

LOCAL NEWS FROM A STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER

# THE ILKLEY INSIDER



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first edition hosted by the new year 12 cohort. In this edition: Eleanor Tolch and Jemima O’Hooley provide insight on how you can alter your revision to be more effective, perhaps all the more relevant as mock exams and A levels loom around the corner for many students in post-16, as well as those in year ten and eleven. Following this, Amelie Brogden writes a fascinating report on marine microbe genomes and their potential to save lives; perhaps revolutionising pharmaceuticals. Additionally, James Hepworth has once again written a fascinating article on technology, this time focusing on the James Webb Telescope and its unveiling of just how beautiful our universe is. Eleanor Tolch provides a second article delving into the year 12 Oxford University residential, uncovering the Potterian magic. She also explores the student experience at such a prestigious university, which several students from IGS find themselves joining each year. Cecilia Hester writes about why you should go and see Upstagers: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, featuring Ilkley’s very own Alice Walsh and Mathew Disney. And if that was not enough William Lister investigates whether Americans can avoid a second Trump presidency even if he is leading the polls. We hope you enjoy our very first edition, and wish all of you the best of luck.

**-WILLIAM LISTER**

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## STUDENT NEWS

This month has been one of many external academic achievements at IGS. Most notably, Caden Murphy received gold in the Physics Olympiad, undertaken by six thousand students a year, designed to assess whether they can ‘work at a high level in Key Stage 5 and beyond. Caden’s outstanding performance has resulted in an invitation to the prestigious Royal Society, the world's oldest continuously existing scientific academy. He and only four others across the country are expected to attend. In addition, the nine other students who took part all managed to secure an award: Jack Ross, Seth Toye, David Purvis, and Jack Woodhouse all received Bronze II, Keiran Slowinski, Joe Spotto, Rachel Joyce made Bronze I, and Nicholas Archer and Samuel Brooks received Silver. Lucy Rachel attained a distinction in the second round of the Cambridge Biology Challenge, a phenomenal feat. Finally, our new head students were announced at the end of last week. We are proud to congratulate Justin Derla, Lois Skelton and Lottie Johnson.



--William Lister

## HEAD STUDENTS



“I’m Lois, your Head Student for Active Citizenship, Respect Equality + Diversity and Events. Although we have many priorities as Head Students, I hope to make the Post 16 experience as enjoyable as possible for as many students as possible. I am looking to create an inclusive and welcoming environment. I am really looking forward to collaborating with the rest of the student body putting your brilliant ideas into place!”



“I’m Db Justin, your Head Student responsible for Mental Health & Wellbeing and Events: I plan to create a better atmosphere for lower years and Post-16 to thrive in, focussing on new clubs and extracurricular activities! Your ideas are integral to our goal to create a positive change, and we strive to be the change you need.”



“I’m Lottie Johnson, one of the head girls, and am responsible for the scholarship and curiosity strand. I would really like to introduce new opportunities for us all whether it be clubs, academic societies or extra-curricular programmes- generally whatever interests you may have and want to pursue further. I’m looking forward to progressing with your support and ideas, so feel free to make any suggestions to me!”

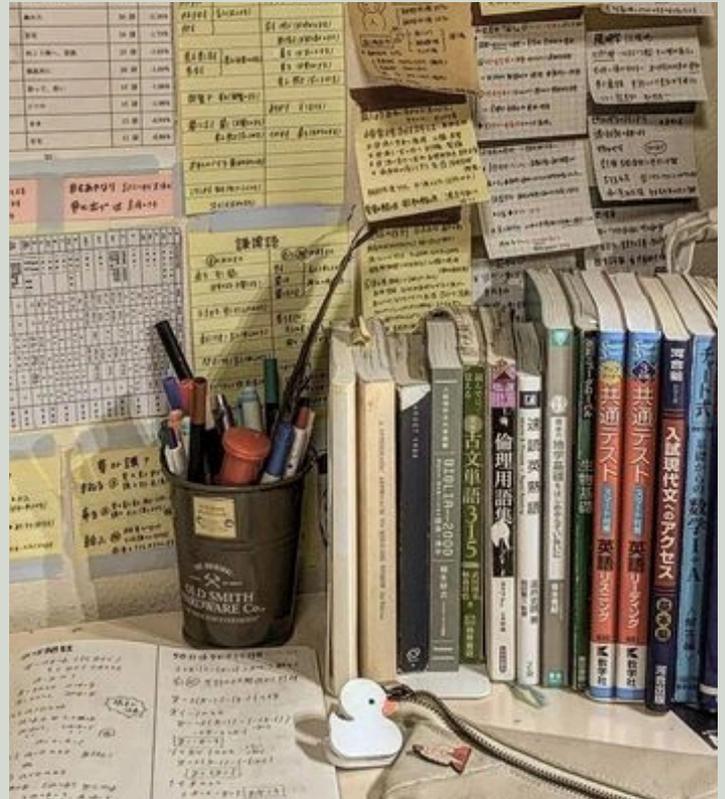
## HOW TO REVISE EFFECTIVELY?

Have you ever wondered how to revise efficiently and effectively? Have you spent hours revising but not received the grade you had hoped for? Have you ever procrastinated while revising instead of using your time productively? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then keep reading.

In its simplest form, revision is reviewing or re-examining a topic or area that has been previously studied. It is important for active recall and making sure you understand all the content you are being assessed on. Many people find revision extremely time-consuming and mentally draining, but it doesn’t have to be that way.

One common myth surrounding revision is that the more time you have spent revising equates to higher levels of effective revision and that more content can be recalled quicker. However, this is not the case. To revise effectively, you must ensure your efforts are focused and specific to your individual learning goals. To do this, you must identify the areas of study you struggle with and avoid spending lots of time revisiting topics you are already confident with; this won’t help you progress with your learning.

Another myth is that re-reading and highlighting content is an effective method of revision and will help you remember the topic better. Nevertheless, there is no scientific evidence that shows this method to be useful in any way in terms of active recall. Instead, you could try using a brain dump to empty all your current knowledge onto a page in one color and, with another color, add the content you missed or want to remember next time.



One common mistake people make when revising for an exam is cramming. Cramming means studying intensively for a short period, usually the day before the exam. Studies have shown that this is not an effective strategy for revision and will only be helpful for short-term use, if at all.

Alternatively, you can create a revision timetable and spread out your workload. This will not only make it easier to manage but also give your brain a break between study sessions.

Another common mistake is revising content that you are already confident in while avoiding less favorable and often more difficult topics. Overcoming this problem can be challenging, but using more fun methods of revision, such as playing revision games and quizzes, or even condensing large chunks of information into a song or rap, can make it more enjoyable.

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Self-care is a key part of effective revision that many people often overlook. However, without self-care, it is easy to become severely overwhelmed and even risk burning out. Some key self-care strategies include taking regular breaks, exercising frequently, getting enough sleep, and eating a balanced diet.

Some people find it difficult to find the correct resources to revise, so here are a few resources you could consider using: [www.physicsandmathstutor.com](http://www.physicsandmathstutor.com) is a website with past papers since 2018 and loads of exam questions for many subjects. Flora is an app that allows you to track the time you spend revising by 'planting' trees or plants and stops you from accessing your phone during 'focus' time. Quizlet is an app that can be used to create sets of flashcards, and you can test yourself in a variety of ways, one of which is a match-up game. Notion is an organisation app that can be used to create revision timetables and track your progress in varying subjects.

In conclusion, to effectively revise, you must put effort into your revision and keep a focused mindset throughout your sessions, sticking to specifically the topics you struggle with. Therefore, the more focused and effective your revision becomes, the greater the results you will achieve.

**-ELEANOR TOLCH & JEMIMA O'HOOLEY**



**THE LARGEST COLLECTION**  
**OF MARINE MICROBE**  
**GENOMES COULD LEAD TO**  
**NEW LIFESAVING DRUGS.**

As of January 16th, 2024, biologists worldwide have developed the largest collection of marine microbe genomes. Scientists stated that this new tool may aid drug development. "The ones found in the depths of the ocean have rare adaptations and traits that have the potential to be useful for medicine. Fabio Favoretto, a marine ecologist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, stated to The Guardian, 'We might find something like that (penicillin) from these ocean fungi.'"

Genes and proteins derived from marine microbes have endless potential implications," study co-author Carlos Duarte, a marine ecologist at the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in Saudi Arabia, says to Nature's Carissa Wong. "We can probe for new antibiotics; we can find new enzymes for food production. If they know what they are searching for, researchers can use our platform to find the needle in the haystack that can address a specific problem." To create this collection, researchers analyzed millions of marine samples from the Pacific, Atlantic, Southern Arctic, and Indian Seas from past expeditions. Due to barriers such as cost, time, and the condition of DNA, scientists have faced difficulties in fully investigating DNA.

However, as of 2022, 303 million different marine microbial genes had been sequenced, according to Smithsonian Magazine. The research's extensive development was due to "technological advances due to the improvement in speed of supercomputing and sequencing technologies," said Elisa Laiolo, which enabled them to analyze more than 2100 metagenomes and 317 million unique groups of microbial genes.

The study additionally focused on the "twilight zone," where extreme conditions bring about some of the world's most unique creatures. Researchers discovered that over half of the unique gene clusters belong to fungi. Medicines such as penicillin are developed from fungi.



**-AMELIE BROGDEN**

**TITLE: THE LARGEST COLLECTION OF MARINE MICROBE GENOMES COULD LEAD TO NEW LIFESAVING DRUGS.**

# JAMES WEBB TELESCOPE

## THE LARGEST VENTURE INTO SPACE AND ASTRONOMY

Without a doubt, one of the largest branches of the scientific world is the study and understanding of the seemingly infinite world that surrounds us: space. Many centuries ago, we could do all but speculate as to what could be out there, but in the modern world, we now have many ways of studying the great unknown. One of the largest efforts in this field of research has been the James Webb Telescope.

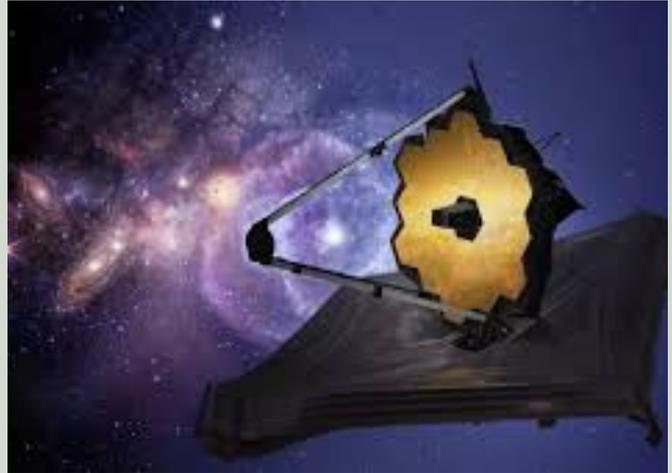
### HUBBLE HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Although the telescope has only been travelling through space for the past two and a half years, the project itself dates back several decades! The first prospects of an interstellar telescope were announced back in 1996, under the name Nexus, with an initial estimated budget of \$1 billion. The telescope took a total of 25 years from announcement to be constructed, and it wasn't an easy process. There were several contract changes, reschedules, and redesigns, meaning that by its launch on Christmas Day of 2021, the price had multiplied tenfold, costing approximately \$10.1 billion dollars!

The telescope itself is made up of a 25-meter-wide mirror, solely designed to reflect light, allowing the cameras to visualise findings, alongside a sunshield, keeping the entire telescope cold. It is a marvel that the machine has remained perfectly operational for the past 2 and a half years and has captured so much information that would've otherwise taken several billions of years to reach.

### CURRENT FINDINGS

The telescope has thus far managed to travel a staggering 1.5 million miles from Earth, meaning that it has been travelling on average at 85 mph throughout its journey. This seems like a long way; however, keep in mind that Mars, our closest planetary neighbour, is 140 million miles away. Despite this, we cannot deny the mesmerising photos that the telescope has thus far captured of the universe around us. Here are just a few of them:



**-JAMES HEPWORTH**

# OXFORD UNIVERSITY YEAR 12 TRIP

Oxford is an extremely prestigious university, evident through the multiple interviews you must go through to be accepted and the high quality of education with around one to two tutoring sessions a week and personalized feedback to track your progress continuously. All the professors and lecturers are experts in their field, allowing you to achieve absolute academic success at every step of the way.

Teaching at Oxford began in 1096, developing rapidly from 1167 as Henry II banned English students from attending the University of Paris. Around the 13th century, protesting between townspeople and students led to the creation of the first halls of residence, which were succeeded by the first Oxford colleges. In 1355, Edward III acknowledged and celebrated the university for its invaluable contribution to education. From 1878, academic halls were established for women, who were allowed as full members of the university from 1920. Oxford University was at the core of the COVID-19 response from the very beginning, apparent in their efforts to develop a vaccine and identify treatments. By early 2022, over 2.6 billion doses of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine had been supplied to over 180 countries.

From Monday 8th April to Tuesday 9th April, 28 Year 12 students and 2 staff members travelled to Oxford to stay at Brasenose College and to explore the city. During our time in Oxford, we were able to witness an array of stunning buildings and the captivating architecture that resides in Oxford. One of these buildings was the Saxon Tower of St Michael at the North Gate (1040), where the door to the cell of the Bocardo Prison is still present in which Oxford Martyrs were imprisoned before their execution.

The Palladian Radcliffe Camera (1737 – 1749) was directly on our doorstep from Brasenose College and was a popular location for photos. With its pillars and dome in a straightforward, symmetrical repeating pattern, the Radcliffe Camera captures Palladian architectural principles flawlessly. Another remarkable feature of Oxford is the English Gothic Magdalen College Tower (1492-1509), which is a 44m high bell tower making it

making it the tallest building in Oxford. The tower also plays an important role in Oxford life as a part of an ongoing tradition that is likely to date back to the tower's original construction; a choir sings from the top on May Morning while townspeople gather below. We also stayed at and explored Brasenose College, where we were given short academic talks by staff at the university in psychology, history, and even pottery. Additionally, we had a tour of Worcester College, which was breathtaking due to its extensive gardens, a lake surrounded by sculptures and trees, and a beautiful chapel with vibrant stained glass windows and decorative pews.



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Whilst at Oxford, we were able to explore the city on our own but also with our teachers, which allowed us to experience the atmosphere of Oxford. In my opinion, the city is purely inspiring with its world-renowned university, beautiful architecture, and several large public parks. Education is, of course, a huge sector in Oxford with the university and numerous tutorial colleges but there is also a thriving social scene with many trendy bars, restaurants, and independent shops, along with regular chain stores found in other British cities. As Oxford is built on the River Thames, there are large areas of the city which are not built on and this gives it a rural feeling. We also visited the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, home to over 7 million objects and 30,000 zoological-type specimens.

Overall, staying at Brasenose College was extremely enjoyable and allowed me and the other students to experience university accommodation, food and taster academic sessions that gave us a real feel and sense of what it is like to study at Oxford. I felt very welcomed by the staff and student ambassadors alike at both Brasenose College and Worcester College, which only made the experience more wonderful.



**-Eleanor Tolch**



## UPSTAGERS PRESENT: CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY

Coming up very soon from July 10th to the 13th, the fabulous local talent at Upstagers is presenting Ilkley with a spectacular show! During the production process and whilst they get ready for the show that is certain to be a 'Golden Ticket,' we have been lucky enough to interview some of the incredible actors and actresses in this show. Ranging from main characters to secondary characters and the ensemble; we have found the ins and outs of how they are getting this brilliant show up on its feet! Today, we will share some interviews with you we have done with this cast, and we will leave the link for the tickets, so you don't all miss out and get yourself one quick!

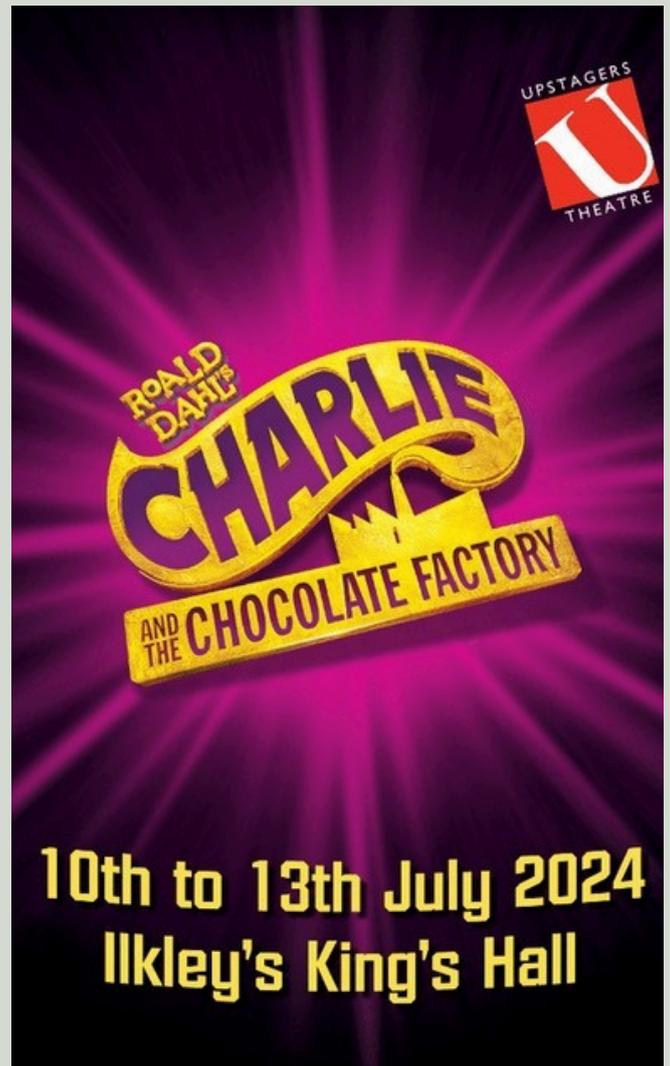


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***“THE RUSH OF ADRENALINE THAT I GET  
IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE IS ONE THAT  
WILL NEVER GET OLD”***

Alice Walsh has been an Upstagers member since she was 8 years old, and it has clearly had a long-lasting impact in terms of theatrical inspiration. Having always had a want for a principal role in the summer production, Alice now finally has that chance to play the famously spoilt and entitled character of Veruca Salt (though we're sure this does not reflect on Alice herself at all!) and states that “the opportunity to make my wish a reality is not one I could miss” with a company that produces shows which “are always professional and high quality to watch”. From all our interviewees, the locally based company of Upstagers receives high praise on quality and prestige. Matthew Disney, who originally was not able to audition due to GCSE exams, has still managed to acquire a “small cameo role that would work around his availability”. Even with the “small” role of Mrs Green, he is extremely proud to be part of a cast that he is sure will create new friends and memories with lovely people who offer more experience in acting. He enjoys working with such a professional company such as Upstagers, one that “makes people feel part of a team”. Matthew sees this as a great chance of freedom to “create some comedic moments and expand his acting ability” with his favourite line being “Vegetables! Some are so rotten you could eat them with a straw and call it a smoothie!”. The cast is extremely excited to be a part of such a fun production, one that hits a soft spot for some previous Roald Dahl readers, favourites varying from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (we are not surprised with this answer!) to Danny the Champion of the World.

Amelia (Ensemble) is delighted to be a part of such a prestigious production with a cast that is an “amazing and talented group of people to work with that never disappoint”. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory debuts on the 10th of July and ends on the 13th of July. We highly recommend you book your tickets now to see this incredibly talented cast that will no doubt release a great production of the well-loved novel, film, and play! [Link for tickets] (<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/ilkeley/the-kings-hall-and-winter-gardens/charlie-and-the-chocolate-factory/e-jdvop>)



- CECILIA HESTER

## External Submissions

Interested in submitting your own work to be published? Use the link below to submit your work. This can be anything, from essays to creative writing, or perhaps a piece of photography or art with a small paragraph accompanying it.

Link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/JGaVNVPEar>

## BIDEN VS THE POLLS

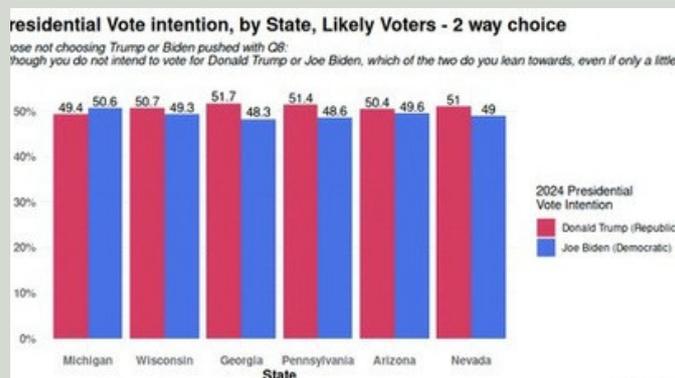
A recent Siena College-conducted poll indicated that 47% of American voters disapprove of how Biden is handling his presidency, the highest figure during his office; the same poll found Trump to have obtained a 5-point lead over Biden at a national level. Furthermore, a second poll by the New York Times found voters twice as likely to believe Trump's policies had improved their position, rather than Bidens. America and its allies have begun to accept the looming inevitability of a second Trump presidency, with his growing lead in the polls; however, politics is largely unpredictable and polls are neither static nor conclusive. Therefore, this article aims to examine three reasons Biden may be able to clutch onto a second term in office.



### **POLLING**

Democrats have outperformed the polls in every special election since Biden's premiership in office, yet, as previously stated, polling is not as decisive as it is often presented. The US elections are generally decided by six swing states: Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Nevada, and usually Georgia. Recent focal polling gave Trump a 2-point lead in Michigan and a staggering 9-point lead in Georgia. Trump was favoured in all of the six swing states. Despite this, the polls fail to depict how Trump's popularity remains in politically disengaged groups. When we alter the poll to more accurately reflect the preferred candidate of those who are more likely to vote, we see the gap narrow significantly, and Biden seizes the lead in Michigan. Trump's lead significantly shrinking is threatened further by the 10% of voters undecided on who they will vote for. The dubbed 'Double Haters' are voters who don't feel represented by either candidate, they are likely to vote for Biden by a 12-point margin. 'Double Haters' have historically been a reliable proxy; in 2016, they preferred Trump to Clinton, and in 2020, Biden to Trump.

Additionally, the polls do not account for historical trends: incumbent presidents have traditionally gained popularity in the run-up to an election, excluding 1992, when billionaire independent Ross Perot stole 19% of the vote, since Reagan presidents have tended to bolster their vote share on average by nearly 4% in the ten-month lead up to an election. This is often how incumbent presidents succeed in winning re-election.



### **ECONOMY**

The American economy is thriving by international standards, whilst inflation may remain higher than the FED stated target of 2%, average wages still linger below pre-pandemic levels, and America holds the title of one of the most economically unequal countries in the developed world. It is still performing much better than its peer's economies: inflation has stayed relatively low and come down faster than in Europe. Unemployment is just shy of hitting a five-decade low, at 3.7%, and GDP grew at an annualised rate of 5% in the third quarter of last year. Trump spent much of his time at POTUS obsessed with the SNP 500, which just hit a record high under Biden.



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Real wages may currently be below pre-COVID levels, but they are experiencing a robust upward trajectory, a trend envied by many European leaders grappling with high inflation rates. In contrast to Europe's stagnant wage growth and looming recession, 'Bidenomics' is shining on the global stage, with US Treasury analysis indicating outperformance compared to international peers. However, despite these positive economic indicators, voters in the US express significant pessimism regarding the state of the economy and President Biden's economic policies. Biden's team attributes this sentiment to misinformation, with the public often misunderstanding the decrease in inflation and increase in real wages. Some analysts argue that despite rising GDP, inflation breeds discomfort among the populace, who tend to credit themselves for wage increases while blaming the government for inflation. Recent data, however, suggests a shift in public perceptions as inflation stabilises and core inflation hints at potential interest rate cuts in the future. Consumer sentiment has experienced a sudden and sharp surge, reaching its highest level in 30 years. With the Federal Reserve potentially cutting interest rates and consumer sentiment peaking, Biden could enter the upcoming election with a significant advantage, as public perceptions of the economy undergo positive shifts.

A large and sustained gap has opened up between how Americans say they feel about the economy, and how the economy is actually performing

Consumer confidence index: actual level vs what we would expect based on economic indicators



## FUNDING

Regarding campaign funds, it is evident that Joe Biden has amassed significantly more than his opponent, Donald Trump. According to a Bloomberg report, Biden & his team have raised over an estimated eight hundred and thirty million dollars in funds. Meanwhile, Trump's expenses on legal fees have rinsed his funding, with a recent court ruling requiring him to pay up to \$500 million in damages. It is worth recognising that modern political advertising has become increasingly ineffective at swaying election outcomes on a national level. Despite this, throughout US electoral history, the candidate who has spent the most money on their campaign tends to win, with there only being two candidates who have won equipped with smaller budgets since 1976. To quote the great political philosopher Cyndi Lauper, "Money changes everything."

-WILLIAM LISTER



**THANK YOU**  
**FOR READING**

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