

I remember Liliane arriving in Cambridge to prepare her Agrégation at Newnham College and finding it a haven of peace after Paris in May 1968 – when she woke in the mornings to the sound of ambulances and police cars.

The differences between the Paris and Cambridge perspectives had already been brought home to her when, while applying for Newnham, she had been startled to discover someone in the college didn't know what the École Normale Supérieure was or what a distinction it was to be at it – they thought it was just an ordinary teacher training college.

All of us remember how hard Liliane worked, concentrating on getting her Agrégation as a first stepping stone to a highly successful academic career, whereas we all three in our various ways wandered off in various alternative directions sooner or later. But this was far from being her only quality: her warm personality ensured that she had a wonderful time in Cambridge, and the meals to which she invited friends in her tiny room – cooked on one gas-ring – quite showed up our beginners' culinary efforts.

In the years immediately following our Cambridge experiences, I found I had a lot to learn from Liliane when I was working in the British Library in London, and she, now based back in Paris, was using the Reading Room at the library for her research into the teaching of 18th-century rhetoric in England. Liliane was using the new opportunities offered by computerization of library catalogues to identify patterns of publishing, which few library users appreciated at the time – most instructive for the British Library staff. She stood out in other ways, too - Liliane in a real fur coat and high heels was creature of elegance quite unlike most of the library's readers.

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