 years...’ What on earth does this have to do with anything? Unless this “looks considerably younger” is supposed to smear Martyn Percy with the whiff of child (or ‘vulnerable adult’) abuse. It is curious that nowhere does the *Daily Telegraph* mention the fact that he has been questioned, interrogated and investigated on Hairgate by Thames Valley Police, the Local Authority Designated Officer, the Church of England’s National Safeguarding Team and England’s fourth most senior Court of Appeal Judge (Dame Sarah Asplin), and all cleared him of the wrongdoing alleged.

*In 2017, she was offered “the opportunity of a lifetime” – a scholarship to Christ Church, Oxford – after studying history and*

*music at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand, and a master's degree at Queen's University Belfast.*

She was on a scholarship to Christ Church. Curiously, she doesn't say it was a student visa for a year. Does this student visa also permit her to work in the UK, which she was and is apparently doing? If so, isn't that right-to-work due to expire as a matter of course? Or has it already done so? Doesn't that rather explain the loss of her job and her housing?

*Upon arriving in Oxford, Miss Jeune claimed that the Dean, who was not only in charge of the 12th-century cathedral but also head of the governing body of the constituent Oxford college, swiftly took her under his wing, inviting her for coffee, "once or twice a term".*

The Dean would routinely invite many, many dozens of Christ Church students (and visiting overseas students) into the Deanery for coffee once or twice a term: it was part of his job. He is a pastoral, relational, caring sort of person: he likes people.

*On their second meeting, the Dean allegedly opened up to her about how he had been adopted as a child and his struggle to find his birth parents.*

*"At the time, I was flattered that he was trusting me with such details," she recalled. "I had very little experience of academia in this kind of environment. So I thought he was a slightly bumbling, socially awkward, very clever academic."*

The Dean 'opens up' to all sorts of people; indeed, his capacity for vulnerability is intrinsic to his mission and vocation. The best pastors and teachers will nurture young people by empathising with their backgrounds and struggles. He talks widely and freely about his adoption as a key aspect of his life, and its influence on his career, theology and spirituality. He has done so for over 30 years. This is all

in the public domain: there was no particular trust, privileged biographical disclosure, or flattering interest in Alannah Jeune at all. And ‘bumbling’? Martyn Percy *bumbling*? He is indeed a ‘very clever academic’ (as novelist Dan Brown attests), but ‘bumbling’ he is not – not in the Cathedral pulpit, not behind a College lectern, and not in private discussion. ‘Bumbling’ is the sort of word one associates with the caricature Oxford don who might make an appearance in ‘Inspector Morse’. One wonders what Alannah Jeune has been watching – or reading.

*Although Miss Jeune did not spend as much time with Emma Percy, who is the chaplain of Trinity College, the couple grew to trust her enough to allow her to housesit when they were away from the Deanery, which up until April was their 12-bedroom grace and favour home, next door to the cathedral.*

Wives tend to be quite savvy to their husband’s foibles and flaws. If Emma Percy suspected her husband might ‘stray’ or have ‘wandering eyes’, why would she help to nurture a relationship of trust with an allegedly attractive younger women?

*So when a formal complaint was submitted against Prof Percy in Sep 2018, accusing him of “conduct of an immoral, scandalous or disgraceful nature incompatible with the duties of the office or employment”, Miss Jeune was among many who threw their support behind the dean.*

*“I was in Team Dean,” she said. “The student body felt Martyn was being targeted by atheist dons. We organised flowers, we sent cards. I really thought the college was treating him badly. It’s sickening to look back at, really.”*

Alannah Jeune was (and is) great friends with the Chaplain, the Rev’d Claire Hayns, who had already moved from being “Team Dean” to joining the Censors’ squad. Not only did Alannah Jeune shadow and



support the Chaplain in everything, she had been living with her and her family: they are very close.

*Although Prof Percy's supporters have subsequently insisted he was completely exonerated, the investigation did find one breach of his fiduciary duty, as well as making some criticism of his conduct.*

This innuendo is gratuitously smears: "accidental and minor breach" was the finding, but Christ Church have fed this line to Ms. Jeune.

*The toxic atmosphere at the college continued, and four months later, a motion of no confidence was put to the governing body, which voted 38 against the Dean with two in favour.*

*Emails then appeared in the press quoting several dons wondering how they might poison Prof Percy, hoping he would turn up drowned in a nearby river, and calling him a "little Hitler".*

*The leak – along with a copy of the previously secret 2019 tribunal findings – was allegedly traced back to Prof Percy via Jonathan Aitken, the disgraced former Cabinet minister-turned-vicar, and a former student of Christ Church. Both men denied any involvement.*

*Meanwhile, Prof Percy was investigated by the college over two separate safeguarding issues, and in Sep 2020, the Church of England released a statement clearing him of any wrongdoing, declaring: "At no point was there any allegation or evidence that the Dean presented a direct risk to any child or vulnerable adult".*

All of which rather establishes an abuse of process, victimisation, and exoneration.

*Alannah Jeune alleged that when Prof Percy turned to leave after the incident, he asked: 'So how old are you now then?'*

*It was a month later, on Oct 4 2020, that Miss Jeune claimed that the dean sexually harassed her after following her up the narrow stairs to the sacristy after a Sunday Eucharist service.*

*Dressed in a cassock throughout the Covid-compliant service, directing worshippers to their seats, she had been wearing her long blonde hair down that day because she was having it cut that afternoon and donating it to charity.*

*“I heard steps so I turned around. I was surprised to see him there as we were having to follow all the social distancing rules and clergy were not allowed in the sacristy as it is quite small,” she claimed.*

*“He started off by saying ‘Have you done something different to your hair today? It’s looking glorious’. I just said that I had brushed it and tried to laugh it off.*

Alannah Jeune neglects to mention that many others in the Cathedral commented on her hair that same day. Martyn Percy’s conversation was in the context of her laudable decision to donate it to a charity that made wigs for children. She also neglects to mention that the conversation about their age-gap related to the Dean’s very short grey hair, which he had commented upon – that no-body would welcome the donation of it because it wasn’t worth having. The Dean would have been perfectly happy to apologise at any point for his conversation, but he was given no opportunity to do so: instead, Alannah Jeune decided very much later to get upset about it, and her confirmed membership of the Censors’ squad (and renewed visa as ‘religious worker’ in the Cathedral) naturally followed.

*“Then he said that he had been watching me throughout the service and could not take his eyes off me. He said the sunlight had been catching on my hair and that he wanted to reach out and stroke it.*

The Dean suffers from an eye condition (keratoconus for over 30 years), and with an eye infection this meant regular application of eye drops. Without his contacts lenses he cannot see clearly for more than 10 yards (as was the case that day). He cannot read accurately, and could not drive.

The Dean sat next to his wife throughout the service in question, so the suggestion that he had been “watching” Alannah Jeune throughout the service, whilst sitting with his wife, does not seem credible. In any case, the Vergers are stationed several feet behind the Dean’s stall, and screened off by a large medieval wall. Martyn Percy does not have eyes in the back of his head.

*“He was very close to me at this point. I remember thinking ‘I hope I don’t give him Covid as it was the start of fresher’s week and I’d been working with students all weekend’.*

*“Then he said ‘Oh I’m just going to have to’, and reached out his hand and stroked my hair for about 10 seconds. I just froze and tried to defuse the situation by not reacting.”*

The Dean was observing social distancing like everyone else: given his age and eye condition, he was taking no chances with airborne particles of Covid. To stroke someone’s hair for 10 seconds is extraordinary: just count the passing of 10 seconds, and you have to wonder what their eyes and lips were doing. That aside, a 10-second stroke would leave skin cells or traces of perspiration. Martyn Percy volunteered a DNA sample to Thames Valley Police to clear his name, which they took. It has never been adduced as any corroborative evidence that he touched her hair.

*Miss Jeune alleged that when Prof Percy turned to leave, he got to the top of the stairs and asked: “So how old are you now then?”*

*When Miss Jeune replied “28”, she claims he said: “Only 30 years between us, then.”*

*“I was like, ‘there’s no other implication to take from that’,” she said.*

*Prof Percy has denied ever saying this. He has admitted to complimenting Miss Jeune on her hair, but denied ever touching it, claiming he was putting in eye drops at the time.*

*Thirty minutes after the incident, Miss Jeune told the Rev Clare Hayns, the college chaplain, what had allegedly happened and reported it to the university authorities, prompting the dean to step down pending another investigation.*

It is interesting that she doesn't mention to Camilla Tominey that a witness entered – or someone Alannah Jeune said “interrupted” this alleged “assault”. This person denied seeing anything at all – or anything untoward – and told the police so. They also told this to the appointed Christ Church investigator (retired police officer Kate Wood). Oddly, Ms Wood declined to include this evidence in her report.

But something deeper is disclosed here.

Having apparently been ‘frozen’ by the assault, and so emotionally disturbed as to feel the need to report the incident minutes afterwards, Alannah Jeune informed the College Chaplain, who has formal Safeguarding and Welfare responsibilities in the College. You'd think that an allegation of sexual assault made to a Safeguarding officer in an educational establishment – where there are many young girls – would have been met with very swift action indeed: witness statements taken, escalation to Cathedral Sub-Dean and College HR; immediate suspension pending investigation. We are, after all, looking at a dirty old lech and a creepy sex pest who abuses his power in order to groom young women.

But the Rev'd Clare Hayns didn't do any of that.

Hairgate occurred after Matins on 4th October. Alannah Jeune recounts a lengthy incident which, if not sexual assault, is certainly grooming. Martyn Percy claims it was a brief chat *en passant* which lasted less than a minute, during which her hair was complimented but not touched.

But let's leave the he-said/she-said disparity aside for a moment.

Either the version of events which Alannah Jeune told Clare Hayns was not remotely near anything recounted here by Camilla Tominey, or the Rev'd Clare Hayns should be immediately suspended as a safeguarding risk, simply because she failed to act as urgently as such an incident would demand – for the welfare and protection of a college full of young female students.

In fact, it wasn't until 11th October that the 'incident' was reported to the Sub-Dean, the Rev'd Canon Richard Peers. One wonders if during that intervening week Alannah Jeune was 'encouraged' into making a formal complaint, with Clare Hayns musing: "People wanted the final blow. I was thinking is this important enough for that to happen" (as she told Kate Wood).

Thereafter we observe a certain amount of 'sexing up', if not 'cooking'.

On 13th October – eleven days after the 'sexual assault' – Canon Peers visited the Dean to tell him there had been a safeguarding allegation. This was in the same week as the Dean's Employment Tribunal hearing vs Christ Church, which seemed remarkably convenient. Canon Peers refused to tell the Dean what the allegation was, which is a strategy designed to exacerbate anxiety and compound depression. Instead, he tried to persuade the Dean to enter into voluntary house arrest, without due process (indeed, without any process at all). Michaelmas Term had just begun, and it

seemed an obvious mechanism to neuter the Dean altogether. Canon Peers was adamant that this allegation was unrelated to anything else, but he wouldn't say how historic it was. And like Clare Hayns, he did not follow any College HR procedures for harassment (or safeguarding).

It wasn't until 21st October that the Dean finally discovered what the allegation was, any yet the Cathedral Chapter, the Bishop, and senior Diocesan staff had all been fully briefed a good week before. Before the Dean had even learned of the allegation, the Bishop tried to persuade Martyn Percy to step aside from ministry altogether (again, without due process).

While Canon Peers feigned neutrality, he was in fact informing other people that something far worse (far, far worse) had occurred in the vestry, which may yet be the subject of separate disciplinary proceedings against him. Alannah Jeune's testimony flatly contradicts some of the 'sexing up' he seems to have carried out in order to support the Censors in their quest to get rid of the Dean.

Clare Hayns says in her Wood interview she "kicks herself" for not reporting Martyn Percy's 'grooming' and 'sexual assault' immediately. This is important. Might it be because Alannah Jeune originally thought it wasn't worth it, and because she was remotely bothered by it? Dame Sarah Asplin, President of Tribunals and a senior High Court judge, states there was nothing "overtly sexual" in the conversation complained about. She also noted that Ms Jeune concurred with this in her original statements, saying she "wasn't upset" by it (and also told Clare Hayns *numerous times* she wasn't upset by it). If the alleged encounter had had anything serious about it at all, Judge Asplin and the Lead Investigator under the CDM proceedings would have been bound to hold a tribunal and interim censure and/or penalties would also have been imposed. Instead, Judge Asplin determined that no further action be taken.

A sexual assault which is not sexual is not a sexual assault.

An assault which does not bother the 'victim' is not an assault.

If you tell a retired police officer and an Appeal Court judge one week that you weren't remotely bothered by an incident, and the next week you tell people you were frozen and profoundly disturbed by the creepiness of it all, the truth usually lies nearer to the contemporary testimony – before people have had a chance to 'sex up' and 'weaponise' it into something "big enough to be the final blow".

Or feed a PR agency.

Since the College/Cathedral HR disciplinary protocol was not applied; and since the College/Cathedral safeguarding protocols were not observed, a bespoke process was created to 'deal' with Martyn Percy. That in itself constitutes harassment: it is victimisation and bullying.

It appears that Alannah Jeune was 'persuaded' to make Hairgate an issue, and she consented – perhaps unwittingly – for it to 'weaponised' into a safeguarding issue in order to please her friend, Clare Hayns, with whom she lived (and thus, a clear conflict of interest). Having been a Junior Dean at Magdalen College, with responsibility for student welfare, she would be acquainted with the University's Safeguarding Policy and its applicable requirement for a 'vulnerable adult'. Why would she go along with it, if, in fact, she is not vulnerable at all?

She needed a job.

She needed a job because her job at Magdalen came with free accommodation, and would usually be for a year, renewable for a further year. But strangely her employment at Magdalen ended prematurely. If this is the job and housing she claims to have lost, it certainly preceded Hairgate. But why did she lose it?

Might it be because she wasn't qualified for the position? Setting aside the question of whether or not her student visa permitted her to work the required number of hours, the post of junior dean in any college is reserved for matriculated research students from the University of Oxford: a junior dean must be a *member* of the University. Since she is not and never has been, it raises the question of whether she was economic with the truth in her application for the position.

It is interesting to note that she certainly likes to give the impression of being a bona fide student of the University. She is often seen wearing an Oxford academic gown which she is not entitled to wear: she has never matriculated to the University of Oxford, let alone graduated from it. Nor was she ever registered with the History Faculty.

*The college commissioned Kate Wood, a former police officer to carry out the investigation. She interviewed both parties and, in her final report, described Miss Jeune's account as "credible, detailed and true", prompting Christ Church to proceed to tribunal.*

*Miss Jeune went on to report the incident to the police when she discovered that Prof Percy had denied it to investigators.*

Lawyers for Christ Church and the Diocese of Oxford set the terms of reference for Kate Wood's 'independent' report. Alannah Jeune cannot be aware that the same lawyers played a direct part in the six previous allegations of the Dean and 'safeguarding concerns' from March 2020 to September 2020, and vigorously contested the Church of England NST's exoneration of the Dean on September 8<sup>th</sup> 2020. She cannot be aware that these lawyers, and with their PR agency, were lobbying journalists from February 2020 onwards, trying to persuade the media, police, NST and others that the Dean



should be investigated on 'safeguarding' grounds, with a view to suspension and quick removal.

*Yet it did not bring closure. By now, "Miss X" had become a subject of discussion among his supporters, who variously described her in anonymous source quotes to the press and in blogs as "a side issue" and "irrelevant" and "an illegal immigrant".*

*(In reality, her visa, which was signed by Prof Percy, runs out this September, when she plans to return to New Zealand.)*

Where has Alannah Jeune been referred to as an "an illegal immigrant"? This *Telegraph* report seems to be the first mention of it. That aside, she is rumoured to have claimed that she lost her job at Magdalen because of harassment from journalists. This cannot be true, not least because according to Camilla Tominey she has hitherto been 'Miss X' (actually Ms X): she has 'come out' for the first time to the *Telegraph*. So which journalists have been harassing her, and (more importantly) when?

She was appointed to the verger post at Christ Church without any vacancy being advertised and a visa for her as a 'religious worker' was sponsored by Christ Church. The position of 'chapel assistant' seems to have been created for her: it has never previously existed, nor was it advertised. She says the Dean signed the visa application, but this is untrue. The Dean has never seen her visa, or had sight of the application.

*Prof Percy's claim that he was suffering from mental health issues delayed the tribunal process to such an extent that Miss Jeune had to give up on her PhD.*

*"I kept on having to ask for more time so I was given an ultimatum," she said.*

*“My university said, you either come back to New Zealand and finish it or we withdraw you. I couldn’t easily fly back because of Covid, and I was committed to seeing this through, so I lost my lifelong ambition to become a professor.”*

Martyn Percy’s ‘claim’ was medically certified and verifiable: in fact, by this point, *he* was the ‘vulnerable adult’, being disabled with stress and signed off with depression. That aside, universities routinely permit extensions for extenuating circumstances – from a broken printer to bereavement and trauma. It is not remotely likely that the University of Canterbury (NZ) would penalise a student because of delays caused by Covid. Nor is it likely that a university would harass a victim of sexual assault.

Her decision not to return home was hers. She allegedly tried to sue the College (an educational charity) for more than £360,000, which included compensation for a lost academic career and accommodation – a claim which could have been objectively falsifiable. One wonders why she didn’t mention to Camilla Tominey what happened to this claim, and why it was dropped (voluntarily by Ms. Jeune).

It was dropped because Christ Church’s lawyers eventually came to realise that the story did not stack up on so many counts: employment, visa, student status, timings, process and more besides. Indeed, if she has lost no job or accommodation; and if she ‘lost’ her PhD of her own volition, she might have been attempting to obtain a pecuniary advantage by deception.

*After a 10-day mediation, the pair finally reached a settlement in February, which saw both awarded compensation and Prof Percy step down from the role. However, his recent interview has prompted Miss Jeune to finally speak out.*

*“Does he honestly think that I would have allowed anyone to rewrite my experience and talk it up?”*

*“It was completely shattering to see so many people support him without knowing all of the facts. I haven’t yet been able to forgive the group of supporters who admitted they got together to ‘plot’.*

*“But the other people, like those who supported his GoFundMe page without hearing the other side of the story, I feel sorry for them because they’ve been manipulated.”*

Camilla Tominey echoes Alannah Jeune’s apparent deception with “the pair finally reached a settlement”. They did not. Christ Church settled with her directly. Martyn Percy denied her allegation, and always has. His testimony and evidence has never changed.

Astonishingly, the College is now sending out emails and public health information notices about the Dean’s ‘sexual abuse’, and asking students and staff to come forward if they have anything to report about his behaviour. How many young women have come forward?

None.

Not one.

Despite Christ Church’s attempt to whip this up into a #MeToo movement, not one woman in 33 years of the Dean’s ministry has come out and to say, “Oh, me too!”

Whether Alannah Jeune was manipulated or not can be for others to judge. The clergy who brought the CDM and other complaints against the Dean had been doing so since the autumn of 2018.

Alannah Jeune does not mention that from around March 2020, she and her close clergy friends had begun to join the opposition against the Dean, and this was clear by September 2020. She says she is unhappy with the suggestion that ‘safeguarding concerns’ and other allegations were ‘weaponised’ against the Dean. Yet it is hard to find a better adjective. Lawyers for the Diocese of Oxford, their PR

agency, a compliant *FT* journalist and clergy have played significant and proactive roles in promoting the antipathy toward the Dean. This includes the Bishop and several of his staff.

Despite what Alannah Jeune and the Bishop of Oxford claim, the Dean's many supporters have avoided direct criticism of her. But the chronological inconsistencies, the shifting and increasingly embellished claims which can be easily refuted with documentary evidence, and the significant doubts about the details of her CV, all combine to cast some doubt on the overall credibility of what she has told Camilla Tominey.

But most importantly, Alannah Jeune is manifestly not a 'vulnerable adult': she is a strong, confident, powerful, eloquent and intelligent woman. So why did Christ Church and the Church of England deal with this incident under their Safeguarding procedures? Perhaps the Diocese of Oxford might issue a statement explaining why the Bishop supported this manifest abuse of the Church of England's Safeguarding process?

Far easier, of course, to dismiss this all as 'misleading' and 'hurtful', if not 'defamatory', and instruct the lawyers.